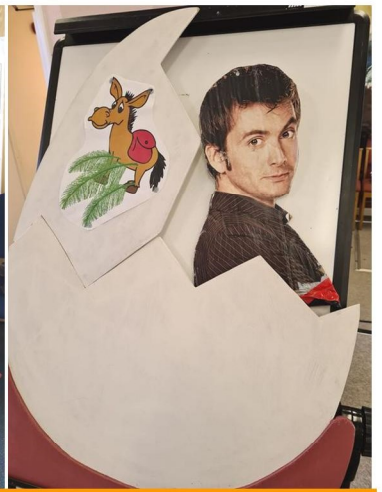




## Inside:

the Mary Songs go to  
Keighley, p 6  
Julia goes bodybuilding  
p 9  
and David Tennant  
(surprisingly) goes to  
ReWind to Easter p 3



# light into dark corners

the newsletter of the Zephaniah Trust  
registered charity 1036478  
29th year Easter 2022

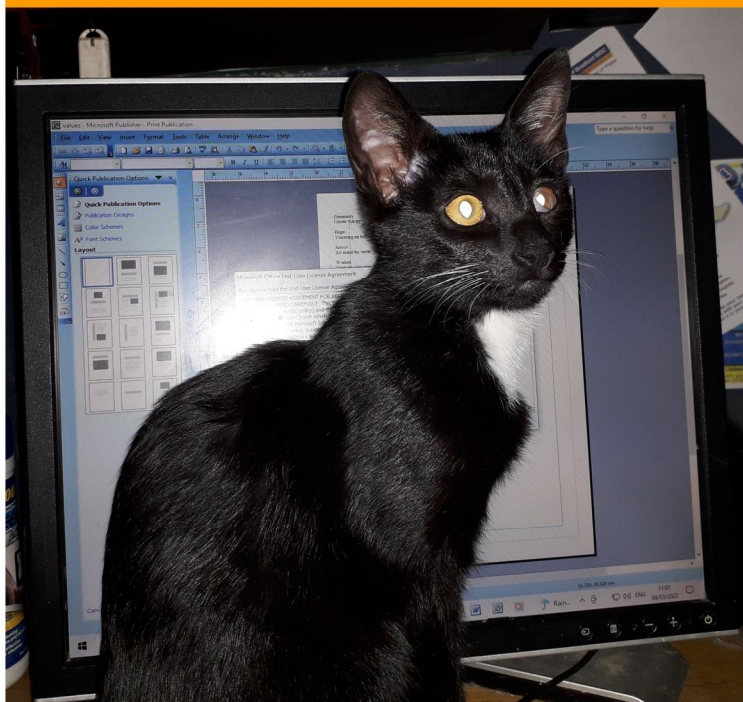
These  
determined  
little stars  
come up  
every year  
between the  
concrete step  
and my  
garden wall. I  
pass them as  
I go out in  
the morning  
and as I  
come home.  
God speaks  
to us all the  
time though  
his people  
and through  
his creation  
as well as  
through his  
word.

Speak, Lord...





# zephpeeps



The **Frouds** of Norwood have a cat ! Meet **Sable** from **David Hartley** of Earby's stable. David was the head who gave me a sabbatical to see whether the Zephaniah project had legs. This young lady, unlike other Froud cats, has long legs with which she pushes into the toaster, chases inanimate objects at breakneck speed, etc. Lovely but still loony. We're hoping she will mature...

We are delighted to hear that **Rev Andy Bowerman**, formerly of Gracespace in this parish is to become the next Dean of Bradford Cathedral. We look forward to seeing him and **Ali** and the family and working with him again, much closer home than Wareham. In conversation once with the Deans of Bradford, Ripon and Wakefield, I asked what the collective noun would be for such a group. "A forest !" was the instant repost. Clever people, these Deans.

We are working with the next generation ! It's been good to have **Kayleigh** on the team at ReWind and with **Nats** at St Cuthbert's for their mums and little ones group. **Thea** shared Mary Songs readings with her grandma and is booked in for a work experience week in July, when she will be visiting schools and refugee groups—and eating curry. She will be experiencing work the Zephaniah way !

