Oakworth Methodist Church

MISSION POSSIBLE

Part of Worth Valley Church
Keighley Methodist Circuit



Winter 2025-26 Newsletter



Pastoral Letter



Dear Friends

As I write, it is mid-Advent on a cold and dark evening, though I am warm in my office with a hot drink in my hand. As I looked out at the darkness it got me thinking: when the clocks went back this year, did anyone else struggle adjusting to the darkness?

After the light nights of summer just 3 months ago, this darkness just, sort of presses in, making everything feel a bit gloomy and hopeless. I found myself blinking a lot, like I was trying to clear my vision; my eyes did not want to adjust to it getting dark so early.



Then, just as we are beginning to make the adjustment to the days becoming shorter, so that it is dark by 4pm, people, bless them, start to decorate their houses and gardens with lights.

I do appreciate the beautifully, carefully decorated houses; they bring joy when I am out walking my dog in the dark. They bring comfort, as these little lights help to dispel the darkness in our winter seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany.

John 1:1-5

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was with God in the beginning.

3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Minister: Rev Tracy Birks
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tracy.birks@airedalemethodists.org

During Epiphany the wise men, the Magi, followed the brightest star in the sky until it rested over a humble dwelling. They were in search of Jesus, the new baby king.

Jesus came as the Christ child, a hope for all. At this time, as we celebrate Jesus' birth, we do it with lights. Lights in our gardens, in our streets, on our trees. We come together in the darkness but then walk in the glow of lights to celebrate Jesus the light for our world. We continue to celebrate through Epiphany until, ever so slowly, the nights shorten and the days lengthen and we see the light coming in the darkness, until we stand blinking in summer sunlight.

When you light one candle with another that first candle gives its light to the 2nd candle but loses none of its original light. Light can be shared without weakening us. So, be the light of Jesus in your communities during these darker challenging months, you can do this and not lose your light.

I hope you have a happy and blessed Christmas filled with love and light.

Love from

Rev Tracy Xx



Advent candles



Advent candles tell their story
as we watch and pray,
longing for the Day of Glory, 'Come, Lord, soon,' we say.
Pain and sorrow, tears and sadness changed for gladness on that day.

Prophet voices loudly crying, making pathways clear;
glimpsing glory, self-denying, calling all to hear.
Through their message - challenged, shaken –
hearts awaken: God is near!

John the Baptist, by his preaching and by water poured,
brought to those who heard his teaching news of hope restored:
'Keep your vision strong and steady, and be ready for the Lord.'

Mary's gift, beyond all telling, was to give Christ room.
She gave God a human dwelling in a mother's womb.
Who could guess the final story? – cross and glory; empty tomb!

Advent candles tell their story on this Christmas Day.
Those who waited for God's glory: they prepared the way.
Christ is with us: loving, giving, in us living, here today!

Mark Earey

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

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



Ronald in Uganda



Ronald writes in his September letter:

"I take this greeting to you and I thank you for all what you do for me. Let God double your blessings. At this time I am in Senior 2 class. I hope to go in Senior 3 class next year. My mother is so happy for what you are doing and she told me to thank you on her behalf. I do casual work in our village so that I help our family. I have more than five friends at school. I performed well in seven items including English, History, Geography and Physical Education.

Thank you for all things. May God bless you and thank you for paying my school fees."

Our Santa Drive raised £175 which covers fees for 7 months. Thank you for supporting Ronald again.

Other News

Social Events

Our most recent Film Evenings were *"Sister Act"* in October and *"Last Christmas"* in November, raising £370.

There was a good crowd again at the Autumn Fayre last month. The Craft Stall raised £508, split between Lees and Oakworth, and our other stalls took £466. So we have raised £720 so far - with more to come from craft sales at the hairdressers up to Christmas. Thanks to everyone for their support.

Our stall at the Village Society Christmas Fair raised £18 this year.



Oakworth Methodist Lunch Club

We are delighted to report that Lunch Club re-opens every Tuesday from 6th January with a full complement of staff. June Goss has just retired and Pam & Edward Pennick have moved to York. We thank them for their support over the last few years. We welcome new cook Sally Corry, Zoe Bates and Zara Ford to replace them.

In memoriam

We commend Madeline Schofield, David Murgatroyd and Gail Hudson into God's hands, assuring relatives and friends of our continuing prayers and sympathy.

We just heard that Gail, Rev John Hudson's wife, sadly passed away this morning 17 Dec, after suffering a series of strokes last weekend. Many of you will remember her as a very supportive minister's wife, particularly at Exley Head. Please hold John and the family in your prayers.

A Reflection on Madeline - The War Horse



We might not admit it but I think a lot of us have little quirks. Mine is that I sometimes liken people to animals or birds. I can only think of Madeline as a War Horse.

