

the bridge monthly bulletin

October 2025



Ryedale Methodists

Autumn is well and truly upon us, the nights are drawing in, and we naturally begin to curtail some of our activities. The warm casserole replaces the crisp salad on the meal table and in a hundred small ways we prepare for the winter ahead. At this time of year, we also pause and give thanks for the abundance of God's provision, nature's bounty and our farmers and producers' hard work in providing the food we need. The trees are withdrawing resources from their leaves, storing sugars, and the process leaving behind, as it does, the beautiful colours and scars that are the results of their own year's labour. Like it or not, the seasons influence so much of our lives – and there is something to be said for a process of taking stock, giving thanks and adjusting and tweaking in small ways for the year ahead at this time of year. So as we celebrate harvest, what has been the fruit of your church's activities this year? Do you need to withdraw resources so that you can re-allocate them in a new way? Would a pause, and maybe a celebratory break, enable you to restore and reinvigorate? Would some small changes lead to even more fruit next harvest?

The farmer will be planning ahead and asking 'What crops will I plant in the coming year?' and 'How will I prepare the ground for them?' In these more modern times, perhaps also asking 'What land will I set aside to re-wild and allow nature to return?' (the Bible similarly talks of a Jubilee for the land). We have been doing likewise and at the September circuit meeting, I was delighted that the meeting wholeheartedly supported a proposal to recruit an Outdoor (or Wilderness) Pioneer, to take a lead in helping us establish faith communities and spiritual activities based outside in our beautiful countryside. We will aim to develop new Pilgrimage routes with self guided walks, as well as providing a monthly faith walk, where we do church as we walk. We will explore Forest Church (it doesn't have to be in a forest!) drawing on the rhythms of nature and exploring our part within it, naturally reflecting on our Christian faith as we do so. We have also agreed to explore, as widely as possible, opportunities to engage with musicians and artists to see how we might bless one another, utilising some of our buildings, but also developing faith conversations and even communities with art or music at the heart.

We also hope to continue this pause and reflect process by inviting my colleague Ruth Gilson-Webb, whose expertise is in helping churches grow and develop, to lead a day in which she might help us reflect on our shared ministry and discern how we respond to the opportunities and realities of circuit life.

Do enjoy this time of celebration and rejoicing. God bless. **Rev Andy**

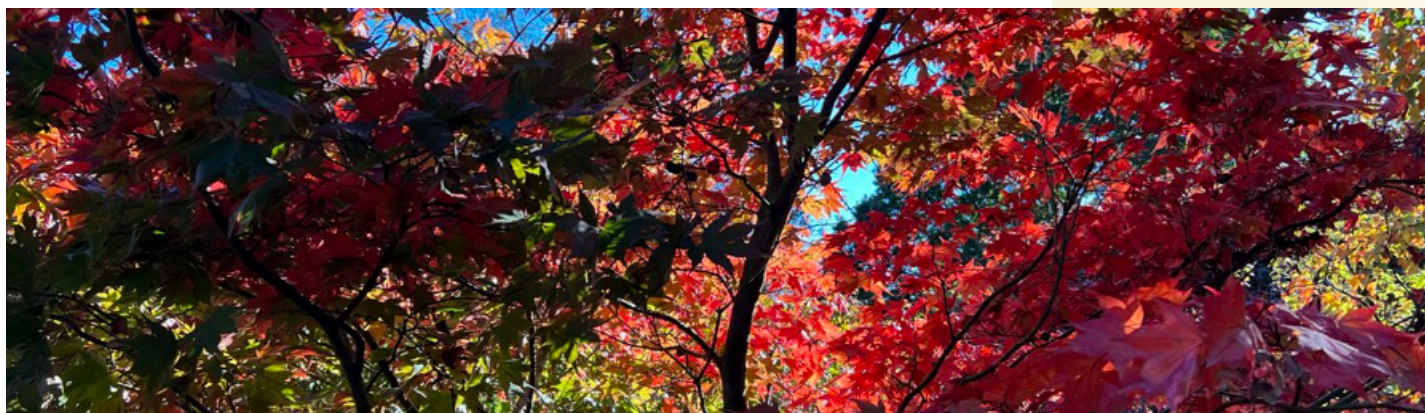
So let's do it - full of belief, confident that we're presentable inside and out.

Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going.

He always keeps his word.

Let's see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshiping together as some do but spurring each other on, especially as we see the Big day approaching.

Hebrews 10: 24-25
The Message



Lectionary Reflections OCTOBER 2025 from Roots on the Web

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5 October 2025 A treasured story 2 Timothy 1.1-14

There are many ways to protect something – you could put it in a strong box or a safe, wrap it in bubble wrap or cotton wool, or add a password to keep it secure. But God's Word shouldn't be password protected – we treasure it by passing it on. The good news, our treasured story that is encompassed within the pages of the Bible and has been handed down to us, needs to be shared with others, directly through sharing the Word of God, but also in the witness of how we live our lives, as Timothy is encouraged to do.

