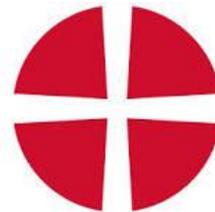




March 2026

The monthly magazine of St. Paul's Armitage Bridge, the Emmanuel Benefice, and the Methodist Churches of Berry Brow and Netherton.

Feel free to take home



The Big Birthday Cake!



'Pass the Parcel'



'Simon Says'

March 2026 Church Services

Sundays:

1st March (2 nd of Lent)	10.00 am	Holy Communion at Armitage Bridge Church (Junior Church)
	10.00 am	Morning Worship (Rev D Plummer) at Netherton Methodist Church
	10.30 am	Morning Worship (Mrs E Nixon) at Berry Brow Methodist Church
8th March (Compassion Sunday)	10.00 am	Holy Communion at Armitage Bridge Church
	10.00 am	United Service with Berry Brow (K Tankard) at Netherton Methodist Church
15 th March (4 th of Lent)	10.00 am	Joint Mothering Sunday Service at Newsome Scout Hall with Berry Brow MC
	10.00 am	Holy Communion (Rev. T Francis) at Netherton Methodist Church
22 nd March (5th of Lent)	10.00 am	Holy Communion at Armitage Bridge Church
	10.00 am	United Service with Meltham MC (Mr Burton) at Netherton Methodist Church
	10.30 am	Holy Communion (Rev T Francis) at Berry Brow Methodist Church
29 th March (Palm Sunday)	10.00 am	Joint Holy Communion Service at Armitage Bridge with Berry Brow and Netherton

* 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>

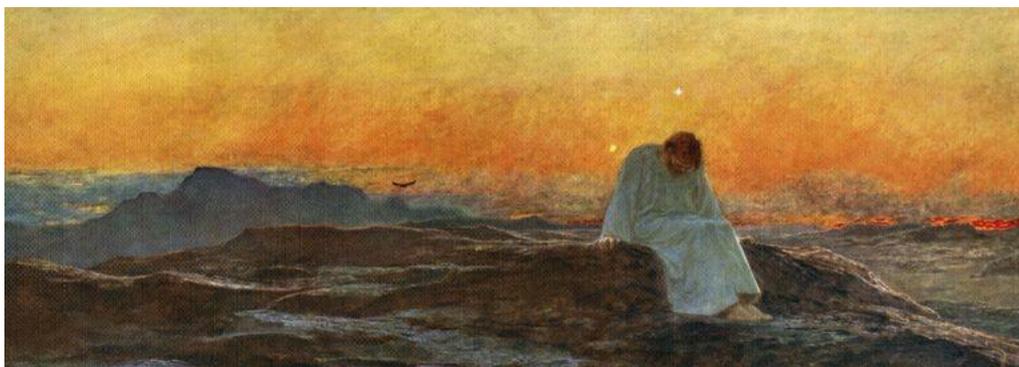
Every Wednesday at St Paul's, Armitage Bridge.

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.

A VIEW FROM THE CLERGY – Rev. Frances Nunn



Lent – The Season of Bright Sadness

Priest and theologian Fr. Alexander Schmemmann wrote “The Lenten season is meant to kindle a ‘bright sadness’ within our hearts. Its aim is precisely the remembrance of Christ, a longing for a relationship with God that has been lost. Lent offers the time and place for recovery of this relationship. The darkness of Lent allows the flame of the Holy Spirit to burn within our hearts until we are led to the brilliance of the Resurrection.”

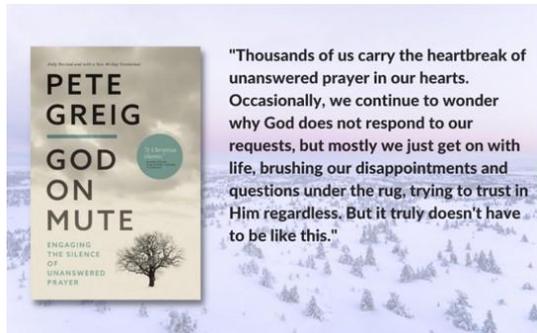
I wonder how this description of Lent feels for you. Is there a sense of longing in your heart to recover that ‘first love’ you felt when you came to faith in Jesus – however long ago that was – a desire for the rekindling of that flame perhaps?

