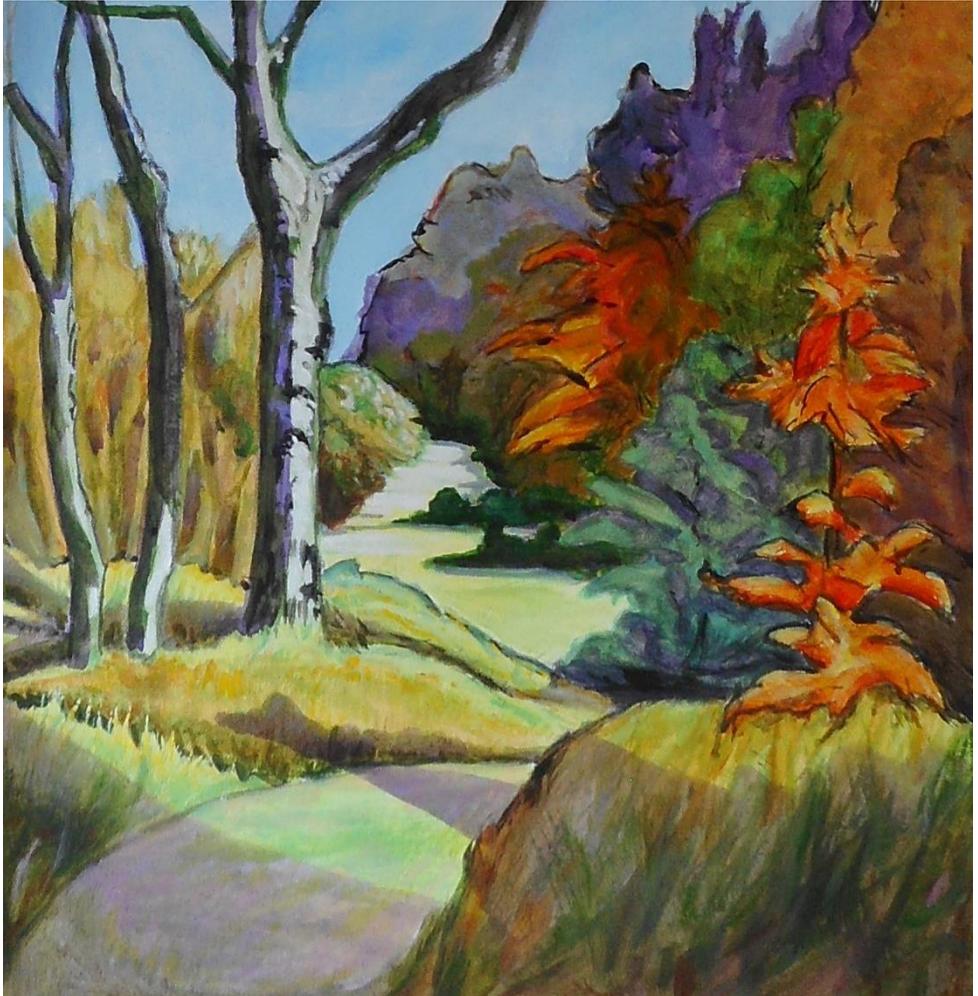


WHEATLEY URC NEWSLETTER



July/August 2021

Covering Thoughts

Last month Bobbie asked if we would like to share our happy places, people or experiences that have boosted a feeling of gratitude and positivity over the past year. I hope that like me you have found it difficult to select just one. In the end it was a recent discovery just five minutes' walk from home that filled me with a feeling of joy.

Carrying a stool and sketch pad ready to draw distant hills, I had left the main track to reach higher ground and saw a small break in the undergrowth and stinging nettles. To my surprise a path had been mown through the shrubs. It meandered its way down the hill, in and out of sunlight, giving access to beautiful trees and leaving a sense of mystery in the dense undergrowth. It was not hard to select a view to draw and it is this that I have painted for the cover. What a gift someone had given, opening up an inaccessible place for me to enjoy. Was it a council employee who remembered this place as it was many years ago?