On sadder note, we mourn with **Hannah**, whose mum, **Lesley**, a long time zephfriend has unexpectedly died. **Lesley** was often an appreciative member of my audiences - even as far as in Lancaster, and had been one of those lovely people who kept an eye on my mum. We shall miss her, but the memories are good.

The memorial service for **Simon Kirby** was held at Chelmsley Wood in January, followed by a concert from me. The artists formerly known as **the PKs** all remembered Simon as a teenager who was always keen to be helpful, and as the overhead projector operator. Indispensable in those days ! It was good to see **Norma, Marie** and **Hayley**, and share in the good memories, although it was a sad occasion. Because of covid, it had been a long time from his death to when we could all meet together, but it was a good and memorable day. Thank you for inviting me to be a part of it.



**Jenny** (see p 7) has been working hard getting her house ready for sale as she looks towards a new chapter of her life, based in York. We wish her well, and know that hers are going to be hard boots to fill. If you feel called to be part of the crazy world of Zephaniah, please speak to us...



# It's so good to be back !

## the almost normal

Back in person to schools, to take assemblies, RE lessons, Re:Winds and workshops; back in person to lead afternoon fellowships, church services and Zephaniah's Bible Times Exhibition; back in person to do concerts. Nearly normal.

John was back at St John's Great Horton the week after Zephaniah's Bible Times Exhibition to lead Muriel's Tuesday afternoon fellowship. Now men as well as ladies they are a lovely group who begin with "devotions" and then give their visitors freedom before closing with tea and biscuits - and cake ! As it was almost Easter, John sang some serious songs, including Hallelujah (just because it was Lent !) and talked about how things went wrong for so many people in the days leading up to Easter and how Jesus, face set towards Jerusalem, was not to be distracted or deflected.

## ReWind

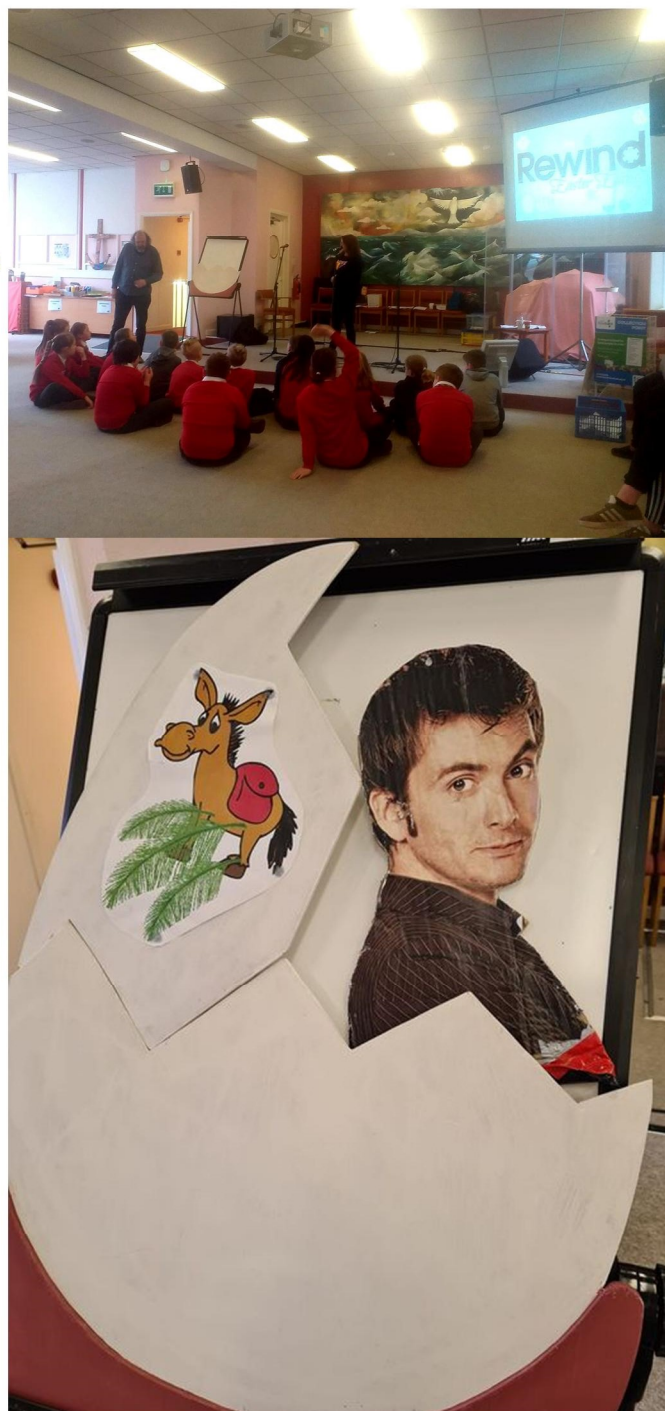
Seven classes from five schools to ReWind to Easter in Shipley Baptist Church, so more than 200 year 5's heard the Easter story in Shipley - plus staff, including one lady who popped back out of retirement as she didn't want to miss it! (the cake may have been a factor) Each session was limited to only one school for reasons of covid safety. Added to those numbers, Yvonne, who is still taking ReWind into schools in Spenningshall, rather than churches and our friends in Keighley and Bingley and indeed, all over the country take the numbers in thousands.

