

THE RIVERFOLD NEWSLETTER

***Growing Disciples with
Compassion,
Confidence
& Courage***

A Letter From The Riverfold: Faith for the Harvest

BY THE REV BECKY HANCOCK

LEAD MISSION ENABLER, THE RIVERFOLD & THE RIVER IDLE BENEFICE



As summer gives way to autumn, the days shorten, the fields change colour and the harvest is gathered. It feels like an appropriate picture for where we find ourselves as The Riverfold. When I wrote our first newsletter in January, we were beginning a new chapter, full of hope and anticipation about what God might do. Eight months on, there is much to give thanks for. The team has grown, relationships have deepened, new opportunities have emerged, and we look forward to new worshipping communities taking shape.

We have seen God at work: people taking steps of faith, conversations opening up, gifts being discovered and fresh possibilities emerging. We are learning that mission is not simply about having the right plans, but about noticing where the Holy Spirit is moving and having the courage to join in.

There have, of course, been challenges. Revitalising rural churches is complex, with declining congregations, buildings needing care, fewer people available to lead, and changing attitudes towards the Church. Growth takes time. Seeds are planted and tended long before we see the harvest.

So, as The Riverfold, let's hold together the realism about the challenges and confidence in the God who is with us. We may not have all the answers, but Jesus continues to love the people and communities entrusted to us.

I have been struck that, despite the drought, the River Idle keeps flowing. Our circumstances and churches may change, but the source of our life does not. The God who has called us is faithful, and his living water continues to flow.

Please continue to pray for our team, existing congregations and emerging worshipping communities—for wisdom, courage and perseverance. And let's keep sharing the stories of where we see God at work, however small they may seem.

After all, Jesus reminds us that there is 'rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.' (Luke 15:10)

May we never become so focused on the challenges facing the Church that we miss the joy of what God is doing right in front of us. As autumn comes, may we have faith to keep sowing, patience to keep tending, and hope to trust God for the harvest.

Every blessing,

Becky

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*'Rejoicing in the presence
of the angels of God over
one sinner who repents?'*

Luke 15:10

Looking Ahead: Growing Our Children & Family Mission:

BY LUCY MCCANN, CHILDREN & FAMILIES LEAD

At the time of writing, I find myself in a period of reflection and forward planning. With most groups paused for the summer, it has been a welcome opportunity to look ahead.

Since my appointment in January as Children and Families Lead for The Riverfold, I have been exploring ways to warmly welcome more young people and families into the family we call 'Church'. Over the past six months, I have connected with ministers, Children and Families Leads, volunteers, church groups and schools to understand where we can best share the Word of God. None of this would be possible without a soaking of prayer!

So, what's next? With Rev. Nigel Stones' secondment to the Idle and Sands Parish, The Riverfold now has a full complement of Mission Associates, securing our commitment to all our children, families and schools.

Plans are underway for a new Baby and Toddler Group in Ranskill this autumn. Our Little Lambs groups continue to support children as they begin their Christian journey through Bible stories, worship and prayer – the three golden threads of our Children and Families Mission. A huge thank you to all our wonderful volunteers who make these groups possible.

This autumn also sees two new worship communities: Family Faith @4 in Gringley, hosted by Rev. Liz, and Rooted@4 in Everton with Rev. Becky and Team. Both will offer families and all generations a chance to share food, explore faith and worship together.

We look forward to sharing more about these exciting new gatherings!

One Riverfold, One Purpose, One Family: Introducing our Mission Statement

As The Riverfold continues to grow and develop, we recognise that not everyone across our churches and benefices may be aware of the shared vision and purpose that brings us together. We wanted to take this opportunity to remind ourselves of what we are seeking to achieve as one family of churches, and the direction in which we believe God is calling us.

