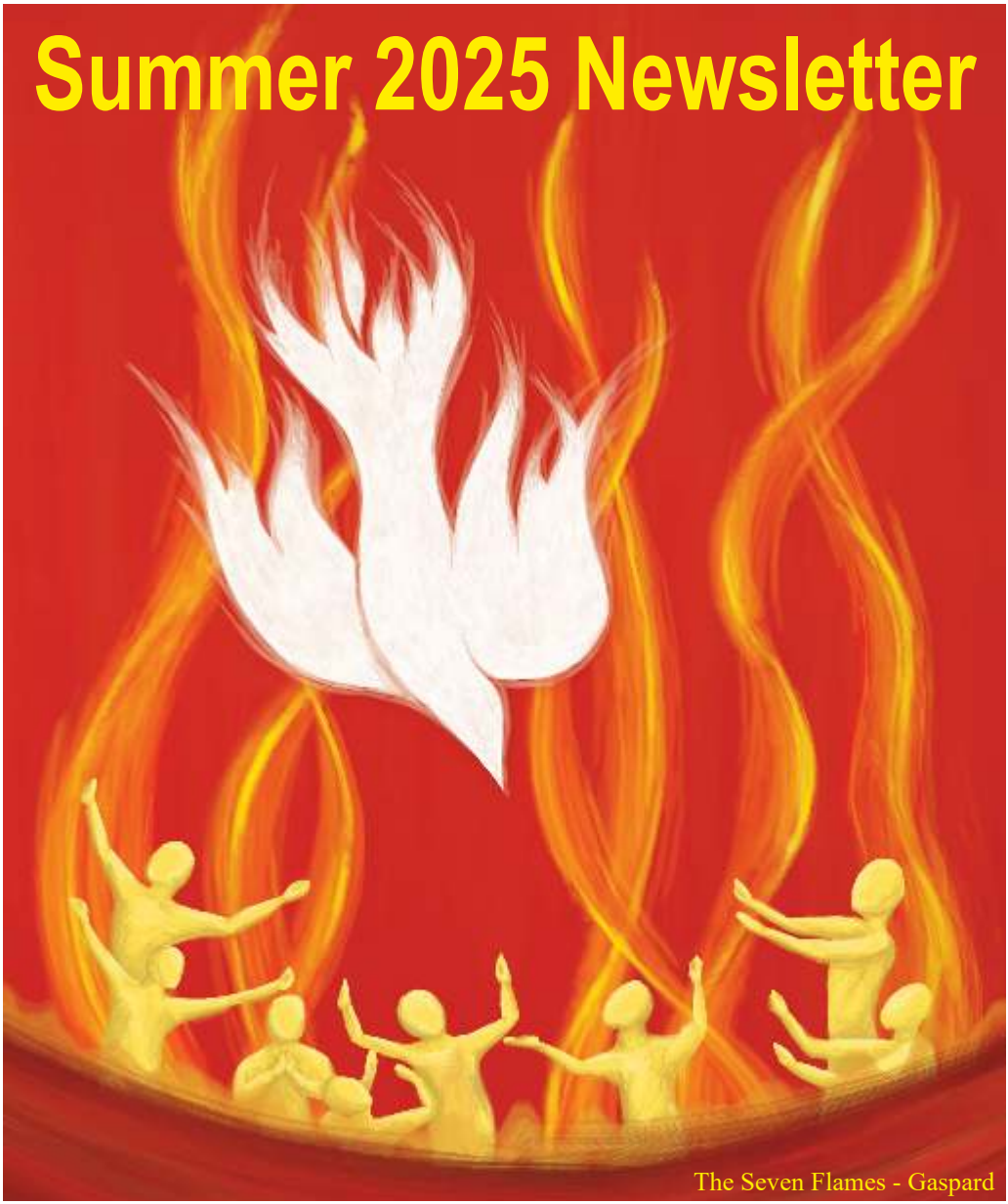
MISSION POSSIBLE

Oakworth Methodist Church

Part of Worth Valley Church, Aireadale Methodist Circuit

Summer 2025 Newsletter



The Seven Flames - Gaspard

Pastoral Letter



Dear Friends

This month, I will, God willing, be ordained in Telford. It has been a long journey! Whilst working as a Lay worker for the church, I spent over 10 years discerning my call before Candidating in 2019/20 for ordained ministry.

