



INSPIRE

St John's Church
Ranmoor, Sheffield

February
2026
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FLOWERS IN CHURCH AT CHRISTMAS 2025



St John's Church, Ranmoor

Parish Office, Ranmoor Parish Centre,
5 Ranmoor Park Road, Sheffield, S10 3GX

Tel: 0114 230 1199

Website: www.stjohnsranmoor.org.uk

St John's Church is a community whose vocation is to extend to all people the same welcome that we ourselves have received from God in Christ. Our worship, enriched by our strong musical and choral traditions, is at the heart of our community's shared life. The gospel calls us to lives of discipleship, informed by reflection and marked by care for one another, by a passion for justice, and by a commitment to the service of our local and wider community.

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Cover photo by Philip Walshaw

Large print versions of Inspire are available

Foreword



Wednesday 18th February is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. Everyone is invited to join our services at 11.30am in the Parish Centre, and 7.30pm in the Church, when we begin the journey with Jesus through the wilderness to the cross and Easter.

People mark Lent in all sorts of ways. Many of us spend more time reading our Bibles and our Lent group can be a valuable way to do this. You can find more details about this year's course elsewhere in Inspire. Many of us try to spend more time in prayer. You might consider joining our morning prayer group that meets on Zoom at 9am every weekday. Or perhaps you can find other ways of praying that would suit you better.

Some of us choose to give things up as a way of identifying with Jesus fasting in the desert. But others may choose to take something up, like spending more time outside or helping others. All of us are called to be a blessing to others and many of us do this in our lives beyond the church. Many people also volunteer as part of their giving to St John's. We are constantly looking for new people to help with a whole variety of tasks, including welcoming people, reading lessons, or leading prayers, serving coffee or arranging flowers. We also need volunteers to help with our Wednesday Lunch Club and with transport. Volunteering can be a great way of getting to know people better as well as contributing to the life of St John's.

Our annual meeting this year takes place on Sunday 26th April. One of the roles we need people to fulfil is that of churchwarden. Pauline Heath and Mark Gregory have both done an outstanding job but their terms as

churchwardens come to an end this year and we need to find their successors. If this is something you might consider, please have a chat with Pauline, Mark, Alison or myself. Or maybe there's someone you know who would make a good churchwarden who needs some encouragement!

The Bible tells us that we are justified by grace – that God loves us, regardless of what we do or do not do. We cannot earn our place in heaven! But knowing that we are loved by God, may prompt us to action, to acts of love and service. We often learn and grow by doing things, by trying things out. What might God be calling you to try this year?

Matthew

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You will probably have the responsibility of making funeral arrangements. No one looks forward to this responsibility, but the death of a family member or a friend brings with it an obligation that must be met. These are people who can help you meet this responsibility. We have been helping people combine the different aspects of a funeral service for over one hundred and thirty five years.

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From the Editor's Chair



By the time you read this, we will be well into the new year, but whilst researching something else I came across the 2025 YouGov Big Survey on Christmas: Christmas activities and routines. Amongst the statistics, it was comforting to learn that the Christmas traditions of eating mince pies and sending Christmas cards are still kept up by many of us (56-58%). 44% of the population open Advent Calendars, whilst some, including my youngest son, take up

the sponsored Advent Challenge, running a kilometre for each corresponding number of the month, raising money for *Shelter*. It gets harder the nearer it gets to Christmas, you'll be surprised to learn!

While Christmas may at heart be a Christian celebration, just one in seven Britons (15%) say that a church service is typically part of their festive plans, with a similar number (14%) normally attending a carol service over the holiday. Of course, there is overlap between these two groups, with six in ten (58-61%) who say they do one also doing the other.

Incidentally, just 13% of Britons follow the tradition of watching a pantomime - and here at St John's, people had the bonus of attending our Nativity Service with a pantomime theme. Oh, yes, they did! It was wonderful to see our church packed out at many of our Christmas services, sometimes with only standing room left.

