

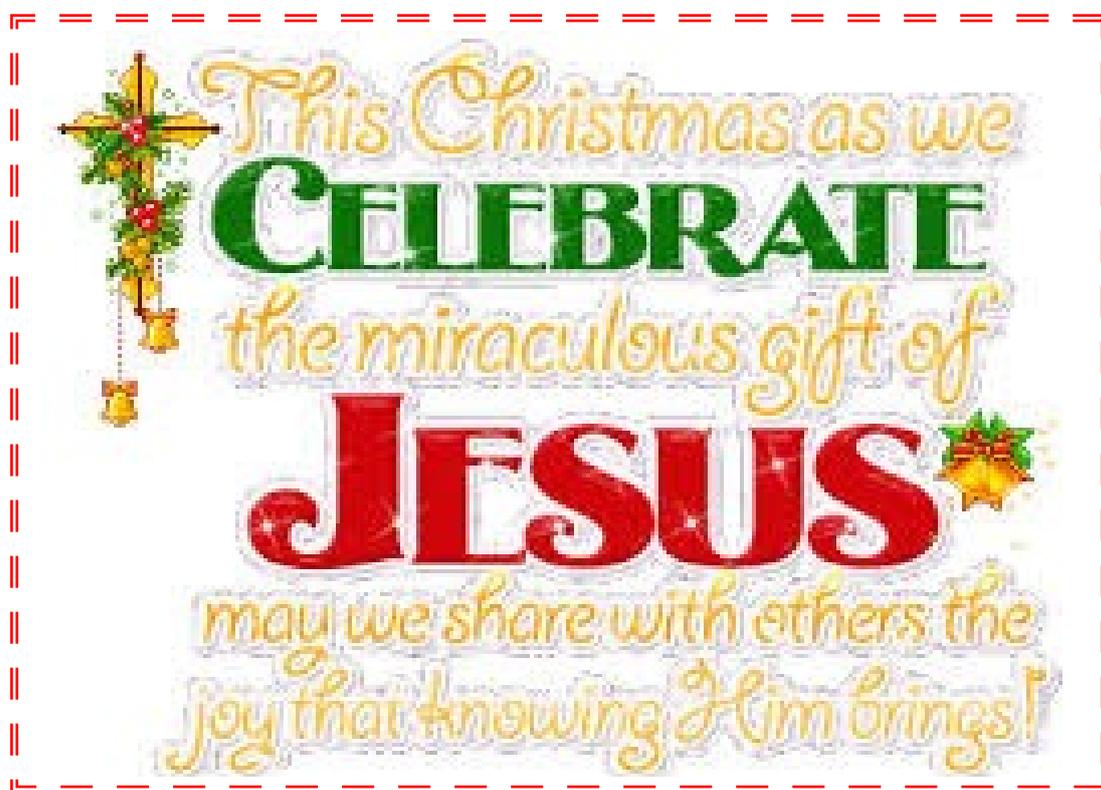


Wigton Moor Church

High Ash Drive
Leeds LS17 8RE

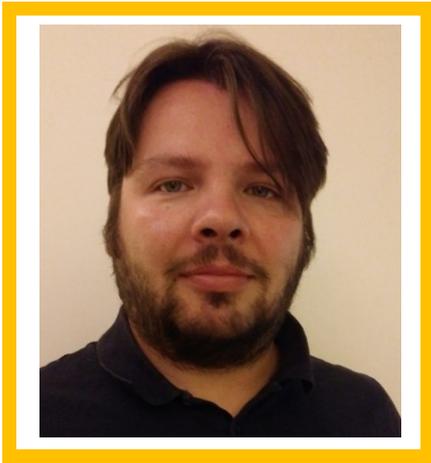
Issue 187 December 2019 + January 2020

PROGRAM



Welcome to Wigton Moor Church

Letter from Alex



A warm welcome in the name of Jesus Christ, our living Saviour.

