




Penhill Benefice Church Magazine



 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Leeds

Dec 2024 – Jan 2025

The Penhill Benefice is committed to show the love of God and the saving grace of Jesus. We share together as the body of Christ, in prayer, worship, ministry and fellowship. In the power of the Holy Spirit we are called to mission and outreach and to be a support and comfort in the community.

Churches of the Penhill Benefice

St Andrew's, Aysgarth. St Oswald's, Castle Bolton. St Margaret's, Preston under Scar. St Mary's, Redmire. Holy Trinity, Wensley. St Bartholomew's, West Witton and the Mission Room at Thornton Rust.

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Associate Vicar: The Revd Canon Penny Yeadon - Tel: 01969 663505

Dale Cottage, Aysgarth, Leyburn, North Yorkshire DL8 3AB

Churchwardens

St Andrew's: Liz Piper (663747)

St Oswald's: Vacant

St Margaret's: Patrick Earle (622467)

St Mary's: Vacant

Holy Trinity: Contact the office with any queries.

St Bartholomew's: Jeremy Gard (624542)

Cherie Miles (623939)

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Vicar's Letter

As I write to you, we are heading towards the darkest time of the year. On December 21st the night will be more than twice as long as the day, with just seven hours and 29 minutes between sunrise and sunset in Wensleydale.

Darkness can be threatening, and it's always encouraging to think of the days lengthening with the coming of the new year!

But we use the darkness as a curtain to display an ever-increasing range of Christmas lights in this season – decorating windows, house fronts and even gardens with illuminations that cheer us and raise our spirits as our eyes are drawn to them - in contrast to the dark.

Some of our villages are once again lighting a new window each day in December, as they become living Advent calendars. Look out for numbered windows in West Witton, Thoraby or Carperby!

There's a strange saying in the midst of that wonderfully mysterious opening chapter of St John's Gospel. It's a passage we often read or listen to in our Christmas services. John writes in Chapter 1 verse 5, 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it'.

In the older Bibles this reads, 'And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not'.

Light disperses darkness – whereas darkness cannot subdue – or grasp the light.

There can be many reasons why we feel the world is a dark place – and not just literally because of the winter. Our lives might be filled with trouble and challenge; the news might be ever more threatening – but the celebration of Christmas, even more than being merely a time of parties and of forgetting of troubles is a time when we celebrate that Light which shines in – and overcomes the darkness.

We celebrate a message of angels ... a star in the heavens ... the birth of the world's Saviour ... a sign of God's presence.

The darkness may still be present, but just as our eyes are drawn to Christmas lights, so if we pay attention to the heart of the Christmas good news, we shall find that the darkness is lessened and hope is awakened.

During this dark month of December, on clear nights you will see a bright light in the sky, apart from the moon.

Earth and Jupiter are both on the same side of the sun, and are in alignment, so the planet appears especially bright. Perhaps it will be a reminder of the star that led the Magi – and like our decorations serve to remind us of the birth of Jesus, the Light of the world!

The contemporary hymn writer and worship leader Graham Kendrick has written:-

Like a candle flame
Flickering small in our darkness
Uncreated light
Shines through infant eyes ...

May the God who comes to us in Christ, banish the darkness and embrace us with his light and life this Christmas and beyond!

Happy Christmas, everyone!



Church Flowers at St Bartholomew's, West Witton

Thank you to all the ladies who participated on the flower rota this year, and for keeping the church looking so nice. It is really appreciated.

I will be doing the **2025 rota** over Christmas and if I don't hear otherwise I will take it you are all happy to continue. Many thanks. Valerie Alsop.

Living Advent Calendar

Filling our villages with light and joy!

Take a walk around Carperby, Thoralby and West Witton during December to see the lovely illuminated numbered windows.

Knitted Harvest Mice



Christine Done kindly knitted some mice that were hidden around the church at the Harvest Service at Holy Trinity Church in Wensley.

People at the service had to see how many mice they could find!

Thanks are given to Christine for knitting the mice at short notice.

Dates for your Diary...

