



Circuit Newsletter Autumn 2023



Circuit Service July 2023: Acknowledging John Hayward's ordination and John Bailey's retirement, and saying goodbye to Bill Topping and Ruth Morrison.

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York Methodist Circuit Hub

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Dear Friends,

The season of Harvest Festivals is fast approaching and consequently we find our thoughts being directed towards our partnership with the earth, in all its creativity as well as its fragility. We do not have to be professional agriculturalists to recognise that to encourage growth and fruitfulness at least



three things are required. First, there needs to be an understanding of the earth, of the kind of soil and the type of climate, so that appropriate plants might flourish. Second, space and time need to be created in order to give opportunity for growth. Third, human labour provides for the caring and nurturing and then finally the harvesting. Of course, we do not have total control over the whole growing process. We know all too well that plans and hopes can be thwarted by extreme weather conditions, be they floods or drought, in this part of the world as well as across the globe, but whether the outcome is abundance or scarcity, human endeavour never ceases to seek to bring the best out of the resources that are available to us. And the process of ***understanding, creating time and space and working hard*** is integral to all of that.

Jesus' parable of the Weeds (Matthew 13:24-30) reminds us of the need for ceaseless identification of potential. The landowner sows the seed. With stealth his enemies sow weeds among the good seed in order to disrupt the harvest. Instead of instructing his servants to pull out the weeds, the landowner advises them to wait and to harvest both plants and weeds at the same time. What lies at the heart of the story is the landowner's ability to see potential in what so easily could be viewed as negative. Allowing the weeds to continue to grow side by side with the plants means that ultimately the landowner has fuel to burn in order to heat the ovens in which the bread can be baked! Far from being a story about separating out the good and the bad, about the condemnation of some and the preservation of others, this is a tale of ***understanding*** the potential, ***creating the time and space*** for the possibilities to grow and ***working hard*** to that end.

It is not surprising that Jesus offers an agricultural parable about seeing the potential in all things, since that is where we find the focus of his life and public work. Jesus' primary concern is to encourage people into "alternative ways of seeing", so that they begin to glimpse other ways of understanding themselves, their relationships and the social, economic, religious and political world of which they are a part. For some this is too disturbing to cope with, but for many it is exciting and liberating.

David Bidnell (Circuit Superintendent)

Circuit Diary Dates

Circuit Council & LWP Rededication, 13th
September, 7pm, Haxby & Wigginton
Methodist Church

Circuit Council, 6th December, 7pm at
Huntington

Circuit service 9th July

Folk from around the Circuit gathered at Haxby & Wigginton Methodist Church on 9th July 2023 to celebrate the continuing ministry journeys of several of our staff. The service started with a reflection from Bill Topping, Outreach Worker at Lidgett and Poppleton Methodist churches for the past two years, as he prepares to leave York and enter training to become a Deacon.

John Hayward then spoke about his recent ordination as a Presbyterian, and how we all have a part to play as part of God's church in our world.

John Bailey reflected on his life of ministry, especially over the last few years as a Local Pastor, and how ministry never stops. He reminded us that it can be hard to move on, but that we need to listen for what God is calling us to do at each part of our lives.

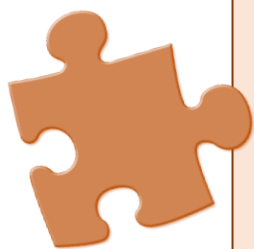
Ruth Morrison, who has been a Circuit Steward for the last few years, was thanked for her service as she prepares to step down and move away from York.

The service concluded with prayers for each of them as they move into the next phase of their journeys with God.



What are we missing?

Is there something going on in your church that you think the Circuit should know about? Why not write a few paragraphs or take some photos and send them to us for inclusion in the next newsletter? Please send stories and photos for the Winter newsletter to the Circuit Office by mid-November.



News from the Children, Youth & Families team

When did you last 'Play'?

You would think that, as children and youth workers, we wouldn't need telling about the importance of play, but this year we have made a determined effort to make time for it. Among the planning, organising, meeting, greeting, running events, leading groups and tidying it all up again, there seems to be little time to simply 'be' and 'play.' I am sure that everyone belonging to a church can relate to that. With fewer people in our churches to share the load, the 'to-do' list seems to be endless. At best, we are too tired to play, at worst, we burn out. Yet, with the multiple problems we see in our churches and our communities, with all of its financial and resource constraints, the need for creative and imaginative ways forward has never been greater. And that's where play comes in.

The team deliberately carve out time, probably 3 or 4 times a year to have time and space to be together and simply 'play'. Sometimes we have sat with coffees and no agenda and chatted, sometimes we get a craft activity or go for a walk. While bringing an enormous amount of fun and joy, we have found it to be incredibly fruitful. There have been so many good conversations, lots of laughs, plenty of inspiration and room for the Spirit to work and plant seed of ideas within us. We always go away buzzing.