At this time of year every shop, bus station, TV and radio are blaring out Christmas music. I myself am preparing for my first Christmas concert in Harrogate alongside seven acts of worship before Christmas. The

opening line of “Do They Know It’s Christmas”, is in my humble opinion the worst of the Christmas pop hits; nothing quite says Christmas like a tax avoiding multi-millionaire rock star asking us to think of the poor whilst hiding his own personal wealth in overseas tax havens. Good work, Bob Geldof... Anyway, the opening line of the song is “It’s Christmas time, there’s no need to be afraid”. We will hear in the retelling of Christ’s birth the angels declaring to Mary and the shepherds “Do not be afraid, we have good news” and we too at Wigton Moor have nothing to fear.

2019 has been an important year in the history of the church. We have had a big change in leadership, not just ministry, but also within the eldership and in our new committees. We have a new sense of purpose with our building and community project and our Christian witness is growing all the time. Individual members have found love, and lost friends and family and many of us have received new callings and ministries within the church and beyond it. The Leeds partnership is gathering pace, you can hear all about it at the church meeting in January and I am preparing to formally be received into Lay Leadership across Leeds. We have nothing to fear because God is at the centre of all the good things we have going, and if we have faith, we have all we need to succeed.

Having said that I pray that 2020 will be a year of growth, that we find our place in the community and beyond and we work hard at bringing God’s love into the homes and hearts of our neighbours and friends in the coming year.

In the meantime, I bid you all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year,

With Love in Christ,

Pastor Alex Walker.

Church News

Moira led the Service of Remembrance on 10 November, and had obviously put a lot of thought into preparing for this important occasion. This year the Wigton Moor Brownies had made a lovely poppy display which was attached to the front of the lectern. Joe Cole laid the poppy wreath, and the two-minute silence was preceded by an excellent recording of "The Last Post". The service ended fittingly with the singing of the National Anthem. We were delighted to welcome among the congregation some of the volunteers from the community who help at the Community Coffee Stop each week.



The cascade of poppies was made by the 2nd Wigton Moor Brownies. A letter has been sent to the Brownies from the church to thank them for their hard work and wonderful display.

You will see from the Diary that our Service of Lessons and Carols will be at 10:30 am on Sunday 22 December, and the service on Christmas Day will begin at 10 am. Our Christmas charity this year will be Dementia UK. There will be a separate collection plate for donations to the charity at both the above services but, if you prefer, Alan can accept donations any time in December.

As usual, any practical gifts for the church will be very welcome. The most useful are toilet rolls, kitchen rolls, washing-up liquid, liquid hand wash, black bin bags, strong swing bin liners, dishcloths, J cloths, scouring pads, bleach, teabags and coffee. These can be wrapped and placed under the Christmas tree, ready to be opened on Christmas morning.

As this issue of Proclaim covers December and January this is an advance notice of a Church Meeting on Sunday 19 January following a faith lunch. Please make a note of this date, and make every effort to attend.

Alan has recently announced he will be retiring from his role as Treasurer at the end of December after eighteen years. This is a hugely responsible and time-consuming “job” which Alan has carried out with such dedication and efficiency over all that time. He has always said this is something he enjoys doing, but now that he has a problem with his eyesight and has been instructed to give up driving he feels it is sensible to give up, albeit reluctantly. We do understand Alan’s decision, and thank him most sincerely for sacrificing so much of his time in carrying out this important role. The good news is that he will carry on his duties as a serving Elder.

When Alison moves from Leeds she will no longer be able to carry on organising the Traidcraft orders, and Maureen has kindly offered to take this on. Alison has always been eager for the church to be involved in supporting the purchase of fair trade goods, which led to her taking on the task of ordering from Traidcraft a number of years ago. Our thanks go to Alison for her commitment to this cause for such a long time, and we are grateful that Maureen is now willing to take over from her, beginning with the January order.

Many of you will remember when Margaret Sykes used to attend church regularly on a Sunday, but in the last few years she hasn’t been in the best of health and has become more frail. Her niece, who lives in Leicestershire, has been in touch by letter to say that Margaret is now in a nursing home near her, so she is able to visit her frequently rather than having to make the long journey to Leeds less frequently. It’s comforting to know that Margaret is now receiving 24 hour care, and not living alone in her bungalow. Her niece has expressed her gratitude as follows “I am writing to thank you most sincerely for your concern for Margaret. She has told me in the past how she enjoyed attending Sunday morning services at the church. I know representatives of the church have visited her, especially since her health has failed and I am really grateful for that”. We will continue to remember Margaret in prayer.

