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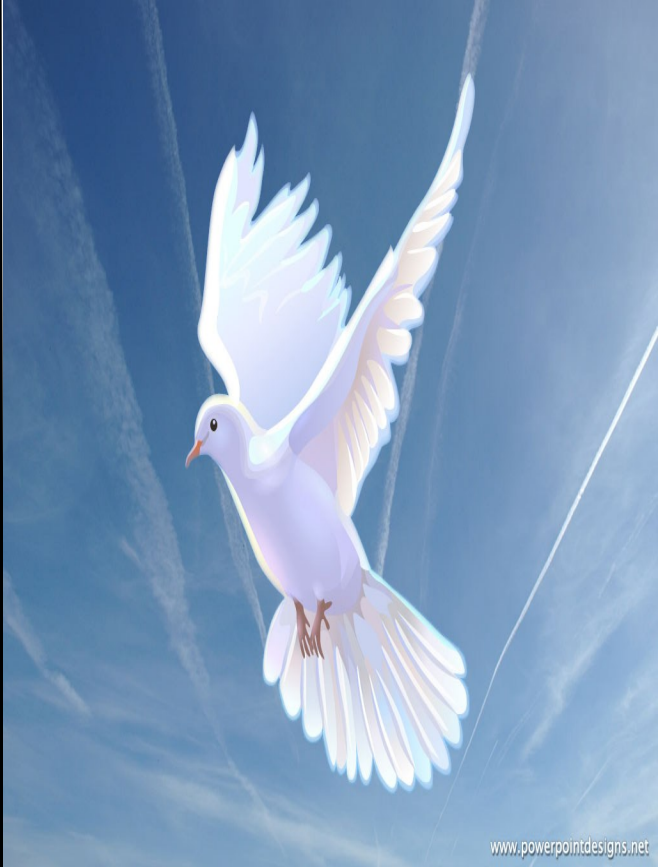
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St John's and St Luke's Together

St John's Church



www.powerpointdesigns.net

MAY 2026

60 pence

St Luke's Church



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Minister's letter May edition

Dear Friends

Last month Matthew shared some of his thinking about the shape of the new team vicar post and about the priorities we might set for St John's and St Luke's. One of those priorities is 'Learning and Discipleship'. I wonder what those words bring to mind for you.



Perhaps 'learning' is the easier of the two. It's easy to imagine things like study groups, books or courses, discussions (even sermons!) as ways we learn. But what about discipleship? We use the word a lot, but do we have a shared understanding of what it means. I've been pondering this question recently, prompted by the Lent book we read this year 'Dancing to the heartbeat of God – Stories of discipleship'. The book contained such a variety of ideas, but it didn't get me much closer to what discipleship is.

Let me share some of my thoughts, as I've wrestled with the question 'what is discipleship?', on the understanding that this is very much a work in progress!

1. Discipleship is more than learning about faith

At its heart, discipleship simply means following Jesus. It is not about passing an exam in faith, or becoming especially holy or impressive. It is about working out, slowly and imperfectly, how to live in the way of Jesus: with kindness, courage, forgiveness, hope and love. We can learn about faith in a study group, but discipleship begins when those things start to shape the way we live.

2. We learn by living

Some of our deepest learning happens in kitchens, workplaces, hospital waiting rooms, school gates and quiet evenings when we are simply trying to get through the day. Everyday life is not a distraction from faith, instead it's where faith happens and grows.

We grow in faith not by escaping life, but by discovering that God is present within it. We learn patience when life is frustrating. We learn compassion when someone close to us is struggling. We learn trust when we don't know what comes next.

3. Following Jesus in ordinary places

The first disciples learned as they went along. Sometimes they were brave; sometimes they were confused. Sometimes they got it right; often they got it wrong. Yet Jesus stayed with them. That is encouraging for us, because most discipleship looks very ordinary. It may be the choice to be patient with someone difficult. It may be finding time to pray in the middle of a busy day. It may be speaking kindly, listening carefully, helping a neighbour, or being honest about our worries. These small, ordinary things may not seem dramatic, but they are often the places where faith quietly grows.

4. There is room to get it wrong

Some of us can be a bit nervous about words like "discipleship" because it sounds as though we ought to have everything sorted out. I'm sure that the opposite is true. I gave up expecting everything to be sorted a long time ago! We do not have to have all the answers. I think it's far more important to ask good questions. We are allowed to wonder, to struggle, and to try again.

