

HEATH LIVES

Number 24

June/July 2026



EDITORIAL

Our beautiful cover photograph is of the Joseph Crossley Almshouses which feature in the article on pages 20/21. Thank you, Alan.

This is another plea for help: we are fast running out of articles in our 'bank' for future issues. Apart from our devoted contributor, Derek Bridge, we do have several people who try to find items of interest to share but if we are to reflect the wider community in which we live, we do need new ideas. Please let us know (details on page 22) if you are aware of any aspect of life in Halifax that you think would interest others and we will follow up any such leads, especially if you can supply contact details.

Thank you for supporting this magazine.

WE INVITE YOU TO
JOIN US FOR OUR

SUMMER LUNCH

On
Sunday
5th July
In the Church Hall
(Manor Drive
entrance)

No booking
required—just come
along
£10 per person



CHURCH CONTACT DETAILS

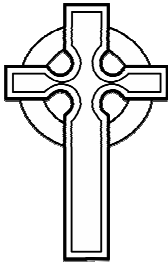
Services are held on Sundays at 10.30 a.m. We are always pleased to welcome visitors.

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

Website: heathchurchhalifax.org.uk

Facebook: Heath URC in Halifax

HOLY ISLAND - WHERE GOD IS ENCOUNTERED



I've always had a fascination with the Celtic tradition, reaching back to the 1970s when I was first introduced to the Iona Community by an Elder at the Rock Church Centre, Liverpool. Iona is a tiny island off the west coast of Scotland, where St. Columba made a base to evangelise the whole of Scotland in the 7th Century. I've had the delight and privilege to visit Iona on numerous occasions and discovered for myself the phrase associated with the island 'The distance between Heaven and earth is tissue-paper thin'.

It was through reading about the endeavours of Columba and other monks living on Iona, that I discovered their importance to an island off the East coast of Northumbria, called Lindisfarne or 'Holy Island' and the spreading of the Celtic Christianity to Northern England and beyond.

It would seem that, following Columba's death, Abbots and monks continued his missionary endeavours, and set about taking the message of Jesus Christ beyond Scotland, thus targeting the island of Lindisfarne as an ideal base for the evangelisation of northern England. I gather it was not always plain sailing to begin with as the first attempt ground to a rapid end! Initially a monk by the name of Cormac was sent to establish a settlement on the island, but he soon went back complaining that the people of Northumbria were 'stupid, ignorant and stubborn and not worthy of their efforts'. He suggested their resources were best focussed elsewhere.

One voice spoke out in disgust: 'Brothers, it seems to me you are being too severe on your ignorant hearers – we have a responsibility in Christ to reach out especially to the unworthy, and thus persevere for the sake of the Gospel'. Aidan was the monk who spoke in defence of those who hadn't yet heard the Name of Jesus Christ, and through his passionately speaking out, was tasked to go to Lindisfarne and persevere for the sake of the Gospel. Through his endeavours and commitment, along with his much gentler approach, his work, and that of St. Cuthbert who followed him, was incredibly successful and many churches and monasteries were established as a result, the island itself also becoming a premier pilgrimage site.

I am aware that all who have been to Holy Island speak warmly of ³their

experience, with one observer suggesting that it is ‘a place where God is met in a special way’ (Adrian Leighton). This is what David Adams has to say about Holy Island: ‘The light of the early island saints such as Aidan, Cuthbert, Cedd and Chad has attracted pilgrims to the Island since the seventh century on St. Aidan’s Day (*) it was the main place of pilgrimage in England and esteemed of great holiness and saintly light which still attracts pilgrims and seekers in their thousands each year’. (‘Island of Light’)

As a family we took great delight in making a pilgrimage to the island on one of our many travels ‘up North’, spending the day walking round the island, soaking in the atmosphere, taking photos, and visiting the various churches – including the URC. It was amazing to realise just how many people were making the same journey, coming from near and far to immerse themselves in what the island had to offer. I found it spiritually uplifting, being in a place that, so many years previously, had played such a significant part in transforming the lives of people who had initially been considered unworthy of God’s limitless love.