We were introduced to ReWind (a Scripture Union idea), via Yvonne, by Steve Grasham (now in foreign parts) to whom we owe a serious thank you.

Huge thank yous too to our schools for coming back. And an especially big shout-out to our volunteers - it is beyond marvellous to look out from the stage during the group activities and see such a talented and capable bunch of people, all connecting to and giving so much to the kids in their own individual ways.

It is such a privilege to share the Easter story with children. We are now meeting teachers who remember coming to our ReWind events as year 5 and 6 students. We use film clips and Julie's storytelling to tell the story of Palm Sunday, the Last Supper and the Crucifixion and point the way to Easter Sunday and the Resurrection of Jesus. Then a plant pot to paint which we deliver to school with compost and, this year for the first time, sunflower seeds rather than bulbs.

David Tennant, as always made several appearances.





# It's so good to be back !

## RE lessons

A teacher asked me to explain what the RE syllabus meant. This is not unusual—it is a difficult document, written by theologians for those who are not. I suggested I took the lesson. Miss agreed, without hesitation, so myself and year 3 set about explaining how the text of the Gospels is “Good News.” The children had been well taught: they could explain what the Gospels are; how many of them they are; their given names; the content. We set to looking for good news. It's written through them.

As we used to say, “Like Blackpool rock.”

For more on Yvonne's RE, see page 6



## assemblies

We get to lead assemblies or “worship” or “collective worship” in many different kinds of school. These pictures are of RC primary schools, **St Walburga's** in Shipley and **St Matthew's** in Allerton, both Bradford, though we do travel further - into Spenn Valley (Yvonne) and North Yorkshire, Calderdale and even Leeds (John).

In the recent troubled times, we have sent links to schools giving them access to recorded assemblies, but nothing beats the “live” experience. Children (and staff) have missed out on the experience of being in a large group singing praise to God (eg **Faithful God**) or encouragement to each other (eg **“Be bold”**); laughing together at the daft things we confess to doing to introduce a Bible story; quietly (sometimes !) reflecting and collecting our prayers together with an **Amen** (an “ahmen,” an “aymen” or an “armeen”).

We are back in many, but there are some schools who are understandably nervous about getting all their school family in the same crowded place at the same time.



## concerts

Two whole years after it should have happened, Cath and I performed the Mary Songs at St John's, Ingrow (Keighley). We sang the songs and Sheena and Thea read the linking lyrics at what was described by the vicar, Rev Dr Tracey Raistrick as a “worship concert.”

I'm happy with that description.

(photo Andrew Dennison)



# Taking Delight – Julie’s Lent Experiment

I’m not really one for observing Lent. I don’t usually give or take something up. Instead, I use it as a time to focus on the Easter story – often through Zeph’s programme of Easter schools events.

This year, however, is different.

