

HEATH LIVES

Number 16

February/March 2025



EDITORIAL

As January gives way to February, we can look, perhaps, for some milder weather and sunny days. We have several invitations for you to join us and hope that one or other of our events - our Spring Lunch (see box) and our April concerts (see page 8) - might appeal to you. Just come along and get your ticket at the door.

I am running very short of material in my 'bank' for future issues so please do try and write something, or get a friend to write something, or send me a recipe you like or a poem (from an author who died pre-1964 for copyright reasons) or there will be no more magazines!!!

The pictures on pages 19 and 21 are from the pixabay website.

WE INVITE YOU TO
JOIN US FOR OUR

SPRING LUNCH

On
Sunday
23rd March
In the Church Hall
(Manor Drive
entrance)

No booking
required—just
come along
£10 per person



CHURCH CONTACT DETAILS

Services are held on Sundays at 10.30 a.m. We are always pleased to welcome visitors.

Church Secretary: Mrs Jane Simmons: heathchurchhalifax@gmail.com

Website: heathchurchhalifax.org.uk

Facebook: Heath URC in Halifax

SMALL SEED—SO MUCH LIFE

During the winter our gardens pretend to play dead, but they don't fool gardeners. We know our living landscape with its bare trunks, withered stalks and rotting leaves, is not dead, only asleep. Plants get tired like us and need rest. We regenerate at night; they take longer. But there's a whole hidden world below ground which doesn't sleep: fungi, bacteria and creepy crawlies busily clearing up the residue of the season past and, in the case of fungi, reaching out to engage with and feed the next season of life above ground. Even as I write on 2nd January, the oak buds are visible from a distance and early snowdrops are already in flower at Harlow Carr.

When Gemma asked me to write an article for our February/March edition, I thought I'd draw on an inspiring book by Dr Neil Thorogood, who was minister of our Halifax Group of United Reformed Churches during the 1980's. Neil is now minister of two URC churches in Bristol, but for 15 years taught practical theology at the URC's Westminster College in Cambridge. He loves to make water-colour sketches and during the Covid pandemic lockdowns of 2020 painted a picture each day, 101 in all, which he shared on social media. Two years later he revisited them, one by one, so that they could become starting points for wider thoughts, meditations and prayers. They evoked memories for him, and maybe the reader too, suggesting possibilities and drawing us into places or spaces where God is to be found, even when all is seemingly dead.

However, autumn and winter months do produce something: seed catalogues. They drop on to the doormat and appear on the computer screen, inviting us to picture the year ahead with promise of new things in the vegetable and flower plots. Should I try something different this time, or stick to some well-tried and successful favourites? Maybe both.

One of Neil's favourites is the hollyhock. He writes "The green spires of hollyhocks (*alcea rosea*) make magnificent shows as they stand in their ranks at the back of the bed in the garden. We have delighted in growing hollyhocks for many years. They



all started, generations ago, as seeds gathered from the plants growing in the garden of my wife's parents in Suffolk. In autumn, the round seed heads split open to reveal a ring of tightly packed brown seeds, each only half a centimetre across. These we gathered and brought home to Cambridge. They are incredibly tough plants, sown simply by being scattered on some bare soil..."

My wife, Anne, loves hollyhocks. We saw lots in Hamelin, Germany, where they transform cottage walls into chocolate box art. We sowed some seed in 2023, but as hollyhocks dislike acid soil and flower in the second year, if at all in Halifax, our expectations are limited. Neil goes on to write: "They can easily reach eight feet in height. The flowers open in summer and part of the fun for us is having no idea what colours we'll end up with: blue; pink; purple; white; red; yellow; black.... They are beloved by bees and butterflies."

Neil goes on to reflect on "the power of life encapsulated in the seed. And this seems to be life that needs little urging or protection; a plant trigger-happy to tower and dazzle... *Alcea* comes from the Greek 'altho' meaning healing. These were plants long valued for their medicinal properties, their beauty and their vigour. The name we know them by now is Christian; originally 'holy hoc', with hoc being another word for mallow. Teething babies were given hollyhocks to chew."

Jesus gave us a parable in Matthew's Gospel, about a mustard seed. Smaller than all seeds but when it is grown is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and lodge in its branches. Mustard seeds are rich in several minerals such as copper, calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, zinc, manganese and selenium. They are a good source of vitamin C and K, thiamin, riboflavin, Vitamin B6 and folic acid. The "seed", as seen in the parables of Jesus symbolises God's Word, with its transformative power to impact lives, communities and nations. Now, that's a catalogue I *must* delve into!