*Thinking of the value of random act of kindness may I end with Roland Mueller's: **Let me be like a mountain***

*Let me be like a mountain,
Patient and strong,
And let my thoughts be like trees,
Growing upright on the steepest slopes.
Let my deeds be like fruits,
Dropping from those upright trees
Into the hands
In need of them.
Let my life flow
Like water from ice-clad rocks,
Like a brook through a stony gorge,
Like a river through a blooming valley,
Like a stream –
Slowly and safely carrying
Hours of pleasure
And hours of grief
To the ocean of eternity.*

Christine



Pastoral Letter

“Thus says the Lord”... “Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? Isaiah 43 18-19

I’ll come clean. I do like old things. We live in an old cottage, with beams and low ceilings, we keep old stuff around us, like Mark’s father’s Aunt Mary Jane’s musical box and my granny’s Japanese vases, precious not because they have much monetary value, or that they are beautiful objects, but because they conjure up memories of the people who gave them to us and the people who were important to them.

I love that our church used to be a work-a-day tanning barn. That it is small and cosy and that generations have cared for it and adapted and re-purposed it to fit the needs of their day. We too added to that heritage by building our new Mulberry Room opened just in time to be shut down by a pandemic the like of which none of us have seen before.

At first it seemed so hard to have all that hard work and generosity snatched away just when we were ready to put into practice our carefully considered plans to serve our community better, to build a dementia friendly church, a family friendly church, a community serving church. As the Scottish bard said “the best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft a-gley”.

So we turned around, and in the whirlwind, we learnt to keep ourselves and others as safe as we could by washing our hands and covering our faces, and staying at home, by not doing the things we most wanted to do, singing (except alone), visiting, hugging, shaking hands or worshipping together. And we learnt to phone each other, to offer service in small tasks and accept help from strangers, to Zoom.

Zoom! Who would have thought that video conferencing would be made freely available to everyone with an internet connection and small churches like ours could move, apparently seamlessly into cyberspace? That our worship leaders could grasp this new tool and create a true worshipping community in the ether?

So, I also love modern technology and the way it can expand our horizons, and I am completely blown away by the way we have all used that technology to maintain our community through the darkest days.

Now, with light at the end of the tunnel and the hope that we might once again meet in church, we might wonder:

What will it feel like for those of us who have not entered the old chapel in all that time? Will it feel the same? Will it be the same?

What was the point?

Of course it cannot be the same, it would be impossible. We cannot just forget all that we have learnt in these months about the ways we can reach out beyond the walls of our precious old buildings.

By incorporating new technology into our old buildings, we can do what we have long longed to do, to make those thick stone walls transparent. We can reach people trapped at home, those far away (even on the other side of the world), those afraid of venturing across the threshold of a church.

So perhaps that is the point, we have been challenged by our Lord, the God who asks us to do something radically new, to adapt and to change, to continue to serve the community in all the ways we planned but also to grasp the new tools we have been given to reach out to give the unchanging message –

You are loved, you are cherished, you are blessed.

Phyllis Williams

~ ~ ~

Prayers

Please remember in your prayers the members in Moria Watson's pastoral group; Barbara & Albert Joiner, Cynthia Mancey, Siobhan Fraser & Alan Sipton. Also remember in your prayers our ministers Pauline Maine & Cara Heafey.