One of my ongoing writing projects is exploring twelve key Bible stories through the lens of empathy and theology. Ash Wednesday saw me researching the concept of shame in a borrowed office. And I found myself thinking about the huge transformative power of delighting in one another.

We all need someone to delight in us. Someone to see us fully for who we are and delight in the unique combination of characteristics that defines us – warts and all. That’s how we combat the toxic destructive nature of shame and build people who can bring in God’s kingdom. It’s an idea that chimes strongly with Zephaniah’s identity. We are named for Zeph 3:17 – “The Lord your God is with you. He is mighty to save. **He will take great delight in you.** He will quiet you with his love. He rejoices over you with singing.”

We seek to create a place at Zephaniah that does that for those we reach out to – and I have benefitted from it greatly over the years. And there I was, on the first day of Lent, being challenged to take delight in those around me – so I took it up as a 40-day practice.

Most of the time, this has involved spending a few minutes each day thinking deeply about someone I’ve spent time with, reflecting on who they are and how that makes them delightful. On other days, I’ve tried to reflect on the process, what I’m learning and where it’s taking me.

It has been eye-opening, encouraging, and spirit-lifting. There is something in the intentionality of it that is powerful – I have a daily reminder in my phone that goes off at 10am telling me to take delight in others. I have delighted in family and friends, in acquaintances and children we’ve worked with. I feel fortunate to know so many wonderful people – and I feel rooted in a community of goodness.

I have opened my eyes to the sparks of God in the souls of others – and once that is done and embedded as practice, it is hard to undo it. There is much that is world-changing in that.

I have learned about myself – the days that are hardest to take delight in others are the ones where I am struggling myself, the days when I am tired or burdened. The struggle to find delight in those around me is a sign that I need to do some self-care and delight in myself for a bit. It is easier to delight in others, to see them as God sees them, when we see ourselves as God sees us too.

Through that, I understand that being able to delight in others is something of a privilege. It comes with being supported, having physical and emotional stability, living lives that are secure and free from debilitating chaos. Those of us who are in that privileged position must fight to secure it for those who are not. Sometimes the opportunities to find delight in others are small – when they are tiny and difficult to find, we must nurture and treasure them all the more.

This being delighted in, being loved wholly and completely, is a beautiful and godly gift to give to one another. It is what parents give to their children as infants when they meet their needs and provide security. It is the basis of healthy human relationships. It enables us to shore one another up through hard times and forgive one another when we make mistakes. And it is the way that God sees us.

The writing project continues. The reflection continues. But I am finding intentionally delighting in those around me to be a holy thing, so I’m not sure I’ll be giving up on it once Lent is over. Join me?





# zephpeeps - Yvonne in the Spen Valley

Yvonne works a little differently to the rest of the frontline team, in the defined geographical area of the Spen Valley.