Our Mission Statement

The Riverfold is a family of churches across the River Idle, Blyth, Scrooby & Ranskill, Oswaldbeck Benefices and Idle & Sands Parish, united by a shared purpose: to grow disciples of Jesus Christ with compassion, confidence and courage, and to see a revival of Christian faith in our rural communities through worship, service and mission. Working together as one family of churches, we seek to reach people of all ages—especially children, young people and families—through strong partnerships with our local primary schools and by establishing new worshipping communities where people can encounter God. Together we are strengthening our churches, developing sustainable ministry, and faithfully joining in God's mission so that every community across The Riverfold may flourish in faith, hope and love.

Save the Date – Something Exciting Is Coming! 🎉

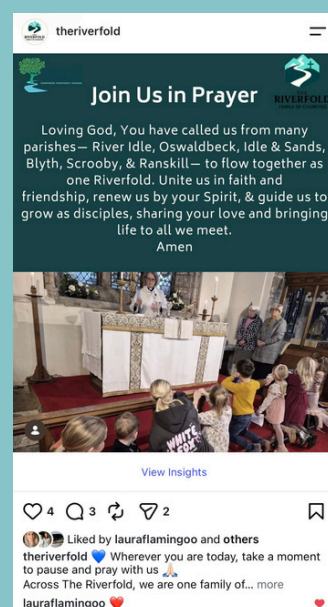
We are thrilled to announce that The Riverfold Worship Service is coming on Sunday 14th March 2027! This will be a wonderful opportunity for our whole Riverfold family to come together from across our churches and communities for a joyful and uplifting time of worship, celebration and fellowship. So put the date in your diary, spread the word and get excited! There is much more to come, and we can't wait to share all the details with you soon...



Follow us on Instagram:
For latest updates



<https://www.instagram.com/theriverfold/>



The Riverfold Churches in Focus: Our Journey Together



Summer was in full swing across The Riverfold! In the River Idle Benefice, Rev Becky Hancock and her husband John hosted a delicious BBQ, with plenty of food, laughter and lots of children enjoying the bouncy castle.

Meanwhile, Rev Louise Bearder welcomed everyone to her vicarage for a lovely afternoon tea in Blyth, Scrooby & Ranskill—where before long, everyone was in the kitchen lending a hand!

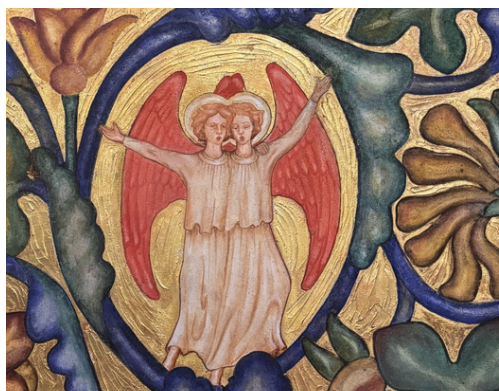
It has been wonderful to see people coming together in friendship and fellowship. As we move into autumn, we look forward to more opportunities to grow together in fellowship across The Riverfold.

It's been a particularly busy and exciting month at St Peter's Clayworth, with plenty to celebrate and lots happening at this special village church.

The church marked Lammas with a lovely celebration, reflecting on the traditions of the harvest and the importance of giving thanks for the food we enjoy. Homemade bread was very much part of the occasion, adding a warm and fitting touch to the celebrations and bringing people together in the spirit of the festival.

There was also some fantastic news on the funding front. St Peter's has secured National Lottery funding towards the conservation and care of the remarkable Phoebe Anna Traquair murals. These beautiful and nationally important works are a real treasure of the church, and the funding is a significant step towards ensuring that they can be properly protected and appreciated by future generations.

With Lammas celebrated, homemade bread shared and important funding secured, it has certainly been a memorable month for St Peter's Clayworth — and there is plenty to look forward to as work continues to safeguard the church and its extraordinary heritage.



In mid-August, St Helena's Church, Austerfield, welcomed the local community to its Angel Festival, showcasing a beautiful collection of handmade angels. Visitors also enjoyed exploring the eco garden and sharing refreshments, making it a wonderful celebration of creativity and community spirit. A huge thank you to everyone who created, visited, volunteered and supported the event. All funds raised will go towards the upkeep of our much-loved historic churches.