We were sorry to hear that Audrey Bowen has been in hospital since 7 November. We understand she is receiving treatment for an infection, and at the time of writing, (14 November) she is still in hospital. We send our love and prayers to Audrey and hope she will soon be well enough to return home.

We continue to pray for Hilary, Cynthia, Pat and Joe Cole, Ruth and Peter Daniel, Joyce and Kathryn, Mildred Keedy, Peter Morrish, Brian and Sheila, Norma Simpson and Phyllis Winning. We also need to remember Gladys who is in hospital and waiting for a residential place nearer the home of her son

At this special time of year, amidst the hustle and bustle, may you all sense the true meaning of Christmas wherever you spend it, and may God’s blessing be upon you throughout the New Year.

Norma Hines

Prayer Focus for December

Week beginning 1 December

- As Wigton Moor Church celebrates another Anniversary, give thanks for the part it has played in our community over the years and especially for the new links being forged through the Community Coffee Stop and other outreach work and the new future which seems to lie ahead of us.
- Pray for our Moderator, Rev Dr Kevin Watson, as he leads our worship on Anniversary Sunday and also prepares for his retirement next year. Thank God for his life of ministry, his service to the URC as its leader in recent years, and for the future, less formal ministry which he will undoubtedly continue to do in retirement
- Praise God for the new outreach opportunity presented by the switching on of the first ever High Ash Christmas lights this Sunday. Pray that many local people will attend and take advantage of refreshments being served in church and that a new tradition may be established bringing church and community ever closer.
- ***Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. Hebrews 10.23***

Week beginning 8 December

- Let us pray wholeheartedly for the General Election this week, that there will be a high turnout of voters, despite the jadedness and disillusion many people feel after a long and wearying year of Brexit wrangling, and that British democracy may be seen at its best.
- Pray for whichever party holds power after the event and for the new Prime Minister. Pray that, whatever the outcome, disagreement will be put to one side so that all can pull together in the best interests of this nation.
- Pray for the many countries of the world where elections are neither free nor fair and corruption in government is rife.
- ***Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Romans 13.1***

Week beginning 15 December

- This week our highly successful Christmas Coffee Stop of last year will be repeated. Thank God for all the tremendous hard work that goes into preparing this by Anne and her team and the enjoyment that so many people receive from it.
- Pray that some of those who attend the Coffee Stop but do not normally come to church may be moved to join us at our Christmas services and that they may feel welcome and uplifted.
- Pray for all the many other Christmas events and carol services being held in Leeds this week, that, whether they be religious events or otherwise, the best of the spirit of Christmas may be demonstrated.
- ***Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13.2***

Week beginning 22 December

- Thank God for the birth of His Son on Christmas Day. Reflect on the contrast between the lowly, unceremonious arrival of a tiny baby to an ordinary couple in a stable in Bethlehem and its transforming effect on the course of history!
- As we enjoy the Christmas lights, glitter and tinsel, pray that we may see beyond them to Jesus, the Light of the World.
- Let us remember in our prayers all those who struggle with homelessness, loneliness and loss of contact with family, discord in the home, illness, caring responsibilities and the many other problems which Christmas serves only to intensify.
- ***The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. Isaiah 9.2***

Week beginning 29 December

- As the year 2020 dawns, let us pray that it may bring the clarity of vision that its number represents, especially in terms of a new spiritual understanding of God's purposes for our world and a willingness to seek and follow His guidance.
- Pray for new, bold and discerning leadership within our churches and the nation.
- Pray that this year will bring a final solution to the problem of Brexit and that our nation may at last be able to move forward confidently and constructively.
- ***“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”. Jeremiah 29.11***

Please note that January Prayers will appear on your weekly News Sheets

WIGTON MOOR BUILDING PROJECT

As you'll all be all too aware, we still don't have any firm plans to start the building work. Whilst that's disappointing, there are some grounds for optimism. Our Fundraising Team have got the bit between their teeth, and have already raised some money from recent events. They have also deployed 'thermometers' showing fundraising progress.