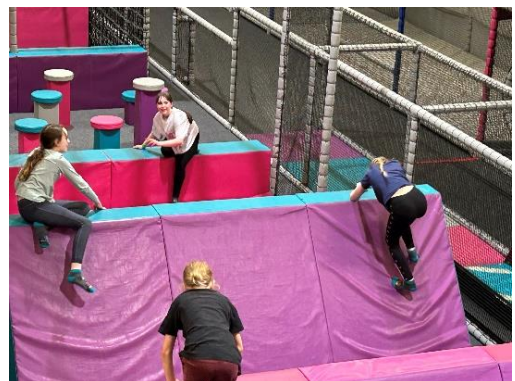
We like to think our One Family and One X sessions provide a space to 'be' and to play among the young people's hectic weeks. Children are naturally good at it, but we tend to lose the skill as we get older and often dismiss it as a childish thing to do. Studies show how important it is for our brains and our mental health to be lost and absorbed in an activity. I wonder what this is for you? You don't have to be 'arty'; creativity comes in all different guises and can be used in our daily life or when pondering life's problems. I find something like 'What if...?' and 'I wonder...?' can open our minds to all sorts of possibilities.

What if you did this more in your church? I wonder what plans and ideas you could dream up...?

District Synod

The team took a group of young people to the District Synod in May, at Manor School. Amy led a workshop on intergenerational church for the young people which they entered into with great gusto and came up with great ideas. Somehow in the course of the session, a couple for the leaders were challenged to do press ups and other young people put on a dance!

We have learned to roll with it over the years! They also had a great time at Agility, the obstacle course, just over the road from Manor School. While Victoria and others went on, Lorraine bravely guarded the bags and 'supervised',



with a coffee. We only had one first aid emergency, so I guess that's a good day. They all enjoyed it anyway!

Synod on 9th September is online, so we are taking a group to Epworth Old Rectory. We have hired a minibus and will be leaving from the Circuit Hub at 9.30am, returning between 3.30 and 4pm. Young people will need a packed lunch and weatherproof clothing as some of the activities are outdoors. The event is open to all – but children under the age of 10 (year 5 and below) must be accompanied. Please contact Victoria to book, places on the bus are limited. Consent forms are available from Lois, and the event is free.



Working with Local churches

Lorraine has been working the Strensall Methodist and their Ecumenical friends to provide a holiday club in the first week of the summer holidays. It ran for 2 days and the children had a whale of a time. It had 'rockpools' as a theme and has an Eco ethos running through it. The children helped put together a wildlife pond in an old sink, which provided an opportunity for chat about

wildlife and protecting our waterways. As a bonus, it was also a tick in the Eco Church box! They look forward to seeing how quickly they will find some wildlife in there. Lorraine will also be working with Easingwold as they reach out to local children through an Autumn workshop.

Amy is working with Heworth, Holgate and Haxby to help them with intergenerational work. She is hoping that we can curate a library of resources that churches can share. There are plans afoot to get people together who are working on or curious about this, in order to share ideas and get creative together. If you are interested in finding out how intergenerational work might be able to happen in your church, contact Amy for a chat. It's not all about offering an intergenerational service, it's about providing opportunities for all ages to interact, build relationships and learn from each other.



Heather has been supporting the teams at Clifton, Poppleton and Lidgett to further develop their children's outreach work. In July, Clifton ran their first Faith and Stories session, a new addition to their Saturday family Pebbles provision. During the session, which was themed around journeys, the children went on an exciting trip around the church, doing activities to collect stamps for their passports on the way, before returning for an interactive drama of Jesus calming the storm and a lively singing session. Then a yummy lunch of tomato pasta was enjoyed by all. Now the team are looking forwards to preparing for their next Faith and Stories session.

Work continues at Poppleton to develop relationships with young people using the building, through the youth group, the under 5s and the after school childminder's group. They have also started to put on children's craft activities, alongside the usual refreshments at village events, such as the King's Coronation celebrations and the annual sports day at the end of May. Following the success of these events, a further session craft is planned for the August Bank holiday weekend fete. They have also joined with their Anglican friends to run a stall to provide an ecumenical presence at the fete.

Heather also continues to support the parent/carer toddler group, Little Lambs at Lidgett, in its efforts to become more self-sustaining. There is a shortage of volunteers to run this much needed group, which has been heightened by Bill Topping's departure. Some parents have stepped forwards to help more actively with the setting up and running of sessions, so Heather is working with them to support them to be less reliant on input from members of the congregation. They are running a couple of sessions over the Summer holidays.