Addressing him as a beloved child, Paul reminds Timothy of the gift of faith that is in him, one shared by his mother and grandmother before him. Paul urges Timothy to be bold in guarding this good treasure and to not be ashamed of Jesus or his apostle and teacher Paul.



Like Timothy, we are fortunate to have had faith passed on to us by others. How can we in turn pass it on?

12 October 2025 Unchained! 2 Timothy 2.8-15

Paul has been imprisoned and chained for sharing the gospel of Jesus but he encourages Timothy that God's Word is not shackled, and that he should not be ashamed of preaching it.

Today we think about those who 'unchained' the Word of God for us and how we can 'unchain' it for others.

In 1696, one of the first free public libraries in England was opened, in Wimborne Minster, Dorset. The first donor believed his books would be safe in the church. This was a time when some religious books were burnt by the authorities. So a later donor insisted on having his books chained to the shelves, though the library itself remained open and free for the townspeople to use.



Wimborne's chained books symbolise open access despite restricted movement, like the chains that held the imprisoned Paul. Being 'chained like a criminal' didn't stop him spreading the gospel: 'the word of God is not chained' (2 Timothy 2:9).

19 October 2025 A toolbox for faith 2 Timothy 3.14–4.5

Timothy is encouraged to remain steadfast in the faith and teachings that have been handed on to him. In a famous verse, Paul reminds him that all Scripture is inspired by God and is needed to equip believers. Paul urges Timothy to be persistent in teaching the truth, despite the sufferings that may come.

Today we explore the importance of the Bible as a toolbox for our faith. Just as a workman needs the right tools for the job at hand, we need to be equipped to serve God in the world. Do we have the right tools to do so?

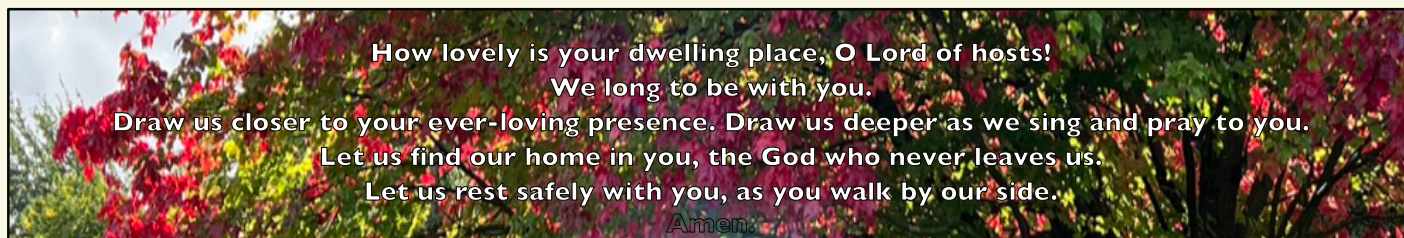


Like a spanner, it teaches humility – sometimes we need to change our fixed view and make an adjustment.

A spirit level reminds us to hold steady and onto God's Word in the ups-and-downs of life.

A tape measure: how do our attitudes and actions measure up against the Bible's teaching?

A hammer may remind us to be persistent (like the widow in our Gospel reading) and not give up in our Christian life when things are difficult.



In prison awaiting trial and reflecting on his life and ministry, Paul has confidence that his suffering and desertion by supporters has not been in vain. He has fought the good fight and a crown of righteousness awaits him. In his lowest moments, people failed him but God stood by him.

Today we learn from Paul's example – God will always stand by us when we stay close to him, even in the most difficult times.

WILDERNESS PILGRIMS

Wilderness Pilgrims is the umbrella identity for the Kairos groups across the district that embrace the outdoors and nature in their spiritual exploration and nurture. Kairos groups, of all kinds, emerge around spiritual interests and approaches, passions for ministry or justice. We are presently looking to recruit a pioneer lead for these projects by seeking those interested to form teams for the following within the Ryedale area:-

WALKING THE WAY

We aim to develop a monthly short walk around different locations in Ryedale, 3-5 miles in length, and incorporate opportunities to reflect, pray and discuss a theme. We hope, also, to develop some multimedia that draws on the walk, with reflections and music that can be accessed by those less able to enjoy the walks.



We are partnering with other existing faith walk groups, such as Buckrose Benefice, who have begun 'Walking Church' a 1-2 mile Amble on Friday afternoons.

A NEW PILGRIMAGE ROUTE

Building upon the St Aelred's Way Pilgrim Trail, a 41-mile route linking Rievaulx Abbey to a series of churches in the North West of Ryedale, each with a teardrop walking route.

