



**York
Methodists**

Circuit Newsletter



Revd Rachel Muthoni, Revd Keith Albans and Deacon Judith Stoddart at the Welcome Service, 3rd September 2017, and a piece of the rock given out to those who attended.



Christmas Special 2017

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Christmas Services

	25th December	Other Christmas services	
Acaster Malbis	At Bishopthorpe		
Acomb	10am A Lindley AAW	24th Dec 11.30pm	
Alne	USA		
Bishopthorpe	9.15am J Skitt	22nd Dec 6.30pm USM carols, 24th Dec 11.30pm HC	
Brafferton Helperby	USA M Chester		
Central	10.00am J Stoddart		
Clifton	10.30am V Paylor		
Clifton Moor	Anglican		
Copmanthorpe	10.30am J Skitt AAW		
Cornerstone	NS		
Dunnington	NS		
Easingwold	10.30am E Cushion		
Haxby & Wigginton	9.30am AAW J Freeman		24th Dec 4pm Nativity service, 24th Dec 11.30pm HC 31st Dec 9.30am Christingle
Heslington	10am P Mott HC		24th Dec 6pm J Nobel AAW 24th Dec 11.15pm J Nobel HC
Hessay	11am USA Bilton		24th Dec 2pm Christingle
Heworth	10.00am R Muthoni	24th Dec 9pm	
Holgate	10.30am OA	24th Dec 4pm Carols	
Huby	At Easingwold		
Huntington	10.30am K Albans	24th Dec 3.30pm Christingle, 24th Dec 11.15pm K Albans HC	

	25th December	Other Christmas services
Husthwaite	At Easingwold	
Lidgett	10.30am I Hill Jt	
New Earswick	NS	
Poppleton	At Lidgett	17th Dec 6.30pm Carols, 24th Dec 4pm Carols
Raskelf	USA	
Rufforth	At Lidgett	
Sheriff Hutton	9.30am E Cushion	24th Dec 3pm Christingle
Southlands	11am A Lindley AAW	24th Dec 4pm Carols
Stamford Bridge	NS	17th Dec 2.30pm Carols
Stillingfleet	NS	24th Dec 11pm USA J Skitt
Stillington	R Jackson	
Strensall	9.30am K Albans	
Tholthorpe	USA	24th Dec 11.15pm HC E Cushion
Thornton-le-Clay	9.30am @Sheriff Hutton	
Trinity	10am J Schofield (Joint with Ark)	
West Thorpe	NS	



New Year's Eve, 31st December

Bishophorpe	11.45pm Watchnight
Huntington	11.30pm Watchnight

Covenant Services

Church	Date	Church	Date
Acaster Malbis	14th Jan 2.30pm	Lidgett	21st Jan 10.30am
Acomb	14th Jan 10.30am	New Earswick	7th Jan 10.30am
Bishopthorpe	7th Jan 10.30am	Poppleton	14th Jan 10.30am
Central	14th Jan 10.30am	Rufforth	7th Jan 11am
Clifton	7th Jan 10.30am	Sheriff Hutton	7th Jan 10.30am
Copmanthorpe	21st Jan 10.30am	Southlands	7th Jan 10.30am
Dunnington	14th Jan 10.30am	Stamford Bridge	7th Jan 10.45am
Easingwold	14th Jan 10.30am	Stillingfleet	21st Jan 4.30pm
Haxby &	7th Jan 8.30am & 10.30am	Stillington	28th Jan 9.30am
Heslington	14th Jan 10am	Strensall	14th Jan 10.30am
Hessay	7th Jan 9.30am	Tholthorpe	7th Jan 3pm
Heworth	7th Jan 10.30am	Thornton	7th Jan 9am
Huby	28th Jan 11am	Trinity	14th Jan 9.45am
Huntington	7th Jan 10.30am	West Thorpe	21st Jan 10.30am
Husthwaite	21st Jan 10.30am		

Circuit Staff rest days

Keith Albans	Friday
Elizabeth Cushion	Friday
Ian Hill	Monday
Andy Lindley	Monday

Rachel Muthoni	Monday
John Schofield	Monday
Julia Skitt	Monday
Judith Stoddart	Saturday

Dear Friends,

This is my first letter since becoming Superintendent, and I must begin by saying thank you for welcoming all those of us who joined the Circuit in September – we are getting accustomed to life on and around the 54th parallel and look forward to all that lies ahead.