And it wouldn't be Christmas without presents. I was given a book *'The Greatest Story Ever Told'* - an "eye witness account" of the life of a man from Galilee told through the eyes of the people who knew him best - written by Bear Grylls, the British adventurer and survival expert. I will enjoy reading it this year as we commemorate the 500th anniversary of William Tyndale's translation of the New Testament into English.

Philip Walshaw



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Lent Groups

This year our Lent Group will take place on Tuesday evenings at the Vicarage from 7.30 - 9.00pm. We shall be using 'Meeting God in John' by David Ford as the basis for our discussions. The first meeting is on Tuesday 24th February. The course will run for five weeks, finishing on Tuesday 24th March, but it is not essential to come to all the sessions. The book will be available to purchase through the church office (expected cost £9.56).

We are happy to arrange transport to and from the meetings each week.

The following is an abridged review of the book:

'Whether you are completely new to John's Gospel or have read it many times before, 'Meeting God in John' will help you see the Fourth Gospel with fresh eyes and gain a deeper understanding of its essential meaning and purpose.

David Ford is a widely respected theologian who offers an accessible and absorbing introduction to the main message of John's Gospel, packed with compelling observations into the personality and impact of Jesus, both in the first century and today.

'Meeting God in John' explores what the Gospel reveals about God through the person of Jesus Christ. It will leave you with a renewed appreciation of and enthusiasm for John's writing, and the desire to return to it over and over again. John Ford's straightforward and illuminating approach also makes it eminently helpful for new Christians just starting out on their faith journey. Simple yet profound, this is an invitation to all who long to deepen their understanding of John's Gospel - and, through it, to meet the God revealed in Jesus Christ.'

Matthew, Alison or Sandra would be happy to talk to you if you need further information.

There is a sign-up sheet at the back of church. We do hope you will join us to share this reflective time during Lent.

Sandra Green

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“What are you giving up for Lent?”

by John Green

A common question at this time of year, although Matthew and Alison would probably prefer us to “take-up” something for Lent - like bible study, rather than forgoing chocolate, alcohol or pudding. Given this is an Eco Church article then I ought to explain that I’m giving up two things, related to our Eco Church efforts.

Firstly, I’ve given up on our Government’s Energy Policy. Ministers tell us that our carbon emissions are falling, relative to our national output (Gross Domestic Product) but what they are not telling us, is that we have exported most of our emissions, by buying goods made abroad, where emissions don’t count against our national target, rather than making things here.

Also, I can understand the need to invest in a renewable infrastructure, to make us self-reliant in the future and that most of the cost has to fall on us, the consumers. But why have we created a scenario where energy-intensive industries like steel-making have the highest energy costs in the world, which makes them uncompetitive and inhibits investment in manufacturing. One other source of exasperation is with our national grid which has not been expanded to cope with the dispersed nature of renewables - wind especially, which is often in remote places.

I also fail to understand why we don’t use our own gas and oil reserves to help with the transition to net-zero and full reliance upon renewables and nuclear energy. Instead, we import the fossil fuels we need from

across the world, at prices fixed by a commodity exchange, based in Chicago.

These thoughts have been prompted by an article written last year by Prof. Dieter Helm, a leading economic policy expert, from Oxford University. He explained that, prior to privatisation of electricity generating in the 80s, energy-intensive industries paid the Bulk Supply Tariff, which reflected the actual costs of the energy and a contribution to the generating capacity and distribution grid costs, so as major users, they got a discount.

The loss of this discount accelerated the de-industrialisation of the UK, the growth of a globalised economy and exporting of jobs and carbon emissions. Much of these changes have now been thrown into reverse because of the unpredictability of major world leaders and the UK is struggling to re-grow its economy, at a time when a land war in Europe is conceivable.

Government is putting great store by the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) but this is going to be the energy-intensive industry of the future. An AI assisted web search uses 10 times the energy of a Google search. So if we are to regrow the UK economy, government may have to find a new version of the Bulk Supply Tariff to help expand manufacturing, attract investment and make us self-reliant, not least in re-armament. Prof. Helm explained that the Government is the primary customer of electricity generation, by whatever means, so there is potential to take action on industrial energy costs and help us afford the welfare benefits and public services we rely on.