I was fortunate and I was accepted for training but had to defer my place at Queens College to undergo an operation that would require a 3-month recovery. So, in September 2021, we packed up our home in the Norfolk Broads and, with our dog and cat, we went to live on campus at Queens Foundation College in Birmingham.

After two years training, we came here to the lovely Worth Valley and continued to be tested, to study and to develop and build on the training at Queens, whilst working as a probationer minister (similar to a Curate in the Anglican Church).

The final part of this process is a Testimony Service, where I will share a five-minute testimony. Sharing our faith and our own experiences is an important part of our Christian life and calling. Sharing your story can literally be life changing. I know of several people who came to church and then to faith due to one man's honest testimony of how he turned his back on an undesirable life and to one that reflected Jesus' love and grace.

Details of Tracy's Testimony and Ordination Services are on page 10. They will all be live streamed at Church and you are all welcome to come and share in them.

Sharing our faith is something we should all be ready to do, whatever our role in church. This can feel overwhelming for some people who feel they don't have anything to share but it starts with your experience and, if you know Christ, you have a faith story to share.

I am privileged to be a minister but first and foremost I am a follower of Jesus. I tell anyone who will listen that I am a disciple of Jesus, that I have heard and followed His call, and I will continue to live every day of my life in study, service and faith, and sharing the Good News.

Love and blessing,

Rev Tracy Xx

Minister: Rev Tracy Birks
☎ 01535 670663 e-mail:
tracy.birks@airedalemethodists.org



News

Mission Possible Film Evenings

'Paddington in Peru' was a very popular choice for our Film Evening in April and *'Going in Style'* was enjoyed by all in May - raising £575 between them. We nearly didn't get our Fish and Chips last month - we were not aware that Oxford Fisheries had closed and Peter had to drive round with our order to find another chippy willing to fulfil it at short notice! Grateful thanks to Queen's Road Fisheries for coming to our rescue! *'The Windermere Children'* will be our final film before the Summer break on 20th June and we return for the first film of the Autumn Season on 19 September: *'Mufasa: the Lion King'*.

Oakworth Methodist Lunch Club

Do you have 4-5 hours to spare every alternate Tuesday morning, term-time only, to help out at Oakworth Methodist Lunch Club?
We are looking for someone to take the lead in a team to cook and serve lunch for approx 35 people.

If you need more information or would like to discuss further, please contact Karen Walbank on ☎07939 263002 or call in at Lunch Club any Tuesday morning - Thanks.

Car Park Railway Sleepers

When the car park was extended in 2019 as part of the Mission Possible building work, railway sleepers were erected around the boundary to safeguard the garden and park wall behind. They are already in a very poor state after moisture and fungal growths have attacked them from behind and we are currently taking advice on what should be done about repairs and/or replacement both now and in the future.

Community Groups

We welcome another new group in July - a Yoga for Runners Class - which will be meeting weekly on Monday evenings in our Church Hall.

Mission Donations

These charitable organisations have all gratefully received £75 grants from the church this year: All We Can Methodist Relief, Bible Society, Sue Ryder Care - Manorlands, Methodist Homes, Save the Children, Shelter and Water Aid. We have also sent £235 to Methodist World Mission, £175 to Mission in Britain and £115 to the Leaders of Worship & Preachers Trust. £701.71 has been collected in Action for Children boxes this year and we continue to support Ronald in Uganda by sending £25 per month towards his education - see this year's report on page 6.

Church Stewards

We are looking for more Church Stewards and Vestry Helpers as some are not able to continue due to ill health. If you feel called to one of these roles, please have a word with Tracy, Christine or another steward.

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The next steps



There seems to be an air of apprehension and despondency in the church at present, particularly as we consider the future.

We know that congregations are shrinking and there are not enough ministers to go round - and for our Airedale Circuit, that means we will have to drop a minister next year.

But I don't believe that God has finished with the Methodist Church yet - either nationally or locally! Our Circuit is taking some bold steps to ensure we attract a new Superintendent Minister in 2026. Some of our congregations are amalgamating so that there are less church buildings to keep going. Three of our church buildings will become Mission Project buildings where new ideas can be developed around the existing community groups which use them. Lees is one of them and the current members welcome the new possibilities this will bring.

Oakworth and Oxenhope will continue to be part of the Worth Valley Church with Tracy as our minister and Cullingworth will join us next year when the Aire Valley Church is dissolved. The new minister will take pastoral charge of the Craven Church which includes Silsden and Steeton.

