



Filey Parish

St. Oswald's St. John's St. Thomas'

# Filey Parish Link MARCH 2023

## LENT IS A TIME TO REFOCUS ON WHAT IS IMPORTANT

Lent. What do we typically think of at Lent? Lent is meant to be a time of reflection, when we consider the work of Christ as He prepared to suffer and die for our sake.

I am reminded of the story of Abraham and Isaac, when Abraham took his son up a mountain to sacrifice him to the Lord. Isaac did not realise when they set out on their journey that he was to be the sacrifice. Isaac did not know that God had asked Abraham to sacrifice his own son.

You can read the story in the book of ***Genesis, Chapter 22*** (note: I don't believe that the Lord will ask us to do anything that He is not prepared to do Himself).

It must have been an incredibly difficult thing for Abraham to obey God on this occasion. After all, Isaac was his son, who had himself been a gift from the Lord when Abraham and Sarah were much advanced in age and incapable of conceiving a child.

Can you imagine how Abraham must have been feeling? He knew that the Lord expected him to sacrifice Isaac, and yet he obeyed because he trusted the Lord. The end of the story is that, because Abraham trusted God, he did not have to sacrifice Isaac; instead, the Lord Himself provided the Lamb for the sacrifice.

The Lord also provided the Lamb for the sacrifice which was necessary for our forgiveness; He provided Jesus, a full and perfect sacrifice for the sins of humanity. It is as we place our trust in God that we are able to benefit from God's gift of His sacrificial Lamb, Jesus. I wonder, how often does the Lord

challenge us to give up something that is precious to us? At those times, I believe that the Lord expects us to trust Him, regardless of how difficult it is for us to obey Him.

In this time of Lent, I think that the Lord often asks us to give up something which may have become an idol for us.

**Romans 12:1-2** says: *“I appeal to you therefore brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”*

The choice to devote ourselves to worship and to forgo something that is important to us can be a valuable spiritual exercise. These types of choices force us to focus on who God is, and force us to acknowledge our weaknesses and our inappropriate commitment to things which are often of little spiritual value.

Lent is a time when we refocus on what is important. Our Lenten exercises in self-denial are a clear reflection of our desire to do God’s will and hear His voice, and in themselves an act of worship.

This is not about blowing our own trumpet, though; I have sometimes heard people boasting about what they gave up for Lent, saying such things as, “well, I gave up deep-fried Mars Bars for Lent”, or “I gave up trolling the bishop on social media for Lent”. Now, while these actions might be admirable, and in some cases very necessary, the self-promotion that they sometimes foster can make us look rather more like the Pharisees who judged by outer appearances and valued anything that made them look more spiritual and Godlier.

As we seek the glory of the One who has called us into a life of sacrifice and service to others, may our devotion to God be

declared not through pious acts which draw attention to ourselves, but rather may our lives point to the love of God and His Son Jesus who is the true God, the living God and the everlasting King.

Lent may be the perfect time to deal with those things in our own lives which are just a distraction that interfere with our ability to focus on God and reveal who God is. Lent is a time to learn to divert attention away from ourselves and towards our Saviour, Jesus. Lent is a time when we are called to give the Lord those things which are precious to us, just as God the Father gave His only Son so that whoever believes in Him might not perish but have everlasting life. Lent is a time when we are called to be generous just as the Lord is generous.

Maybe you have given up fast food, coffee or alcohol for Lent. Your sacrificial act doesn't have to be all about you, though. Yes, it may be a good spiritual discipline for you to overcome something which has become an idol in your life, but your sacrificial act can also have an impact on others.

Maybe you could donate the £3 a day you're spending on specialist coffees to charity; maybe you could volunteer for the benefit of someone else during the time that you save by not watching a movie on Netflix each day.

This is how we can be the hands and feet of Christ in our community, by sacrificing something for the benefit of others. And this is not something that we should just do at Lent; no, this is something that we should do all year. While Lent is a good reminder of the generosity of God and the sacrifice of Christ, it is really only a springboard for us, a means of beginning a new life of sacrifice and service to others.