Lent offers us the opportunity to intentionally make time to spend with the LORD in quiet reflection and prayer; sacrificing things we would normally fill our time with, to make space for being in His presence and opening our hearts to the Holy Spirit.

There are many resources available to support our Lenten journey with Jesus – the Churches Together in England website can direct you different options from a range of Christian denominations and traditions: <https://cte.org.uk/lent-resources-2026/>

However you feel prompted to deepen your relationship with God this Lent, may it be a blessing to you personally, and should you feel led to share any thoughts or feelings this Lent season raises for you –

I would be happy to chat over a cuppa and pray with you as we journey together. Fran



unanswered
prayer
the prayer course II

The 24/7 Prayer Course II continues throughout Lent, described as 'An opportunity to process life's most painful questions' exploring the topic of unanswered prayer, between 6-7pm at St Paul's Armitage Bridge on the following dates:

Wednesday 4th March - Maundy Thursday – How?

Wednesday 11th March - Good Friday – Why?

Wednesday 18th March – Holy Saturday – Where?

Wednesday 25th March – Easter Sunday – When?



Junior Church this month

Sunday 1st March, 10am

at St Paul's Armitage Bridge

**Family Easter Craft
Workshop**

Saturday 21st March 10am-12.30pm

Contact Fran if you'd like to book your place!

Fran.Nunn@leeds.anglican.org (07731 861583)

DIARY DATES

Eco-Church Issues

RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch Results Update.

We hope you found an hour in your busy schedules to take part in the Big Birdwatch. Hopefully, initial results for 2026 will be available in time for the April issue.

Our Carbon Fast Journey This Lent

Over the seven weeks of Lent, we'll rethink our relationship with creation to try and live more lightly with all God has entrusted to us. Each week addresses a different area of life—engaging our hands, hearts, and habits in practical ways.

What's in store for Carbon Fast 2026?

Week 1: Our Wonder and Responsibility towards Creation

Week 2: Consumerism / Shopping

Week 3: Money / Investments

Week 4: Food Waste / Meat & Dairy

Week 5: Transport / Driving

Week 6: Energy / Electricity / Gas

Week 7: Social Media

Each week offers three challenge levels:

- **EASY** – Start small with accessible actions
- **MEDIUM**– Deepen your commitment
- **ADVANCED** – Reach for transformational change. Requires planning/research, systemic change

Every Friday, discover a new challenge to help you reduce your carbon footprint this Lent by signing up as a Carbon Steward at info@climatestewards.org

Suggestions for weeks 1 and 2 are shown below:

Week 1: Our Wonder and Responsibility towards Creation.

Why not choose one of the challenges below:

START SIMPLE

- Spend 30 minutes outdoors daily – walk, sit, observe, pray
- Visit nature on your doorstep – Explore your nearest park, wetland centre, nature reserve, or city farm
- Volunteer this month in your church’s outdoor space– Get your hands in the soil

GO DEEPER

- Volunteer with your local Wildlife Trust work party or woodland conservation group
- Get involved with a Friends of the Park group in your area
- Pray for specific conservation groups in your region – name them before God weekly
- Read about nature – discover more about oceans, soil, trees, or wildlife

BIG LEAP

- Give generously or volunteer at a charity helping conserve and provide access to nature: e.g. City farms, zoos, wetland centres
- A Rocha UK – Britain's only Christian conservation charity
- Join a conservation movement on your doorstep and volunteer
- Book a conservation working holiday

Week 2: Consumerism/Shopping

START SIMPLE

- Spring clean your wardrobe - donate unwanted clothes and household items to charity shops
- Sell items you no longer use on Vinted, eBay or Facebook Marketplace

GO DEEPER

- Attend a clothes swap party or local repair café
- Learn basic repairs – sew on a button, fix a hem, tighten furniture joints
- Buy only second-hand this week (charity shops, vintage stores, refurbished electronics)

BIG LEAP

- Zero new shopping this Lent (apart from food and medical essentials)
- Host or volunteer at a repair café in your community
- Commit to a capsule wardrobe – use only what you own for the season

Litter Pick Date

Just to be different, the Eco-Church Group have decided to push back our Litter Pick in Berry Brow from the originally scheduled March to Saturday 25th April 2026, from 10.00 – 12 noon. Get the gloves and litter-picker ready!