I was delighted to discover recently that the latest edition of ‘The Pilgrimage’ on BBC traces a journey from Whitby to Holy Island as a group of celebrities from different faiths and none walk, talk, eat, share experiences and learn so much more about themselves and the common values they share. They grow together and discover new depths of faith and understanding, on one occasion gazing in awe and wonder at an ammonite that was discovered on a beach which was 180million years old!. Isn’t this what we do in a local fellowship, as we share a pilgrimage of discovery together in mutual love and respect, seeking to encourage one another in our faith journey, and enabling us to be a better followers of the Lord Jesus Christ ‘who walks with us and talks with us along life’s narrow way’.

Let me leave you with a favourite blessing attributed to St. Columba of Iona: ‘Lord, be Thou a bright flame that goes forever before us; be Thou a guiding star that shines forever above us; be Thou a smooth path that winds forever below us; be Thou a kindly shepherd that stands forever behind us; to-day, tonight and for ever. Amen.

God Bless

Chris

(Rev’d Chris Wood – retired URC minister)

() St. Aidan’s Day: is the 31st August*

HEAVEN

Fish (fly-replete, in depth of June,
Dawdling away their wat'ry noon)
Ponder deep wisdom, dark or clear,
Each secret fishy hope or fear.
Fish say, they have their Stream and Pond;
But is there anything Beyond?
This life cannot be All, they swear,
For how unpleasant, if it were!
One may not doubt that, somehow, Good
Shall come of Water and of Mud;
And, sure, the reverent eye must see
A Purpose in Liquidity.
We darkly know, by Faith we cry,
The future is not Wholly Dry.
Mud unto mud! — Death eddies near —
Not here the appointed End, not here!
But somewhere, beyond Space and Time.
Is wetter water, slimier slime!
And there (they trust) there swimmeth One
Who swam ere rivers were begun,
Immense, of fishy form and mind,
Squamous, omnipotent, and kind;
And under that Almighty Fin,
The littlest fish may enter in.
Oh! never fly conceals a hook,
Fish say, in the Eternal Brook,
But more than mundane weeds are there,
And mud, celestially fair;
Fat caterpillars drift around,
And Paradisal grubs are found;
Unfading moths, immortal flies,
And the worm that never dies.
And in that Heaven of all their wish,
There shall be no more land, say fish.



Rupert Brooks

PARAPHRASE OF THE FIRST PSALM

The man, in life wherever plac'd,
Hath happiness in store,
Who walks not in the wicked's way
Nor learns their guilty lore.

Nor from the seat of scornful pride
Casts forth his eyes abroad,
But with humility and awe
Still walks before his God!

That man shall flourish like the trees,
Which by the streamlets grow;
The fruitful top is spread on high,
And firm the root below.

But he, whose blossom buds in guilt,
Shall to the ground be cast,
And, like the rootless stubble, tost
Before the sweeping blast.

For why? That God the good adore,
Hath giv'n them peace and rest,
But hath decreed that wicked men
Shall ne'er be truly blest.

Robert Burns



Robert Burns had recourse to religion at times of personal crisis. These versifications were for him the natural outcome.

By way of contrast –

EPIGRAM ADDRESSED TO AN ARTIST

This was allegedly written by Burns on the back of a small envelope, during a visit to an artist's studio in Edinburgh. The unnamed painter was working on a picture of 'Jacob's Dream'.

Dear _____, I'll gie ye some advice,
You'll no take it uncivil:
You shouldna paint at angels, man,
But try to paint the Devil.

To paint an angel's kittle wark
Wi' Nick there's little danger:
You'll easy draw a lang-kent face,
But no sae weel a stranger.

kittle wark – ticklish work
lang-kent = long-known

Submitted by Anne Boyd

HALLMARKS AND STANDARDS

Hallmarking is one of the oldest forms of consumer protection and dates back to the 1300s when King Edward I instituted the testing (assaying) and hallmarking of items made of silver or gold. The system protected both the buyer and the seller of the goods. It protected the buyer from being ripped off by unscrupulous dealers that were seeking to profit by selling items that were not of the quality stated and it also protected honest dealers from being undercut by the same unscrupulous ones.