We have several applications for funding in the pipeline (hands together!). One of these is to the Emmerdale Fund, where we hope to obtain a significant contribution, but the application is on hold as it became clear that we are much more likely to be successful if we can also demonstrate tangible backing from our governing body, the URC. We have made a formal application to Synod, and hope to have some news on this shortly.

Subject to the above, I'm still hopeful we can make a significant start on the work in 2020. Ideally, we'd like to start the whole project (£230K) but we've looked at phasing the work if necessary, though phase 1 is just over 50% of the total – details of the phasing is set out in our new church website.

On a related subject, we've had permission to let our manse, with the income going towards the building work. The manse has been fully redecorated in anticipation of this, and new carpets will be fitted in December. So, hopefully, we will have a new tenant installed early in the New Year.

Drew

CHURCH DIARY

DECEMBER

Sun	1st	9.30 am	Prayers in the Church Lounge
		10.30 am	CHURCH ANNIVERSARY AND GIFT DAY. Morning Worship including Holy Communion led by Revd Kevin Watson, Yorkshire Synod Moderator followed by a Faith Lunch
		4–5.30 pm	Switching on of Christmas Lights on High Ash Drive, followed by refreshments in church
Mon	2nd	10-11 am	Prayer meeting at Brenda's
Tues	3rd	2-4 pm	Community Coffee Stop
Thurs	5th	2-3.30 pm	Bible Study
Sun	8th	9.30 am	Prayers in the Church Lounge
		10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Alex
Tues	10th	2-4 pm	Community Coffee Stop
Wed	11th	2.00 pm	Midweek Service led by Alan
Thurs	12th	2-3.30 pm	Bible Study
Sun	15th	9.00 am	Holy Communion led by Moira followed by Church Breakfast
		10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Moira
Tues	17th	2-4 pm	Special Festive Community Coffee Stop
Thurs	19th	2-3.30 pm	Bible Study
Sun	22nd	9.30 am	Prayers in the Church Lounge
		10.30 am	Traditional Service of Lessons and Carols led by Alan
Wed	25th	10.00 am	Christmas Day Service led by Moira
Sun	29th	9.30 am	Prayers in the Church Lounge
		10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Revd Pauline Calderwood (Retired URC Minister)

Readers and Readings for December will be announced in your
Weekly News-sheets



THE CHAIR BASED EXERCISE CLASS ENJOYING LUNCH AT THE LORD DARCY

CHURCH DIARY JANUARY

Sun	5th	9.30 am	Prayers in the Church Lounge
		10.30 am	Morning Worship including Holy Communion led by Alex
Mon	6th	7.00 pm	Elders' Meeting
Tues	7th	2-4 pm	Community Coffee Stop
Wed	8th	7.00 pm	Midweek Service led by Norma Hines
Thurs	9th	2-3.30 pm	Bible Study
Sun	12th	9.30 am	Prayers in the Church Lounge
		10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Revd Pauline Calderwood (Retired URC Minister)
Tues	14th	2-4 pm	Community Coffee Stop
Thurs	16th	2-3.30 pm	Bible Study
Sun	19th	9.00 am	Holy Communion led by Moira and followed by Church Breakfast
		10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Moira followed by a Faith Lunch and Church Meeting
Tues	21st	2-4 pm	Community Coffee Stop
Wed	22nd	2.00 pm	Midweek Service led by Moira
	7 for	7.30 pm	Mission and Care Leeds Partnership Meeting at Wigton Moor
Thurs	23rd	2-3.30 pm	Bible Study
Sun	26th	9.30 am	Prayers in the Church Lounge
		10.30 am	Morning Worship led by Revd Clare Davison (Headingley St Columba URC)
Tues	28th	2-4 pm	Community Coffee Stop
Thurs	30th	2-3.30 pm	Bible Study

FEBRUARY

Sun	2nd	9.30 am	Prayers in the Church Lounge
		10.3 am	Morning Worship including Holy Communion led by Sheila Akerman

Readers and Readings for January will also be announced in your Weekly News-sheet

Leeds Mission and Care Group meeting Tuesday 12 November

The meeting took place at the URC in South Leeds, Belle Isle and was very well attended with 40 people present. This included Kevin Watson the Synod Moderator and Simon Copley from the Synod Vision and Opportunities Group. Nine of the Leeds churches were represented.