Warm Welcome at Berry Brow Methodist Church

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

'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.

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 February event raised in the region of £235.00 for Prostate Cancer. Numbers were slightly down on normal due to half-term and helping with the Mrs Sunderland music competition, so we had quite a bit of cake left over. Fortunately, the congregation at St. Paul's are good at eating cake and according to Alan Greaves raised an excellent extra £82.66 for the cause. So the total ended up a more than respectable £317.66. Thank you to all for your incredible, radical generosity – apparently you were paying attention to the sermon!! The next two events are as follows – all welcome:

14th March - British Heart Foundation

11th April - School funds (to help with the coffee morning running costs, and in replacement of the January Coffee Morning which had to be cancelled).

Alan and Helen

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

30th May

22nd August

7th November (Christmas Extravaganza)



EVENT REPORTS

Junior Church Big Birthday Party

Saturday afternoon of 7th February at St. Paul's was the time and place of great fun and frolics as the Big Birthday Party took place for the first time in a number of years. The party celebrated everybody's birthday in junior church. Around 15 children arrived along with parents and carers and straight away dived into a range of traditional party games, including pass the parcel, Simon Says, and various balloon-based games.

While all this was going on, masses of party food was being prepared in the kitchen, by Andy, Helen and Tony. Various pizzas, hot dogs, snacks drinks and cakes were provided and consumed with great enthusiasm. There was even a birthday cake provided by Tony (see photo).

Such events require volunteer help from all sorts of sources, but special thanks go to Melody and Sam for planning the event, Andy and Helen for their sterling work on the ovens, Tony of course for just being everywhere and others too many to mention.

The great news for the rest of the church family was that there was even plenty left to eat with coffee after the service on the following day!

Shrove Tuesday at Berry Brow

St Paul's Armitage Bridge and Berry Brow Church worked together, once more, to provide the Community an opportunity to mark the beginning of Lent with pancakes. Tony, Cath and Graeme worked tirelessly producing enough pancakes. Delicious fillings were donated by Debby, Sandra and Win and Angela speedily and efficiently married the two together. A brilliant team in the kitchen, Pat and Sue kept up the pace, washing up like Superwomen and service was wonderfully conducted by Alison, Jane, Sandra, Keith, Pat, Pam and Kim. Finally, we must not forget the donkey work of moving furniture which was magnificently done by Jon and the others. Many thanks to all the above.

As well as producing a lovely outreach event we also raised £303.85. Thank you to all who supported in any way.'

Carol Waters



Here is the latest offering by David Barker relating to our churchyard, drawing attention to the special value it brings for our flora and fauna.

DAFFODILS *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*

Is it me or does the scientific name seem to be a contradiction?

I have probably been more aware of this plant for longer than any other and maybe you share this experience. When I was only about seven or eight years old we used to buy Daffodil bulbs at school. So far as I recall, these were a variety called 'King Alfred' which are no longer commercially grown. As to why, I don't know, as apparently they were at that time regarded as a highly popular and alluring variety.

The generic name refers to the beautiful youth described in Greek mythology who became so entranced with his own reflection that he pined away. The Gods turned him into this particular flower, so the story goes. The drooping flowers are thought to represent Narcissus bending over to catch his reflection in a pool of water. Incidentally, 'narcotic' shares a root with Narcissus, possibly because all parts of these beautiful plants are, as so often is the case with plants, poisonous, the bulbs particularly so.

It is generally acknowledged that Daffodils were originally introduced to Britain from the Iberian Peninsula by the Roman invaders who used them for medicinal purposes. This is rather mystifying as the sap contains toxic alkaloid crystals which are a skin irritant. The Roman military also employed Daffodils symbolically as a memorial to their comrades fallen in battle.

Over 27,000 cultivated varieties of Daffodil are catalogued according to the National Trust and other reputable authorities. A method of classifying these plants was developed by the RHS Daffodil Committee in 1950, resulting in 13 different divisions and these

remain in use. Today, over 90 per cent of the Worlds Daffodils are grown in the UK. (£100 million in retail sales for cut flowers, £10 million in annual bulb sales).