So there you have it! Daylight lengthens, nature responds in myriad exuberant and beautiful forms. So much life. Neil concludes with a prayer for us all:

"For the outrageous power making seed into flower, thank you. It is your gift we find in creation's energy; life rich and wonderful in all its possibility. Give to us the joy that comes when we notice what you are growing all around. Amen"

John Seager

GEORGE

Who played with a Dangerous Toy, and suffered a Catastrophe of
considerable Dimensions

When George's Grandmamma was told
That George had been as good as gold,
She promised in the afternoon
To buy him an Immense BALLOON.
And so she did; but when it came,
It got into the candle flame,
And being of a dangerous sort
Exploded with a loud report!
The lights went out! The windows broke!
The room was filled with reeking smoke.
And in the darkness shrieks and yells
Were mingled with electric bells,
And falling masonry and groans,
And crunching, as of broken bones,
And dreadful shrieks, when, worst of all,
The house itself began to fall!
It tottered, shuddering to and fro,
Then crashed into the street below-
Which happened to be Savile Row.

When help arrived, among the dead
Were Cousin Mary, Little Fred,
The Footmen (both of them), the Groom,
The man that cleaned the Billiard-Room,
The Chaplain, and the Still-Room Maid.
And I am dreadfully afraid
That Monsieur Champignon, the Chef,
Will now be permanently deaf-
And both his aides are much the same;
While George, who was in part to blame,
Received, you will regret to hear,
A nasty lump behind the ear.

Moral:

The moral is that little boys
Should not be given dangerous toys.

Hillaire Belloc

TRIUMPH AND DISASTER

Phyllis Bentley, the celebrated Halifax writer, once told at a meeting how she had lost an umbrella while travelling by rail. She had an idea that she had left it on the platform at a local station but, on enquiring when she returned, she was told it had not been found. Going home feeling irritated rather than upset, as we do when we lose something, she sat down and wrote a short story about someone who had lost an umbrella. This was published and she felt much happier about the loss.

What an excellent idea this was: to take a set-back and turn it into an advantage, to turn loss into profit. It is always worthwhile to take the problems which beset us and try to find some way in which we can turn them to our advantage.

We read in Luke 15 v 8-10 of the woman who lost a silver coin. She still had nine left but she immediately lit a lamp and searched everywhere until she found it. Then she tells her friends and neighbours, "I am so happy; I have found the coin I lost. Let us celebrate."

Similarly, in the parable which Jesus told (Luke 15 v 4-6), the shepherd who lost one of his sheep left the remaining ninety-nine in the pasture and went looking for the lost one. When he found it, he was overjoyed and put it on his shoulder and carried it back home. Then he, like the woman, called his friends and neighbours together and said, "I am so happy. I found my lost sheep. Let us celebrate."

From another aspect, I can recall an elderly lady who was affected to some extent by dementia and had the recurring idea that she had lost sixpence. In her mental condition this was very distressing both for her and her daughter, who was driven to the extreme of slipping a sixpence quietly from her purse and exclaiming, "Oh, here it is, mother!" Thus were both restored to their former contentment.

When we are affected by a calamity of some kind, be it large or small, it is very upsetting and difficult to dispel from the mind. It is often with us all the time. How satisfying if we can find some way to turn this to our advantage and change disaster into success. Sometimes it is a question of putting things into the correct perspective. Quite small incidents can take on an importance out of all proportion to their actual value. If we can see this and adjust our thinking, we will see clearly that in the great scheme of things they count for very little. It is often a good thing to sit back and survey such

problems so that we can appreciate their true significance rather than our original conception which, because of its sudden onset, takes on an undue importance.

Rudyard Kipling was probably quite right in suggesting that when we meet with triumph and disaster, we should “treat these two imposters just the same”. How wise not to be affected unduly either by success or by failure. It is pleasant sometimes, however, to comfort ourselves with the words from Chitty Chitty Bang-Bang:

“From the ashes of disaster grow the roses of success.”

Even ashes and apparently empty soil can still produce beauty.

Derek Bridge.

WHAT A WORD!