Church Coffee Morning

10.30am -12 noon, Redmire Village Hall

Wednesday 4th December

Wednesday 1st January

(New Year's Day)



Christmas Coffee Morning in aid of The Children's Society

10.30 am.

Thursday 12th December

Cote Gill, West Witton. DL8 4LT.

£5.00 There will also be a raffle.

Everyone is welcome.



Wensleydale Filling Station

7pm at Thornborough Hall, Moor Road, Leyburn DL8 5AB

Friday 13th December *Christmas Celebration*

No meeting in January

Contact: 07714 204024 mikehirst3@gmail.com

Church Afternoon Tea

2-4pm, Redmire Village Hall

Wednesday 18th December *Christmas tea party from 1.30pm*

Wednesday 15th January

All our churches are open during the day, providing space for rest and reflection – perhaps the chance to be quiet and remember special people. Christmas jollity can seem very far away if it's your first Christmas without a special person, but the calm of a sacred space can bring comfort as God breathes His peace on you.



Benefice Advent Reflections

Tuesdays November 26th

December 3rd, 10th and 17th

Time: 7.30pm at Aysgarth Institute

There will be reference to Richard Harries' book 'Wounded I Sing' and looking at 4 poems of George Herbert with attention to a Bible passage.

What sort of a Christmas card person are you?

The time to send and receive Christmas cards has come round again – time for our annual shock at the cost of a coloured card, and disbelief at what the Post Office intends to charge us to deliver them.

It seems there are three kinds of people when it comes to Christmas cards: the total abstainers, the total givers and the selective givers.

Abstainers write 'Happy Christmas everyone' on Facebook, and consider the job well done. Total givers spend a fortune on cards and stamps and send them to everyone they know. Selective givers try to cut corners, but then cannot remember who sent who what, and as the cards pour through their door, spend time worrying...

However you do it, it is good to stay in yearly touch with your widest circle of friends and family. Proverbs points out that: 'Like cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.' Prov 25:25.

Your loved ones will enjoy hearing from you!

Wonky Tree Bookshop Gift vouchers are available and would make a great present this Christmas. A perfect way to treat the book lover in your life! See the full advert on the back page.

www.thewonkytreebookshop.co.uk

Prayer Topics For December and January



As winter inevitably arrives in our dales, we are reminded of the beauty that surrounds us, thick frosts, though not so many of those these days, the way the sheep huddle against the stone walls sheltering from the seemingly ever present winter winds. The stars in the clear night skies, which we are so lucky to enjoy here.

In this season we celebrate Christmas in the spirit of Hope peace and togetherness, knowing those same stars light the way for communities near and far.

While we give thanks for the blessings of our lives and the beauty of this place we call home, let us also hold in our hearts those who face difficult times both across this nation and around the world.

Tom spoke recently about Christianity being a family, no matter how far from home, in whichever country, when you meet with other Christians, you have a sense of belonging, of kinship and community.

May this Christmas season renew a spirit to extend a hand where we can and to carry love forward into the coming year.

A prayer for our Community.

Dear Lord, we give thanks for the beauty of the land around us, and for the gift of community that warms even the coldest of days. We pray particularly for the farming community in these difficult times. May our homes be filled with peace and our fields with the promise of new life in the year to come.

Amen.

A Prayer for Peace and Healing.

Loving God, as we celebrate Christmas, we ask for peace and healing for our world. May your light reach those who feel lost, your comfort embrace those who suffer and your Hope uplift those who are ill or in need.

Help us to work together in love and compassion for all. **Amen.**

Wishing you a blessed and joyful Christmas!