Welcome to this special Christmas edition of the Circuit's Newsletter. The newsletter usually accompanies the Circuit Plan, but that came out a month earlier on this occasion. This means that it now better fits the pattern of the Church's worshipping year, with the key seasons fitting onto one Plan rather than spreading across two editions. Newsletter and Plan will come back together in February 2018.

In these pages you'll find details of all the special ways in which we are planning to mark our Saviour's birth, on and around December 25th. There are also details of a couple of Watchnight Services and the various Covenant Services which will be held during January. I hope that if you cannot manage to attend any of your own Church's services, you will feel able to find one nearby.

Advent and Christmas give us a great opportunity to tell again the old familiar story. Some will focus on the individual characters – each with crucial roles to play. Others will focus on the setting – angels, manger and star. Some of the ways the story is told may well not be in the Bible! But fundamentally, the reason we still tell the story is because it is a God-story. Incarnation shows us God's love, God's involvement and God's willingness to get divine hands dirty with the stuff of our lives.

As Charles Wesley puts it: "Our God, contracted to a span..." That is always worth celebrating!

May God's peace and blessing be yours this Christmas,

Keith



Introduction from David Arscott: Rural Mission Enabler based in the Easingwold area.



My background is in community work in various forms such as: setting up volunteer groups in rural parishes in Warwickshire to open Public Rights of Way; helping a community decide on landscape improvements in their village near Doncaster; enabling people on a council estate in Leeds to maintain and develop their gardens and streets; and giving people who have become homeless in Bradford somewhere to live and some support while they got their lives back on track. I also spent ten years helping churches in areas of urban deprivation across the north of England to bring tangible good news into their local communities.

I moved from Warwickshire to Yorkshire in 1995 and live with my wife, Kate, in Wetherby. As a teenager I found my faith in Jesus through Crusaders (now Urban Saints) then went on to leading youth and pastoral groups, being a church leader for a few years and writing for Scripture Union Daily Bread. I have lived in villages in Warwickshire and Somerset and I feel very close to God in the countryside. Enabling believers to join with God in bringing His kingdom into rural communities could just be my dream job.

What's going on at Cornerstone?



A year ago, a group of people from around the circuit was formed with a vision to work in the Tang Hall area around what was St George's Methodist Church. It was hoped this would be an opportunity to serve the people of this part of the city and grow new opportunities for ministry and mission, and explore new ways of being church. We decided to rename the building and church Cornerstone Methodist church to reflect that we want to become an important part of the local community, as well as pointing people to Jesus, our cornerstone.

So far we have:

- Held times of prayer together and with others.
- Worked on renovating the building, redecorating and installing a café servery as well as essential maintenance work.

- Explored partnership with York Community Church (YCC), who now run several community activities in the building. This includes the local Foodbank, debt counselling, groups for older people and parents and young children.



- Welcomed York Chinese Christian church who now worship at Cornerstone on Sundays.
- Held a community fun day to which we welcomed many local people of all ages.

The future

We are partnering with YCC to make plans for a community café which will provide a meeting place for local people and a base for further initiatives. We hope this will help draw the local community together and help them see the church as part of the community, as well as providing a resource for other groups working in the area.

For this first year, practical and building issues have been our priorities, but those involved at Cornerstone are also praying and thinking about how best to 'be church'. We want to discern a way of worshipping that will provide a welcoming place for those who use the building for community activities to be drawn in and to find out more about our faith.

This Christmas we plan to use the new café facilities to invite people in to sing carols and hear about the Christmas story. Join us on Friday 15th December at 7pm! From January we will be worshipping together on the third Friday of each month from 7pm. All are very welcome to come along!

We would love to have more people involved, so if you are interested please do get in touch with Lois or Angie at the circuit office.

Carols at Cornerstone: Friday 15th December from 7pm.
Free refreshments. All ages welcome.