Also remember members of the Finance Team; Chris Shelly, Christine Bainbridge, Robert Harding, Bob Webster & Mike Matejteschuk

~ ~ ~

Change regarding important celebrations

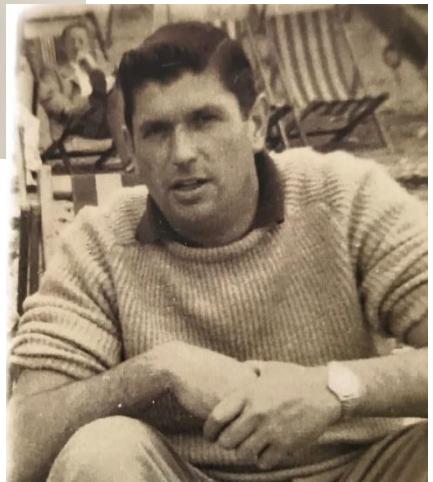
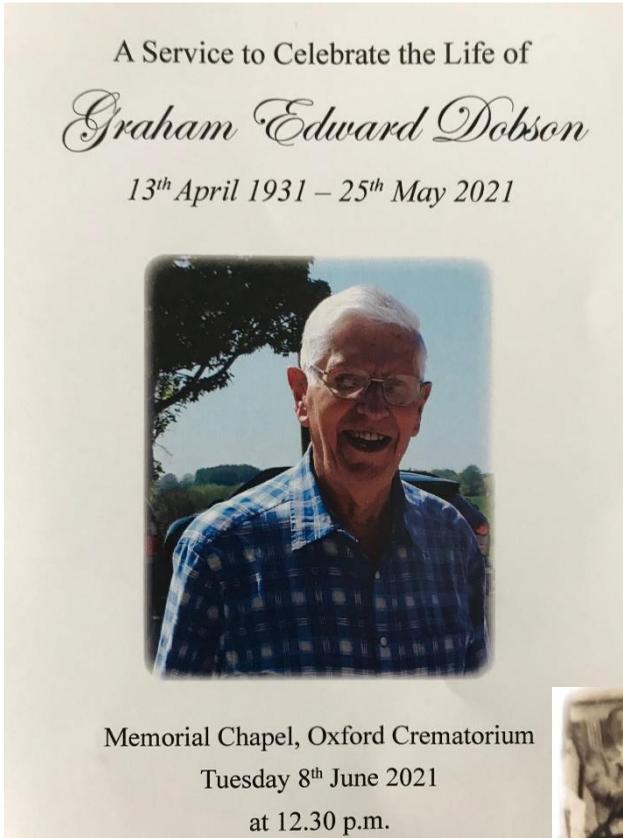
Revd Colin Thompson's Golden Jubilee celebration of his ordination has been postponed until the Autumn.

Church Anniversary Worship Service 11 July at 5pm

Our preacher will be Revd Tanya Rasmussen. Please note the new time for this service. Our anniversary tea is postponed until the Autumn, date to be confirmed.

Graham Dobson

Many of us were unable to attend the service to celebrate the life of Graham Dobson because of Covid restrictions, so it is lovely to see the front cover of the service sheet for his funeral and a gorgeous photo of him in his younger days.



Christian Aid Week Results for 2021

As in the last two years and for the future, we no longer collect door to door in the village. As with many other charities and following modern trends, Christian Aid is increasingly encouraging the use of one-off events and on-line giving as their main fund raising sources, going forward.

This year the Christian Aid representatives from the churches in Wheatley got together to organise, in line with Covid restrictions, a series of small, open air tea



and cake events in private gardens (one taking place as far away as Thame), a coffee morning (in Holton) and a soup lunch (on the hottest day of “Spring”!). These events were by personal invitation of the hosts so as not to exceed maximum allowable numbers and social distancing etc on the day.

A grand total of £1,850 was raised and sent to Christian Aid for the continuance of their work.

There may be some further, similar events being planned for later in the Summer. So, many thanks to everybody for your help and support over the years, whether as an event organiser, collector, cake or soup maker, supporter or donor.

Working in collaboration with Commitment for Life and Justice Now, Christian Aid is focusing particularly on the climate crisis, and those particularly affected by rising global temperatures, flooding and crop failure.



Liz & Tony Barry



Falcon School Update

New WURC Donation - £600!

We are really pleased to announce that we were able to make this latest donation to the Falcon School in mid-June which was the sum of donations accumulated since March. This included generous support for the Long Crendon Quiz Walk which, due to increasing applications, will have to be extended in its closing date up until at least mid-August.