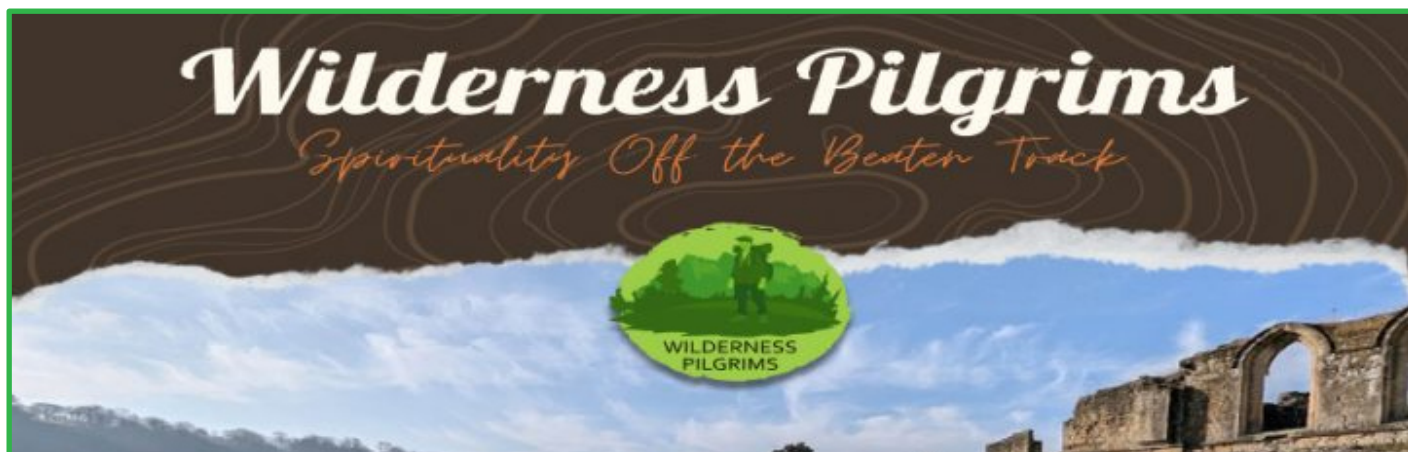
We plan to develop a new route connecting other churches in Ryedale, with both Rievaulx, Byland and Kirkham Priory.

FOREST CHURCH

Initially focussed on one or two locations across Ryedale, we are in the process of funding and recruiting a leader to offer family-focussed monthly act of worship, meeting outside and drawing on natural materials, crafts and foraging. This will be a community run gathering, if you'd be interested let us know.

and...

We are shaped by the passions and interests of those who engage with us, and so you may have an idea, that others may gather around. If so, do share it with us.





Sarah Hulme,

the Connexional Rural Mission and ministry officer will be leading a day looking at the mission of the rural church

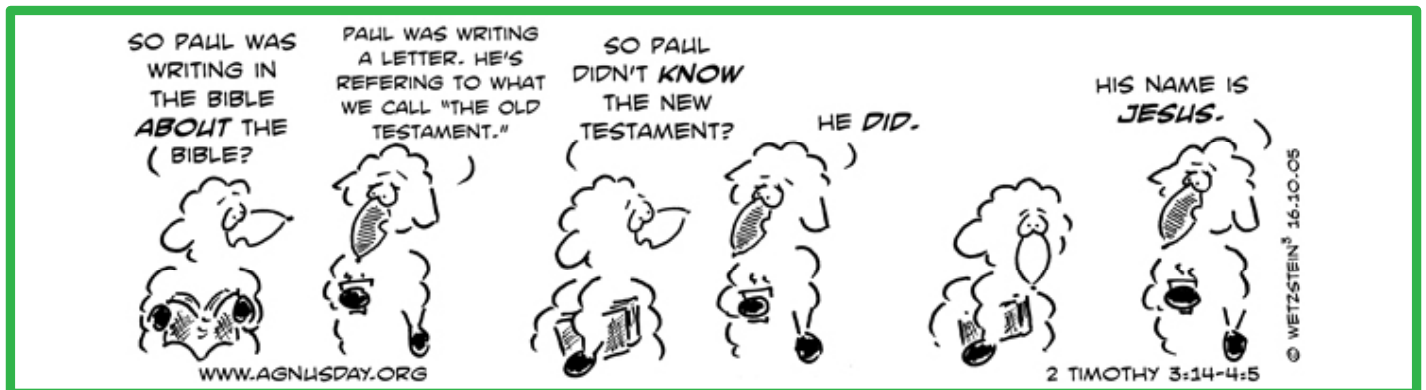
Saturday 25th October from 10 until 4 at Pickering Methodist Church

The day is open to all and free

Pie and pea lunch

donations towards the cost of lunch will be welcome

Please book via Rev Graham Ransom by 14th October.



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SCAN ME

“
Feel blessed to have had
the opportunity to be part
of something bigger
”

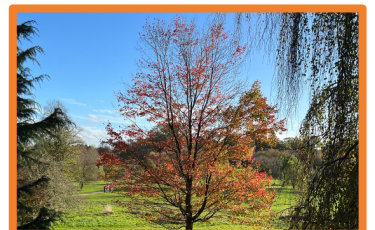
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