So, as we approach Easter during Lent, let us consider how we might make a difference in this world through our own sacrifices and generosity which reflect the heart of God. Consider

***Ephesians 5:2*** which says: “*And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*”

A Lenten prayer for us, from the Basilica Del Santo Sanguine in Bruges, Belgium:

*Lord, you are the source of all love. You showed it through Jesus, who shed His blood for us. We ask you to open our hearts and make them as generous as yours.*

*Give us a heart that is eager to serve others. Let us be the expression of your smile on the World.*

*Amen*

*Revd Huw*

## **International Day of Prayer**

Our local gathering for the International Day of Prayer\* is Friday 3rd March at St John's, Filey, at 2pm. All Christians who seek “God's will be done” are invited.

Please come a little early, if possible, to greet those who also want to see the gospel announced, Christ's church to arise, and fruit to be borne. As we seek to be hospitable, maybe we can sit with one person whom we do not yet know?

For those who can, let's encourage both prayer to God and those in our community who gather to pray.

Each year a country is selected as a focus of prayer. This year's focus is Taiwan.

*\*historically called Women's World Day of Prayer but I've been reassured it is for all who pray for Christ to be lifted high and for persons to be drawn to him!*

*Kimberlee*



## MESSAGE FROM NIGEL AND VIV



***Dear All,***

***Thank you so much to everyone who gave us such a wonderful send off at the end of January; for your kindness, love and best wishes. Thank you too for such wonderful gifts both as a church and individual gifts.***

***As said before, we will hold a special place in our hearts for the place and people of Filey forever. We continue to pray for the parish, especially in the next months as you prepare to find a new vicar.***

***With our heartfelt thanks.***

***Love and Every Blessing  
Nigel and Viv***

## Services in Filey Parish Churches for March

### ***Sunday, 5th March***

9am Holy Communion - said, BCP, St Oswald's  
11am Morning Prayer, St Thomas's

### ***Sunday, 12th March***

10.30am St Oswald's, Parish Praise  
10.30am Together Time, St John's  
11am Holy Communion, St Thomas's

### ***Sunday, 19th March***

10.30am Holy Communion, St Oswald's  
11am Morning Prayer, St Thomas's

### ***Sunday, 26th March***

10.30am Holy Communion, St Oswald's  
11am Morning Prayer, St Thomas's

### **Friday Services at St John's**

10am ***3rd March***, Holy Communion  
***10th March***, Morning Prayer  
***17th March***, Holy Communion  
***24th March***, Morning Prayer  
***31st March***, Sharing Service

### **Zoom Worship**

**Sunday 6pm** Evening Prayer/Compline, **Wednesday and Thursday 9am**, Morning Prayer. **To join Zoom meetings click on this link or use the log in details below.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4216335851> Or open your zoom app Meeting ID: 421 633 5851 Passcode: "Oswald"

## **OPEN CHURCH VOLUNTEERS' MEETING**

Once again it is hoped to hold Open Church at St Oswald's for a couple of hours three times a week during the Summer months. If you have helped with this before I do hope you will be able to support it again this year. If you haven't done it before but would like to volunteer, it's a matter of being there to welcome visitors to our church and offer a cup of tea or coffee. With sufficient volunteers it will work out at about once a month.

Open Church is very much valued by people wishing to look round or who may wish to sit quietly or pray a while. There will be a meeting in the West Room at St Oswald's Church on Monday 6th March at 10.30am for everyone interested in helping.

***If you would like to know more please contact Sue Megginson 512075.***

## **Churches Together in Filey seek new member**

Churches Together In Filey (CTIF) need another representative from Filey Parish to join their meetings.

The group's aim is for local churches to work together to witness to the community of Filey. Stephanie Luxton, who attends meetings for Filey Parish, says they are becoming far more active and vibrant in this regard.

Each church is allowed two representatives so we are looking for a second. The meetings are held four times a year.

***If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Stephanie Luxton on 07761085091.***

## **Celtic Morning Prayer Service**

This service will resume on Tuesday 4th April at 10am in the Chapel at St Oswald's. It will now take place on a weekly basis, each Tuesday.