Who Let The Dads Out?

Methodists across the circuit are reaching out and connecting with their communities in a variety of imaginative ways. From cafés to community lunches, parent and toddler groups and messy church, it's all go. In serving people we build relationships and trust, which can then allow us to speak of our faith and draw them closer to God.

Some groups of people are easier to reach than others. Many churches do a great job connecting with the oldest and youngest generations, and very often mums too. But what about the dads?

Men are not only tricky to connect with, but are more likely to be seen as self-sufficient and not in need of any community support. An image we're more than likely to go along with. But this isn't the full picture.

The main cause of death for men under 50 is suicide and mental health problems are on the increase. Work is not always a place for making friendships. Relocating to a new area can leave men feeling isolated, while mum has the school yard or the church toddler group to start building new friendships. A few sweeping statements there – but you get the picture.

BRF, the people behind Messy Church, also support a project aimed at dads. "Who let the Dads Out?" is essentially a variation on the parent and toddler group aimed at working dads and their young children (typically 0-7yrs). They are run by churches once a month on a Saturday morning with a few "manly" touches like bacon sandwiches and newspapers. Alongside the toddler group activities there might be craft, construction or computer games for the older children.

Dads get time to deepen their relationship with their children and an opportunity to meet other dads. And if mum gets a break, then the whole family unit benefits. The church gets to build new relationships - and perhaps learn what the world looks like for some of the younger men in the community.

For any church already running a parent and toddler group it's relatively easy to set up. "Who let the dads out?" has been running successfully at Haxby for over a year. If you'd like to know more, have a chat with our Families Worker, Lorraine Jones, or look at www.wholetthedadsout.org.uk

Stephen Spain

Prayer and fasting

Earlier this year the Methodist Conference called on the Methodist people to dedicate a day of prayer and fasting for the church and our communities. Our Circuit has recommended that churches should look to do this at a time of their choosing around Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd December, at the start of Advent and the new liturgical year.



This year's Presidential theme is 'Day by day' and you can download the booklet on Prayers for a 'Spiritual 5 a day' from <http://www.methodist.org.uk/media/2722409/day-by-day-presidential-booklet-2017.pdf> or order from Methodist Publishing.

More information and resources can be found on the Methodist website www.methodist.org.uk

It may not be appropriate for you to fast from food, for example for health reasons. It is especially important to be sensitive to those with body image issues and eating disorders, and to consider the message that we send if we make fasting from food the only option.

One idea that has been suggested is to make a '**reverse advent calendar**'- get a box or bag- perhaps something like a bottle carrier which is divided into sections- and collect tins and packets for Carecent or a foodbank, one for every day of advent.

You could contact York Foodbank to see what they most need- you can find a list of urgently needed items and drop off points at <https://york.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/> <http://www.realadvent.co.uk/> might also be useful.



There are other ways you can fast or focus on prayer. What matters is the reason for what you do, rather than the act of fasting itself. Here are some suggestions:

- **Electronic fast:** give up looking at the internet or carrying your mobile phone. Fast from social media or checking the news. Maybe give up TV! Spend the time in prayer or reading the Bible instead.
- **Money fast:** give up spending money, perhaps on items like clothes, sweets, drinks or meals out.

- **Time fast:** give up an activity and use the time to instead focus on God. Maybe that could even mean cutting back on church meetings.
- **Partial fast:** instead of giving up food for a whole day, cut out a type of food, e.g. sweets or cake. If you're a meat eater, you could go vegetarian or vegan for a period of time. Or you could try living on the equivalent of the contents of a Foodbank parcel or what someone living on the poverty line could afford. Again, you could donate the money you save to a charity tackling food poverty at home or around the world.