MISSION MESSY CHURCH

Misson Parish Hall

MONTHLY ON THURSDAY

10 SEPT
8 OCTOBER

3:30-5:30pm

Craft, Fun
Worship and Food







WAITING FOR HAMLET

BY DAVID VISICK
PERFORMED BY NICHOLAS COLLETT
AND TIM MARRIOTT

"OUTSTANDING" ★★★★★ THE GOOD FRINGE GUIDE
"A JOY TO BEHOLD" ★★★★★ BOHEMIAN BRITAIN
"A THEATRICAL JOY" ★★★★★ THE REVIEWS HUB

WEST STOCKWITH PARISH CHURCH (DN10 4EY)
Friday 02 October, 7:30pm

£13.00 (Standard) / £10.00 (Student)
BOOK NOW: Call 07500 043842 or email stoines01@aol.com.
For more info contact Steph on 07500 043842. Doors open at 7pm. Conspires included.
Drinks 50p. BYO wine. Glasses available.
liveondlocal.org.uk





River Idle Benefice

WOMEN'S GROUP

SATURDAY 5th September
10 AM - 12 NOON
ST NIC'S CHURCH HALL



Join us for
Food and Fellowship
To Explore our Relationship
with God

All Women are Welcome

Future
Dates
2026/7:

- 10 October
- 14 November
- 12 December
- 9 January 2027

£3 recommended donation to cover breakfast.
Thank you

Contact is Natasha Chadwick: 07894 223 097

Not-to-miss news:

The Riverfold Gathering: Together in Worship

In response to this exciting growth, we are delighted to announce that, from September, we will be holding monthly Riverfold Worship Services.

These special evenings will be an opportunity to pause, gather from across our communities, lift our voices in worship, pray together and spend time in God's presence. Whether you come regularly or are simply curious to join us for the first time, everyone is warmly welcome.

The services will take place on nominated Tuesdays from 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm, hosted in different churches across The Riverfold.

Upcoming Worship Services:

Tuesday 22nd September - St Nicholas, Bawtry

Tuesday 20th October - All Saints, Misterton

Tuesday 24th November - St Bartholomew's, Sutton-cum-Lound

Tuesday 26th January- St Barnabas, Ranskill

We are so excited to see what God will continue to do as we grow together in faith, fellowship and worship. We hope you will be able to join us at one or perhaps all of these evenings as we come together as The Riverfold.

Come, worship, pray and be part of what God is doing among us.

Save the Date: New Worshipping Communities

Exciting things are happening this autumn! We're delighted to announce two new worship communities coming to The Riverfold:

Family Faith @ 4 – Gringley, hosted by Rev. Liz Mack

Rooted @4 – Everton, with Rev. Becky Hancock & Team

These new gatherings will bring families and all generations together to share food, explore faith and worship together.

And that's not all...plans are also underway for a new Baby & Toddler Group in Ranskill! 🐣

Dates to be announced soon, watch this space!

Opportunities within The Riverfold:

Join The Riverfold Team!

Worship Team Leader

The Riverfold is looking for a passionate Worship Team Leader to inspire and develop vibrant, Spirit-led worship across our churches, schools and New Worshipping Communities. This exciting role will involve equipping and mentoring musicians and emerging worship leaders, building and supporting worship teams, shaping creative worship, and helping people encounter Jesus through authentic and contemporary worship. Based in Bawtry, with local travel required, the role is 35 hours per week and includes generous holiday and pension benefits. Funding is currently secured until the end of 2030, with the possibility of extension. Closing date: Wednesday 30 September.

Volunteer Opportunities

We're looking for volunteers with experience in visual and creative skills, including photography, filming, video editing and other digital media. As we continue building the Riverfold website, anyone with experience in these areas would be a wonderful support to our team. If you're interested in volunteering or finding out more about any of the opportunities above, please email our Operations Team Lead, Laura Korczyk, at laura@theriverfold.com



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*Operations Team Lead -
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