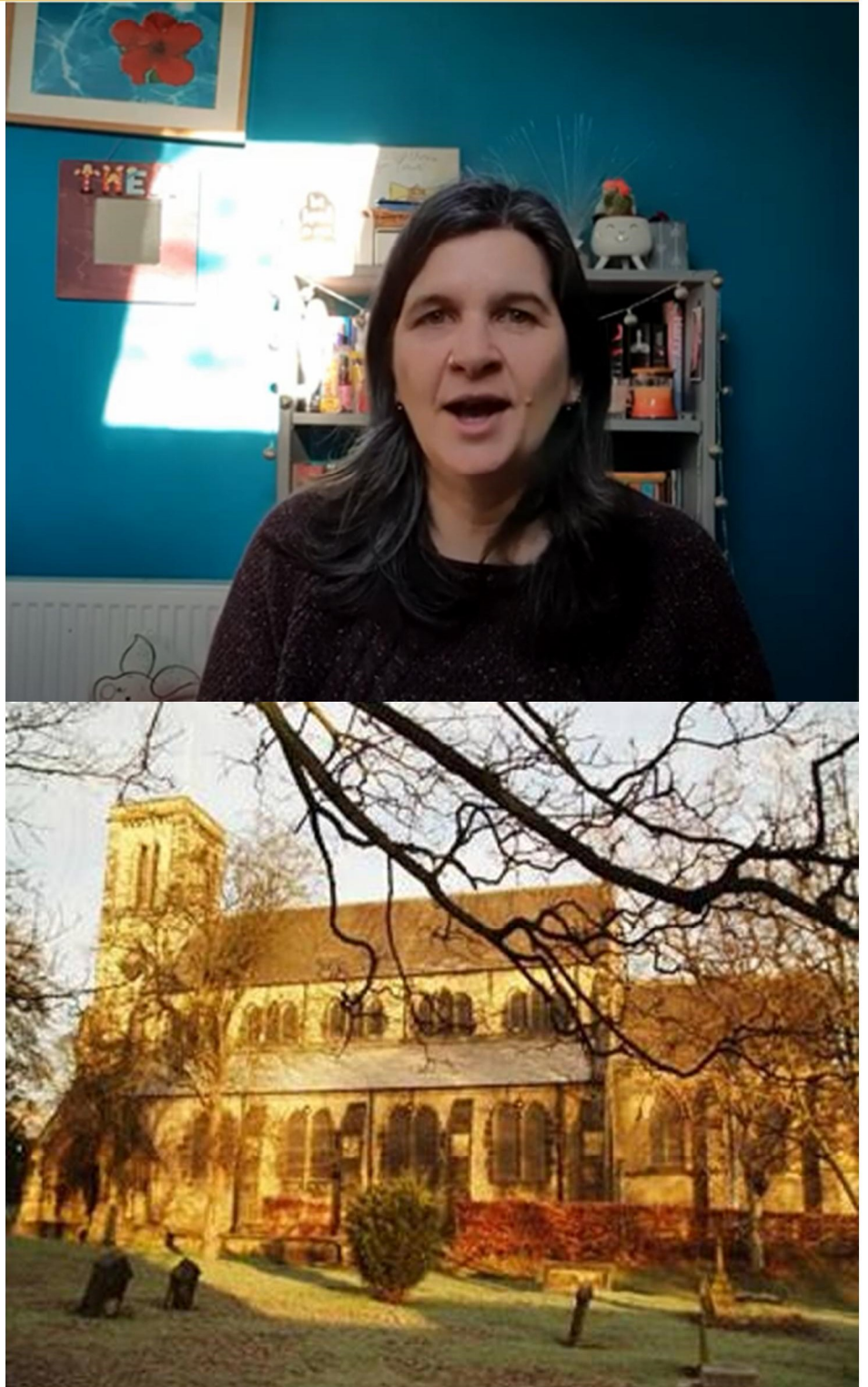
She used to work for the Spen Valley Faith in Schools Trust and was a Zephaniah Associate - so when that organisation's funding for her post ended, we knew we had to step up and keep her important work going - and she joined us as staff in September 2019 !

And thank goodness for that, because she has been hugely valued in her schools throughout the pandemic, continuing with assemblies and RE lessons, prayer spaces and Re:Winds - often having adapted quickly to virtual vs in-person sessions, working in different spaces and different ways, all with creativity and a commitment to making it work. 1 person, up to 19 schools, reaching around 4500 children a year. She's a star!

A greater proportion of Yvonne's work in schools is her RE teaching where she will do a series of lessons in successive weeks on a given theme. What do you think she was teaching here...

"One of my favourite questions of this afternoon's RE lesson - If days existed when the Big Bang happened as they do now, what day would it have happened on? One of the other kids decided it was probably a Friday coz Fridays are the best day and this was a pretty awesome thing!"

After the demise of SVFIST and then the covid shut downs, links with the churches in the Spen Valley towns (Cleckheaton, Heckmondwike, Birstall, etc) have become more tenuous, although a big chunk of the funding has followed Yvonne to Zephaniah. Churches that used to host Re:Wind events three times a year and Zephaniah's Bible Times Exhibition annually are no longer available. We are setting out to build those connections anew. We have a Sunday morning in Cleckheaton St John's. Anyone help with other churches ?





# zephpeeps—Jenny

Things are a-changing for me and mine. After over 12 years as the Trust Administrator, it's unlikely I'll get to celebrate 13 years at the Zephaniah desk, as I will be moving on at an, as yet, unfixed date in the autumn.