The 1300 statute allowed the wardens of what was to become the London Assay Office to test the gold and silver that was being crafted in workshops. The original mark applied was the Leopard's Head and this is used by the London Assay Office to this day. Only silver items were hallmarked in these early years - items made of gold followed later.

(Other marks or Standards.

There is the British standard, the 'kite mark', that guaranteed the quality of the goods we bought; then this was replaced by the "CE" for the EU goods. We could go on forever with a very long list of trademarks. Now we are not sure what marks we should take note of!)

Before 1773 there were only two places in England where silver and gold could be assayed, which were London and Chester.

1773 saw a group of metal workers from Sheffield and Birmingham objecting to having their silverware being sent to London for testing and approval. These men met in a hostelry (what we call a pub), the Crown and Anchor, to petition Parliament together for an assay office in the north. In spite of determined opposition by London and Chester silversmiths, an Act of Parliament was passed in March 1773, just one month after the original petition had been presented. It was to allow both Birmingham and Sheffield the right to assay silver. Lots were drawn to determine which marks the offices would use; Sheffield won and chose the crown as its mark, while Birmingham took the anchor, honouring the hostelry in which they had first come together. From 1784, Sheffield was empowered to keep a register of all makers' marks within one hundred miles, including those of Birmingham. The Sheffield Assay Office hallmarked its first piece on 20th September 1773. It is now one of only four remaining assay offices in the United Kingdom.



London

In 1977 Sheffield's mark, the crown, was changed to the Yorkshire Rose: we can easily see how that came about as, if you look at a crown from above, the pieces radiating from the centre can look very much like the petals of a rose.



Birmingham

Anyone registered with any Assay Office had to have an approved Maker's Mark. This is the only mark that a silversmith may put on his or her work; the other three are put on by the assay office.



Sheffield

In order, the marks used are: the maker's mark, the Assay Office mark, the purity of metal used and a date mark. The fifth is any special mark that may be allowed and the whole set is called the Hallmark. All the marks are equally important but without the maker's mark the other three are not very useful. It is the reputation of the maker that brings everything together.



Edinburgh

The British Hallmarking Council have over the years sanctioned a number of commemorative marks to be used as a fifth mark by any one of the four UK Assay Offices. In 1934, to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of H. M. King George V and Queen Mary, a mark was available for two years and proved so popular that further commemorative marks were sanctioned: for the Coronation of H. M. Queen Elizabeth II in 1953/4: for the Silver Jubilee in 1977, the Millenium in 1999/2000, the Golden Jubilee in 2002, the Diamond Jubilee in 2012 and the Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

So the hallmarks mean that you can buy with confidence.

Peter Oates

(Peter wrote this for us some time ago but felt it needed a little revision. However, his health deteriorated and it never happened, so I put it aside. I have now decided to go ahead as it is and am pleased to include it in his memory. Ed).



THE OASIS

From the desert's arid heat,
With wrinkled skin and sun-parched mouth,
They come near with weary feet,
Pilgrims from the burning south.
Is this vision what it seems,
Where the silver water gleams?
Do those palm trees really hide
Such cool shade as is implied?

All too often such a sight
Is one without true being:
A picture where the brilliant light
Lies to our sense and seeing.
A thing to tempt with promise fair,
To give us hope of resting;
Then cruelly takes it from us there,
Thus all our feelings testing.

Such the haze of desert land
Maybe things aren't what they seem.
Illusions rise on every hand
And many sights are but a dream.
But no more on sand we tread;
Thick grass is now our basis,
The shade of fronds is overhead
And cool is this oasis.

Derek Bridge



Image by [Mostafa Elturkey](#) from [Pixabay](#)

'ME AND MY HOME'

This is the title of a booklet written by Halifax-born-and-bred Charlotte Sutcliffe, in partnership with two others. Charlotte is an Occupational Therapist whose focus is on frailty and dementia. The booklet is a collection of handy tips and suggestions to make it easier to live independently at home as one grows older, or to discuss with carers. The aim is for 'low cost high impact' changes in every room of the house and is a result of suggestions from groups and individuals from their own experience.