The plant is the national flower of Wales and is a close cultural second in China where it symbolises 'good fortune.'

Lovely swathes of golden Daffodils are a heart-lifting sight, marking the end of Winter and the advent of approaching warmer, brighter conditions. The first Sunday in April is always 'Daffodil Sunday' in England. This year, April 5th coincides with Easter Sunday and also the end of daylight-saving time.

Daffodils have inspired poets, writers and artists through many centuries. They are immortalised in Wordsworth's poem 'Daffodils', one of Britain's favourites. The town of Grasmere cashes in on this connection. For example, I have stayed at the Daffodil Hotel in Grasmere and nearby St Oswald's Church boasts of its Daffodil Garden. In fact, Wordsworth was in reality inspired by a bank of Daffodils at Glencoyne Bay, Ullswater, 15 April 1802 while walking with Dorothy his younger sister, rather than at Grasmere.

Shakespeare often mentions Daffodils but uses such charming Old English variations on the name including Daffydown-dilly and Daffodilly. Other regional names include Lenten Lily and Easter Lilly.

A.A. Milne in his delightful poem 'Daffydown Lilly' wrote:

'She wore her yellow sun bonnet. She wore her greenest gown. She turned to the South wind and curtsied up and down.'

Wild Daffodils were once a common sight in Britain but during the mid-19th Century they slipped into a rapid and mysterious decline. Apart from Devon they are nowadays only to be found in widely scattered pockets, many miles apart, throughout the British Isles. No explanation exists as to why this is so.

David Barker



Photo: Geoff France

Quiz Questions

We haven't had any quiz questions recently, so here are a few to get the old grey cells going!

1. The Chinese New Year started on 17th February, which animal's year is it?
2. What date is the Spring Equinox in 2026?
3. What is the March birthstone?
4. In which country do cherry blossom trees signify the beginning of Spring?
5. To the nearest million, how many Easter eggs are sold every year in the UK?
6. What do the spices in hot cross buns represent?

(Answers over the page).

You're 'avin' a larf!

The weather has been a bit grim recently, so hopefully the jokes below will raise a smile (or maybe a grimace)!

1. My mate lent me £5,000 to produce my idea of a fruit-based torch, then took all credit. *He stole my limelight.*
2. I just want to thank the chap who lent me his dictionary to look for the meaning of the word plethora... *It means a lot*
3. A huge thank you to my neighbour, who lent me her large sheet of plastic covering. *Ta Pauline!*
4. One for Fran: Words of wisdom: *"There's a fine line between a long, drawn-out sermon and a hostage situation.*
5. What is the dentists' favourite hymn? *Crown Him with many Crowns*

<p>Quiz Answers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Year of the Fire Horse2. 20th March (it varies between 19th, 20th and 21st March due to Earth's orbit and leap years)3. Aquamarine4. Japan5. 80 million6. They are said to represent the spices used to embalm Christ after his death

Armitage Bridge Ringers – News From The Belfry

Church bells and their fittings require a certain amount of maintenance throughout the year to keep them 'swinging' in tip top condition. Some parts virtually never wear out, whereas others need repairing or replacing fairly frequently. Ropes need constant

attention. Originally church bell ropes were manufactured from natural fibres, for example hemp, jute or sisal. Historically the type of fibre used depended on what was available locally. From the 13th century in western Europe, rope was constructed in ropewalks – very long buildings where strands the full length of the rope were spread out then twisted together to make ropes.

These days the preferred natural fibre is flax or hemp, albeit pre-stretched polyester top ropes are widely used to help alleviate the weather problem. Sallies are made from 100% British wool and can be made from a single colour through to a combination of 3 colours. Ours are traditional red, white and blue.

Weather conditions can affect bell ropes in various ways. If a tower is very damp, the ‘tailend’ (the bit you hold) can get very stiff, making ringing the bell difficult. Wet weather can also make the rope shorter, likewise dry weather makes the rope drop a bit, making it longer, which varies the height of the sally (the woolly bit you catch). Part of the ‘steeplekeeper’s’ job is to ensure that the ropes are set at the correct length for his ringers – not an easy task – as ringers vary greatly in height and arm length. Lorraine at 5’2” tall may be perfectly comfortable on a particular bell, whereas Julie, who is considerably taller would struggle with a rope which is too long. To help alleviate some of the discrepancies all towers have a selection of wooden boxes for ringers to stand on if required.