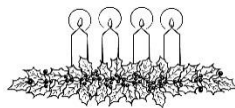
Church Services: In case of bad weather, please check our website penhillbenefice.co.uk/services for updates. **Phone services** - dial 0333 0110 946 and enter room number 61337190# and PIN 7450# (local charges apply)

Sunday December 1st Advent Sunday

9.30 am Telephone Service

10.30 am Holy Communion

Penhill Together Service, St Andrew's, Aysgarth



Sunday December 8th

9.30 am Telephone Service

9.30 am Morning Prayer, St Mary's, Redmire

9.30 am Holy Communion, St Margaret's, Preston under Scar

11.00 am Holy Communion, St Andrew's, Aysgarth

11.00 am Holy Communion, St Bartholomew's, West Witton

Friday December 13th

6.30 pm **Carol Service**, Holy Trinity, Wensley

Saturday December 14th

2.00 pm **Carols**, Thoraby Village Hall

Sunday December 15th

9.30 am Telephone Service

9.30 am Holy Communion, St Margaret's, Preston under Scar

9.30 am Holy Communion, St Mary's, Redmire

11.00 am Holy Communion, St Andrew's, Aysgarth

6.00 pm **Carols and Readings**, St Bartholomew's, West Witton

Sunday December 22nd

9.30 am Telephone Service

9.30 am Holy Communion, St Bartholomew's, West Witton

11.00 am **Carol Service**, St Andrew's, Aysgarth

3.00 pm **Carol Service**, Thornton Rust Mission Room

4.00pm **Carol Service**, Redmire Village Hall

6.00 pm **Carol Service**, St Margaret's, Preston under Scar

Tuesday December 24th Christmas Eve

No Telephone Service



3.30 pm

Crib Service, St Mary's, Redmire

4.00 pm

Crib Service, St Bartholomew's,
West Witton

8.00 pm

Holy Communion, St Mary's, Redmire

The collection at this service is for St George's Crypt

11.30 pm

Midnight Communion, St Bartholomew's, West Witton

Wednesday December 25th Christmas Day

No Telephone Service

9.45 am

Christmas Communion, Holy Trinity, Wensley

11.00 am

Christmas Praise, St Andrew's, Aysgarth

The collection at this service is for The Salvation Army

Sunday December 29th

9.30 am

Telephone Service

10.30 am

Holy Communion Benefice Service,
St Margaret's, Preston under Scar

December Mid-Week Services: Holy Communion at 9.30am on Thursday
5th & 19th December at St Bartholomew's, West Witton



Epiphany is the time in the Church year that we remember when the 'wise men' or 'Magi' followed a star that led them to the Christ child Jesus. They bowed down and worshipped him

and left *three* special gifts.

Gold A valuable metal. Reminds us that Jesus is **King of Kings**.

Frankincense A sweet smelling incense used in the Temple to worship God.

Reminds us that **Jesus is God**.

Myrrh A fragrant spice put on a body before burial. Reminds us that Jesus was to die so that he could be our **Saviour**.

Sunday January 5th Epiphany

9.30 am

Telephone Service

9.30 am

Morning Prayer, St Mary's, Redmire

9.30 am

Holy Communion, St Margaret's, Preston under Scar

11.00 am

Holy Communion, St Andrew's, Aysgarth

11.00 am

Holy Communion, St Bartholomew's, West Witton

Sunday January 12th

- 9.30 am Telephone Service
- 10.30 am Holy Communion Penhill Together Service,
St Mary's, Redmire

Sunday January 19th

- 9.30 am Telephone Service
- 9.30 am Holy Communion, St Mary's, Redmire
- 9.30 am Holy Communion, St Margaret's, Preston under Scar
- 11.00 am Holy Communion, St Andrew's, Aysgarth
- 11.00 am Morning Prayer, St Bartholomew's, West Witton

Sunday January 26th

- 9.30 am Telephone Service
- 9.30 am Holy Communion, St Bartholomew's, West Witton
- 11.00 am Morning Prayer, St Andrew's, Aysgarth
- 3.00 pm Evening Prayer, Thornton Rust Misson Room

January Mid-Week Services: Holy Communion at 9.30am on Thursday 2nd, 16th & 30th January at St Bartholomew's, West Witton

Everyone is Welcome to Attend our Church Services and Events

When you arrive at a church service or event, someone will welcome you at the door. They will be able to guide you of where to sit and how to follow the service. Hymn books and paper copies of any words used in the service will be handed out. The person leading the service may invite you to stand, if you are able, and say some of the responses at certain parts of the service, or these instructions may be written within the service sheets. Join in with as much or as little as you like and if you're unsure just follow others' lead.