Have you ever stared at a single word for so long that, suddenly, it looks very odd, and loses its meaning? Or said it to yourself over and over again until it sounds most peculiar and meaningless?

It is a phenomenon known as ‘Jamais Vu’, and you can experience it if you try scribbling a single word around 30 times, or for about a minute. Suddenly, it will look very peculiar.

Researchers at the University of St Andrews asked people to write out words, over and over again. About two thirds of them reported ‘Jamais Vu’, meaning ‘never seen’.

One psychologist explained: “There is something about repeatedly encountering the same word that causes your awareness of that word being a proper word to remain unchanged, whilst your subjective experience of encountering that word starts to go a little ‘off’.”

‘Jamais Vu’ is often called a ‘dissociative experience’ – where aspects of conscience experience, that normally work seamlessly together, break down.

Just think of a word and say it to yourself over and over again and see if you also find it suddenly ridiculous and meaningless!

THE PARASITE

It is strange how one can sometimes
Stand outside one's pain and look at it
As if it belonged to someone else.

It is strange how a pain can be
Both a part of oneself and an intruder
At the same time.

It is strange how it is impossible
To remember a pain once it has gone,
Until it strikes again and then you think,
'Oh, yes, I remember you now.'

It is strange, how you feel when a pain has left you:
A void, a big unfilled space in your head or your stomach,
A cold emptiness.

It is strange how a pain can be a living thing
Using your breath, using your heartbeat,
Using you to give it life.

Gemma Wassell

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US
FOR THESE FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

APRIL 5TH: NICOLA MILLS:

'OPERA FOR THE PEOPLE'

With tea and scones

£10

APRIL 12TH: THE FLASHBACKS

Big Band-style music

And refreshments

£5

CHRISTIANS IN CALDERDALE SCHOOLS

CICS (Christian Initiative in Calderdale Schools – now Christians in Calderdale Schools) was started as a Millennium Project in 1999 by Churches Together to reach out to youngsters in our Secondary schools. Members of Heath were at the forefront of this as we raised funds for a full time worker (then 2) and supported them as they went around schools in Calderdale.

With time, some of the supporters moved away or died and the work continued as a result of a large donation and legacy. Then came Covid and the question 'But do schools really want us now they don't have long lunch hours or traditional Assemblies?' We appointed Robert Fox as a consultant to find out and he came back with a resounding 'Yes'. He then graciously agreed to continue with us to find workers and volunteers to fulfil the requests

So now the Trustees have fresh impetus and enthusiasm to encourage the churches and Christians in Calderdale to:-

- Pray for your local school
- Be part of an 'Open the Book' team
- Pay for and/or take 'It's Your Move' books into Y6 of your local primary school
- Be part of a panel of 4 answering questions about being a Christian in your job/situation or part of a team going in to run a 'Question Point'
- Help with 'Safe Spaces Club' in Sowerby Bridge
- Help with Chilli Tuesdays at Kings with College students
- Support the work financially to enable our excellent team of salaried workers to go in for Mentoring, taking lessons, assemblies.

Thank you so much for inviting me to Heath on Sunday morning to talk about CICS, for your warm welcome and enthusiasm.

Others of you reading this may have come across some of the team in your Secondary or Primary school. If you are at Secondary School. have you still got your copy of 'It's Your Move'? If you are still at Primary School – you are almost certain to get one in Y6.

Our logo has a cross in the location pin (from Google maps) above a school in a hilly area. Help us to make sure that Christ stays there.

rosemarywright@cicscalderdale.org.uk facebook website.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2025

One highlight of my November was a day spent in Leeds with women of all denominations. We were hearing about international preparations for the World Day of Prayer to be celebrated on Friday 7th March 2025. The worship for that day has been prepared by the women of the Cook Islands. They have prepared a wonderful service based on Psalm 139 with the title, "I made you wonderful." We spent the day together learning about the Cook Islands and going through the service.

Luckily, the 2025 World Day of Prayer is to be celebrated in Halifax at Holy Trinity and St. Jude's. People from all the various churches in Halifax will be worshipping together, praying with people all over the world for peace and justice to prevail.

Do make a note of the date in your new diary or calendar: 7th March 2 p.m. at St Jude's.

