

Cross Talk



January 2026

Cross Talk is published monthly by email. To receive a copy please contact kitnorris@live.co.uk

Cross Talk contains the weekly Collect and Readings together with details of Church services in the Benefice and news and items of interest supplied by our readers. The magazine will also be available on the web sites: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/3447 and baldersbychurch.com.

CHURCH SERVICES

St. James' Church, Baldersby St. James with Dishforth, Rainton and Skipton on Swale

Sunday 4th January, 10.45am	Communion Service <i>with refreshments.</i>
Sunday 11th January, 9.30am	Breakfast Service <i>with Coffee and Croissants</i>
Sunday 18th January, 10.45am	Plough Sunday Service <i>followed by Bring and Share lunch</i>
Sunday 25th January, 9.30am	Morning Service <i>with refreshments</i>



St John the Evangelist Church, Dalton

Sunday 4th January, 11am	Family Service <i>followed by refreshments</i>
Sunday 18th January, 11am	Holy Communion <i>followed by refreshments</i>



St. Columba's Church, Topcliffe

Corporate Member of the Prayer Book Society

Thursday 1st January	No Service
Sunday 4th January, 8.30am	Said Holy Communion (BCP)
6.30pm	Choral Evensong for Epiphany <i>followed by pre-supper nibbles and wine</i>
Thursday 8th January, 11am	Midweek Morning Prayer
Sunday 11th January, 10.45am	Holy Communion
Thursday 15th January, 11am	Midweek Morning Prayer
Sunday 18th January, 10.45am	Choral Matins
Thursday 22nd January, 11am	Midweek Morning Prayer



Sunday 25th January, 10.45am	Holy Communion
Thursday 29th January, 11am	Midweek Morning Prayer
Sunday 1st February, 9.30am	Holy Communion
6.30pm	Choral Evensong

January Reflection – Revd Dawn Ward p.4

Rievaulx Abbey and Aelred of Hexham, Abbot of Rievaulx - Richard Byas p.5

Village News – p.7

Readings for the 2nd Sunday of Christmas to 3rd Sunday of Epiphany

(Page numbers refer to the Common Worship Lectionary.)

Sunday 4th January, 2nd Sunday of Christmas (Epiphany Sunday this year, see below)

Collect

Almighty God,
in the birth of your Son
you have poured on us the new light of your incarnate Word,
and shown us the fulness of your love:
help us to walk in his light and dwell in his love
that we may know the fullness of his joy;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Readings (p33) Year A

Jeremiah 31.7-14 or Ecclesiasticus 24.1-12

Psalm 147.13-21 or Wisdom 10.15-21

Ephesians 1.3-14

Gospel: John 1.[1-9,] 10-18



Tuesday 6th January, The Epiphany

Collect

O God,
who by the leading of a star
manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:
mercifully grant that we,
who know you now by faith,
may at last behold your glory face to face;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Readings (p39)

Isaiah 60.1-6
Psalm 72.[1-9,] 10-15
Ephesians 3.1-12
Gospel: Matthew 2.1-12

Sunday 11th January, The Baptism of Christ, The First Sunday of Epiphany

Collect

Eternal Father,
who at the baptism of Jesus
revealed him to be your Son,
anointing him with the Holy Spirit:
grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit,
that we may be faithful to our calling
as your adopted children;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.



Readings (p43)

Isaiah 42.1-9
Psalm 29
Acts 10.34-43
Gospel: Matthew 3.13-17

Sunday 18th January, The Second Sunday of Epiphany

Collect

Almighty God,
in Christ you make all things new:
transform the poverty of our nature
by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.



Readings (p46)

Isaiah 49.1-7
Psalm 40.1-12
1 Corinthians 1.1-9
Gospel: John 1.29-42

Sunday 25th January, The Third Sunday of Epiphany

Collect

Almighty God,
whose Son revealed in signs and miracles
the wonder of your saving presence:
renew your people with your heavenly grace,
and in all our weakness
sustain us by your mighty power;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit
one God, now and for ever.