Lauren and Wilbert are now considering how best this donation could contribute to current Falcon developments. In the meantime, as we write, Wilbert is sitting

out his 10 days of quarantine following his return from Zimbabwe. We could tell you more but far better just to share extracts from Wilbert's latest email to us with all his news!

Hi Rob,

I can't help smiling and typing as I sit at Heathrow waiting to be taken to a Hotel for quarantine. My journey to Zimbabwe and to Falcon was exciting. More so that God blessed me with a wonderful wife who will be coming to join me soon. We had a wonderful wedding that completed a huge vacuum that had been left in my life.

As far as Falcon School is concerned, you all are going to rejoice at the level and speed of development that happened in weeks the moment I arrived. I am happy to announce that the teachers' cottage is now complete (see behind me in photo).



All it needs now is a roof, windows and doors for the teachers to move in. Of course plastering and floors will be needed before they can move in but hey! The house will already be habitable and better than where they are even before these things are completed.

I will put together a presentation about my trip and work at Falcon when I get home after quarantine. All I can do now is to show you the result of your kindness in that building now waiting for a roof.

More will be in the presentation where the Teacher in charge is thanking you in person.

Please Rob pass my thanks and gratitude to the members of Wheatley URC. Your kindness and generosity can only be a gift from God and nothing else.

May God continue to bless you all.

Wilbert

The other great news is that the **foundations for the new teachers' accommodation** are already laid out (no holding the Falcon team back!), so when it's finally completed later in the year they will be able to move out of their metal corrugated hut.

Care For The World Ministry Team

~*~

Deadlines

Wednesday 18th August 2021 is the deadline for the July/August Newsletter.

Please send copy to: newsletter@wheatleyurc.org.uk Paper copy can be given to Debi Kidd.

Disclaimer

The Editors welcome letters, articles and announcements from individuals and organisations, but reserve the right to publish or not.

A 'Happy Place'

What a lovely surprise to receive emails in response to the invitation to share 'a happy place', an experience of finding joy and creating happiness during the very challenging second year of the global COVID-19 pandemic. A happy place could be a person, place, words, art, music, memory, thing etc, and something in the past, present or future. Enjoy reading about some of our community's happy places.

Creativity for someone else:



Having bought a teddy for my new great-nephew, I decided it looked a little chilly. So I knitted it a Taylor-made jumper (with hole in back for his tail!). It gave me great satisfaction, and the recipient's older brother, aged 2, was quite envious. So my happy place is doing something creative for someone else. It works!

Wendy Benson

A winning memory:

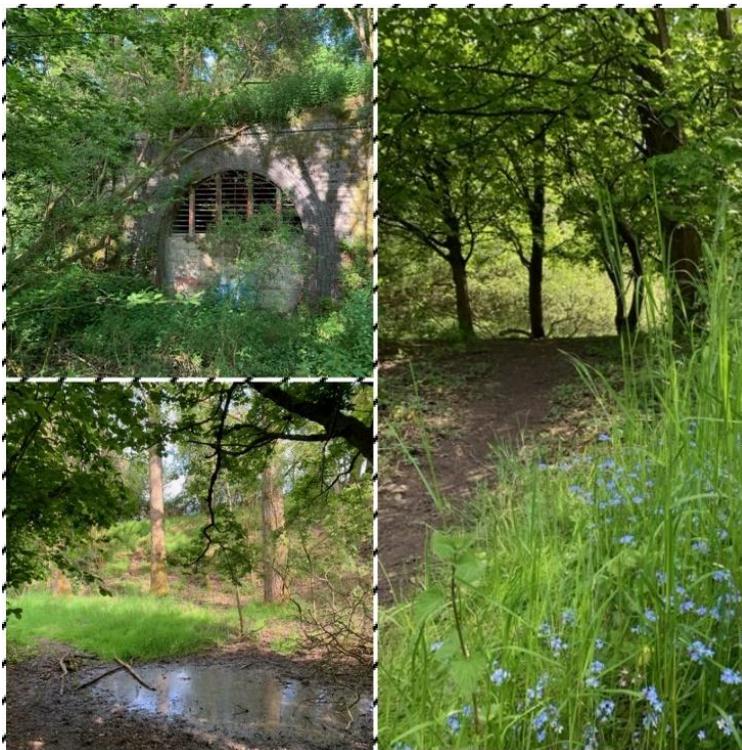
Sailing over the last jump in the finals at the gymkhana at Silver Leys in 1943; Although my pony (Miss Muffet), grazed the hind pole with her right hind foot, the pole didn't come off, so we were not awarded a fault and were given a clear round and eventually the silver cup. Bliss!!