St.Paul’s does not suffer too badly with this anomaly as we are fortunate enough to have the central heating pipe running up through the ringing room and the bell chamber on its way out through the roof, so a more constant temperature is maintained.

Other local towers we help with sometimes need some of the ropes raising or lowering weekly during spells of unsettled weather.

The cost of a new rope depends on its overall length. Ropes for us here are around £150.00 each plus carriage and VAT. Multiply that by 6 to over £1000.00 for a complete new set. For somewhere like Huddersfield Parish Church it would be nearer £2500.00 for a set of

10 ropes. It is possible in some instances to effect repairs which can vary from a few pounds to around £50.00. Ropes these days are well worth looking after to get the maximum wear and lifespan out of them.

On a recent trip out to Loughborough (taking some ropes for repair) Stuart Mills and I drove round to Queens Park, near to the town centre to have a look at their war memorial along with the recently installed "Hope Bell", which is in fact a clock mechanism. It has four quarter chime bells plus the main "Hope Bell" and stands 7.50 metres high.

This installation was designed to mark the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on local communities and as a tribute to NHS and other key workers. It is also a place of quiet reflection to remember those lost. It was designed and installed by Vertigo Creative. The bells are supported on four steel pillars which symbolise people coming together to embrace in a hug which was much missed during those dark times.

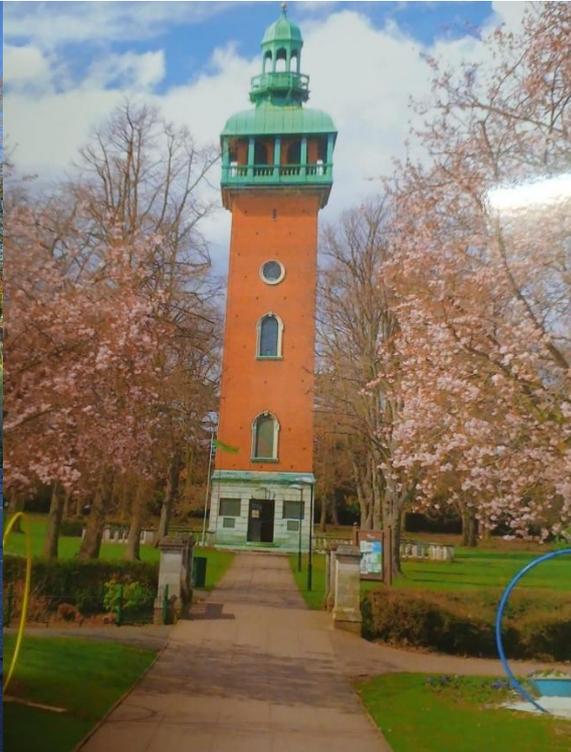
The Loughborough Carillon is a tower standing 46 metres high in the middle of Queens Park. It is a well known landmark visible for several miles. Plans were finalised in 1919 with the completion in 1923. It was the first four octave carillon in England, the idea being to link it to Belgium where so many of our servicemen lost their lives. There is a total of 47 bells in the tower, the lightest weighing about 6 kilos with the heaviest weighing in at an impressive 4,211 kilos. The apparatus is played from a large keyboard by a "carillonneur" with recitals in the summer every Thursday 1pm to 2pm.

Whilst working on the "Hope Bell" Creative Design also upgraded the entrance to the carillon making it into a museum. There are three floors of military memorabilia with artefacts from each of the armed forces and both world wars.

Moving around the park Taylors Bell Foundry have installed the metal bell case used for casting Great Paul which is located in the south west tower of St Paul's Cathedral, London. The total weight of our 6 bells at Armitage Bridge is about 1.8 imperial tonnes, Great Paul itself comes in at 16.75 imperial tonnes. The picture gives you an idea of

its immense size compared to Stuart standing adjacent to the case.
More on Great Paul next month.

Lorraine and Alan



The casting of Great Paul

Loughborough Carillon



The Hope Bell



Hot Dog anyone? The 'Big Party' Caterers

Closing date for April 2026 issue: Friday, 20th March 2026

Copy contact details to Graeme Williams at

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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.