One X

A few of the One X group have expressed an interest in becoming members of the Methodist church. As it worked well before, we have decided to use the One X sessions to explore what it means to be a Methodist in Britain today. This does not mean that the format of the sessions will change, or that we expect the

young people to all become members at the end of the term! We will continue to bake, play games and do crafts and quizzes, but we will have a theme that runs through all the sessions for the first half of the year. As a bonus, we will be joined by Louisa Taylor for these sessions. We are planning membership services for those who wish to become members at Acomb on 28th January and at Southlands on 11th February. If your young person is interested in becoming a member, but is not part of the Acomb or Southlands communities and you would like to arrange a service for them in their own church, please let the team know.

Diary dates:

9th September: Epworth trip – leaving from the Hub at 9.30 returning 3.30/4pm

22nd September: One X 5-7pm at the hub

13th October: One Family 4.30-6pm at the hub

20th October: One X 5-7pm at the Hub

10th November: One X 5-7pm at the Hub

17th November: One Family 4.40-6pm at the Hub

25th November: Changemakers, a day for young people, led by young people. Mindlock escape room at 10am, finishing at the Hub at 4pm. More information to come.

1st December: One X 5-7pm at the Hub

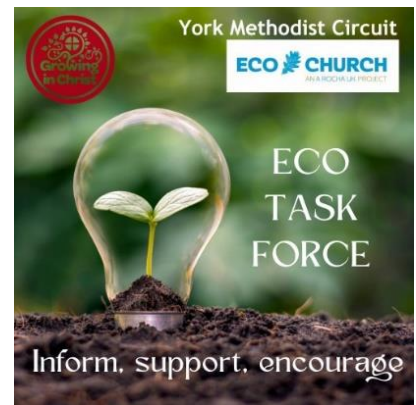
8th December: One Family 4.30-6pm at the Hub

16th December: Ice skating 4.30pm at York designer outlet.

News from the Circuit Eco Task Force

Eco Anxiety? I recommend a change of Media Diet!

As wildfires, floods and storms become an increasingly common and worrying sight, it is easy to become disheartened about what we read in the news. Disheartened and powerless. I would encourage you to look behind the headlines though. The big (and bad) stuff gets the headlines and media space. The positive stuff – and there is a considerable amount of it – you tend to have to dig a bit deeper for. It's often smaller and less headline-grabbing but nonetheless significant. I have listed some positive news just here. I find that balancing my 'media diet' mobilises me out of a 'freeze and panic' mode and into action. Even if it's small steps. It's all progress.



Positive News

1. Deforestation rates in the Brazilian Rainforest fell by at least 60% in July, compared to the same month last year. Yes, there is clearly still work to do but what a massive difference a change in leadership has brought.
2. Insulating Britain. A Manchester business woman and her pioneering construction firm is training up excluded teens and ex-offenders in retrofitting skills and refurbishing thousands of homes across the north.
3. Biodegradable shoes! Israel-based Balena have developed a bio plastic that breaks down and made from natural and renewable materials – and still lasts years! You can take them to be recycled after they have finally worn out.
4. Coolbricks made of cow dung?! When builders see the product they can't believe it doesn't contain cement (a process which produces high levels of CO₂). Cool bricks do not have to be fired or baked and are 100% recyclable. It costs 50% less to produce and can be recycled.
5. Are COPs any use? The Conference of the Parties who meet annually to tackle climate change (COP26 was in Glasgow if you remember) often come under fire for being a talking shop. A reporter that has been at most of the COPs, however, said that if it wasn't for the COPs, we would be facing 6 degrees of Climate Change, unlike the current 1.7-1.8 degrees that will be reached if each country meets its targets.

These facts are the courtesy of the 'Positive News' Magazine. You can subscribe to the magazine or sign up to the newsletter. <https://www.positive.news/>

Lorraine Jones Lorraine.jones@methodistyouth.org.uk 07850 631168

Bronze Eco Church Award Achieved!!

A huge congratulations to 3 of the Churches in our Circuit who have now been given the Eco Church Bronze Award. The Eco Task Force loves to share the local Churches successes and a shout out to all those who were involved. Well done Poppleton, Huntington and Haxby and Wigginton Eco Groups. Together with Southlands and Acomb, that's 5 Churches. We have now passed the point of 10% of our Churches being awarded Bronze, so have made

Bronze on our Eco Circuit too! It's so encouraging that there are another 5 registered and working towards Bronze status too – it's been great to hear their stories about actions they have taken.

I am sure the teams would agree that there are some very easy wins you can do to get you started on the Eco Church journey. Talk to Lorraine to put you in touch with a local team or come along to one of our monthly meetings.