If all this sounds very heavy and alarming, then I'm afraid it is. Pope Francis, speaking in what was his final year, said that, rather than believing we are living in an era of change, we are actually living in a changed era - it's already happening.

I've come to the conclusion that the last 80 years have been an exception rather than a new normal. Two world wars scared the human race into finding a new world order of relative peace and prosperity, that we may

not see again. World leaders have scant regard for organisations like the United Nations and NATO and the balance of power between East and West is shifting. It's perhaps no wonder that the recent Conference of the Parties (COP) in Brazil was shunned by these leaders, but I'm heartened by reports from those who were present that real progress was made.

This points to what we can do about it, as individuals and as a church. I'm a great believer in the adage - "The whole is greater than the sum of the parts". Doing what we think is right for the environment and creation produces an aggregate effect of simple acts that create a wave of change and sooner or later politicians will have to respond.

Oh, I nearly forgot the second thing I'm giving up, which is this regular column. I've greatly enjoyed doing it and I hope you've found it helpful. My other voluntary activities have unexpectedly changed and are taking up more of my time and energy, so I've had to cut back where I can.

We will still have an Eco Church section in the magazine but not these mini-essays, which I hope have served their purpose of keeping environmental issues in front of everyone. It's likely that the EC pages will contain more news, helpful advice and activities such as January's RSPB birdwatch, 'No Mow May' and the "Big Plastic Count" in March. Which reminds me:
don't forget to register at BPC: thebigplasticcount.com

Editor's note: The St John's Eco Church Group is really grateful to John for all he has done in his role and his wise words in Inspire magazine. As a Silver Eco Church we're continuing our work to care for God's Creation in our Worship & Teaching, Land, Buildings, Community Engagement and Lifestyles of our congregation.

If you would like to help please email:
matthew.rhodes@stjohnsranmoor.org.uk.

A Rocha UK monthly Eco Tips: February

Ash Wednesday falls this year on 18th February. This Lent, why not take part in Climate Steward's Carbon Fast. Lent is a time when Christians traditionally fast and focus on God. The Carbon Fast will help you consider ways to live more simply, give you new ideas to cut your carbon footprint and invite you to focus on God and consider the whole of his creation. Beginning on 5th March, you'll receive a weekly email containing key facts, suggestions for how you could reduce your carbon footprint and a prayer to lead you through this Lenten season. Each week features a different theme designed to help us take climate action in manageable ways that bear witness to a God who has promised to restore all of his creation.

Find out more and sign up at: climatestewards.org/resources/carbon-fast/



Ranmoor Parish Centre Bridge Club

We meet Wednesday evening at 6.45 pm in the Parish Centre and welcome new players.

If you would like to visit, please phone John Briddon on 0114 2620501 or email: rmburdall@hotmail.co.uk

Scissors Paper Stone

Welcome to Scissors Paper Stone 2026

by **Mary Grover**

This community history of St John's is now in its third year. Scissors Paper Stone was a response to our curiosity about the lives of the people who created the suburb of Ranmoor: its buildings and its communities. In 2024, we started by exploring the lives of the stone masons who built the church, the stone they used to build it and the wealthy benefactors who funded it. Margaret Bennett's paintings brought together the fabric of the church with the landscape in which it is set and from which its materials were quarried. As she was planning her exhibition, we learned that our spire, which is part of the landscape of all who live around St John's is crumbling. Margaret and many others have used the Scissors Paper Stone events to help raise money to restore it. Our activities in the last two years have also raised awareness of the beauties of our building. I particularly enjoyed the visits of the children and teachers of St Marie's who tested out our children's trail. A high point was the silence that fell when the children put their heads on the chancel step and suddenly experienced a perspective foreign to most of us - the sun pouring through the usually invisible west window.

In 2025, we focused on lives lived in and around Ranmoor in its early days as a garden suburb. Margaret drew in artists from across this city and far beyond to respond to the 'Unseen' of Ranmoor: the people on whose labour its wealth was created, the servants who disappeared into the basements and women whose craft skills enriched our environment. If we were lucky, we discovered their names but sometimes their names were all we knew of them. Over the year we learned ways of finding out more. Alan Crutch and Keith Pitchforth have helped us use local wills to understand more about the relations between employers and servants. During the last two years, Sheffield's extraordinary local historians have shared the stories of men and women who have left records which are

testimonies to their gifts and energy.