Readings (p49)

Isaiah 9.1-4
Psalm 27. 1, [2-4,] 5-13
1 Corinthians 1.10-18
Gospel: Matthew 4.12-23

January Reflection



Dear friends,

I do hope that most of you will have been able to catch a glimpse of a nativity play. Where together with the children we share a chaotic sea of shepherds and angels, all tinsel, and tea-towels. I have known on the odd occasion a dinosaur to be part of the action and two young people introduced me to their magic dragons on Christmas morning. I never envy the teacher who must choose who will be Mary and Joseph.

Topcliffe C of E Primary Academy produced a fantastic show of the Bethlehem Bake-Off.

It's the Bethlehem Bake-Off,
It's the story that you know,
We've just mixed it with some dough.

We enact the Nativity story once again, and of course it is a special event for our children and for the adults. Each telling of the Nativity story becomes adapted in some way for the present generation.

Each year we hope, and we try to re-connect with what is most important and most precious in our lives. Each year we hope that things will be better, we hope that we will be better.

The reading from the Book of Isaiah (9: 2-7), written seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, speaks of the hope for better things. A child has been born, an important child, presumably a prince, or the son of a powerful family. Because of this birth, everything will be different.

The people's joy is described in the simplest of terms, it is the joy of a good harvest, or the joy of a lasting peace after a vicious conflict. It is the joy of people in a precarious, dangerous world, who know that now they will be safe and well.

The earliest Christians, reading Isaiah hundreds of years later, identified this child immediately. They saw this as a prophecy of Christ and the difference Christ makes. It was the nativity being lived out in their generation.

At the heart of the Christmas story, God in Christ becomes human, and like Scrooge God declares 'mankind is my business'.

But Christmas is more than just about us becoming better people.

Christ shares our life, so that we can become more like God. The earliest Christians called this the 'marvellous exchange', as if we are in some wonderful way swapping places.

As we have gathered as family and church families to share again the Christmas story, my hope is that by taking it to heart each of us will become a little more generous, a little more human. But there is more than this. In giving his Son to us, God is inviting us to be with him, and share his life, not just for one day but forever.

I do pray that all of you have had a blessed Christmas and I wish you a very Happy New Year.

Reverend Dawn.

Rievaulx Abbey and Aelred of Hexham, Abbot of Rievaulx

Rievaulx Abbey was founded in March 1132 on land given by Walter Espec, lord of nearby Helmsley to the Cistercian order of monks. The Cistercians first appeared in England at Waverley, Surrey, in 1128 and were responsible for one of the most remarkable European monastic reform movements of the 12th century,



placing an emphasis on a return to an austere life and literal observance of the rules set out for monastic life by St Benedict in the 6th century.

The first buildings at Rievaulx were temporary wooden structures but in the late 1130s the first abbot, William, began the construction of stone buildings.

Aelred, Rievaulx's most famous abbot came to Rievaulx as a postulant in 1134 two years after the monastery was founded. He was born in 1110 to Anglo-Saxon parents. His father, Eilaf, was priest of the church of St Andrew, Hexham, which was associated with some of the great Anglo-Saxon saints of Northumbria, to whom Aelred was deeply devoted throughout his life.

Aged fourteen, Aelred entered the service of King David I of Scotland and rose to become the king's steward. His job included diplomatic missions for the king, and it was during a mission to Archbishop Thurstan of York in 1134 that Aelred learned of Rievaulx Abbey. It was the rigour of the Cistercian monks' life that inspired him to join the community.



He quickly adjusted to the monastic life and excelled at prayer, study and manual labour – the three pillars of the monastic day. His previous experience at the royal court of Scotland also proved valuable to Abbot William, who in 1142 chose Aelred to act as an emissary to the pope in Rome.

Returning to Rievaulx, Aelred was appointed as the abbey's novice master, whose responsibility was the care and instruction of young men preparing for the monastic life. In 1143, Aelred was appointed abbot of Revesby Abbey, a newly founded Cistercian monastery in Lincolnshire but in 1147 was recalled to Rievaulx to serve as its third abbot. The thriving monastery became a religious, cultural and economic powerhouse over the next 20 years.