## **VACANCY PRAYER – UPCOMING MEETINGS**

**Online Meeting via Zoom** (Colin & Margaret Rowling. Inquiries 01723-512499.)

Mondays 6th March and 17th April, 7pm (40-50 mins). Need help to use Zoom? Ring Margaret who is happy to provide Zoom coaching.

**Filey Parish Zoom details:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4216335851>. Or open the Zoom app; enter Meeting ID: 421 633 5851 and Passcode: "Oswald" [capital O].

**In person home meetings**

**Old Town Filey**, (Rowlings, ring 01723 512499 for address).

Wednesdays 8th March and 19th April, 7pm, (1 hr).

**Tree Estate**, (Trisha Wick, ring 01723 515438 for address).

Thursdays 9th March and 20th April, 4pm (30 mins).

**Muston Road** (Grace and Geoff Care, ring Grace on 07743 502093 or 01723 447358 for address). Mondays 27th Feb, 13th March and 27th March, 10th April and 24th April, 4pm (45 minutes).

***Thank you to our Vacancy Prayer Group hosts. New hosts and groups are welcome. Please contact Kimberlee Waring on 07906 419918 with questions.***

Are you missing participation in a Lent Group? You are invited to join a Vacancy Prayer group during Lent.

## **Lent Lunches**

Churches Together in Filey are hosting Lent Lunches at the Methodist church hall each Wednesday at 12.30pm.

There will be soup and a roll and a short Reflection by a Filey Church Leader. The Church Leaders in Filey are taking a Wednesday each throughout Lent.

## 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF FILEY REVIVAL

The 200th Anniversary of the Filey Revival will be celebrated at St Oswald's Church, Filey, on Thursday 23rd March at 7pm.

This will be a multi-denominational celebration marking the 23rd March 1823, when John Oxtoby (known as "Praying Johnny") was called to be a missionary to Filey and urgently prayed for several hours on his knees in a field overlooking the town until he felt God's "Yes".

When he preached, fishermen broke down and gave their lives to Jesus, the start of a revival which would transform the town and its people for the next 40 years or more.

Join us in worship led by Rob Parker of W.I.N.G.S. and pray that we will see a move of God on our coastlands, spreading inland.

*Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord.*

*Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.*

(Habakkuk 3:2)

### PRAYER FOR FILEY

7 PM THURSDAY

23 MARCH 2023

St Oswald's Church, Filey



On the 23rd of March this year, it will be 200 years since John Oxtoby came and prayed on Mill Hill in Filey ... this time of prayer resulted in a massive spiritual breakthrough that would lead many to come to faith in Jesus, bringing blessing and prosperity to the town.

Remembering what God has done in the past, we remind ourselves that God's Spirit is moving amongst us now. Let's declare and celebrate with expectancy all that he will continue to do in 2023 and beyond!

Because of its spiritual heritage, Filey is a strategic place to gather and pray; joining with all churches and denominations along this coastal region.

Our prayer is that God would again, open up the heavens and bring breakthrough ... yes, here in Filey; and right across this East coastal region.



info@wingsprayerhouse.com

## WHAT IS CELTIC SPIRITUALITY?



### Part 2: The Early Monasteries and the Soul Friend

The earliest monasteries in Ireland (500-1000 AD), were not the originals of the now roofless ruins which adorn our ecclesiastical landscape of today. They did not consist of one single building (those came much later), rather they were small village-like communities.

The monks lived in their separate huts or cells, but there were also dwellings and workshops for lay people and families who lived and worked the rhythms of the religious life. A central walled space housed a church, a tower, a refectory, a school and a manuscript building.

The Abbot or Abbess took the lead in all day to day matters but, essentially, s/he was the guide in things spiritual. Such a person was elected by the community, (interesting for our present *Vacancy* process). Such a system, with Egyptian and French origins, was well understood and accepted by the surrounding tribal and druidic society.

Each monastery was unique, it was **local**: there were similarities but there was no organised system of control or standardisation. *'Love God and do as you like'*, as St Augustine was later to say.