If you think that this may be of interest for you or for someone you know, please contact John Seager on johnmseager@btinternet.com.

Christian Aid was founded in 1945 by British and Irish Churches to help refugees after the war ([Christianaid.org.uk/our history](http://Christianaid.org.uk/our%20history)). The charity is a partnership of people, churches and local organisations committed to ending poverty worldwide.

Every year Christian Aid week focuses on one particular area of need. In 2026 the "Where hardship means hunger" campaign aims to raise funds and awareness of under-nourishment in Kenya.

More than a third of Kenyans are deemed to be under-nourished as defined by the Global Hunger Index. In 2023 29% of the population were living below the poverty line and that number has been rising since. As 80 % of the land is arid or semi-arid, food production is very challenging, especially as the country also experiences climate extremes such as severe flooding and prolonged droughts.

Famine and food insecurity affects women and particularly single mothers disproportionately. By implication, children's health and education are also severely affected.

Christian Aid is funding a variety of programmes to ensure long term food security especially in urban areas by training urban farmers. Vegetables can be grown on rooftop gardens and surplus sold can bring financial stability for women. Keeping food where there is no electricity or refrigeration is a common problem. Christian Aid is teaching modern farming and preserving methods such as the use of dehydrators.

To support Christian Aid's work please join us for our traditional Bacon Butties, Books and Bakes Event. Entrance via Manor Drive—look out for the date on our website, Facebook and noticeboards.

GRANDMA'S HALIFAX

As I glanced at a Smith's print of Halifax the other day, which portrayed Crown Street in 1860, I studied the coach and four standing outside the White Swan, which then stood halfway up the street. There were passengers with their luggage standing there and a little higher up the street a horseman sat easily talking to a friend. It occurred to me then that this Dickensian scene was one which would be well known to my grandmother who was born only ten years later. We are all conscious of the speed with which things change over a short span of years but Grandma must have been particularly struck by the changing events during her lifetime.

Mary Anne Barlow (1870-1951) was the daughter of Telemachus and Mary Alice Culpan. Her father was a blacksmith and the family, which included nine daughters and two sons, lived at Boothtown. When she was nine years old her parents would be reading in the Halifax Guardian or the Halifax Courier of the fighting in South Africa when the Zulu nation rebelled under the fierce leadership of Cetshwayo. To people living in Halifax, this perhaps seemed a long way away and need not disturb them. Of greater import would be news of the first Boer War (1880-1881).

When she was twenty-nine years old, she met and married Fred Wilkinson, a sizemaker, who was to hold a responsible position at Crossley's Carpets, where he was in charge of the sizing department. Their daughter, Elsie, was born in 1893 and John in the following year. In 1899 the second Boer War began when many local men enlisted, some of whom lost their lives, but again the conflict was far off.

It must have been about this time, when she was around thirty years old, that she saw her first motor car. This would have been a wondrous thing indeed. Her life until then had been in a world where the horse and train and the new trams were the only means of transport and the sight of a cumbrous, self-propelled vehicle must have been awe-inspiring. In fact, it would be the 1920s before such cars became a common sight on the roads of Halifax. She spoke of

walking to work in her younger days with the coachman from Birk's Hall in Wheatley.

The town and its outskirts probably changed considerably during her early days from the building of the Town Hall just before she was born to the construction of Crossley Street and Princess Street. Clearing the slum-like dwellings around the Parish Church, an area known as "Duffy's Park" from the number of Irish immigrants who lived there, would come around 1900, but some of the town centre development such as the General Post Office and shops along Commercial Street would arouse interest.

In 1910 when she was forty years of age the Wright Brothers made their astounding flight from the racecourse at Highroad Well to Exley, making the return trip as the weather improved. What a landmark! Motor cars, aeroplanes, what next? Scott's expedition to the South Pole came next, followed by the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand at Sarajevo and the outbreak of World War I – the Great War – or, as they called it, "the war to end all wars." Her son John fought in the trenches with the Royal Artillery but thankfully came home relatively unscathed. In 1913 Mary's husband Fred died and when Elsie was married in 1920 to Ewaine Bridge, now returned from serving in France with the Military Police, they went to live with her mother. Ewaine had served with the South African Constabulary until 1904 when he joined the Halifax Borough Mounted Police and was now a sergeant. In 1935 he died aged only fifty-four and Elsie was left to raise their four sons.