In 2026, we continue our exploration of both the servants and their employers. This is leading to a greater understanding of networks holding a rather unstable society together. At the end of the nineteenth century, working class districts in industrial cities were in some ways more stable than newly created communities like Ranmoor. Many of our big mansions were abandoned by families by the 1920s, only having existed as domestic residences for 50 to 60 years. Our talks in 2026 explore the networks that connected its residents and linked them with worlds beyond Ranmoor. Increasingly rich Ranmoor residents had houses in multiple places: some the seaside, some London, their business and professional connections leading them to places across the globe.

We have been hugely grateful to the Sheffield historians who have contributed to our project. In the past three years, Julie Banham, Jane Bartholomew, Sylvia Dunkley, Scott Engering, Loveday Herridge, Val Hewson, Judith Pitchforth and Sue Roe have all shared their knowledge and original research to help us understand the origins of Ranmoor. Next year we are joined by Jenny Stephenson with her work on Ranmoor's medical networks and the stories that inspired our stained glass. Dan Eaton is designing material which helps children discover how war temporarily connected residents from diverse social groups. Thank you to all who have contributed to our programme. Huge thanks to the refreshment team led by Janet Anker which has given our many visitors such a warm welcome. Without our clergy, church wardens, church administrator and vergers, nothing would have happened at all. The flyers and posters designed by Sarah Beardsmore play a key role in attracting visitors from across the city.

And now for something completely different, so different that I am unable to publicise it fully. In September, Margaret Bennett and Val Hewson are going to reveal an undiscovered story about the appearance of our first church which burnt down. During the year they have travelled the country looking at churches from the decade in which our church was built. Their display and talks will be a revelation - the extent of which is a mystery to me too.



Scissors Paper Stone

Lost AND Found

The Victorians who sat in the pews of St John's, the walls that enclosed them and the windows that lit them connect Ranmoor with worlds far beyond this hillside.

The Scissors Paper Stone team has been spending the winter building on the work of our first two years. Join us in 2026 to share our most recent discoveries about:

- The connections between the residents of Ranmoor
- The influence of Ranmoor on the city of Sheffield
- The cultural influences that inspired the design of both Ranmoor churches

See overleaf for more information about the 2026 programme.



Visit the website to find out more about Scissors Paper Stone and to read the blog.

www.stjohnsranmoor.org.uk

Scissor Paper Stone Events 2026

Saturday 7th March, 4pm, St John's Church
Wives, Widows, Spinsters: Women in Victorian Ranmoor
A talk by Val Hewson with refreshments available. Tickets £5*.

Friday 27th March, 7.30pm, Ranmoor Parish Centre
The medical networks of St John's in the late nineteenth century
A talk by Dr Jenny Stephenson with refreshments available. Tickets £5*.

Saturday 25th April, 4pm, St John's Church
Edgar Allen: 'A Man from Sheffield'
A talk by Sue Roe with refreshments available. Tickets £5*.

Thursday 21st May, 7.30pm, Ranmoor Parish Centre
From Louth to Gladstone Rd: The Servants of Ranmoor
A talk by Mary Grover with refreshments available. Tickets £5*.

Heritage Open Days at St John's

Saturday 12th September, 4pm, St John's Church
The first St John's - Uncovering what was lost
Free talk given by Margaret Bennett and Val Hewson at 4pm,
followed by viewing of the art works, church trails and refreshments.

Art display, church trails and refreshments also available on:
Tuesday 15th September, 2-4pm
Wednesday 16th September, 10am-12pm
Thursday 17th September, 2-4pm

Saturday 24th October, 11am, St John's Church
The Commemorative Stained Glass of St John's
A talk by Dr Jenny Stephenson with refreshments available. Tickets £5*.

Tickets for all events are available from TicketSource or the Parish Office.