Feel free to ask the welcomer any questions you have about the service or event and they will be happy to help, or you can contact the church beforehand to find out more about the local arrangements. See contact details on the inside page of this magazine.

After some services, refreshments are offered, this could be a good opportunity to get to know people, but there is no pressure to stay if you prefer not to.

Hymns and their Tunes

Lo, He comes with clouds descending to the tune Helmsley

It is appropriate as Advent begins to look at one of the season's most popular hymns and the contribution made to it by the best known and most prolific English hymn writer, Charles Wesley (1707-1788). Our Aysgarth hymnbook has twenty one hymns credited to him; the Methodist's "Singing the Faith" has seventy six and he is believed to have composed over six thousand.

Wesley graduated from Christ Church Oxford in 1732 and was ordained in 1735. He had been a key member of a student prayer group at Oxford but not until 1737 did he experience what was his evangelical conversion or, as he called it, "his renewal of faith".

Unlike some of his fellow "Methodists" he remained an Anglican until his death, believing, I understand, he could more effectively influence from within the then somnolent and self-satisfied Church of England. He held a brief curacy in 1739 but was made to resign because of his preaching style and its strong evangelical slant.

The provenance of the hymn, however, is not straight forward. It is pretty certain though, that the final draft and the words which we sing were Wesley's. The first version was written by John Cennick (1718-1755). His original first line was "Lo he cometh, countless trumpets."

The biblical reference of the current first line of the hymn is Revelation Chapter 1 Verse 7.

The tune is ascribed to Thomas Olivers, a Welshman and Methodist preacher and a cobbler by trade. The story is that he heard the tune being whistled by an Irish labourer in London which has in fact been traced to an Irish "concert" song from Dublin. Both editions of this song which I have seen would have needed quite a bit of work to adapt to the current words. An example of not letting the devil have all the best tunes?

It found its way into John Wesley's "Select Hymns and Tunes Annex" of 1765. We can only wonder today at the power and influence of what must have been a phenomenal double act of the two brothers, John with the emphasis on preaching and Charles on congregational participation in communal worship.

What I cannot discover is why the tune takes the name of a pretty North Yorkshire market town. If anyone can cast further enlightenment on this please let me know.

This is my last contribution of hymns and their tunes. I have enjoyed sharing my own enjoyment and understanding of this very important aspect of our worship, whether as an aid to understanding aspects of the biblical basis of our faith or just for the sheer spiritual uplift so many of our favourite hymns give us. I hope it has helped you too. *Geoff Hirst*



*We don't sing carols no more...
You 'ave to listen to 'em off me iPod!*

The Colours of Christmas

There are several colours that we traditionally associate with Christmas. They are green, red, and gold, and to a lesser extent, white and blue.

Green: Evergreen plants like holly, ivy and mistletoe were used for thousands of years to decorate buildings during the long dark winters. The Romans exchanged evergreen branches in January to wish each other good luck. The ancient Egyptians brought palm branches into their home during the mid-winter festivals. In Europe during the Middle Ages, the 'Paradise tree' which figured in plays about the loss of Eden, was normally a pine tree with red apples tied to it.

Red: This is the colour of holly berries, and it reminded people of Jesus's blood when He died on the cross. Red is also the colour of bishops' robes, which is how St Nicholas came to be portrayed wearing red. Red is also the colour of fire, which keep you warm during cold dark nights.

Gold: This is the colour of the Sun and light. It was the present of one of the Wise Men, and traditionally, was the colour of the star over Bethlehem.

White: This is the colour of purity and peace. It is the colour of the altar cloth at Christmas.

Blue: This is the colour of Mary's robe. It is also the colour of the sky and heaven.



Food for Thought in Lent 2025

Tuesdays 18th March and 1st April 2025

Time: 6.30 for 7.00 pm at West Burton Village Hall

Two enjoyable evenings with a Supper and listen to a Speaker
Home-made desserts available on a donation basis, to be given to the
Charity chosen by the speaker.