Grandma's long life encompassed the reigns of Queen Victoria, King Edward VII, King George V, King Edward VIII and King George VI. She lived through the Zulu wars, the two Boer wars and both World War I and II. She encountered the interesting phenomenon of wireless in about 1927. She never saw television as far as I know. Certainly the first set we had in the house was in the early 1950s after the coronation had taken place and Grandma died in 1951. But what a full life she had lived in her 80 years! What a lot she had experienced!

Derek Bridge

IS THE WAY WE EAT SUSTAINABLE?

The closure of a narrow stretch of water, thousands of miles away, might be regarded as a wake-up call to the UK as far as our long term food supply is concerned. Many of us will be familiar with the statistic that 40% of our food is imported, and it is hard to imagine living on just 60%. So, import more from Europe and South America, some might say; a snag being that the rest of Europe will be in a similar position so will be exporting less. As for South America, the devastating effects that large-scale agriculture is having there on the environment and the world climate is another story.

Another worry is that much of the food that we do produce in the UK is reliant on the large-scale use of fertiliser that comes from the Middle East; one third of our fertilizer and fertilizer ingredients come through the Strait of Hormuz.

Commonly-quoted criticisms of organic farming are that it is all very well, but it will never provide us with sufficient food and the food costs too much. I wonder if those arguments are about to be completely quashed? One aim of organic farming is to be self-contained or at least 'locally contained'. The nutrients removed from the soil by growing crops (including grass) are replaced with the nutrients from composted waste materials and manure. Feeding the soil with materials sourced locally reduces reliance on imports and reduces travel distances and therefore the reliance on fossil fuels, the reliability and cost of which are growing concerns. Interestingly, the cost per hectare of organic fertilising, including labour, is now being matched by war-inflated prices for imported fertiliser. Organic farmers argue that nitrogen fertiliser should be taxed more highly as it accounts for over 30% of the energy used by UK farmers, and an even higher percentage of agriculture's greenhouse gas emissions.

The lower carbon footprint is so important as climate change continues; organic methods have a much lower carbon footprint than non-organic. The continued use of high levels of artificial fertiliser is detrimental to the long-term health of the soil, and this is already becoming apparent with hectare after hectare of soil that is almost dead, with few microbes and little space for air or water. Frighteningly, around the world we are losing soil faster than it is being formed, with the consequences of increased erosion and flooding. We are likely to see decreasing yields in the U.K.

Organic methods maintain the structure of the soil and sustain a rich variety of living organisms, and this healthy soil also captures and stores carbon and enables water percolation. The 'State of Nature' report, by the



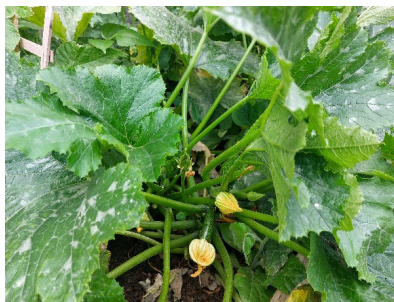
RSPB, informs us that this century we have seen a serious decline in wildlife with 16% of our wildlife species in danger of becoming extinct, with serious and continuing declines in plants and insects too. Overall, we have lost over half of the biodiversity we had in 1970. The two main reasons given for this are the way we manage our land for farming,

and climate change. There are reasons for hope. Areas that are being farmed in a nature-friendly way such as land that is farmed organically and/or rewilded, as well as sustainably-managed woodland, are seeing an increase in biodiversity. This is just as well for us as well as for wildlife, as declining biodiversity affects the future sustainability of agriculture.

There are health benefits to organic methods too. The constituents of any organic product must be at least 95% organic to obtain certification, and so consuming more organic food means (or should mean!) eating less ultra-processed food, which is now widely regarded as harmful to health. Additionally, the use of pesticides, herbicides and fungicides on our food is still raising safety concerns.