**These events are free to students and under 18s.*

Remembering those from Ranmoor who died in war

11-20 November 2026

NEW for 2026. We're offering walking tours and art workshops to local schools, exploring the local people who died in the two world wars. Tours will be guided by Mary Grover with material developed by Claire and Dan Eaton. Get in touch to find out more (administrator@stjohnsranmoor.org.uk).

www.stjohnsranmoor.org.uk

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, RANMOOR

February Calendar

SUNDAY 1ST FEBRUARY: Candlemass

10.30am All Age Communion

6.30pm Candlemas Procession

Wednesday 4th February

10-12.30pm Foodbank Collection from the Church Drive

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

12.30pm Lunch Club

5.30pm Choral Evensong - *Choristers*

Sunsion in G Responses *Aston*

Light of the World *John Dankworth*, Psalm 11

Thursday 5th February

10am Toddler and Baby Group

8pm Organ Recital - Darius Battiwalla (Leeds City Organist)

SUNDAY 8th FEBRUARY: 2nd Sunday Before Lent

10.30am Parish Communion

10-3pm – Marriage Preparation (Wedding couples 2026 invited)

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Wednesday 11th February

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

12.30pm Lunch Club

5.30pm Evening Prayer

Thursday 12th February

10am Toddler and Baby Group

Saturday 14th February

7.30pm Choral Bangers 5

Free Admission with a collection in aid of the spire appeal.

SUNDAY 15TH FEBRUARY: Sunday Next Before Lent

10.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Monday 16th February

7.30pm PCC meets in the annexe

Wednesday 18th February: ASH WEDNESDAY

10-12.30pm Foodbank Collection from the Church Drive

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

12.30pm Wednesday Lunch Club

7.30pm Holy Communion -

Adult Choir, Messe Quatuor Vocum *Domenico Scarlatti*;
Miserere Mei *William Byrd*; Exaltabo te *Alessandro Scarlatti*

Thursday 19th February

10am Toddler and Baby Group

SUNDAY 22ND FEBRUARY: 1st Sunday of Lent

10.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Monday 23rd February

7.30pm Sanctuary in the side-chapel

Wednesday 25th February

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

12.30pm Wednesday Lunch Club

5.30pm Choral Evensong

Thursday 26th February

10am Toddler and Baby Group

SERVICES DURING THE WEEK:

Holy Communion: Every Wednesday at 11.30am in the Parish Centre

Choral Evensong: Evensong Wednesdays at 5.30 pm

(Choral Evensong every other week in term time)

Morning Prayer: Monday to Friday 9am in Church and on ZOOM

Footsteps: A Sunday school children's group that meets during the Sunday morning service. Children are welcome at all of our services.

Lunch Club: meets every Wednesday in the Parish Centre. All

Welcome – please book with the Parish Office

Sunday Social: Meets straight after the morning service on the 4th Sunday. Please book with the Parish Office. **Toddler Group:** meets every Thursday in the Parish Centre during term time. 10-11.30 am

Our Sunday Services are always in Church and on YouTube

www.stjohnsranmoor.org.uk 0114 230 1199

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The Parish Office is open Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays

9.30am-2.30pm

The Inspire Project

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Restaurant Review: Mezwaani Restro Bar 519, Ecclesall Road, Sheffield 11



“Quaerat debitis, vel, supierite dicta sequi labore porro pariatu harum expedita”. Yes I know this is a somewhat unusual start to a restaurant review, but those among you who are conversant with the Latin language will probably seize on this minor display of a long dead language with an element of amazed pleasure! Actually, this Latin bit it isn’t anything to do with the forthcoming review, it’s merely something I’ve copied from the Mezwaani web site. On contemplation I could perhaps have sorted out some form of translation, but as I can’t be bothered, and in the unlikely event you really want to know what it means, show it to some clever friend who has aspired to the dizzy heights of an O-level pass in Latin.