Elisabeth Davie



Sunday morning worship in Cook Islands Christian Church

WHAT THE TEMPTATIONS MEAN FOR US

Immediately after His baptism in the River Jordan, Jesus faced and resisted three powerful temptations during 40 days in the wilderness of Judea. This time of testing and temptation was His preparation for the work God had sent Him to do on earth. It's the principle behind the season of Lent, which begins on 22nd February. Although the temptations were personal to Jesus, many of us will recognise their relevance in our own lives.

The first was simple. 'You're hungry. You can do miracles. Well, turn these hot stones at Your feet into loaves of bread'. It sounds quite plausible, but in fact it's an invitation to put one's own needs first. Temptation rejected.

Then came the second: 'Throw yourself off a pinnacle of the Temple. You know that God will send His angels to catch you before you hit the ground'. Again, it's plausible (there was even a verse from the Bible to back it up). But this would be to substitute one spectacular publicity stunt for the hard slog of travel, preaching, healing and touching individual lives. Temptation rejected.

The third was outrageous. 'Fall down and worship corrupt and evil power, and You will have infinite worldly power and success'. In other words, the divine Son of God should deny His Father and worship the devil, to glean success without going to the Cross. For the third time, temptation resisted.

I know these temptations were tests of the Messiah Jesus, but can't we see in them temptations that come to all of us from time to time? Look after number one, and all will be well. Take the short cut to success and avoid all the hard slog. Compromise your integrity, in order to fulfill your ambitions. Or choose the hard way: walk the narrow path of honesty, commitment, and truth. That's really the Lenten choice.

Canon David Winter

WHAT AM I?

(Answer: Page 22)

The beginning of eternity, the end of time and space,
The beginning of every end, the end of every place.

George Gordon Lord Byron

AN AMISH CHALLENGE TO MYSELF

Having recently read an article on the Amish way of life, I was challenged by the ways in which they foster harmony and peacefully-honest relationships in their community, and I determined to try to implement their emphasis on modesty and humility in my own life.

The Amish are people who, in the early 18th century, emigrated to America from Switzerland so they could establish communal living, set apart from the influence of the craziness of the world, a place where they could practice The Simple Life according to the values of their Christian faith. They are known for being a peaceful, gentle people who follow a 'no-technology' lifestyle based on equally-shared hard work. There are many truly community projects like barn-raising or quilt-making, all working together, with values of respect and not promoting oneself but preferring the needs of others and, unusually in this day and age, accountable for their actions to one another for the best interests of the whole community.

They live according to the principle of *Gelassenheit* which literally translates as 'letting-go-ness', and means submission to a higher authority. It is considered the opposite of individualism. It's a way of life that emphasizes self-denial, obedience to church authority, and humility. The concept expresses the ability to allow things to be, without the need to be poked or probed or dissected: simply to accept situations for what they are. The Amish practise the art of letting things go, by not always pursuing an argument or needing to press a point when someone else seems wrong, not always having to be heard or your opinion considered, nor to be right with the final word. *Gelassenheit* has the wider premise of forgiveness—the willingness to let things go, not out of laziness or fear but for the sake of kindness, respect and greater peace. It promotes contentment—the ability to accept life's ups and downs with serenity and trust, without needing to analyse deeply and explain all situations. It permits life to remain whole and to cultivate Shalom, the healing peace of God trusting in his perfect plan.

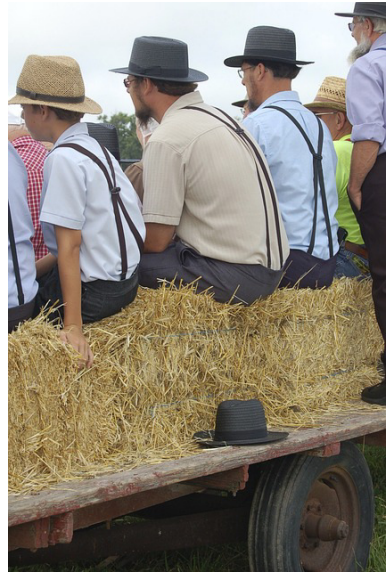
HOLD YOUR TONGUE: When someone annoys you, rather than letting rip with a piece of your mind to set them straight, *Gelassenheit* promotes the willingness to accept other people without criticizing or finding fault. So, instead of challenging them, try to love them and accept them as they are.