For quite a while now my life has been split between Shipley, where I live, work and worship, and York, where I socialise and where my boyfriend, Alex, lives. As Thomas takes his GCSE exams this summer we are at a point where we can consider uprooting and relocating without it being detrimental to his education, so that's what we're doing. We've looked at a number of education options including staying on for A levels at his current school and moving to college in Bradford, Leeds and York. In the end, Thomas decided that he liked York College, and the opportunities it offers, and he has a place to study for a BTEC Extended Diploma in Engineering from September.

It's safe to say that this is the biggest step that I have made since making my way North for university - and that was never meant to be permanent! It means a new home, a new church and, eventually, a new job. The first of those will hopefully happen in time for Thomas to start at York College in September. We might be renting initially while a more permanent solution is sorted. A new church will probably take a bit longer, and be dependent on where I eventually land in York.

I will continue in my post at Zephaniah into the first half of the autumn term. We hope to have a handover period with whoever takes over from me so that I have a chance to pass on all the knowledge built up over 12 years that's locked up in my head. I will then be moving on to pastures new and unknown.

Before then, I hope to find enough space in between getting my house ready for sale, and generally stressing at the enormity of what I'm about to do, to do a fundraiser. I once walked 19 miles via 19 of our schools for our 19th birthday. I'm thinking about a symbolic sponsored walk from Shipley to York. Watch this space! I am excited (as well as scared) about the new path ahead, but I am genuinely gutted that it will mean leaving the job I have loved, and the people I have worked with for the last 12 years.



This has been a hard newsletter piece to write because it pins down in print what has, so far, only been spoken of and therefore ephemeral.

Please pray for me.

- Pray for a new home. As I type we are still weighing up whether it's better to extend Alex's house, or move to a new one. Pray for clear thinking as we decide and, if it's the former, we find somewhere to Rent during building work.
- Pray for the right job at the right time, and that I'll recognise it when I see it.
- Pray for a new church family. My roots have gone down deep at Shipley Baptist and I think they will be tough to replace.
- Pray for me and Alex as we embark on a new phase in our lives together. Pray especially for Alex, as he will, as he put it, be giving up his current "man-cave in house form".
- Pray for Thomas as he leaves his school, his friends and his activities, and starts afresh in a new city.
- Pray for my mental health. It's exciting.... But it's VERY BIG and VERY stressful!





# It's so good to be back !

## Prayer Spaces

Much appreciated by children and staff, Julia and Yvonne, separately and sometimes simultaneously, set up and run Prayer Spaces. These require a space - difficult to find in many schools, and provide for a small group of children at any one time, a space in their hectic days, a chance to think about serious things ( eg hope, forgiveness, peace) and an opportunity to pray.

Many children are well informed about current affairs around the world and often worry about what is happening in places we adults know little about. We have a large map of the world on which to place a symbol of peace where is this an absence of such.

The invited activity for the top picture is simply to write your name on the paper hand, hang it on the tree and remember that you are loved. The lower picture features one of the most popular activities. A square of paper is folded closed. Open it up and write your "hope." before placing it on the shallow water and waiting while it opens up, lily-like in front of you.

It takes a while, but then we sometimes we have to be patient...

## Zephaniah's Bible Times Exhibition

We started this as the late Rev Stan Woods looked for younger, more physically strong people to help him continue this ministry of presenting the Bible, its history, its contents and its purpose to old and young alike. When Stan retired to the North East we realised we had to create our own travelling Expedition and before the pandemic we were taking it out between ten and twelve times every academic year, mostly in Bradford, but allowing for one distant posting ( eg Huddersfield, Kirby Stephen, Clitheroe) annually. That's more than 2,000 children, plus accompanying adults as well as church groups every year.

This is too good to keep in a cupboard, but I am beginning to understand how Stan felt ! We need to look at the long term future of staffing and transportation of this marvellous and back in demand way for churches to resource their local schools and indeed, their own congregations. Please pray that we shall understand what God wants and how to realise that.