Moving on. Mezwaani Restro Bar is the very latest addition to Sheffield’s culinary golden mile - usually referred to as Ecclesall Road. Actually, by

the time you are perusing this erudite tome, some other aspiring dining emporium will probably have blossomed forth to become the “very latest addition” in an ever-hopeful attempt to survive the casual nonchalance of Sheffield’s mildly discerning dining fraternity. They come, they go – but mostly they go!

The Meal (part one)

Slight pause in proceedings as I haven’t actually had the pleasure of dining at Mezwaani yet. Reservation is for next Thursday - for myself, G, plus two more family members one of whom (daughter) actually spent an evening there (Mezwaani that is – keep up!) about a couple of weeks ago, and was suitably impressed.

(To be continued..!)

Back now after the “festive scene” with an arranged reservation for four this evening at Mezwaani for a very early 6pm start. The early start is due to the imminent arrival of Storm Goretti - due to reach Sheffield at about 8pm - which could involve a speedy retreat from the restaurant should the promised snow appear. I know I’m not providing any relevant restaurant details (so far) but providing Storm Goretti doesn’t decide to arrive early, all will be revealed in the next couple of paragraphs.

Arrived in slight drizzle (outside - obviously!) which no doubt will be a precursor to snow - but happily we are now ensconced at our designated table in the rather palatial confines of this very new restaurant. Sadly, we are the only diners in this pleasantly presented emporium, but I guess the snow potential, plus a very early 6pm booking on a Thursday (traditionally a quiet time - used to be “free food night” back in the day - no money until Friday pay day!) probably accounts for the lack of hungry punters.

The Meal (part two)

Interesting food and drinks menus. The former offers an interesting selection of Indian and Chinese dishes - with quite a fair leaning towards vegetarian choices, whilst the latter displays a pretty strong offering of unusual cocktails - as well as the standard display of wines and beers. So whilst perusing the food choice, the ladies felt a cocktail would add

suitable gravitas to the occasion - deciding jointly to try the subtly named “Corpse Reviver” (£13.00). This intriguing offering - a skilful blending of an orange liqueur, dry Vermouth, gin and absinthe proved so highly popular that a second very quickly followed the first. Both of the gentlemen opted for a pint of Kingfisher lager at a reasonably priced £6.50. A complimentary dish of prawn crackers, plus a choice of “dips”, accompanied the drinks which were delivered via a very “smiley” waitress.

A decision to share a democratic choice of three starters, which, after some forthright discussion, included two from the meat section and one from the veggie section. In no particular order these were: Tandoori King Prawns (at a pretty steep £15.00) presented in a very good chilli sauce with a side element of finely cut cucumber. A tasty dish with sufficient quantity (6 prawns) for everyone to try. Second dish was Tandoori Lamb chops - again a pricey £14.00 - but skilfully marinated in a spicy yoghurt, tasty, and with sufficient meat for all to enjoy. Final dish was Aloo Tikki Papdi Phaath (£10.00) - a potato patty topped with crispy flat puri, assorted chaat seasoning, and coriander chutney. So far so good. Starters all well received with accolades and zero complaints.

Final stage. Main course for me was a move to the Indo-Chinese section of the menu for a Chicken Fried Rice at a comparatively modest £10.00. Not a great choice. The dish was dry and under-spiced. Chopped spring onion had been added as a surface dressing which didn't help the taste in any positive way. Perhaps it was the classic “I chose the wrong dish” syndrome. Actually, on thinking about it, there never should be a “wrong dish” situation – every offering should be as near to perfection as the preparation team can produce.

Verdict

Really good until the last lap. G and the others had only praise for all elements of their meal (especially the couple of Corpse Revivers) but my main course could have been better. Will Mezwaani Restro Bar survive Sheffield's death row dining area, aka Ecclesall Road? Two chances! May need a few Corpse Revivers to keep it going!!

Roy Stanley

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Rambling on

by Philip Walshaw



Where can you see three ships in the Peak District? Some of you will know the answer, as I wrote about them in a walk that appeared in an issue of *Inspire* a few years ago (9 to be precise). Three ship-shaped rocks with the names of Victory, Defiance and Royal Soverin (sic) chiselled into them can be found adjacent to Nelson's Monument (pictured above) on Birchen Edge overlooking Baslow and beyond.