Circuit council report 18th September 2017

- As well as new ministers (Revd Keith Albans, Revd Rachel Muthoni and Deacon Judith Stoddart), two new circuit lay employees have begun work: David Arscott as Rural Mission Enabler in the northern part of the circuit and John Bailey in Andy Lindley's section.
- Churches were reminded to ask preachers first before requesting them to take a special service, and then to inform the circuit office via the Plan forms. Preachers' training and expenses were discussed.
- Discussions took place about the possibility of changing the quarters that the Plan is based on, to ensure the whole of Advent or Lent is included on the same Plan and to avoid having to plan Lent in early autumn. Discussions would continue at staff meetings.
- The circuit stewards were thanked for all the effort that had gone in to dealing with the manse moves and changes of staff over the summer.
- Approval was given to rent out Vanbrugh Drive manse while decisions are made about the University Chaplaincy. Vesper Drive, Heworth Green and Dene Holm manses are to be sold.
- Work at Shipton will in future be centred on the Anglican-Methodist Primary School, and it is hoped to appoint a chaplain.
- Circuit Council gave approval to projects to refurbish the space used by Carecent, for double glazing to be installed at Dunnington and for fire alarm installation at Southlands.
- Many church property projects are exempt from needing planning permission due to our status as a church. Please talk to Angie Creswick (Circuit Resources Manager) early on in any planning of building works to ensure you follow the best route to getting consent for your project.
- New policies and procedures for safeguarding children and adults who are

vulnerable are available at www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/safeguarding/methodist-safeguarding-policy These must be used in place of previous ones as there are a number of changes.

STOP PRESS! Circuit Council 16th November 2017

- Stephen Spain and Kim Gabbatiss spoke of their call to ordained presbyteral and diaconal ministry respectively. The meeting voted overwhelmingly in support of both of them and Kim and Stephen will now go forward to the District stage of the candidating process. We hold them and their families in our prayers.
- The manse at Vesper Drive has now been sold, and the sale of the Heworth Green manse is nearing completion. A sale has been agreed for Dene Holm but is still in the early stages.
- A presentation was given on the Circuit Vision statement and churches were encouraged to look at how their activities reflect our vision.
- The 2018 Circuit Celebration will be held on Saturday 14th July. Time and venue are still to be confirmed. Our guest speaker will be the Secretary of Conference, Revd Gareth J Powell. It is hoped that a review of the Circuit's Constitution will be completed in time for the revisions to be signed off at this event.

Regular prayer meetings

Easingwold	Prayer meeting every Friday 8.30am.
Haxby	Ecumenical prayer 9am every Wednesday, venues vary.
Heslington	Christian Meditation Group, Fridays 10.30am & second Sundays 7pm. Prayer Group, Tuesdays 10am.
Holgate	Prayer and Care, Thursdays 10am.
Heworth	Prayer meeting, Thursday 7.30pm
Huby	Prayer meeting, Thursdays 8am.
Husthwaite	Prayer meeting, 1st Wednesday of the month 9am.
Poppleton	Prayerful Reflection, Tuesdays 10am-10.30.
Southlands	Concern: a meeting for prayer, Wednesdays 2.30pm.
Tholthorpe	Prayer meeting, Wednesdays 8.45-9.15am.

Circuit Prayer Rota

Week beginning	Church to pray for	Topic to pray for
5th November	Alne	Work with those who are homeless
12th November	Bishophorpe	The armed forces and chaplains
19th November	Central	Those who are housebound
26th November	Clifton	Victims of domestic violence
3rd December	Clifton Moor	Young people in our churches
10th December	Copmanthorpe	All We Can
17th December	Cornerstone	Those exploring new ministries
24th December	Dunnington	Those who are alone at Christmas
31st December	Easingwold	The year ahead
7th January	Haxby & Wigginton	National leaders
14th January	Heslington	Children in our churches
21st January	Hessay	Week of prayer for Christian unity
28th January	Heworth	Carecent

Diary dates

5th December	Leaders of Worship & Preachers meeting, New Earswick, 7.30pm
19th December	Lunch for supernumerary ministers, spouses, and widows/widowers, Heslington, from 11am.
31st January	LWP Fellowship meeting, Lidgett, 7.30pm
6th February	Circuit Council, Haxby, 7.30pm
11th February	Circuit Service recognising the work of Local Preachers, time & venue TBC
29th April	Easter offering service, time and venue TBC
Saturday 14th July	Circuit Celebration with Revd Gareth J Powell, time and venue TBC.