The first time in my life I tasted rum which I pretended to like.

Sybil Beaton

A loved and very happy place enjoyed by all:

I have gradually discovered my happy place over the past year. I'm now finding that more and more I'm heading there, not only in reality, but in my thoughts and dreams. It has grown, developed and, quite literally, blossomed.



A year ago, we were walking daily during the first lockdown. On one occasion, we ventured into the old railway cutting in Littleworth. This is a long, deep cutting which leads to a tunnel. The area was heavily overgrown after being neglected for decades. However, there was one path leading to the tunnel entrance; now blocked due to it being unsafe. The grid opening at the top allows bats to roost inside. The path was choked with fallen trees and difficult to navigate.

Then, at the start of 2021, a group of locals, decided to act and turn the area into a nature reserve. They cleared the paths, put in a raised walkway and created new paths, opening the area, letting in the light. Bluebells flowered on the tunnel top. Roe deer and muntjac roam the paths, birdsong is loud and amplified. It is altogether a loved and very happy place which can now be enjoyed by all.

Pauline Shelley

My “happy place”

Sentoza is a 25 foot long, hunk of floating metal that I like to escape to (and in) from time to time, with a bagful of snack food and a bottle or two of wine or beer, to snatch a few happy hours amongst willowherb and waterfowl, sometimes this extends over a night or two! Indeed, I have, in the past, been known to disappear for even longer periods, either up The Oxford Canal or down The Kennet and Avon from Reading.



During the last twelve months or so it has been a welcome change of venue during our partial lockdown periods, just communing with moorhen and coot (and the occasional swan or heron) on the riverbank mooring of the boatyard.

For many years we shared this

little boat with the late Reverend Angela Butler and her husband Peter and it was kept at the bottom of their garden at Purley-upon-Thames, near Reading, where this picture was taken, on the completion of my longest, mainly solo navigation, in 2009, of the Thames/Oxford Canal/Grand Union Canal/Thames Triangle. Sentoza no longer looks quite as pristine as this, but when the diesel engine is shut off, still manages to create the aura of peace and tranquility, evoked by the name of the once idyllic island (Sentosa) located off Singapore, that the original owner apparently knew well, from his time in The Far East following World War II.

Tony Barry

~*~

Zoom Service Rotas for July/August 2021

Dates	Worship leaders	Readers	Intercessors
July 4	Rev Pauline Main	Marston and	Summertown
11	Rev Tanya Rasmussen	Wendy Benson	Ann Hardiman
18	Rev Colin Thompson	Angela Holdaway	Bobbie Stormont
25	Richard Bainbridge	Ann Hardiman	Christine Bainbridge

Dates	Worship leaders	Readers	Intercessors
August 1	Rev Pauline Maine	Marston and	Summertown
8	Richard Bainbridge	Rob holdaway	Ellen
15	Rev Colin Thompson	Robert Harding	Tom Goss
22	Rev Cara Heafey	Ann Hardiman	Anne Bettes
29	Rev Pauline Main	Marston and	Summertown

Quiet Evenings in Summer

If you would like to come and join us for a time of quiet reflection and music on Sunday July 25th and/or Sunday August 8th at 6pm please drop us an email: the.bainbridges@btinternet.com or phone 01865 872868 at the latest by noon each of the days.