This three-mile walk is a variation to the one I originally wrote about and it starts from the Curbar/Cutthorpe crossroads off the A621 from Owlter Bar to Baslow. You can get there by car but there is a bus stop which Service 218 will stop at. Make your way through the gate and soon take the footpath to the right which will take you in the direction of a rocky outcrop that overlooks the main road. You will shortly come to a stile on your right which gives access to said rocks. Ignore this stile if you don't want to visit the rocks (children will like it because there's a little cave there!) and continue on the path until you reach a gate. If you've chosen the option to visit the rocks, follow the path until it reaches another stile and then the gate.



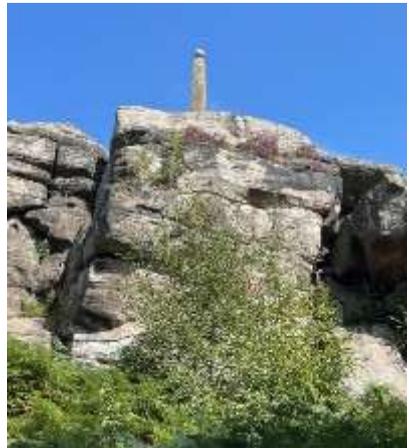
If you visit the rocks, you will get this view of the road that seems to disappear under the rocks. Once through the gate, follow the path straight ahead through some bracken until it opens out with the rocks along Gardam's Edge on your right. "Don't go too near the edge", I hear someone shouting! Beware, there is a very steep drop but the views are still good without having to peer over the edge.

Continue along the path crossing over a broken-down wall and keeping the wall to your left. Soon you will see a gap in a wall that used to have a gate. Go through this and you will shortly meet another path. Turn left and follow the path downhill until it meets the main A619 Chesterfield Road and your peace is shattered by the noise of the constant traffic. Climb over the style and turn left up the road and left again up the B6068 Cutthorpe road, passing the Robin Hood Inn (unless you are tempted to call in). After the adjacent public car park and Robin Hood Farm B&B turn left up the track and go through a gate, then up some steps. Follow the footpath until you see a path on the right. Climb up this steep path and then follow the long path along the top of Birchen Edge until you reach Nelson's monument and the three ships (see photograph overleaf).



Continue along the ridge until you reach a white triangulation point. Descend the rocky path and you soon regain the path that comes out of the woods. Turn left and follow the path (which can be very boggy in wet weather) down back to the crossroads from where you started.

You have the option to miss out the steep path up to Birchen Edge and continue along the path through the woods, which will lead you back to the crossroads. You can see the monument from this path, as shown, and have the opportunity from this point on the path to climb up to it!



Church on Holiday: Part I

by Jane Dalrymple

Andrew and I had a very enjoyable visit to the north Lakes and Borders area last July. I thought you may be interested in some of the churches that we visited on our travels – and would strongly recommend visiting any one, if not all, of them. Our first stop was at St Mary's Church, Wreay, on the outskirts of Carlisle, and what a fascinating yet eccentric

little church it is! Despite there having been a church at Wreay for over 700 years, the church we see today was commissioned, designed and paid for between 1840 and 1842 by Sarah Losh. The daughter of a prominent local family, for her time, she was well-educated and had travelled in Europe, which



greatly influenced her vision of how she wanted the church to be. It is small but rather beautiful, based on the form of a Roman basilica.

The church is crammed with symbolic ornaments and carvings which refer to death and rebirth, drawing upon the loss of her parents and beloved sister, Katherine; in the mausoleum you can peer through the window and see a beautiful marble statue of Katherine. You also see pine cones, a symbol of fertility, throughout the church; Major Thain, a local soldier and Waterloo hero had died on the Afghan frontier and had sent Sarah a pine cone, his last missive to her before he was killed, and the arrows that decorate the main door represent death, recalling his death.



There are stone carvings from nature in abundance on the exterior and interior of the church.