Discipleship is not about being perfect. It is about being willing to keep walking, trusting that God's grace is greater than our mistakes.

5. We do not grow alone

One of the gifts of being church together is that we do not have to do this alone. We can learn from one another's stories and experiences. Sometimes another person's honesty gives us courage. Sometimes someone else's question helps us realise we are not the only one wondering.

No one has all the answers. We are not a community of experts, but a community of learners. Each person brings something

different, and each perspective matters.

At the heart of Christian faith is the belief that we are loved, deeply and unconditionally. Discipleship is not about trying harder so that God will love us more. It is about learning to live from that love, and learning to share it with others.

So perhaps this month is a good time to ask ourselves:

Where am I learning at the moment — even if it doesn't feel very spiritual?

What questions am I carrying, rather than trying to answer too quickly?

How might my everyday life be one of the places God is already at work?

With best wishes


Judith (Ashurst)



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APRIL'S COFFEE MORNING

I'll do a bigger article for June's magazine once I've run the London Marathon (*at the time of writing it is 5 days away!*) but I have to say an enormous **THANK YOU** to everyone that supported the coffee morning on 11th April in aid of my fundraising for Pancreatic Cancer UK. £806.90 was raised which is just incredible. My total at the time of print is over £2000 which I am truly humbled about.

Thank you for the support, well wishes and prayers as I take on this challenge.

Gill



Who are Christian Aid?

Our work began in 1945, when we were founded by British and Irish churches to help refugees following the Second World War. We are an international charity determined to fight poverty and respond to humanitarian emergencies, no matter how tough it gets.

United by hope, we work in partnership with a network of churches, organisations and people of all faiths and none. Together, we deliver vital programmes of work across the world, and raise awareness and funds to support lasting change. By turning our hope into action, we're helping to build a fairer, more peaceful world.

The above text is from the website of Christian Aid who we are supporting via our Saturday 9 May coffee morning. You are warmly invited to come along, bring your friends and enjoy a lovely social event whilst raising money for this well respected, much needed charity. Donations of goods for tombola and raffle stalls, books, jigsaws, homemade cards and home baking are gratefully received; thank you. We look forward to welcoming you.

Kindest regards
Anne

QUESTION CORNER



Question

In Matthew 16, 18 Jesus said to Peter “You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church”. How should we interpret that?

Answer

Jesus was asking the disciples who they thought he was, and it was Peter who replied ‘You are the Messiah (the Christ), the Son of the living God’. And then Jesus said ‘You are Peter (PETROS). ‘the Rock’, and on THIS rock (PETRA) I will build my church’. In the Greek text there is a play on words. ‘Petros’ means ‘a rock’, but ‘PETRA’ (also ‘rock’) suggests a different subject—i.e. the confession of faith which Peter has just made. This indicates that the rock on which the church is build is ‘Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God’. This text has divided Christian opinion through the ages, with some placing more emphasis on Peter himself, and others emphasising the confession of faith Peter made. There ought not to be a division if we put due weight on all the words. Christians of all denominations should surely accept that Peter became a rock, a strong and courageous leader in the early church, and that he should be honoured as such. But, as we sing in a familiar hymn, ‘Christ is our corner stone. On him alone we build’.

David

THIRST COFFEE MORNING

Where? Dene Park community centre off Woodfield Road

When? Wednesdays 10.30 till 12.

Only closed around Christmas and New Year.

The coffee morning is under the umbrella of St. Johns and St. Lukes, led by John and Val Carr and a team of volunteers, including me (Jenny).

It's a safe space to enjoy a fairtrade coffee or tea £1.20, and homemade cake 30p and have a chat and be listened to amongst friends. If you are new you will soon become a regular and a friend.

On the 3rd Wednesday of each month we provide soup and a roll and fruit in the winter months, sandwiches and fruit in the summer months at 12ish, Folks can stay and enjoy this lunch together if they wish.

So, come along and give it a try, a warm welcome awaits you.

Kind regards

Jenny Winchester

P.S. Thirst was started by Karin Shaw and a group of prayers over 20 years ago. Karin is now a curate at St. Peters.