The main item on the agenda was an updated discussion paper entitled “Enabling effective future ministry across Leeds”. This contained two main proposals which the churches had already seen and in many cases discussed, in our case at our last Church Meeting when they had the general support of the meeting. The proposals are:-

1. URCs and LEPs with URC involvement within the Leeds Mission and Care Group covenant together to form **The Leeds Partnership**.
2. A ministry team to serve the Leeds Partnership be formed.

The updated discussion paper will be available to all members to read prior to our next Church Meeting at which we are asked to make a decision as to whether or not we wish to be involved. This decision has to be communicated before the end of January so we have arranged a Church meeting for Sunday January 19th in order to discuss this. This is an important step to take which has the potential, through working together, to enable Wigton Moor, along with the other Leeds churches, to become more effective in our local mission.

The invitation at the end of the document reads:-

“We invite you to prayerfully consider how God is working through you and the other churches of the Leeds Mission and Care Group and how the formation of a Leeds Partnership as proposed above could increase the effectiveness of our ministry in God’s name. We invite you to support the proposals and commit to our next steps together.”

There is more about the Mission and Care Group meeting in MICA News which will be available in church. The next meeting will be held at Wigton Moor on Wednesday 22 January 2020.

If you have any queries or concerns about these proposals please ask me and I’ll try to answer them!

Moira



**WE HOPE
THAT WE
SHAN'T SEE
TOO MANY
SCENES LIKE
THIS IN THE
COMING
MONTHS!**

HELLO FRIENDS

GREETINGS FROM GLOUCESTERSHIRE!

I promised that I would send you a pre-Christmas news update on how things are going here in the city of Gloucester and within the Forest of Dean Churches. Here it is!

Our first four months here seem to have flown by. It has been a real challenge to settle into a new local community and Church, but slowly Abbeydale is beginning to feel like home. We have a good home, a friendly and welcoming local community, and Churches which are doing all within their power to make us feel welcome and integrated.

Nathan is currently living with us. He managed to secure a really good job in a local Engineering Company, and he is happy with all the challenges it offers. He is learning to drive and hopes to pass his driving test before Christmas. We enjoy having him around and he is a very good cook.

Pierce is pursuing his second year of studies at John Moore's University in Liverpool. He likes his Course and his grades are good. He has made many friends, some of whom live in this part of the country. Recently he has taken up five-a-side football to regain his physical fitness.

Julia has joined the worship group at Christchurch Abbeydale which is called Jubilate. They help to lead worship here one Sunday morning each month and at our Café Church on the second Sunday evening of each month. There are about 16 people in Jubilate, and sometimes they lead worship in other Gloucestershire Churches, one of which is Lydney URC, one of my Churches in the Forest of Dean. Julia also volunteers at our local Sue Ryder Charity shop. We are both still members of Slimming World and we are slowly making friends.

80% of my time is spent working in Abbeydale at Christchurch where I lead worship on the first three Sundays of the month – morning and evening. We have anything between 80-110 people attending most Sunday mornings and the worship is varied as we have a 4-way LEP. Remembrance Sunday saw a congregation of 170. I have recently welcomed three people into membership and there will be a few more coming into membership early in 2020. On Sunday evenings we have services that focus on prayer and ministry (Sunday 1), Café Church Outreach (Sunday 2) and Growing Disciples (Sunday 3). Like Wigton Moor we have a mid-week Communion on each Wednesday at 6pm with an average attendance of about 20. Healing prayer forms part of this service each week. Much of my time here is spent visiting, enabling me to get to know as quickly as I can the 150 or so adults connected to the Church. We have some children each Sunday, and a very successful Boy's Brigade with Girls Association with about 30 youngsters connected to it. They actively participate in some of our worship services. I am their Chaplain and so I see them most weeks. I work with 2 local Primary Schools and have good connections with the Beavers, Cub and Scout groups based in Abbeydale.