Oakworth became stronger when we welcomed many of the Exley Head congregation a few years ago and we look forward to extending that welcome to members of other congregations being displaced by the changes which will take place over the next year.

The Mission Project buildings will all be going through a similar exercise to the one Oakworth has been pursuing for the last 18 years as we developed our **Mission Possible Vision** and now seek to discern the next steps of that Vision - with prayer being very much at the heart of it all. I never tire of reminding all who will listen of the way God has supported us along the way - particularly as we overcame so many problems with the building project - and raising nearly £500,000 for that was nothing short of miraculous!

I firmly believe we are still on the right track and that God is guiding us as we seek to take the next steps. Sometimes, an honest consideration of what we do currently is the best way to look forward and see what we might do better - and that is the exercise we are presently engaged in.

In March, David Goodall looked with us at how our various church-run activities encouraged growth. Chis Partington ran the follow-up meeting in May, in which the same activities were honestly appraised against the New Places for New People Fruitfulness indicators, with a view to considering later whether we want to continue each of the activities as they are, or with changes, or not continue some and/or maybe do something new.

One by one, we looked at the Friendship Group, Lunch Club, Worship, Welcome Drop-In, Pantomime, Film Evenings, ECO Church and Wednesday Club, considering:

- The vision and purpose of the activity,
- How much it is shaped by the people it is trying to reach,
- Does it depend on a key leader or is there a sense of community,
- How well does it include non-church people and encourage steps of faith,
- In what ways are we growing closer to Jesus through it,
- How is it good news for people experiencing poverty and marginalisation,
- Is it 'owned' by, known about and prayed for by the whole church,
- Is it sustainable long-term, what does it cost, is it worth it.

Chris summarised our responses in tabular form and these will be circulated locally, separately. If anyone else would like a copy, feel free to ask!

After completing the exercise, Chris observed that there are a number of worthwhile activities taking place at Oakworth that exhibit care for others that could be called 'Missional' in that sense. However, few bring new people into the worshipping community or to faith and few are regularly and actively prayed for in worship. In response to the final point, I know for a fact that several people pray regularly for all these groups, using notice sheets and newsletters as reminders!

This discussion will be continued at out next Church Life Meeting on Tuesday 22nd July at 7.00 pm, when we hope to draw some conclusions on how we shape our Mission work going forward. Do join us if you can.

To start us off, Chris suggests we all come to that meeting with the table below completed. If we have 15 eggs (of energy, time and money), which activities would we give the greatest amount of resources to? Share your 15 eggs across the seven activities. Then, place the activities in priority order 1-7.

Activity	No. of eggs? (Share 15)	Priority order (1-7)
Friendship Group		
Lunch Club		
Welcome Drop-In		
Pantomime		
Film Evening		
ECO-Church		
Wednesday Club		



Ronald in Uganda



Ronald is now 19 years old and his latest report tells us he looks healthy, takes good care of himself, takes his drugs well and is very grateful to God for giving him life.

He moved from Primary School to Secondary School last year, where he has made new friends and he says life is good. His attendance, learning and attitude are all reported as average and he hopes to improve his class work this year.

His new school teaches vocational skills and he is learning bricklaying.

At school, he loves playing football and he helps with garden work at home.

He and his aunt are very grateful for the assistance given to the family.

Our Easter Bunny Drive Raised £200. Thank you for supporting Ronald again.

Pantomime News



Auditions for Sleeping Beauty, our Pantomime for 2026, have just been completed and they have gone very well. Our senior principals were taken well out of their comfort zone when we asked them all to sing solo to help us choose who should play which characters - but they all rose well to the challenge - and made our job of casting the roles even more difficult! We have ended up with a strong cast - congratulations to all.



Three girls and two boys have decided not to return next year and two more girls are taking a year out to go skiing next February! So we have lost seven from the cast and are welcoming nine new girls aged 8-14, plus Aoife is returning after performing with the Bradford Sunbeams last year. That gives us a cast of 39 next year. Four boys also put their names on the Waiting List in February but all changed their minds when invited to audition - which is a shame!

It is 28 years since we last performed Sleeping Beauty in 1998 and there were only eleven principals in the script. This year, we have a much larger group of 11-16-year-olds and need 19 principals - so the script needs a total makeover before it can be used!