I don't know if you've seen the film, or even the stage play. There is a scene towards the end of the film when Joey, the main horse in the story, is running across the battlefield, leaping over foxholes and barbed wire. There are flashes, smoke and explosions but nothing is going to stop Joey going where he wants to go.

That was Madeline.

Over the last few years, she has been beset with a succession of health and injury issues. Her diabetes became more of a problem so she amended her diet to deal with this. She had a fall and injured her back. She hurt her leg and had a brace on for several weeks. She had problems with a blocked artery in her foot. None of this kept her in. She liked to be out, going places, mixing with people, doing things, helping where she could. As her mobility deteriorated, she succumbed to using a walking frame but refused a wheelchair. "I'm not having one of those!" When her kidney function began to deteriorate, after a lot of thought, she decided not to have dialysis, as this would have meant sitting, having treatment, three or four days a week. Not for Madeline, she wanted to be out. Three weeks before going into Manorlands, she was at the Alhambra in Bradford, watching Mary Poppins.

Jane has known Madeline for over 50 years but I've come to know her better over the last two or three years, as Ruth and I, along with others, have ensured that she got, not only to church on a Sunday, but to as many coffee mornings and other functions she could manage to fit into her busy schedule.

She was devoted to her children and grandchildren and regularly kept me updated about her three daughters, Julie, Ros and Melody, and her son Peter in Australia, whom she regularly spoke to on a Sunday morning before going to church. It was a real regret to her as she grew older and her health deteriorated that she was unable to make her trips over there.

Earlier in the year, she was at a Rotary event in Bingley when she was surprised to receive a long-service medal and I think this was a real highlight for her.

Madeline had a strong Christian faith and wanted to go to church both for the companionship and for the spiritual support and strength it gave her. She will be greatly missed in church life here at Oakworth. She used to help with Messy Church. She was a steward for many years and was on the stewards' rota until a few months ago. She was a very active member of the Wednesday Club and was always coming up with ideas and organising visits for the group. She was also secretary to the Ladies Group for a number of years, organising their monthly meetings.

Just before going into Manorlands, she was on-line looking at mobility scooters so she could still have her independence. Perhaps a chariot would be better for a War Horse!

Andrew Houldsworth



Madeline's final journey

God gives us …

Christmas is a time of giving and receiving gifts of all kinds. For some of us, choosing presents is a real joy, whilst for others it can be a nightmare, as we wonder whether our gifts will be appreciated. Children can't wait to see what Santa has brought them this year.

The theme of our Prayer Corner over the last few weeks has been, "All Good Gifts Come from You, Lord" and Barbara's wonderful posters have illustrated this perfectly.

In the story of Sleeping Beauty, the fairies bring gifts to the baby Princess at her Christening. Barbara has used some of these to design another series of stunning cards to give to the Panto cast to encourage them as they prepare for the Show. Some of the cover designs are shown here - words of encouragement are added inside the cards. For those who haven't met any yet, the creatures on the first card are Labubu dolls - one of the top ten sought after gifts this Christmas - they feature in the Panto!

Let us not forget God's greatest gift to us all as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.









Mission Possible Film Evening

Downton Abbey:

The Grand Finale (2025) (PG)

Friday 23rd January *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

When Mary finds herself in a public scandal and the family faces financial trouble, the household grapples with the threat of social disgrace. The Crawleys must embrace change with the next generation leading Downton Abbey into the future.

Pantomime News



Rehearsals for our 2026 Pantomime Sleeping Beauty are now in full swing and the Show is starting to come together. Karen and Anne have already set most of the song and dance routines and Dan is spending time with all the groups and principals on the songs and lyrics, adding harmonies and encouraging confidence in their singing abilities.



Work is also well underway on scenery and lighting design, preparing special effects and sorting those wonderful costumes. We are delighted that more new parents and young people are coming forward to help with scenery building and painting as we build a new team for this. The stage goes in during the Christmas holidays and we'll soon begin to see the scenery taking shape.

Advance booking for cast and crew families is ongoing. Tickets go on general sale on 1st January - details are on the back page and church website. Book early to avoid disappointment - tell all your friends - and enjoy the Show!