I have also been getting to know other clergy in the area. I work closely with four other Anglican clergy (I too am counted as a local vicar because our LEP includes the C of E) and their churches with whom we are in partnership, and also a local independent evangelical church called Abbey Church who we work alongside in different mission projects like NOAL (Nativity On A Lorry). I am also seen as one of the Baptist Ministers in Gloucester, and so I am part of a small group of Baptist Leaders who meet regularly for

prayer, support and bible study. All these Church leaders have given me a terrific welcome and I feel very encouraged to be a part of their networks.

The three URC Churches that I look after in the Forest are all aging congregations but full of love and faith. Lydney URC is 22 miles away and is one of the larger towns in the Forest. It is not that far from Chepstow. Littledean URC and Drybrook URC are smaller churches in a different part of the Forest, and I take the Ross on Wye road out of Gloucester to visit them. I lead worship in 2 of these Churches on one Sunday each month and I visit people all over the Forest each Tuesday. I try to fit Church meetings and ecumenical meetings into Tuesdays as well. Rural ministry is a new challenge for me, and I am glad of the fellowship and support of the Salvation Army Corps in the Littledean and Drybrook areas. Ecumenical work is very important in rural communities, where the majority of Churches are facing declining numbers, increasing struggles and other challenges connected with isolation. Working together in the face of increasing pressures is essential.

We often think about Wigton Moor and are pleased to receive copies of Proclaim. We continue to pray for your work and witness in Leeds and I specifically pray for the areas that are highlighted in the prayer diary. It is always good to read the news section and hear about how friends are doing and the way the mission of the Church is developing.

We send you our love and pray that you enjoy the season of advent and the joy of Christmas worship. May 2020 be a great year for all connected with Wigton Moor URC and the Leeds Partnership of URC.

Love in Christ

Peter & Julia, Nathan and Pierce

“Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord”

CHURCH WEBSITE

We now have a new secure website, which will be formally launched at our Church Anniversary Service on 1 December. It can be viewed by anyone with online access, using a computer, Smartphone or tablet. The website address is :

www.wigtonmoorchurch.co.uk

In the new website we've tried to set out what our church is about, and what goes on in the building each week – times are already set out, and once we have the relevant permissions we'll also add contact details.

It is already around 90% complete, but we still need to decide how best to post sermons on the relevant page, and hope to replace some of the pictures on the site with better quality versions over time.

We've included details of special events e.g. the recent Table Top Sale, and the event surrounding the switching on the Christmas Lights. As such events take place, we will also try to post some pictures where possible.

Key details on both our Building Project and Fundraising activity have also been included, which we'll update from time to time.

You'll also find the most recent three editions of PROCLAIM. We would hope that many of the folks who have online access will opt to no longer receive a physical copy, which will reduce copying effort and costs, and impact on the environment.

Finally, the website has key contact information for everything which goes on at Wigton Moor, with the option of sending us an email with any comments or enquiries. The contact information

also includes the church telephone (landline) number, which is now linked to an Answer Machine in the Vestry.

My thanks to Sheena, Jenny, David and Alex for their help in getting the website up and running so quickly.

Drew

1st Fundraising Table Top Sale

The Fundraising and Publicity committee organised a sale on Saturday 9 November. It was a very successful morning and the stall holder products were amazing. All the stall holders commented on the lovely atmosphere and would like to come back again next year. We also had a church table so thank you to people who knitted, made Christmas decorations, jam/marmalade etc. Also a special thank you to the volunteers that helped with the refreshments and serving at the church table and preparing and putting the tables away.

We made a grand total of £ 519 to go towards the church building fund.



Sheena Kelly

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Please contact the Church Secretary for further information about church activities.

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