BE GENTLE: When an argument gets heated, and things get nasty as

heels get dug in, remember Gelassenheit, the willingness to possess one's soul in quietness, without the need to win the battle or be proved right. Instead of going for the killer comment, look for gentle ways to lower barbed weapons, make peace. Let your opponent feel respected and loved.

SEEK UNITY: When changes are proposed, whether you agree or are against it, the principle of Gelassenheit promotes the idea that getting one's own way is never the most important thing—rather, what matters is unity in love, cherishing and nurturing a bond of fellowship, and learning to live together in peace.

Phew! What a challenge to me in my daily life, but certainly worth a try in the hope of repairing and maintaining relationships.



Diana Clarke



THE WINDRUSH BABIES

I got off the train at Kensal Rise station, I was 16 and in an unfamiliar area of London where I was to be for the next two years. This was my first day as a trainee nursery nurse, assigned to Mortimer Road Day Nursery. I followed directions down a hill through streets of two-story Victorian terraced houses with hardly a tree in sight, a contrast to leafy south-west London where I grew up.

A ten-minute walk found me in front of an L shaped, whitewashed, prefab which had seen better days! A high gate with iron bars kept fifty children inside a large yard with a grassy bank sloping down to a railway track. I stepped inside and was surrounded by African-Caribbean children. Some regarded me curiously, others ran to get a closer look and say hello while others were absorbed in what they were doing. Further on was a row of old prams each containing a baby. Some slept, some watched the activity around them. Some children were riding tricycles or pushing little trucks, some enjoying the sand tray, others getting delightfully wet at the water tray. Several members of staff joined in the fun! My first impression was of industry and happiness. Inside were lots of small tables and chairs, with cots and highchairs in the baby room. Furnishings and equipment were sparse.

The nursery opened at 7:30am and closed at 6:00pm. Some of the children spent a full day while others attended for less time, depending on their mothers' circumstances. Many mothers worked in a nearby factory (an ammunition factory during the war) and the nursery provided daycare for the workers' children.

Early shift in the nursery was hard as we started at 7:30. When we arrived the prefab would be very cold. One of us went outside to fill hods with coke then light the stoves - a tricky job! Someone made fried bacon, fried bread and warmed milk for early comers. Someone else settled the children as they arrived, most by 9:00 am. The baby room would be busy with the arrival of ten babies all noisily demanding attention at the same time. But when all was done, it was cosy, sitting by the warm stove with the babies happily crawling or tottering around, playing with toys or sitting on our laps enjoying a little sing or cuddle.

Our equipment required improvisation. The children loved music and singing so we made instruments: shakers and tins with rubber tops for drums. Skittles were Coca-Cola tins, which made a great noise on the tiled floor when knocked over. We did lots of painting too. What we lacked in equipment we made up for by giving the children lots of time and attention, their speech was great! We played outside as much as possible so the older and younger groups could play together. Sometimes we waved to te trains passing in and out of London.



Life wasn't easy for mothers managing on very little. Many of the houses were multi-occupied with a mother and as many as four children in one room, with a shared bathroom, sink and cooker on the landing. Each room was warmed by a paraffin heater. Amazingly there weren't many fires! With many absent fathers these women struggled on. I regularly visited at weekends and took one or two children home with me where they could enjoy parks and the riverside, feeding ducks. The train ride was exciting too! My parents loved these visits and welcomed the children wholeheartedly. The mothers were happy to let the children come and to let me visit. One mother said, "You are different from most people because you come and talk to us." How lonely they must have felt.

Although living conditions were poor and money tight, the children were well kept; clean and well dressed, well behaved and eager to join in. Interaction was good between children and staff and we had lots of fun.

After lunch the children rested on folding beds, covered with a blanket while sleeping. Rest time for children and staff! Tea would be a bread and butter and cake meal, then it was time for the children to get ready for home. Days were long for such little ones and there were no holiday breaks.

Recently the 'Windrush' boat that in 1958 brought folks from the Caribbean has been much in the news. People came full of hope for a better life and many did not get the welcome they hoped for, having to work hard to establish their position in British society. I see it as a privilege to have worked with these Windrush children and hope that some happy memories have stayed with them, as they have with me.