If the idea that organic farming can't feed enough people is becomingly increasingly untrue, what about affordability? It is fair so say that organic food isn't affordable, available and accessible to everyone in society. But it could be. In an ideal world, organic wouldn't need to be more expensive. A significant part of the problem is that the true cost of our food isn't always reflected in the price.

We can campaign for greater subsidies for organic farming and incentives for farmers who switch to nature-friendly farming systems. Perhaps this is something we should engage with our MP about in if we want a sustainable farming system that



can provide good food for all. Here's a thought; when we shop, leaving a few items of luxury/junk/unnecessary food on the shelf could allow us to buy some organic produce, be it fresh, tinned or frozen, especially as ongoing price rises in non-organic food narrows the price difference. Buying fresh food when it is in season in the UK benefits our wallets, our farmers and the planet, and a great way to do this is from local allotment sales; whilst the produce may not be certified organic, many are grown organically.

For nearly 80 years the Soil Association, the organisation that certifies organic farms, produce and processors, has worked to transform the way we eat, farm and care for our natural world. Their vision is regeneration: a world with good health, in balance with nature, and a safe climate.

This is about caring for both people and the planet; fully in line with our Christian values. What's not to like?

As The Soil Association says -

Organic must be valued: by policymakers who facilitate its availability; by retailers; by our economic system; by the financial sector and by the public. We are the public; we show we value organic produce by buying it. If the proportion of agricultural land in organic production is to increase from its current 3%, more farmers need the confidence to begin the conversion process which can take 2 to 3 years. This implies buying British organic food whenever possible.

Organic must be supported: by policy; by farmer training, support and knowledge-sharing; by innovation; by effective standards and regulation. Do we take sufficient interest in standards and regulations?

Organic must be available: widely in retailers; in public settings; in local communities; enabled by sufficient supply chain infrastructure. Could Heath make a point of serving, and flagging, some organic food at community lunches? Let's remember that supermarkets have a big influence on farming. If we don't buy organic produce from them, they are less likely to buy it from farmers.

Jane Simmons

JEWELS

What do we perceive as a jewel? Do we think of something rare, special, costly? Yes, the word conjures up images of minerals from the deepest places of the earth, brought up to be cut, polished, perfected to reveal their hidden beauty, or melted and refined in a goldsmith's furnace.

Does it make us think of the craftsmanship of Faberge or the diamond cutters of Amsterdam? Perhaps we recall the names of famous gemstones such as the sapphire Star of India, the Cullinan and Koh-i-noor diamonds; or priceless pearls from the oceans of the world.

And the day when we went to gawp at the Crown Jewels in the Tower of London!

Or can a jewel simply be a jewel because it is precious, treasured by someone, valued outside of monetary worth?

Memories can be jewels, scattering brightness to sparkle through our lives: a baby's laugh, a perfect rose, a dewdrop decorated at dawn, the eyes of a faithful pet raised in trust, a band of comfort on a dark day, the first time your child says "I love you". Memories are unique to each one of us, given by God.

On my list, words are jewels: reading them, hearing them, writing them. A poem, a phrase, an extract of beautifully-crafted prose, a cleverly constructed line of subtle humour. Words have magic to touch the soul.

What are your jewels?

Merle Wilson



TRANSPENNINE HARPISTS

Saturday 20th June 2026
@ 2.30 p.m.

£10 including refreshments

ECCLEFECHAN TARTS

Ecclefechan is a small village in Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland. It's just north-west of Gretna Green. There's a sign beside the M74 telling motorists that it's the birthplace of Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) – but few people these days have heard of that historian and essayist. Wikipedia tells me that it was also the birthplace of Dr. Archibald Arnott (1772-1855), who was Napoleon's doctor on the island of St. Helena.

The name was first written down as 'Egilfeichane' in 1507. It comes from an old language called Common Brittonic. The first part, 'egle' means 'a church'. The second part means 'little'. So, Ecclefechan means 'little church'.

I wonder if you've ever seen the cartoon 'Oor Wullie' in the 'Sunday Post'? Oor Wullie was once given a day off school for spelling 'Ecclefechan' correctly.