We were booked to take it to St John's, Great Horton earlier in the term, but an increase in covid cases in the schools there meant that there weren't enough teachers to bring such children as were there. The indefatigable Gaby Young (top pic) rearranged the event and we hosted eight sessions each with around thirty (ish) lovely, curious children.





# It's so good to be back !

## out-of-classroom-education

It is good to be back at Ingleborough Hall Outdoor Education Centre again - this time with East Morton year 5s and High Craggs to come next term. We often sing under the elegant staircase, or in nicer weather, outside by a camp fire. Mr Wilkinson of Shipley loves to light a fire !

This was in a "classroom."

And I get to eat an Ingleborough Hall tea - with pudding !  
Remember those, Inglebrall veterans ?

## workshops

In the last week of term Julie and John have lead poetry and storytelling workshops in East Morton and Baildon.

For your delight, two Year 5 group poems, from East Morton CE Primary School, first this year's effort on our theme for the morning of Psalm Sunday, and, dated Easter 2019, Good Friday.

Julie asks the question, "If you're teacher asked to collect a car that hasn't been driven and bring it to her (they usually are in Primary schools) and if the owner challenges you, say, "My teacher needs it." Well, would you ?

John's approach is to note how many ways of getting into trouble with your mother are afforded the children at that triumphal entry.

1. In bother for just being there. Would your mother let you go into the city to see a celebrity. Not likely.
2. Destroying the local arboriculture. Tearing bits of palm trees. Whose trees ? Who cared ? Possibly the gardener...? And you can be sure that someone who knows your family has seen you.
3. Putting your clothes on the road. Imagine taking it home, messed up. The cross-examination as to how ("You did what?") and where ("You shouldn't have been there") I'd have left it on the road, I think. Put it down as yet another lost coat.
4. Making lots of noise. In fairness, singing houses are about as likely as quiet children.

When I shared this at Shipley Baptist, Bob Millar was heard laughing out loud. (Those who know, know)

Best question I was asked, "Who is Hosanna ?"



## Palm Sunday

Feeling mischievous

I sneak out,

Run into the city

And join the crowd.

Tempted to follow,

I snap a branch,

Wave it in the air

And join the crowd.

Looking for a red carpet,

I place my coat

Gracefully, respectfully

On the dusty road

And join the crowd.

Excited as a birthday morning

I yell, shout, scream

Out his name.

Me, my mates

And the crowd in Jerusalem.

## Good Friday

Pontius Pilate, selfish, stares;

Soldiers strong, evilly laugh;

Children, moany, scream;

Dogs, scared, hide;

Women of Jerusalem weep;

Mary Magdelene, broken-hearted, is distraught;

Rubbernecks annoyingly barge and shove;

Barabbas, fortunate, smirks;

Disciples, worried, pray;

Priests, important, smile;

Jesus, holy, dies.



# zephpeeps - Julia's work with refugees

I have the privilege of meeting people from many different backgrounds through working with refugees. It is also a privilege to be in a position to be able to help. Here is the story of when I met Abdul. (Not his real name...)

I met Abdul when I was delivering food packages from Biasan during lockdown, as I was making a delivery to his housemate. I learned that he was an asylum seeker from Afghanistan. He asked me if I could help him, through his friend interpreting Urdu and English over the phone as we stood on his doorstep.

I am involved with two refugee support organisations: Biasan, a weekly community group, who also run a storage unit with clothes and household items, and Bradford Refugee Forum, who run a befriending project amongst other activities. Both were able to help in this case. Biasan were able to help with kitchen equipment and warm clothes. BRF helped to link him with weekly gym sessions, and other support.

More recently, I went with Abdul to a community supermarket at St John's church, Bowling. The idea of the community supermarket is that people can pay a small amount on the door, and then go on through to choose their weekly shop (which would cost much more from supermarkets), from items the church had either bought, or been supplied by wholesale markets with surplus or other sources.

I'd never been before, but I was encouraged by how well it was run. There was a warm welcome, with volunteers speaking different languages on the door to make sure they could welcome everyone in a language people understood. The vicar came over to talk to us and tell Abdul about their other activities he could get involved in. And we were given a hot dinner! It is a group that clearly cares deeply about they do.