BY BREAD ALONE

Such an ordinary thing, bread, such a part of our everyday lives; but, in its way, a small miracle every time. Almost every culture (except, perhaps for the Bushmen of the Kalahari desert) has its own versions. The few basic ingredients of flour (spelt, wheat, rye, barley....), water, oil or milk (or yoghurt), sometimes yeast, a pinch of salt - and there you are with English muffins or cottage loaf, French baguette, Italian ciabatta, Greek pitta, Middle Eastern flatbreads, Indian puri or naan - so much variety and so many wonderful tastes from such limited means. Take a basic white wheat dough, roll it out, butter it, sprinkle with brown sugar and spice and dried fruit, roll it up - and, hey presto, you have Chelsea buns. Deep-fry it and you have doughnuts or churros. It is the gift that goes on giving. No wonder it is called 'the staff of life' - something we can lean on, depend on, be sustained by.

The central place that bread has in our consciousness is also reflected in the way that we use the words 'dough' and 'bread' in a slangy fashion to mean 'money' - the medium of exchange in so many of our daily transactions with one another. We talk about working 'to earn a crust'. And did you know that, way back in the 13th century, bread was the first foodstuff to be regulated by law as to weight, quality and price? This gave rise to the phrase 'baker's dozen', meaning thirteen rolls rather than twelve, as a baker would throw in an extra roll to make sure he was not selling under-weight. New Year First Footers bring bread, coal and a silver coin to provide comfort, warmth and sufficient wealth for the year ahead.

Many countries have proverbs associated with bread:

- Avoid those who don't like bread and children. (Swiss)
- With a piece of bread in your hand you'll find paradise under a pine tree. (Russian)
- Rather a piece of bread with a happy heart than wealth with grief. (Egyptian)
- Better dry bread in peacetime than meat in wartime. (Hungarian)

The Book of Common Prayer mentions 'Wine that maketh glad the heart of man; and oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man's heart.' Also, the Bible contains over 400 references to bread.

Although Jesus points out that 'Man cannot live by bread alone,' in the Lord's prayer, we ask for 'our daily bread'. This is an echo, which Jesus' hearers would have been aware of, from Proverbs 30 v 8: 'Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the Lord?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonour the name of my God.' Enough, we say, is as good as a feast; all sorts of difficulties can arise from too much or too little.



Some modern translations paraphrase this part of the Lord's Prayer as 'give us three square meals a day' but surely our 'daily bread' implies far more than just food? Jesus tells us that he is 'the bread of life', implying that he is our spiritual nourishment: this must be included in our 'daily bread' - as must be all the things that sustain us: family love and care, exercise, warmth and shelter as well as nutrition for our bodies. If all we are asking God for in our prayer is forgiveness and food, and resistance to temptation, it seems a rather barren life; not the 'life in all its fullness' that Jesus offers us.

'Bread is King', said Louis Bromfield: 'With bread, all sorrows are less', said Cervantes: 'Without bread all is misery,' said William Cobbett.

So, whether we are using it as a metaphor for spiritual nourishment or thinking of the taste of good, fresh-baked bread in our mouths, let us give this 'ordinary' item of daily life our full appreciation and thankfulness. As Dr Johnson didn't say, 'He who hates bread, hates life.'

THOUGHTS ON MOTHER'S DAY

With Mothers' Day in mind at this time of year, it is perhaps a good time to think about a very important woman in the bible whose name is only mentioned twice and is seldom remembered. That woman is Jochebed, whose name means 'Jehovah is our glory', and she was the mother of Moses, Aaron and Miriam. Israel had been in Egypt for 400 years and as a nation, had grown in numbers until the Pharaoh felt that their presence was a threat. He did everything he could to subdue them, and finally commanded the Hebrew midwives to murder the newborn sons of the Hebrew women as they were giving birth. He found that he couldn't rely on the midwives because they feared God more than they feared him, so instead he told his people to stay on the lookout for Hebrew babies. If they saw one, they were to throw him in the Nile and watch him drown.

Jochabed gave birth to Moses at this time and she did all she could to save him. We know very little about her apart from the fact that she was of the tribe of Levi, the priestly tribe. She was a courageous woman: she hid her baby boy from the authorities for three months and only when this became increasingly impossible did she decide to give him up—but not to death. She carefully fashioned a little basket and set the baby in it, entrusting him to God and to the Nile which would be for him a place of safety and not of death. She placed the basket among the reeds near the bathing place, where he would be sure to be found. Her trust was rewarded as God not only gave Moses a safe home with Pharaoh's daughter but also arranged, through Miriam, that Jochebed would be engaged as a nurse for the baby. Thus Jochebed was able to teach and influence her son in the ways of God's righteousness even while he was being raised in a non-Jewish household.