Sunday Worship



A warm welcome awaits
as we worship together

Dec	7	10.30 am	Rev Tracy Birks
	14	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Carol Service** led by Rev Tracy Birks - at Lees -
	21	10.30 am	Maurice Baren
Wed 24		6.00 pm	**Worth Valley Church Christmas Eve Nativity** - Family Service led by David & Emma - at Oakworth
Thu 25		9.30 am	**Worth Valley Christmas Morning Carols** - led by Rev Tracy Birks round the piano - at Oxenhope
	28		*No Services in Worth Valley Churches*
Jan	4	10.30 am	Rev Susan Greenhart
	11	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Covenant Service** - at Lees led by Rev Tracy Birks - includes Holy Communion
	18	10.30 am	Tim Sharp
	25	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Service** - at Oakworth - led by Rev Tracy Birks - includes Holy Communion
Feb	1	10.30 am	Local Arrangement
	8	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Service** - at Oxenhope - led by Rev Tracy Birks - includes Holy Communion
	15	10.30 am	Maurice Baren
	22	10.30 am	**Worth Valley Church Service** - at Lees - led by Rev Tracy Birks - includes Holy Communion

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.

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Diary Dates



Tuesdays 12.15 pm Oakworth Methodist Lunch Club
closed 9th-30th December (Christmas); 17th February (Panto)

Thursdays 10.00-12.00 Dementia Friendly Keighley - Oakworth Hub

DECEMBER 2025

Mon	1	1.30 pm	Welcome Drop-in - Church Hall
Tue	2	12.00 pm	**Lunch Club Christmas Lunch** - Carols from 11.30 am
Mon	8	1.00 pm	Oakworth Craft Club - Church Lounge
Tue	9	5.00 pm	**Santa Drive & Food** - for Ronald in Uganda
Wed	17	6.00 pm	Airedale Circuit **Barn Carol Service** - Craghouse Farm
Wed	24	6.00 pm	Worth Valley Church **Christmas Eve Family Nativity** - followed by mulled wine and mince pies

JANUARY 2026

Mon	5	1.30 pm	Welcome Drop-in - Church Hall
Fri	16	10.00 am	Friendship Group - Church Lounge
Mon	19	1.00 pm	Oakworth Craft Club - Church Lounge
Fri	23	6.30 pm	**Mission Possible Film Evening** + Fish & Chip Supper

FEBRUARY 2026

Mon	2	1.30 pm	Welcome Drop-in - Church Hall
Tue	10	7.30 pm	Airedale Circuit Meeting - Bingley
Sat	14	to Sat 21	**39th Pantomime - Sleeping Beauty** - on stage
Mon	16	1.00 pm	Oakworth Craft Club - Church Lounge
Fri	20	10.00 am	Friendship Group - Church Lounge

MARCH 2026

Mon	2	1.30 pm	Welcome Drop-in - Church Hall
Fri 6 to Sat 7		7.15 pm	**KYDZ Youth Theatre Spring Show** - on stage
Sat	14	All day	**Catering for Haworth Hobble** - at Haworth
Mon	16	1.00 pm	Oakworth Craft Club - Church Lounge
Tue	17	7.00 pm	Worth Valley Church Council - at Oakworth
Fri	20	10.00 am	Friendship Group - Church Lounge
Sat	21	10.00 am	**Spring Market** - in Church+Hall
Sun	22	10.30 am	**Pantomime Praise Service** - on stage
Fri	27	6.30 pm	**Mission Possible Film Evening** + Fish & Chip Supper

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

Find us on Facebook

39th Oakworth Methodist Pantomime



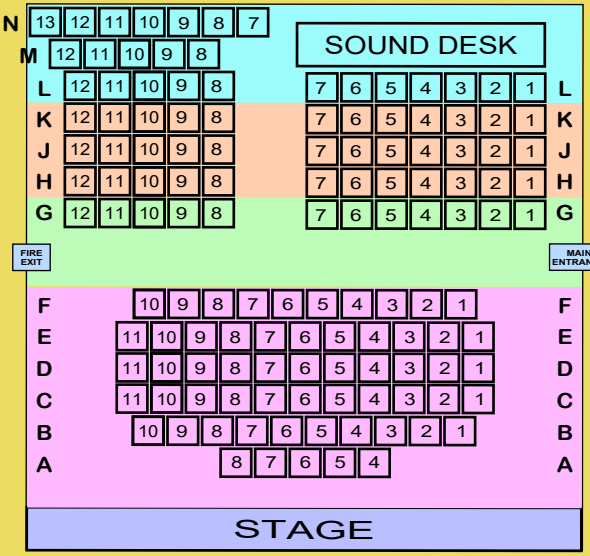
7pm Evening Shows:

Saturday 14th,
Monday 16th,
Tuesday 17th,
Wednesday 18th,
Friday 20th &
Saturday 21st
February 2026

2pm Matinees
on both Saturdays

Adults £9.00,
Seniors £8.00
Children £6.00

Seating Plan



Unless requested, Paper Tickets will NOT be delivered this year - Please print your eTickets or show on your phone screen

Book online at www.OakworthMethodists.org
or ring Peter Howarth ☎07968 618312