Full details including ticket price are to be confirmed in the new year.

For further info please contact penhill.benefice@btconnect.com
or telephone 01969 663097/624542.

Wensleydale Concert Series 2025

All concerts are at St Andrew's Church, Aysgarth at 7.30pm.

Tickets are now on sale - they make great Christmas presents!

For full details please see the website

<https://www.wensleydaleconcertseries.co.uk/>

Or call 01969 663026 for queries. **TICKETS** are £18 per person in advance, £20 at the door. For under 18s and anyone in full time education tickets are £1. Season tickets are £95 and need to be ordered by 17th May 2025. For under 18 and full time students season tickets can be purchased for £8.

Sat 17th May – New London Chamber Ensemble (wind quintet)

Sat 14th June – Iyad Sughayer (piano)

Sat 28th June - Fenella Humphreys (violin) & Emma Abbate (piano)

Sat 12th July - Ben Cruchley (piano)

Sat 26th July - James Gilchrist (tenor) & Anna Tilbrook (piano)

Sat 16th August - Mark Bebbington (piano)

Sat 6th September - Fitzwilliam String Quartet

Sat 20th September - Jeremias Fliedl & Callum McLachlan

Deanery Prayer Meetings 2025

11am - 12noon

Tea/ coffee available at 10.45am

Monday 6th January

East Witton Parish Room

(near the bus stop at the bottom of the Green. Parking on the road side)

Our prayers for our beautiful deanery will have a liturgical structure with space in between for our own prayers and for silent prayer.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO PRAY OUT LOUD. God hears all the prayers of our hearts, whether spoken or unspoken. Everyone is warmly invited to come.

Become a Volunteer Trustee - Marrick Priory Trust

Are you passionate about outdoor education and making a lasting impact on communities? Marrick Priory Trust is looking for dedicated volunteer trustees to join our board and help shape the future of our outdoor education and residential centre, located in a 12th-century priory in the stunning Yorkshire Dales National Park. We are particularly seeking individuals with experience in education, historic buildings, finance, business development or fundraising. Commitment: 4 meetings a year (some online). Expenses: Travel reimbursed. This is a unique opportunity to contribute to the future of a centre that has been enriching lives for nearly 50 years. To express interest or find out more, please contact Rolline Frewen at: rolline.frewen@marrickpriory.co.uk

Deadline for Feb – March 2025 edition of the Penhill Beacon is

Thursday 9th January 2025

Please Email articles to: penhill.benefice@btconnect.com or post to:

The Coach House Office, Swinithwaite, Leyburn, N Yorks DL8 4UH

Posada Journey

During December knitted figures of Joseph and Mary (and the well behaved house trained donkey!) will once again travel around West Witton and Swinithwaite looking for shelter re-enacting Mary and Joseph's journey.

Telephone Directory

JULIE IVESON PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC COUNSELLING, BACP Registered Psychotherapeutic Counsellor Level 6 DIP. www.julieivesontherapy.com
Email: julieivesontherapy@gmail.com Mob: 07825467508. In person at Leyburn Arts & Community Centre, The Old School House, Richmond Rd, Leyburn DL8 5DL. Online via Microsoft Teams or Telephone. I offer a safe and confidential space to explore your personal issues.

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www.yoredalehouse.com info@yoredalehouse.com Open 10.30am to 4.30pm February to November. Closed Monday and Tuesday. Licensed village tea room. Homemade food. Breakfast, light lunches and clotted cream teas.

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www.whiterosecandles.co.uk whiterosecandles@btinternet.com Open Feb to Oct Wed-Sat: 10am-4.30pm. Nov/Dec: Wed-Sat 10am-Dusk until Christmas. If making a special journey it is wise to ring and check details. Church candles are one of our specialities, also dinner, pillar and aromatherapy candles. All made in Wensley. Commissions accepted.

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Phone: 01969 625927 Email: info@thewonkytreebookshop.co.uk

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