In the story of Moses, it was three courageous women who saved him: his mother, his sister and the Pharaoh's daughter, knowingly taking in a Hebrew child despite her father's proscription. The midwives also played their part, by refusing to carry put the Pharaoh's orders.

It is unimaginably hard to give up a child: but that is what mothers do, all the time. A mother spends eighteen years or more preparing her children to leave home and create households of their own. For Jochebed, as for many, the parting came earlier but her strength of character, her faith and trust in God and her good planning saved Moses so that he could lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and to the borders of the Promised Land.



YOU NEVER WILL BE OLD

You never will be old
with a twinkle
in your eye,
with the springtime
in your heart
as you watch
the winter fly.

You never will be old
while you have
a smile to share,
while you wonder
at mankind
and you have
the time to care.

While there's magic
in your world
and a special
dream to hold,
while you still can
laugh at life,
you never will be old.

Anon

A CHILD'S VIEW OF WARTIME

I was born at Christmas in 1938 so my memories of wartime when I was three years old were devoid of the fear and anxiety that grown-ups felt and these things did not affect me at all. When the air raid sirens went, we packed a shopping bag with a flask and food and a neighbour would join us as we went down to grandma's cellar kitchen until the 'All Clear' went. I would often ask mother if we could have a picnic again tonight! Mum and grandma must have hidden the seriousness of war from little Betty.

Christmas 1944 was when we heard of the V1s which caused great concern all around. That Christmas I remember that on the 24th December I received my presents early and was told that Santa had brought them early because of the war. By this time I could feel a sense of fear around me and neighbours who lived alone coming to us for company. I know now that the V1 landed at Little Tooting Farm, Sowerby, where the farmhouse was badly damaged.

There were, of course, other things that I took in my stride, taking a little book to the shop and watching the grocer cut a little piece of paper from it – mum called it 'a coupon.' There were not many sweets in my early years but at our chemist we could buy sticks of barley sugar without a coupon. I could choose from a large jar on the counter a stick of each colour, although I think they all tasted the same.

Life carried on and I became old enough to give back my Mickey Mouse gas mask and receive in return one like the grown-ups had, just plain black with a little window.

The war ended in 1945 and soon after, there was great excitement in our home as dad returned from Egypt. He had left a baby girl and found a lively schoolgirl.

Betty Bridge.

The Creation is quite like a spacious and splendid house, provided and filled with the most exquisite, and at the same time, the most abundant furnishings. Everything in it tells of God. (John Calvin)

SAYINGS OF MOTHER TERESA



The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service, the fruit of service is peace.

Let us touch the dying, the poor, the lonely and the unwanted according to the graces we have received, and let us not be ashamed or slow to do the humble work.

Be faithful in small things, because it is in them that your strength lies.

If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one.

Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand.

(In this life) we cannot do great things, only small things with great love.

When a poor person dies of hunger, it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed.

Keep the joy of loving God in your heart and share this joy with all you meet, especially your family.

The poor give us much more than we give them. They're such strong people, living day to day with no food. And they never curse, never complain. We don't have to give them pity or sympathy. We have so much to learn from them.

Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin.

Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty, than the person who has nothing to eat.

It is not how much we do, but how much love we put in the doing. It is not how much we give, but how much love we put in the giving.

A NEAT EXTRACTION

Now the dentist speaks to me
almost in apology:
"It's cracked in two;
the crack's right through;
it can't be filled,
it must be pulled."



After much pulling my broken fang
is shown to me in a small tin pan.
My numbed gum thrums with muted pain;
the dentist beams: "Some teeth need time.
This one was tough: it's yours to take."
I shake my head, it starts to ache.
"A neat extraction," I hear him say;
"Let's see how much there is to pay."

Michael Collins

Answer to riddle on page 11: The letter 'e'

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Please ensure that all contributions for the April/May issue of Heath Lives are received by the editor before

9 a.m. on Monday 10th March 2025

We welcome all contributions but publication is not guaranteed.

Send to: garnetnr@outlook.com
or hand to Gemma or to Anne Boyd

Please note that inclusion of an article does not necessarily mean that the Editors agree with the sentiments expressed.