ST JOHN'S CHURCH BILTON

COFFEE MORNING

SATURDAY 9TH MAY

ENTRANCE £1

10AM-12NOON

(accompanied children free)

Refreshments included in entry fee

Home-made cakes

Jigsaws

Hand-made cards

Raffle

Large choice of books

Tombola

Refreshments



All proceeds in aid of



April 25th
Outreach Ministries
Learning Community



If you're part of an outreach ministry such as Messy Church, Lego Church, a community cafe, or are exploring new ways to connect with your community this new learning community is for you!

June 20th
Churchwardens
Learning Community



Come along to our session for Churchwardens. Archdeacon James will be joining us to share his wisdom once more.



**Change
of date!**

Learning Community Sessions

Saturday mornings from 10am – 12pm: @ St Andrews Starbeck

Please come along whether you're actively involved in lay ministry or are exploring it.

Please book your place and put the date in your diary.

June 6th
Preaching
Learning Community



Gather with us as we focus on engaging with the Bible narrative in ways that help our congregations encounter the living Word. We will also explore how to give and receive thoughtful feedback as part of reflective practice.

June 13th
Children & Youth
Learning Community



Join us for a session with a focus on team working, setting expectations and guiding behaviour. Gain practical, grace-filled approaches to support both your team and the children and young people you serve.

To reserve your place in a learning session, please contact Gayle Bryon Encouraging Lay Ministries Coordinator gaylebryonelm@gmail.com



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2026 Lunchtime Organ Concerts Wednesdays 12-1pm

May 13 Anthony Gray St Wilfrid Church Harrogate
June 10 Adrian Selway St Paul's Church Harrogate
July 15 Natalia Smirnova & Gill Hart
St Michaels and All Angels Church



Come and listen to our special Willis organ while enjoying the beautiful stained glass windows of our listed Gothic Arts and Crafts Church.

Admission free

Donations welcomed

Parking behind the church.

The Smiths Arms is opposite

SPEAK UP FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

Rural Interest Group on General Synod

Love the local church? Want it to flourish?

We do too, which is why we are launching this campaign for greater representation for the local church in the decisions of the Church of England. 2026 will see elections to General Synod which, for lay members, begin with the Deanery Synod elections at your APCMs in the Spring of 2026. This forms the electorate for General Synod elections later in the year.

All too often the local church voice is not heard because, particularly in small churches, representation on Synods are not seen as a priority. This, then is reflected on General Synod where the local church voice has become increasingly marginalised in the last decade. We strongly encourage every church to look again at its engagement with Deanery, Diocesan and General Synods to make our voices heard.

Deanery Synods – these gatherings of local churches are the most important starting place. Even the smallest congregation can elect a member to represent them, and each of these representatives get to vote for candidates (or to stand themselves) for Diocesan and General Synods. We particularly want to

encourage every local church to elect their Deanery Synod reps at the 2026 round of elections to ensure that your local church has a vote in elections to General Synod.

Diocesan Synods – these are where Diocese decisions are taken and direction is set. Every Deanery elects lay people and clergy to the Diocesan Synod, it's a great place to ensure the local church voice is heard and resources wisely shared.

General Synod – If you are a member of Deanery Synod you can vote (and even stand for election) in the elections to General Synod. Meetings take place two or three times a year. They are intense... but can be fun too! You get to be involved in the decision making and make your mark in the wider church. General Synod has been lacking voices from small local churches and we want to hear about all that God is doing in even the smallest parish. You can make a difference here. Even if you aren't able to stand, take part. Join in with hustings, make sure your candidates are interested in the local church and also want it to flourish. **Make your vote count.**

This communication comes from the Rural Interest Group on General Synod (RIGGS). We are concerned for all local churches, not just the rural, and we will be praying for you throughout the election process.



Reuse, Recycle.....Fabric

On the 20th March The Green Team held their Crafternoon, this year to support the work of the Harrogate Food Bank.

Sadly 1 in 5 people in the UK live below the poverty line. 90 volunteers worked to give over 34,000kg of food to the people of Harrogate in 2025. To distribute this strong carrier bags are always required.

By re purposing fabric a small team came together to sew strong tote bags from a donated bolt of upholstery fabric.

Sewing machines were whirring as others cut the fabric and pressed the fabric.





Lastly a name tape was sewn onto each bag to encourage the bags to be donated back to the foodbank to be used again and again. We also handed over some cotton carriers previously donated to the Green Team but never sold and made a collection in church of good quality plastic 'bags for life'.