Common Lectionary Readings July 2021

Note: leaders may choose to use other readings

Date	4 th July	11 th July	18 th July	25 th July
First Reading	Ezekiel 2: 1-5	Amos 7: 7-15	Jeremiah 23: 1-6	2 KIngs 4: 42-44
Psalm	Psalm 123	Psalm 85: 8-13		Psalm 145: 10-18
New Testament	2 Corinthians 12: 2-10	Ephesians 1: 3-14	Ephesians 2: 11-22	Ephesians 3: 14-21
Gospel	Mark 6: 1-13	Mark 6: 14-29	Mark 6: 30-34 & 53-56	John 6: 1-21

July 4th: On the occasion of a visit to an art gallery: “To teach like this is not to teach at all but fill another's eyes with your own seeing”. [Elizabeth Jennings]

July 11th: The death of John: “Calvary is Auschwitz where the frail Franciscan Maxililian Kolbe offered his life for another prisoner.” [John Pridmore]

July 18th: “The great Easter truth is not that we live newly after death, but that we are to be new here and now by the power of the resurrection .” [Phillips Brooks]

July 25th: The Feeding of the 5000 : “The interesting question arises as to whether the little Galilean child himself, herself , gets a bit of the bread so marvellously multiplied.” [John Pridmore]

~ ~ ~

Common Lectionary Readings August 2021

Note: leaders may choose to use other readings

Date	1 st August	8 th August	15 th August	22 nd August	29 th August
First Reading	Exodus 16 : 2-4 & 9-15	1Kings 19: 4-8	Proverbs 9: 1-6	Joshua 24: 1- 2a & 14-18	Deut 4: 1-2 & 6-9
Psalm	Psalm 78: 23-29	Psalm 34: 1-8	Psalm 34: 9-14	Psalm 34: 15- 22	Psalm 15
New Testament	Ephesians 4: 1-16	Ephesians 4: 25 to 5:2	Ephesians 5: 15-20	Ephesians 6: 10-20	James 1: 17-27
Gospel	John 6: 24-35	John 6: 35 & 41-51	John 6: 51-58	John 6: 56-69	Mark 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

August 1st: Ephesians is the great letter of a counter-cultural community in the middle of Caesar's empire

August 8th: “Conceiving love only as warm and fuzzy, you can readily forget how much work it entails”. [Nancy Mairs]

August 15th: T.E.Lawrence entitled his book “Seven Pillars of Wisdom” from the passage in Proverbs.

August 22nd: “Worship has to permeate ordinary human life and, on the other hand real human life has to make worship alive and significant.” [Raimundo Pannikar]

August 29th: “The letter of James is a text, which, if not exactly airbrushed out of the Christian tradition, has been side-lined within it.” [John Pridmore]