ACTIVITIES IN HEATH CHURCH

On the third **Tuesday** of each month at 10.30 a.m., a **Coffee Morning** is held in the Lounge (using the Manor Drive entrance). Everyone welcome.

On the second **Thursday** of each month at 7.30 in the evening, we hold meetings of the **Thursday Club** in the lounge . We welcome new members.

Jason Whitaker Boxing Fitness.

Boxing padwork sessions available for all fitness levels and abilities including group classes, 1-to-1s and 2-to-1s.

FB: Jasonwhitakerboxingfitness

Tel: 07929372498

Kim's Dance and Movement

Tuesdays 10am - Adult Beginners' Tap Class. Suitable for complete beginners or those with a little bit of tap experience in the past and needing a basic recap.

Tuesdays 11am - Adult Intermediate Tap Class. Anyone from 18-80 with previous knowledge or experience in tap dancing. Fun class.

Thursdays 11am - Move & Groove Dance fitness. Over 18's Aerobic-style fitness class. A nice feel-good class with a mixture of songs/routines including salsa and Cha-cha. All abilities as you can take it at your own pace.

Contact Kim on 07747 867706 or Facebook @kimsmoveandgroove

***Move to Improve* standing and seated exercise classes with Heidi.**

Help Improve your balance and posture, and strengthen muscle & bone plus improve your overall fitness.

Wednesday 2pm Back to Basics Gentle keep fit.

Friday Gentle keep fit 10am & 11.10am.

Please contact Heidi 07791869594

Email heidimolle@googlemail.com



Regular bookings at Heath United Reformed Church Autumn 2024

All activities and hire times are subject to change.

TT = Term time

S = Seasonal

V = Variable

O = Occasional

Day	User	Time	Location
Monday	Coccinelle French Class	11.30-3 TT ellie.fitzgerald1@outlook.com	Lounge
	Janet's Eazi Dance	2-3 JanetFletcher5@yahoo.com	Hall
	Steph's Community Choir	2-3 no need to book	Upstairs
	Beavers	6-7 Beavers @49thhalifax.org.uk	Lounge & Hall
	Cubs	6.30-8 Cubs@49thhalifax.org.uk	Hall
	Halifax Symphony Orchestra	7-9.30 S roybiggs@halifaxorchestra.org	Upstairs
Tuesday	Kim's dance class	10-12 07747 867706	Hall
	Community Coffee Club	10.30-12 (3 rd Tuesday) heathchurchhalifax@gmail.com	Lounge
	Yvonne's Tai Chi	1.30-3.30	Hall
	Halifax Philatelic society	1-3pm (2 nd Tuesday)	Lounge
	Kim's music lessons	4.15-8.15 pm TT	Upstairs
	Scout District Meetings	7.30 – 9.30 V	Lounge
Wednesday	Northern Lights House Group	10.30-12.30 fortnightly 07929 372498	Lounge
	Heidi's cardiac rehab	2-3 07791 869594	Hall
Thursday	Heath Study Group	10.30-12 S heathchurchhalifax@gmail.com	Lounge
	Kim's dance class	11-12 07747 867706	Hall
	Halifax Young Singers	6-9 TT halifaxyoungsingers2@gmail.com	Upstairs
	Laura Morrell Singing	8-9 TT 07425 893945 (in hall on 2nd Thursdays)	Lounge
	Thursday Club	7.30-9 (2nd Thurs) heathchurchhalifax@gmail.com	Lounge/visit
Friday	Heidi's cardiac rehab	10-12 07791869594	Hall
	Kim's music lessons	10-11 TT O & 4.15-6.15 pm TT	Upstairs
	Janet's Eazi Tap	6-7	Hall
	Scouts & Explorers	7.30-9 Scouts@49thhalifax.org.uk	Hall & Lounge
Saturday	Artful Stars - children's art	9-11.30 TT 07791 954274 julie@artfulstars.co.uk	Lounge
	Kim's music lessons	9-11 TT	Upstairs
	Calderdale Chess League	2-7 O 07504 598590	Hall
Sunday	Heath's Worship	10-12 Service 10:30-11:30 07748988161	Upstairs
	Northern Lights	2.30-6 07970 256243 (Independent church, not linked to Heath)	Hall/Lounge
Variable	Jason's 1:1 Boxing skills	V 07929 372498	Meeting Rm 2

For further details, please see page 23