A total of 14 reusable cotton carriers were made and delivered with an additional very large bag full of plastic bags for use by the foodbank.

A thoroughly enjoyable afternoon with a cuppa, needle and thread



!If you wish to donate to the Foodbank collection points are across Harrogate: at Waitrose or Morrisons, Mowbray Church Tuesdays, Jennyfields Evangelical Church Wednesdays, and Life Destiny Church Starbeck Thursdays all 10.30-12.30.

Items needed can vary (check their website) but usually include tinned meat, tinned fruit, UHT milk, Longlife juice, toothpaste, deodorant, razors and shaving foam.

<https://harrogatedistrict.foodbank.org.uk/>

The Green Team

March 2026

Saturday 9th May

St Wilfrid's Church, Harrogate

Time: 07:30 PM

Tickets: £5 / £30

Reserve your tickets:

W. cuorechamberorchestra.com

T. 07810 512961

A celebration of Joseph Haydn

Featuring Soloist Cansin Kara

Cuore
Chamber
Orchestra



Haydn
Symphony No.1 / Cello Concerto No.1
Elgar
Elegy
Arnold
Sinfonietta No.1
Mozart
Eine Kleine
Nachtmusik
09/05

Cuore

HOW DO I MAKE MY FAITH COUNT?

Come along and find out...

Events 2026

10 February 2026, 7pm-9pm @Leeds Minster

Discussion Evening - Bishop Chris Edmondson will help us think about how we hear God's call

22 April 2026, 6pm-9pm @Wakefield Cathedral

Vocations Fayre - connect with people from a broad range of ministries, including lay, ordained and chaplaincy. Pre-event Choral Evensong at 5:30pm

13 June 2026, 10am - 3pm @Bolton Abbey Priory

Vocations Retreat Day - Spend time discerning with God and others whilst immersed in the history and beauty of Bolton Abbey

23 September, 7pm-9pm @St Peter's Huddersfield

Discussion Evening - Hear about real experiences of starting a new ministry for lay and ordained

18 November, 7pm-9pm @Church House Leeds

Discussion Evening - Hear perspectives on ordained ministry from the new and the retiring

For more details email vocations@leeds.anglican.org

Registration via Eventbrite

Contacts

Exploring Vocation Together



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Administrator
jenice.guild@leeds.anglican.org

Revd Canon Sean Robertshaw
Diocesan Director of Vocations
sean.robertshaw@leeds.anglican.org

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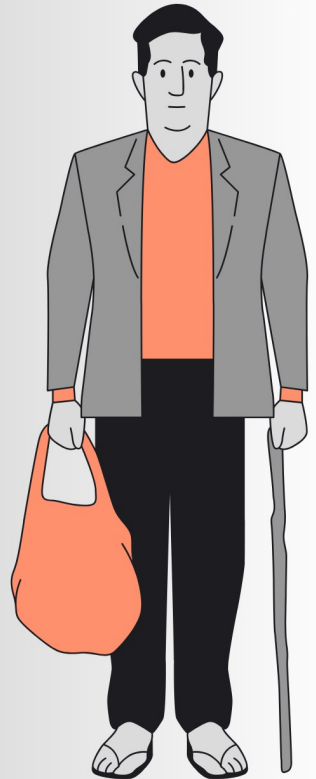
£0
extra cost to anyone

Homelessness can affect anyone.

Lifeline Harrogate is a Christian Charity that works with homeless people, and those vulnerably housed. We provide long-term supported accommodation to 21 people in seven 3-bedroom houses within Harrogate.

We have so far housed 159 residents over 53,000+ nights with an average stay of 340 nights. 89% of residents leave us with a positive move-on option

The outcome we aim for is always to transition residents onto fully independent living. That means for us they have developed a social network so that they can continue to feel supported and have the skills to succeed.