And Robert Burns wrote a song called 'The Lass o' Ecclefechan'. She was no better than she should be...

These days, Ecclefechan is most famous for its tart. Here is the recipe I use. It can be varied quite a bit.

Ingredients: For the sweet short-crust pastry:

Actually, use any you like. Bought cases are fine—a dozen small ones, or one large, in a tin about 23 cms diameter. I find the amount of filling can stretch to 15 small ones if you're a bit mean with it. Or:

150g plain flour
75g unsalted butter (or salted will do)
1 tablespoon caster sugar
1 egg
1 tablespoon milk

For the filling:

150g mixed dried fruit (I like to use raisins, sultanas and cherries)
50g chopped walnuts
1 egg
100g light brown or light muscovado sugar
75g butter

At least a teaspoon or up to a tablespoon of lemon juice, or orange juice or white wine vinegar

Method:

As usual: sift flour, rub in the cubed butter, add the sugar and mix. Add the beaten egg and milk, knead gently until smooth.

Wrap the dough in cling-film or a plastic bag and chill for at least 30 minutes.

Filling: Melt the butter in a pan, mix in the sugar. Take it off the heat and let it cool a little, then add the beaten egg followed by the lemon juice, then the dried fruit and walnuts.

Divide the mixture between the tartlet tins and bake in a pre-heated oven at 180C/160 fan/gas mark 4 for 20-25 minutes until the pastry is light golden.

Leave the tarts to cool down in the tin for 10 minutes before taking them out and leaving them to cool completely on a cooling rack.

Notes: If you are making one large tart, the case needs to be baked blind first. Leave an overhang of about an inch or so. Chill the pastry in its tin for 30 minutes first, then place a sheet of baking paper on it, cover with baking beans and bake for 15 minutes at 190C/170 fan/gas mark 5 then remove the baking beans and paper and bake for a further 5-10 minutes until the pastry is cooked through. While it's hot, carefully slice away the remaining excess pastry. Leave it to cool a bit. When filled, the tart will need about 15 minutes baking.

Chilling the dough is crucial as it does tend to shrink in the oven.

Roll the dough thinly, as otherwise you end up with tarts that have more pastry than filling.

Don't overbeat the butter and sugar, otherwise the mixture becomes marshmallowy.



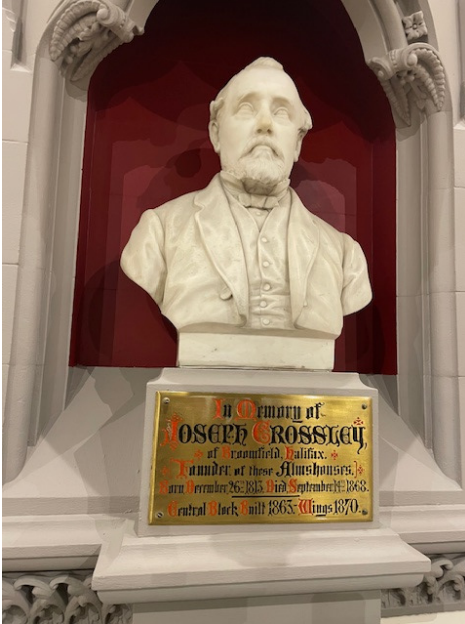
Do not overfill the tarts, as the filling rises quite a bit and tends to overflow. Fill them half-way to three-quarters.

Some people like to sprinkle icing sugar on the tarts once they have cooled.

It took me longer to type this than to make the tarts....

Anne Boyd

JOSEPH CROSSLEY'S ALMSHOUSES



Have you thought of moving to sheltered accommodation? The Almshouses are an amazing, 19th century collection of 33 one-bedroom flats set in beautiful grounds on Arden Road, Halifax. Suitable for couples and single people, it is a wonderful place to live, with a close community of residents.

The flats vary greatly in style, some having larger kitchens than others, and are all extremely spacious with gas central heating & shower rooms (no baths). There is a warden on site four days a week (Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri). There is

plenty of parking & ample washing lines as well as a splendid rhubarb patch!