Aelred was also a talented preacher and in 1163 delivered a sermon at Westminster Abbey when the relics of St Edward the Confessor were moved to a new shrine. But by then Aelred was seriously ill affected by a combination of arthritis, shingles, kidney stones, gout and serious lung disease.

By the time of Aelred's death in 1167 the community had doubled in size, having 140 monks and about 500 lay brothers. This needed larger buildings for the community and many of today's buildings date from Aelred's rule. This work continued under Aelred's successor, Silvanus.

Due to his poor health, Aelred lived in his own house, close to the abbey's infirmary with the monks visiting him in this lodging.

Aelred died on 12th January 1167 and was immediately regarded as a saint. During his lifetime, he had exhibited many of the characteristics associated with medieval saints, including the power of prophecy and the ability to perform miraculous cures.

He was buried in the abbey's chapter house but in about 1220, the east end of the church at Rievaulx was rebuilt on a magnificent scale to provide a setting for Aelred's relics, which were placed in a reliquary above the high altar. In 1476, the Cistercian order granted the Rievaulx monks permission to celebrate Aelred's feast on 12th January.

From the second half of the 14th century, Rievaulx witnessed dramatic changes in the communal life of the monks. The lay brothers, who had performed most of the monastery's manual work, almost entirely disappeared from within the community, and substitute labour had to be hired.

Today the remains of Rievaulx Abbey are maintained by English Heritage who describe it as 'England's most majestic and complete abbey ruins, in a lovely, wooded valley'.

Winter hours (November to late March): The abbey reduces its opening to Wednesday through Sunday. Hours are generally 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Summer hours (April to late October): The site is typically open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Closures: The site closes on Mondays and Tuesdays during the winter season. It also observes closures around Christmas, so confirm the schedule on the English Heritage website before your visit.

Richard Byas

The choir were rehearsing the oratorio under their enthusiastic choirmaster.
He stopped them with an anguished cry 'No, no, no. Stop, stop, stop.
I've told you before... it's sopranos on their own till you come to the gates of Hell
– then you all come in'.



Richard Byas

Baldersby St. James Church

Plough Sunday - Our service is held on **Sunday 18th January** this year and we are having our usual Bring and Share Lunch.

Tuesday Coffee, 10-12 noon - Our coffee mornings are every Tuesday with our famous "Cheese Scones" made by Sheilagh.

Carol Service - We had a super service on Christmas Eve with a very full church, highlighted by our musicians playing and singing. It was a very delight to start Christmas with so many friends. We are so grateful to everyone who helps set up and tidy up afterwards as we had visitors through on Boxing Day. Our Christmas tree was especially beautiful this year and worth a visit.

Happy New Year to all for 2026.

Susan Brown, Baldersby St James PCC

Dalton Church and Village Events

Well Being Night

There will be a Well Being Night in the village hall on Friday 2nd January. For details and tickets please call Sam Cellier on 07793 035059.

Domino Drive

The next Domino Drive will be on Saturday 24th January at 7pm. Entrance is £2, with £1 for 5 raffle tickets. There will be tea and biscuits at the interval.

As there are 5 Saturdays in January, there will be another Domino Drive on Saturday 31st January at 7pm. All ages welcome.

Sylvia Binks

St Columba's Church, Topcliffe

Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

The church was full for the candle-lit Carol Service on Sunday 21st December with everyone joining in singing well known traditional carols supported by the organ and church choir. The choir, directed by Linda Hewlett, also sang five unaccompanied carols to a high standard during the service, receiving praise and many favourable comments. The nine lessons were read by members of the village in the congregation. The service was followed by a tasty selection of supper nibbles and wine much enjoyed by those who attended this special service.

Services will resume with said Holy Communion at 8.30am and Choral Evensong at 6.30pm on Sunday 4th January.

St Columba's Church wishes everyone a Happy New Year.

BENEFICE DIRECTORY

The Parishes of Topcliffe, Baldersby with Dishforth & Skipton on Swale, and Dalton.

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