The monastic community was the church and presented a **way of life** which was able to infuse a new Christian perspective into things previously pagan. A **disciplined** life of confession, penance and constant prayer was the vow of each monk, as well as the vow to perpetual pilgrimage for Christ, embracing exile from their homeland to pray as hermits, evangelise and to establish new monasteries and schools in England and mainland Europe.

The key notes of the monastic way of life were; the love of the created order, the love of learning, the love of wandering about through all aspects of life, the love of silence and solitude, the love of the narrative of the ordinary day to day and the joy that emanated from a profound sense of God, the all mighty one being as close as breath. That closeness was expressed, in part, by a deep reverence for kith and kin and in particular the **Soul Friend**, (Old Irish, *anamchara*).

An early belief was that the soul resided in the head, hence St Brigid bizarrely once said, '*A person without a soul friend is like a body without a head*', so expressing how vital it was to have a soul friend alongside on the Christian journey.

The practice of having a soul friend arose from the desert monasteries' notion of mentoring and developed through the act of making one's confession and making appropriate penance. The practice was easily translated from the *People of the Oak*, the Druids, as their prophets and prophetesses acted as personal guides as part of their spiritual discipline.

Sometimes, the traditions became entwined, such as when St Columba addressed Christ in his prayers as, '*my Druid*'!

For the early Christian, having a such a friend was part of the preparation for death, part of that lifelong process of 'soul making', wandering to the place of resurrection. Dying well meant living well, day by day, with your soul friend to guide you

and to be there to preside at your funeral rite. Throughout, the *anamchara* was not only confessor but healer and friend, where a true sense of mutuality emerged, compassionate and non-judgmental. One scholar has written, *'The Celtic Christians knew from firsthand experience that the soul, to know itself, must gaze into another soul, must speak from the heart to be heard by another heart'*. (Edward Sellner, *The Celtic Soul Friend*, p.181).

As we move on next time to consider some of the early Celtic Saints, let me end this section with a quotation from the Venerable Bede on St Cuthbert as soul friend,

*'They confessed their sins to St Cuthbert, confided in him about their temptations, and laid open to him the common troubles of humanity they were labouring under, all in the hope of gaining consolation from a holy man. They were not disappointed. No one left unconsolated; no one had to carry back the burdens he came with.'*

Now, in the eye of the Father who created us, in the eye of the Son who purchased us, in the eye of the Spirit who cleansed us, like those early wandering Christians, we drift on.

***Revd Paul Burkitt holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Celtic Christianity from the University of Wales and is a member of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis***

### **St Oswald's Flowers**

The flowers for the end of February and beginning of March have been sponsored by Anne Simpson.

#### ***In Memory of Vinnie Stringer***

These flowers will welcome you into the North Porch due to it being Lent, and there being no flowers in church during this time.

*If you wish to sponsor flowers, please put your details in the calendar on the church windowsill.*

## FINAL PHASE OF WORK AT ST JOHN'S

In 2017 we began the 2020 journey of a major refurbishment at St John's with the aim of having a building that did not look dated and reached out to the community.

The project was in four phases: kitchen and centre, toilet block, church doors and finally the car park. Despite Covid, we managed to complete the first three phases by Autumn of 2022. We are now left with the car park to complete the work.

As those of you who use the car park will be aware, the potholes are increasing in size. The estimate for the work including VAT is £35,000 so it will be some time before the work is done.

We have started to look for grants but for work like this they will be very limited, so again we are starting to fundraise not just for the money but also as a means of bring people together.

***If you have ideas or would like to be part of the project please do get in touch.***

*Christine Wilson and Graham Wilkinson*

## Fairtrade Fortnight 27<sup>th</sup> Feb to 12<sup>th</sup> March

Unfortunately, Traidcraft has had to go into administration due to poor Christmas sales and the increased costs we are all facing.

However, Fairtrade products and produce is available in many shops and supermarkets. This Fairtrade Fortnight why not make a special effort to support small farmers and producers in the developing world by buying Fairtrade items wherever possible.