Choreographers Karen and Anne are currently working on the song and music choices for all the routines and I am really looking forward to creating all those new characters and updating the script over the Summer ready for rehearsals to start in November!

His Presence



A friend of mine once asked me just how could I believe
In someone I never saw, nor spoken words received.
I thought, perhaps, I should explain just why I have no doubt
That it was God's creativeness that brought this world about.
I only have to look around to know that He is there.
I see and feel and hear Him; that's why I'm so aware.

I see Him in the raindrops that nourish trees and flowers.
I see Him in the rainbows that sometimes follow showers.
I see Him in a mother's love when looking at her child.
So thankful that this miracle is pure and undefiled.
I see Him in the wrinkled face that's seen so many years,
Knowing it was faith in Him that overcame all fears.
I feel Him when a playful breeze blows gently through my hair.
When the sun shines warmly on my face, I know that He is there.
His strength shows in the mountains and the ever pounding seas.
A kitten's purred affection shows how gentle love can be.

For those who wish to listen, it is played throughout the land.
The symphony of life itself, directed by His hand.

Alora M. Knight. Family Friend Poems, April 6, 2018.

S	S	E	N	E	V	I	T	A	E	R	C	A	S	K	E	D
Y	R	H	X	O	R	I	S	H	O	W	E	R	S	K	E	E
M	T	E	I	P	I	A	Y	E	A	R	S	S	N	T	B	L
P	D	H	W	N	L	T	W	H	W	N	W	P	C	O	E	I
H	U	N	G	O	E	A	C	A	T	O	K	E	O	V	L	F
O	W	R	U	U	L	S	I	E	B	G	R	F	O	K	I	E
N	E	T	R	O	O	F	D	N	F	I	N	L	U	H	E	D
Y	M	G	H	E	R	H	I	E	D	F	T	E	D	L	V	N
E	A	E	N	E	D	A	T	E	L	E	A	B	R	N	E	U
L	C	F	I	I	R	S	Z	N	W	K	V	T	U	T	A	H
C	R	A	E	E	D	E	D	O	H	E	N	I	T	O	S	L
A	E	I	H	O	E	N	R	E	S	F	R	I	E	N	D	H
R	V	T	G	R	A	D	U	M	I	R	K	U	R	C	E	E
I	O	H	B	H	S	K	N	O	W	I	N	G	P	W	E	A
M	O	U	N	T	A	I	N	S	P	O	R	D	N	I	A	R

Find all the blue words from the passage above in the grid opposite and then read the message in the unused letters!





Mission Possible Film Evening

The Windermere Children (2020) (12)

Friday 20th June *6.30 pm*

on the big screen
at Oakworth Methodist Church

with Fish & Chips in the Interval

All welcome - just turn up on the day

Donations to cover cost of food and film

The harrowing and ultimately life-affirming story of Holocaust children who were relocated and rehabilitated in the UK Lake District after World War II. It began with uncertainty and fear in the new land, however it eventually led to the triumph of hope and goodwill and life-long friendship and happiness that they all cherish.

Oakworth Gala

Saturday 5th July

1.15 pm Fancy Dress Judging at Windsor Road

2.00 pm Procession leaves Windsor Road and moves through the Village to the Field

2.30 pm Entertainment starts in Gala Field off Victoria Road, followed by Children's Races



The "Oakworth Haul", the 4 mile annual Village Run, also starts and finishes in the field during the afternoon

Do support the Community Group Stalls in the field

KYDZ
Keighley Youth Theatre

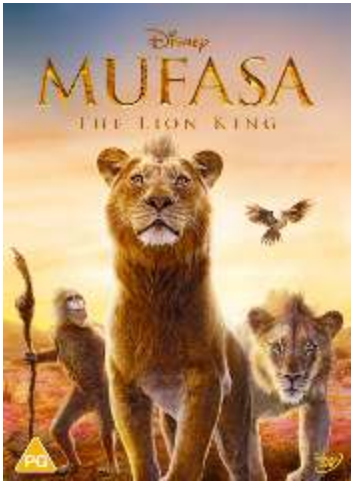
Summer Show

18th & 19th July
at 7.15 pm

at Oakworth Methodist Church

Tickets available from:
www.ticketsource.co.uk/kydztheatre





Mission Possible Film Evening

Mufasa: The Lion King (2024) (PG)

Friday 19th September *6.30 pm*

on the big screen
at Oakworth Methodist Church
with Fish & Chips in the Interval
All welcome - just turn up on the day
Donations to cover cost of food and film

Mufasa, a cub lost and alone, meets a sympathetic lion named Taka, the heir to a royal bloodline. The chance meeting sets in motion an expansive journey of an extraordinary group of misfits searching for their destiny. Their bonds will be tested as they work together to evade a threatening and deadly foe.