Transforming lives through Housing and Support

WORSHIP | FAITH | FOOD | FRIENDSHIP

1ST SUNDAY
OF THE MONTH

Youth
**WORSHIP
NIGHT**

6 - 7.30pm
WESLEY CHAPEL
28 Oxford St, Harrogate



**Register
online**

netmakers.org.uk/harrogate-youth

In partnership with

NETMAKERS
YOUTH

MAY'S CALENDAR

Friday 1 st	1-3.00pm	Wellbeing Café (SL)
Sunday 3rd	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am 6-7.30pm	Holy Communion (SJ) Parade Service (SJ) Holy Communion (SL) Youth Worship Night at Wesley Chapel
Tuesday 5 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Wednesday 6 th	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 7 th	9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group) (SL)
Friday 8 th	12-1.00pm 1-3.00pm 6.30-7.15pm 7-7.45pm	Bible Study Group (SL) Wellbeing Café (SL) Junior Choir Practice (SJ) Adult Choir Practice (SJ)
Saturday 9 th	10.00am-12noon	Coffee Morning in Church Hall (SJ)
Sunday 10th	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am 6-7.15pm	Holy Communion (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Café Church (SL) Ignite (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SL)
Monday 11 th	9-9.30am 7.30pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Baptism Information Session (SJ)
Tuesday 12 th	9-9.30am 10.00am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Walking Group (SJ)
Wednesday 13 th	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 14 th	7.00pm 9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Finance & Buildings Committee Meeting (SJ) Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group) (SL)
Friday 15 th	12-1.00pm 1-3.00pm 6.30-7.15pm 7-7.45pm	Bible Study Group (SL) Wellbeing Café (SL) Junior Choir Practice (SJ) Adult Choir Practice (SJ)

Sunday 17th	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am 12.30pm 6-7.15pm	Holy Communion (SJ) Morning Worship (SJ) Morning Worship (SL) Baptisms (SJ) Ignite (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SL)
Monday 18 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Tuesday 19 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Wednesday 20 th	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am 12.00pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre Thirst Table at Dene Park Community Centre
Thursday 21 st	9-9.30am 9.30-11.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group) (SL)
Friday 22 nd	1-3.00pm 6.30-7.15pm 7-7.45pm	Wellbeing Café (SL) Junior Choir Practice (SJ) Adult Choir Practice (SJ)
Sunday 24th	9.00am 10.30am 10.30am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (SJ) All Age Holy Communion (SJ) All Age Worship (SL) Evensong (SJ)
Tuesday 26 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Wednesday 27 th	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am 7.00pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre PCC Meeting (SJ)
Thursday 28 th	9-9.30am 12-1.00pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Bible Study Group (SL)
Sunday 31st	9.00am 10.30am 6-7.15pm	Holy Communion (SJ) JOINT Morning Worship (SL) Ignite (Year 7+ Youth Group) (SL)
<u>JUNE</u>		
Monday 1 st	9-9.30am 2-3.00pm	Morning Prayer (SJ) Monday First at Dene Park Community Centre
Tuesday 2 nd	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
Wednesday 3 rd	9-9.30am 10.30am 10.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ) Holy Communion (SJ) Thirst - Coffee at Dene Park Community Centre

Thursday 4 th	9-9.30am	Morning Prayer (SJ)
	9.30-11.30am	Little Fishes (Parent & Toddler Group (SL)
	12-1.00pm	Bible Study Group (SL)
Friday 5 th	6.30pm	Richard Taylor School Choral Concert (SJ)
	1-3.00pm	Wellbeing Café (SL)
	6.30-7.15pm	Junior Choir Practice (SJ)
	7-7.45pm	Adult Choir Practice (SJ)

The parish office will be closed between 25th and 28th May for staff holiday.

Monday First

Monday First is a monthly informal get-together for a service on a Monday afternoon in the Dene Park Community Centre, just off Woodfield Road. We meet on the first Monday of the month (Bank Holidays permitting!) from 2-3pm.

Led by a team of people who bring a range of skills to the mix, we explore a theme in a number of ways, including songs, discussion, easy crafts and some prayers. Past themes have included topics such as Harvest, Remembering, Love and Welcome. At the moment we are looking at some parables under the heading "Tales Jesus Told". It's amazing what we learn as we share and explore topics - did you know there are around 30 million sheep in the UK?

You would be welcome to join us at any of our sessions. The next dates are April 27th, June 1st and July 6th. And even if you can't join us please pray for the team, the regulars who come along and for more people to join us.

And I forgot to mention the compulsory tea and cake!