The Charity "Transforming Trade" (formally Traidcraft Exchange) is working to help those small producers who now cannot sell through Traidcraft. They would appreciate donations to help in this work [www.transform-trade.org](http://www.transform-trade.org).

*Sheila Ives*

## **ECO CHURCH**

The Church of England has set a target of all Parishes achieving Net Zero Carbon emissions by 2030.

This is a big ask but if we are to contribute to caring for God's Creation, it is a challenge we must accept. An action plan has been accepted by the PCC and the task is now to implement it. We will be using the Eco Church self-auditing scheme to guide us in this work. It means looking at all the building, grounds and activities including the Parishes Ministry including community involvement.

Eco Church is a scheme that is run by A Rocha UK [www. \*\*arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/eco-church\*\*](http://www.arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/eco-church) and is a Christian Inter-denominational organisation working to assist churches to meet their climate change goals.

*John Ives*

## **Community lunches return**

Our monthly community lunches will return in March after offering a warm space and soup lunch for everyone each Friday during January and February. A huge thank you to everyone who supported this venture with donations, offers of help and coming to enjoy a simple bowl of soup together.

Community lunches are held monthly on Fridays from 11.45am to 1pm. Upcoming dates are: **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March**, for the Earthquake appeal; **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April** and **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May**.

***Please do come and join us.***

*Sue H and Christine W*

## **Open Church at St John's**

***10-11.30am, Saturday 4th March.***

Please call in for a coffee and Fellowship.

## LEARNING HOW TO 'WELCOME WELL'

A few weeks ago, I joined a church wardens' get-together on Zoom with our Archdeacon. There were 33 church wardens – goodness me, imagine that – all those church wardens at the same time, that would frighten anybody!



Our discussion was 'Welcoming Well', a good reminder of how to welcome people into our churches. We often forget how it feels to walk into a church for the very first time – we can take it for granted, and we often do.

We shared thoughts of how a person may feel: Fearful, intimidated, scared of getting it wrong, not knowing what to do, anxious, confused, worried who would see them walking into the church. People worry before they sit down that they will be asked to vacate the pew in fear of sitting in someone else's place.

The initial welcome / experience when a person walks through the door, the first minute is important. If people are not made to feel welcome we may never see them again.

At the end of the service, some people want to slip out of the church quietly, let them leave comfortably.

If we notice anyone standing on their own with tea / coffee, do say 'hello' and offer a word or two.

***Welcoming is a gift. Many among us have that gift and maybe you could consider sharing what you have been given, by becoming a welcomer in church.***

God bless

*Angela Burkitt*

## THREE CHALLENGES AGAINST WASTE

"I would like to propose to you *three challenges* against the waste mentality, the throw-away mentality.

The first challenge: ***not to waste the gift that we are.***

Each one of us is a good, independent of the gifts we have.

Every woman, every man, is rich not only in talents, but in dignity. He or she is loved by God, is valuable, is precious.

Jesus reminds us that we are blessed not for what we have, but for who we are. And when a person lets go and throws him or herself away, he or she wastes themselves. Let us struggle, with God's help, against the temptations of believing ourselves inadequate, wrong, and to feel sorry for ourselves.

Then, the second challenge: ***not to waste the gifts we have.***

It is a fact that about one-third of total food production goes to waste in the world each year, while so many die of hunger!

Nature's resources cannot be used like this. Goods should be taken care of and shared in such a way that no one lack what is necessary. Rather than waste what we have, let us disseminate an ecology of justice and charity, of sharing!

Lastly, the third challenge: ***not to throw people away.***

The throw-away culture says, "I use you in as much as I need you. When I am not interested in you anymore, or you are in my way, I throw you out". It is especially the weakest who are treated this way – unborn children, the elderly, the needy and the disadvantaged.

But people are never to be thrown out, the disadvantaged cannot be thrown away! Every person is a sacred gift, each person is a unique gift, no matter what their age or condition. Let us always respect and promote life! Let's not throw life away!"

*Pope Francis*

(From Angela Burkitt)