Sunday Worship

A warm welcome awaits
as we worship together



Jun	1	10.30 am	Rev Tracy Birks - **All Age Worship**
	8	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Service** led by Rev Susan Greenhart - at Oxenhope
	15	10.30 am	Sonia Boocock
Tue	17	7.30 pm	**Testimony Service** for Tracy Birks & Chris Holmes Live streamed from Pontefract - at Oakworth
	22	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Service** - at Oakworth - led by Rev Stephen Normanton - includes Holy Communion
	29	10.45 am	**Methodist Conference Worship** and Reception into Full Connexion of Tracy Birks & Chris Holmes
		4.00 pm	**Ordination of Revs Tracy Birks & Chris Holmes** Both live streamed from Telford - at Oakworth
Jul	6	10.30 am	David Clark
	13	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Service** - at Lees - led by Rev Clare Stainsby
	20	10.30 am	David Varley
	27	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Service** - at Oxenhope - led by Rev Tracy Birks - includes Holy Communion
Aug	3	10.30 am	Rev Tracy Birks
	10	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Service** - at Oakworth - led by Glenda Coogan
	17	10.30 am	Darrell Cummins
	24	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Service** - at Lees - led by Rev Tracy Birks - includes Holy Communion
	31	10.30 am	Rev Roger Fox

Oakworth Services will be live-streamed on our Church YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/@oakworthmethodists/streams
and they can also be viewed later if you wish.

Editor: David J Howarth ☎ **01535 215784**
e-mail: DHowarth@OakworthMethodists.org

Diary Dates



Tuesdays 12.15 pm Oakworth Methodist Lunch Club
closed 22nd July - 26th August (Summer Holidays)
Thursdays 10.00-12.00 Dementia Friendly Keighley - Oakworth Hub

JUNE 2025

Mon	2	1.30 pm	Welcome Drop-in - Church Hall
Fri	6	6.00 pm	Sleeping Beauty New Cast Auditions - in Church
Thu	12	7.00 pm	Airedale Circuit Meeting - The New Place
Mon	16	1.00 pm	Oakworth Craft Club - Church Lounge
Fri	20	10.00 am	Friendship Group - Church Lounge
Fri	20	6.30 pm	**Mission Possible Film Evening** + Fish & Chip Supper

JULY 2025

Sat	5	2.00 pm	**Oakworth Gala** - Victoria Road Playing Field
Mon	7	1.30 pm	Welcome Drop-in - Church Hall
Fri	18	10.00 am	Friendship Group - Trip Out
Fri/Sat	18/19	7.15 pm	**KYDZ Youth Theatre Summer Show** - in Church
Mon	21	1.00 pm	Oakworth Craft Club - Church Lounge
Tue	22	7.00 pm	Church Life Meeting - re **Mission Possible** Next Steps
Sun	27	11.30 pm	Worth Valley Church AGM - at Oxenhope

AUGUST 2025

Mon	4		Welcome Drop-in - CANCELLED
Fri	15	10.00 am	Friendship Group - Church Lounge
Mon	18	1.00 pm	Oakworth Craft Club - Church Lounge

SEPTEMBER 2025

Mon	1	1.30 pm	Welcome Drop-in - Church Hall
Sun	14	All day	**Catering for Yorkshireman Marathon** - at Haworth
Mon	15	1.00 pm	Oakworth Craft Club - Church Lounge
Fri	19	10.00 am	Friendship Group - Church Lounge
Fri	19	6.30 pm	**Mission Possible Film Evening** + Fish & Chip Supper
Sun	28	All day	**Worth Valley Horticultural Show** - in Church+Hall

OCTOBER 2025

Mon	6	1.30 pm	Welcome Drop-in - Church Hall
Sat	11	7.15 pm	**KYDZ Youth Theatre Concert** - in Church
Tue	14	7.00 pm	Worth Valley Church Council - at Oxenhope

Check our website for further information:
www.OakworthMethodists.org

Find us on Facebook

Easter Worship