Outside there are gargoyles, caterpillars, chrysalis and butterflies. The pulpit is a fantastic carving of a fossil tree, carved from bog oak that had lain submerged for over 3000 years in nearby Wragmire Moss. The font, designed and carved in alabaster by Sarah Losh and



her cousin, is covered in carvings of plants, animals and insects, and is quite unlike anything I have ever seen before! The mirrored lid of the font cleverly recreates a pond with wildlife. Again, the symbolism is all about new life and rebirth.

The apse, as you may be able to see in the photograph on the previous page, is very Italianate in style, and contains 14 stone columns with carved capitals that form 13 seats for Jesus and his disciples, gathered around the altar. The windows are “fossil” windows, made from thin sheets of alabaster carved like stencils of fern fossils.

In the grounds of the church, as well as the cemetery and the mausoleum, is a replica of the early Celtic cross at Bewcastle. Sarah and Katherine planned it together as a memorial to their parents. On its base in Latin it poignantly reads: “Two daughters proposed that this be set up: one, greatly sorrowing, performed it”.

The whole effect of the church is quite breathtaking and totally unexpected in such a small village. While we were there, the nearby primary school came in for a short service, and it was lovely to see the church being used in a very 21st century style! A short walk away there is also a Sarah Losh Heritage Centre, with a fascinating history of the local area, Sarah Losh and her family, and all free of charge.

Quiz: Comedians

compiled by Philip Walshaw



The answers to the clues below are surnames of male and female UK comedians, past and present. Send your entry by email to jpwalshaw@gmail.com or by post to 19 Cairns Road, S10 5NA to reach me by Monday, 16th February, 2026.

1. His humour is grave, strangely (7)
2. Appears after the event (4)
3. Dialling... 1212 (9)
4. Redesigned dress around a French one (8)
5. Permission given; everyone follows (6)
6. Outsider drawing attention to his show (6)
7. Found in a copse tidied up (6)
8. Almanac rewritten without introduction (6)
9. Foreign comedienne? (6)
10. Trader by name; comedian by nature (8)
11. Tiny Merc repaired (8)
12. Discovered in Bhopal, India (5)
13. Comedienne with her own kind of jokes (5)
14. Became endlessly funny after Rome changed (9)
15. Accommodation for recluse (9)

Answers to last month's quiz: 1. Telstar 2. Something 3. Yesterday 4. Reflections 5. Wonderwall 6. Woodstock 7. People 8. Abracadabra 9. Imagine 10. Runaway 11. Solitaire 12. Holiday 13. Albatross 14. Waterloo 15. Footloose

Entries were received from: Janet and Malcolm Anker, Helen Baxter, Ruth Cheshire, Pam and Ian Dall, Lynn and Steve Lawless, John and Brenda Staniforth, Barbara and Peter Wozencroft.

The winners were: Lynn and Steve Lawless, who receive a box of chocolates.

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Wednesday Lunch Club

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Ranmoor Brownies:

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ranmoorbrownies@gmail.com

36th Ranmoor Group Scout Leader and
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at Bentley Lane:

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Michaelholmes1@gmail.com
Heidi Adcock heidi.adcock@me.com
Nea Maycock nea@ranmoorscouts.com
Simon Maltby
simon@ranmoor scouts.com

Beavers (6 to 8 yrs) meet Mon night:
Cubs (8 to 10.5 yrs) meet Wed night:
Scouts (10.5 to 14 yrs) meet Tues night:

District Explorers (14 to 18 yrs)
meet Friday night:

Liam Foster
liam.foster@cheshirescouts.org.uk



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Contributing to Inspire:

As always you should feel free to contribute to the magazine: articles, news, photographs, and anything else that you feel might be suitable. We cannot guarantee that everything we receive will be published.

The deadline for contributions to the March edition is Monday, 16th February, 2026.

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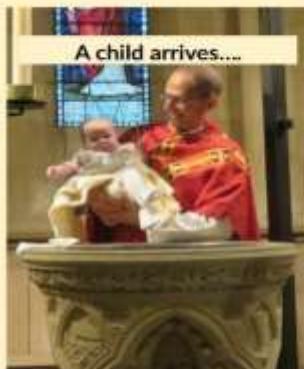


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