Even though he had little, Abdul would always look for ways to show kindness and generosity. One time he invited me inside for a cup of tea (when it was allowed!). His tea making skills, as it turns out, are one of a kind. I was given a steaming hot mug, which was mostly milk and a huge portion of sugar, with a hint of tea. I approached it suspiciously- it tasted amazing. Abdul gave me a second cup. I was bouncing off the walls for a few hours afterwards.

Abdul kindly wrote a testimony for BRF, so here are a few of his own words:

*"BRF have helped me to find gym and English Class.*

*BRF Volunteer helped me find more people from my country living in*

*Bradford and join a whatsapp group together. I can call the BRF volunteer when I have a house problem, for language and other support and for connecting me with other people and support groups."*

Since then, Abdul has been given leave to remain (refugee status), which is wonderful news!

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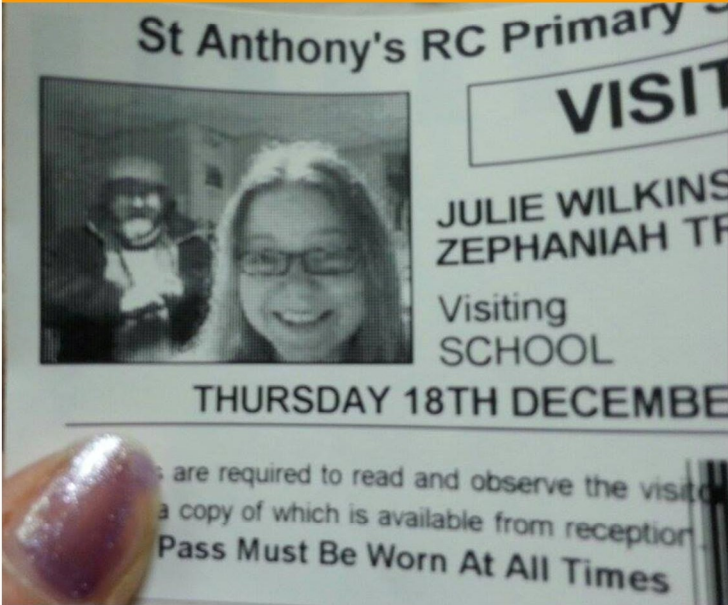
Another wonderful little person I have met is a 3 year old girl at Biasan, who lights up the whole room with her smile! Recently her mum told me that she is a fan of the TV show, Junior Bake Off- but in their house she has got confused and renamed it "Julia's Bake Off". It is the best compliment I have ever received!



Julia not working with refugees, but demonstrating a Prayer Space activity. Put your worries down !



# looking back...



"Darkness  
can't drive out  
darkness -  
only light  
can do that."

Martin Luther King, Jr



"They can't cancel Spring" - " David Hockney



Amongst these random memories :  
Not such a lovely Ingleborough Hall  
experience. A much younger, and slimmer, John  
getting inspiration...  
**"Though I go deep underground, you are there...  
Whenever I need you, you are there."**





# looking forward...

Our **Holiday Club** will run from Monday August 1st to Friday 5th, 10am till 12 at Shipley Baptist Church

**Zephaniah's Light Party** will, as always, be on October 31st. Somewhere.

The church school primary schools leavers' service is returning to **Bradford Cathedral** in July and **Zephaniah** has been invited to take part so we will be there !

We will need someone to take over the Trust administration... at Zephaniah we focus on the gifts that someone has and how we can help develop them, rather than looking for a specific skill set.

We don't expect a **Jenny** clone. Be in touch if you think it could be you....

We have some availability for **Prayer Spaces**...could your school use one ? Contact us at the addresses below.

Could your church use **Zephaniah's Bible Times Exhibition** ? It will be set out at Shipley Baptist Church May 9-13. Email [johnfroud@zeph.org.uk](mailto:johnfroud@zeph.org.uk) for a viewing. Evenings are not spoken for and possibly an afternoon or two...

**John** is able to take concert bookings anywhere in the country. **The Mary Songs**, including **Cath** is more local.



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TAKING LIGHT INTO DARK CORNERS  
**Zephaniah**  
Trust