As well as the beautiful gardens there is a chapel on site with services by visiting preachers being held every Thursday at 2.30pm. All residents are encouraged to attend and there is a comfortable coffee lounge at the back for after the service, as well as being used by residents for the varied social events that they organise.

The brainchild of Joseph Crossley, of Crossley's carpets fame, the Almshouses were originally built in 1863 as two-storey houses for retired workers of Crossley Carpets but converted to upstairs/downstairs flats in the 1960s. These pensioners were provided with low-cost homes and a weekly pension – the weekly pension is a thing of the past but the low-cost homes continue to be offered to anyone over the age of 60 who satisfies the entry criteria.

These are:

Must currently live in Calderdale, Bradford or Kirklees; or have family ties in Halifax (e.g. wanting to move to be nearer children in the area)

Must be a regular Protestant churchgoer

Must be of limited means

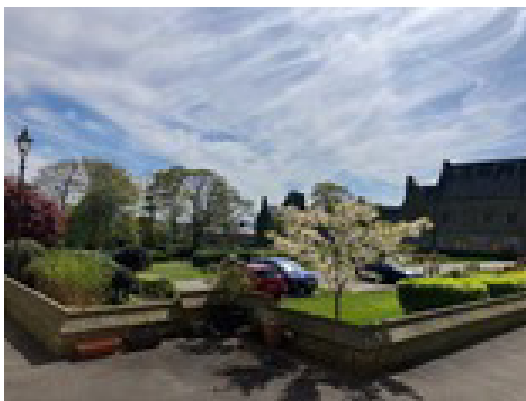
Must be capable of independent living

No pets are allowed, although visiting dogs are welcome. No overnight guests, as each flat has only one bedroom, although there is a relatives' room available at a small cost for anyone who wishes to make use of it. Residents benefit from paying no water rates & a reduced TV licence fee. Gas, electricity & band A community charge are the responsibility of the resident along with telephone & internet charges. The monthly maintenance charge (we don't call it rent) is currently £373 and is reviewed every 1st July.

On the 4th Saturday of June every year there is a special service of thanksgiving in the chapel for Joseph Crossley and afterwards the Trustees serve the residents & guests with afternoon tea – outside when possible. It is always a lovely, happy occasion enjoyed by all.

More information and an application form for residence can be found on our website josephcrossleyhomes.org.uk Why not think about joining this happy community!

Leah Carbery



A Franciscan Benediction

May God bless you with discomfort
At easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships
So that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger
At injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people,
So that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears
To shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger and war,
So that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and
To turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness
To believe that you can make a difference in the world,
So that you can do what others claim cannot be done.
To bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

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

9 a.m. on Friday 6th July 2026

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 Spring 2026

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@outlookcom	Lounge
	Janet's Eazi Dance	2-3 janetfletcher5@yahoo.com	Hall
	Sing for Fun	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	Community Coffee Club	10.30-12 (3 rd Tuesday) heathchurchhalifax@gmail.com	Lounge
	Yvonne's Tai Chi	1.30-3.30	Hall
	Kim's music lessons	4.15-8.15 pm TT	Upstairs
	Kim's dance class	6.15-7.15 07747 867706	Hall
	Scout leaders' 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
	St John's Ambulance Cadets	6-9	Hall
Thursday	Heath Study Group	10.30-12 V 01422 431424 heathchurchhalifax@gmail.com	Lounge
	WAM choir	10-12	Upstairs
	Kim's dance class	11-12 07747 867706	Hall
	Halifax Young Singers	6-9 TT halifaxyoungsingers2@gmail.com	Upstairs
	Thursday Club	7.30-9 (2nd Thurs) heathchurchhalifax@gmail.com	Lounge/visit
	Heidi's cardiac rehab	10-12 07791869594	Hall
	Kim's music lessons	4.15-6.15 pm TT	Upstairs
	Scouts & Explorer Scouts	7.30-9 Scouts@49thhalifax.org.uk	Hall & Lounge
	Kim's music lessons	9-11 TT	Upstairs
Saturday	Kim's music lessons	8.15-11.15 TT	Upstairs
	Calderdale Chess League	2.00 -7.00 07504 598590 O	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