PEOPLE

Baptisms

Emily Beatrix Carlton
Winne Florence Wallen Lockwood
Freya Rose Myatt



We welcome you into the Lord's family.
We are members together of the body of Christ;
we are children of the same heavenly father;
we are inheritors of the Kingdom of God.
We welcome you.
Amen.

SUNDAY 10TH MAY

is Copy Date for
June's **FOCUS**

Items for inclusion to:

SJSLFocus@gmail.com

or Editor, **20 Redhill Close**
HG1 3JG

or leave them in the drawer at the
back of St John's Church

St John's & St Luke's

CHURCH OFFICE OPENING HOURS

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY

9.30am to 1.00pm

TUESDAY 11.30am to 1.00pm

FRIDAY CLOSED

565129 (+ Answerphone)

church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

The Editors of Focus magazine take every reasonable care to avoid errors in the advertisements and articles contained in this magazine. However, the inclusion of an article or advertisement in Focus does not imply either endorsement of or liability for the opinions expressed or of goods or services advertised, whether by the Editor, St John's and St Luke's PCC or St John's and St Luke's churches.

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the editor or the Clergy and whilst every care is taken not to change the original meaning, the editor and Clergy reserve the right to cut or alter articles submitted, as they deem necessary.



MISSING DAY OR NIGHT

Missing from home or education. Not knowing where they are or who they are with.



NEW PLACES

Discovering they have been going to new places where they have no obvious connections.



ONLINE USE

Spending more time online. Secretive activity, refusal to come offline. Have they distanced themselves from family, friends and usual activities?



CHANGE IN APPEARANCE

Clothing, personal hygiene, talking differently, tired.



CHANGE IN BEHAVIOUR

Have they become unusually secretive, fearful or withdrawn, aggressive, distanced themselves from family and friends, involved in anti-social behaviour.



CHANGE IN FRIENDS

Sudden changes in who they are 'hanging out' with including meeting new people from social media.



EXPLOITATION SPOT THE SIGNS



INJURIES

Unexplained bruises, cuts, burns, marks. Reluctance to seek medical attention.



COPING MECHANISMS

Alcohol/drug use/self-harm – what they may be doing or using in order to cope.



POSSESSIONS


Unexplained items e.g. New clothing, money, phone, drugs.



HELP US STOP EXPLOITATION

SAY SOMETHING, IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS.

CONTACT:

Crimestoppers  Police 
0800 555 111 101

WWW.STOP-CE.ORG

Contact:

L

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SAY SOMETHING
IF YOU SEE SOMETHING

STOPCE

SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING

Our small, friendly Scottish Country Dance group meet at St Luke's Church hall on Mondays from 7.30 to 9.30.

We welcome new members -
It is not necessary to have experience or bring a partner, just soft shoes and a sense of humour!

It's fun, good exercise and sociable.

The first night is free,
thereafter the fee is only £3.50.

We would love to see you!
Either turn up at the hall or contact:



Bilton & Woodfield
Community Library



YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

You can use computers or find out about local events and information. We run storytimes for pre-school children and reading groups for all.

YOU could become a member of our team of volunteers

We are open five days a week:

Monday	1.00pm - 5.00pm
Tuesday	9.30am - 5.00pm
Wednesday	CLOSED
Thursday	9.30am - 5.00pm
Friday	9.30am - 1.00pm
Saturday	9.30am - 1.00pm
Sunday	CLOSED

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St John's Church Hall and St Luke's Church
can be hired for single occasions or for regular events.
Contact the Church Office for more information.

ROOTS & Fruits
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30 King Edwards Drive, Harrogate, HG1 4HL.

Telephone: 01423 538445

Opening Times: 7.30am-5.30pm Tuesday - Saturday

Supporting the local community

ST JOHN'S AND ST LUKE'S TOGETHER WHO'S WHO

Parish Office Phone No: 01423 565129

Parish Office email: church@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

Parish Office address: c/o The Vicarage, Bilton Lane, Harrogate, HG1 3DT

For parish information including services and events

visit Parish Websites: www.stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

www.stlukesharrogate.org.uk

www.facebook.com/groups/stjohnsandstlukes.harrogate

www.facebook.com/stlukesharrogate

The Ministry Team

Matthew Hunter —

Judith Clark —

Team Rector

Children & Young People's Chaplain

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Tel 07946 492097

Matthew.hunter@leeds.anglican.org youthwork@stjohnsandstlukes.org.uk

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