Richard Bainbridge

~~~~

## St Alkelda's Way

a self-guided pilgrimage through the Yorkshire Dales  
National Park

Tom and I have recently returned from a 4 day self-guided pilgrimage, walking St Alkelda's Way following the way St Alkelda must have followed in the late 9<sup>th</sup> or early 10<sup>th</sup> century CE, between two churches whose patron saint she is – St Alkelda Giggleswick and St Mary and St Alkelda Middleham.



The last few years have seen a widespread revival of the practice of pilgrimage walks. Perhaps the most famous is the long walk from southern France to Santiago Compostella in Spain – the Camino.

We knew nothing about St Alkelda before this walk, the draw being a few days walking, a little bit challenging but hopefully manageable, up north somewhere and to include if possible a pilgrim route. I had visited the fabulous website of 'The

British Pilgrimage Trust' many times and vicariously walked a few routes. St Alkelda's Way ticked all the boxes so the planning began.

Although modern research has shown that Alkelda was "probably" an historical person, a lady of high standing in her community, a nun or even of noble birth perhaps, there is still much mystery surrounding her. Here is a little bit from the guide book by Kathleen Kinder.



"Alkelda became famous as a saintly lady for her use of nearby holy wells for the baptism of converts and for her martyrdom at the hands of Danish women sometime after 866-7AD, when the Danes, swept across the Vale of York and into the eastern Dales causing death and destruction wherever they went. Alkelda's name, possibly not her real name, sounds like a corruption of *haeligkeld*, a composite Anglo-Saxon-Norse word for "holy well".

She no doubt made the hazardous journey from the Christian kingdom of Northumbria to Giggleswick to share her faith with the people there. Her pilgrim journey was an act of considerable courage and faith. Maybe she stopped to pray for a safe journeying at one of the wayside crosses that were beginning to appear as both boundary markers and worship sites (we saw a few of these but all without their top cross part now). She might have paused at Malham where there was probably a Christian community or may have taken the higher route for safety.



We know nothing of St Alkelda personally because the Danes not only burnt down all the churches, monasteries and convents they slaughtered the monks, nuns, and anyone of note in the community who could read and write. The Danes themselves were illiterate.

## The Route

The 38 mile walk - officially 33, but we managed a few planned and unplanned detours along the way!, took us through beautiful, exhilarating and sometimes challenging scenery - a landscape of limestone and millstone, caves, rivers, wildflower meadows and ancient woodland; an area full of contrasts and varied plant life, trees, forests and vegetation.

We began each day with a short Celtic prayer of thanksgiving and protection and after a good breakfast we set off about 9am. We stayed in a variety of accommodation



– a B&B, a Youth Hostel, a family run hostel, a community pub and a hotel, where

we met interesting people, many lovely dogs and shared stories about our day and our journeys. We met no other pilgrims specifically walking St Alkelda's way and on most days we were the only ones for miles around. Glorious.

There were so many moments each day where the breath-taking, expansive beauty, brought us to a stop, to pause, listen, look, breathe and give thanks.



Crossing the pass from Kettlewell into Coverdale, we heard the songs and cries of Curlews, Lapwings and Oyster Catchers and then suddenly there they were flying overhead and landing nearby protecting their nests. That was so amazing and such a surprise. We also saw an amazing variety of sheep with their gorgeous lambs. The sun shone with each day getting hotter so we were very grateful for the gentle breeze that accompanied us.

## Each Day

**Day 1:** Giggleswick to Malham 7 miles

**Day 2:** Malham to Kettlewell 10½ miles

**Day 3:** Kettlewell to Carlton 15 miles

**Day 4:** Carlton to Middleham 5 miles

**Day 5:** Back to Settle via Leyburn and Hawes to Garsdale Head on the community bus and then train on the Carlisle to Settle line. A wonderful ending to an amazing holiday.

If you would like to know more or have any questions do please get in touch.

You can read about St Alkelda's Way at [www.stalkeldasway.info](http://www.stalkeldasway.info) and if you are interested in pilgrim routes in Britain do visit the British Pilgrimage Trust website at [www.britishpilgrimage.org](http://www.britishpilgrimage.org)

**Bobbie Stormont & Tom Goss**

~ ~ ~

## Our Current Noticeboard

### Wayside Pulpit

Here is our current outdoor Church Noticeboard from Christine. Through her contribution, often including some of her own original artwork, we hope to reach out to those passing by with art, poems and inspirational thoughts which often come from members of our community.





***High Street, Wheatley, OX33 1UE***

**CHURCH CONTACTS**

*Minister: Revd. Pauline Main 01865 513581  
email: [minister@wheatleyurc.org.uk](mailto:minister@wheatleyurc.org.uk)*

*Associate Minister: Revd. Dr Colin Thompson  
email: [colin.thompson@stcatz.ox.ac.uk](mailto:colin.thompson@stcatz.ox.ac.uk)*

*Church Secretary: Phyllis Williams  
email: [secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk)*