Meeting the District Net Zero Officer

It was great to meet Tim O'Brien, the District Net Zero Officer at the last Eco Task Force get together. He told us about his role and plans to help the District achieve Net Zero by 2040. He was accompanied by Rose Gosling from his home Church, Summerbridge, who have been awarded Gold Eco Church Status, so we were all busy taking notes and getting some helpful top tips! We looking forward to working with Tim going forward.

Book Recommendation:

It's not that Radical: Climate Action to Transform Our World. Mikaela Loach

Loach reframes the Climate change debate, arguing that it requires racial equality – a pathway to a better world for everyone, regardless of class, colour, where you live, or any other stratification that currently shapes a

life. (The Guardian) As Loach explains, the word 'radical' simply means getting to the root of a problem. Many of the problems our world faces can be traced to the same root cause. Hold on to you hats, it's hard hitting but a great read. She also offers a hopeful guide to moving forward and making a better world together. The solutions are radical in that they get to the root of the problem, but *not that radical* in the way that the solutions are not 'rocket science'; the answers are out there already.

Next Dates of the Eco Circuit Group

Thursday 21st September – site visit to Allerton Waste Recovery. 6-8pm. Contact Lorraine Jones if you want to come along.

Wednesday 25th October – Huntington Methodist Church. Eco Task Group member talks about the findings of her Masters about Climate Justice. We talk about the implications for Eco Church.

Act Now! For a Greener Future: Saturday 13th May.

Acomb Churches Together held a day to learn and pray about the environment and care for creation. There were many workshops, all of which were inspiring and interesting. It was also encouraging to be with others who are also taking action. That alone is inspiring – it makes you think that maybe, just maybe, things will turn out ok.

That's not to say that there isn't work to be done, not only in terms of tasks and actions, but in terms of how we think about relationship with nature. Jan Nobel, the York Diocese Green Ambassador, showed a powerpoint of God's creatures structured as a pyramid, with man at the top, then a woman below that and all the creatures below, going all the way down to bugs. Putting the human race above the rest of God's creation has created so many problems, not the least of which is the depletion of nature. Instead, we need to be moving to a more connected, circular way of thinking. We realise more than ever how much we need the 'least' of the bugs, like pollinators, and how much we all suffer if things get out of balance. Food for thought.

Katrina Seddon from Wigginton also had some thoughts about one of the workshops:

We went to Sophia Cheng's workshop on Why should I care about the climate? What action makes sense for me? Sophia works for Extinction Rebellion. One of their concerns is countering society's level of apathy regarding climate change. One tactic when giving talks is to generate an emotional response by asking questions like, What are some of the things you like about being alive on earth?, or, When I see what is happening to the natural world and society, what breaks my heart? Feelings are seen as a means of motivation to meaningful action.

Extinction Rebellion has had a shift in tactics to being more open, rather than just being disruptive. The big climate event in London was joined by other groups, such as Quakers and Christians. In briefing people on climate change, they cannot then unknow...the question, How does that make you feel? is more likely to bring about change. We can ask ourselves, What action makes sense for me?

One way of getting started is using a model created by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson: If we draw a Venn diagram with one circle called, 'what brings you joy', the second called, 'what are you good at?' and the third called, 'what work needs doing', we can name the intersection, 'your climate action'.

Sophia ended by telling us that ER meets on Tuesday evenings at 7pm at Sparks in York, if anyone would be interested in coming along.

All in all, it was a great day and very well organised. Great speakers, good company, lovely soup lunch, what more can you ask for? Another event perhaps? I will wait until the organisers have recovered before suggesting it!

Another perspective on the ACT Now day at Acomb

As a young, Christian, climate activist, I sometimes struggle to figure out how God fits into the equation. This equation being humans (more often than not, Christians) destroying the planet and me, doing my best to fight back. However, back in May, I attended the ACT Now eco fair at Acomb Methodist Church. I went under the title of 'eco reporter' and overall, it helped me at least begin to answer the question: where is God in the climate crisis?

After the speech from a lecturer at the uni and A Rocha UK Trustee, Colin Beale, which was about the effects of climate change on ecosystems, I've made my way to my first workshop. It was called Resilience and was about climate anxiety. Climate or eco-anxiety is fear in the face of the climate crisis which up to 60% of young people, my generation, experience, me included. When I entered the space, and saw that I was the youngest person there by about 20 years, I was a bit skeptical. However, I was quickly relieved of my doubts.

The workshop involved several exercises where we would each find a partner and sit opposite them. Then, we would be asked a question, a gong would sound, and we would have five minutes to discuss the question with our partner. The questions went along the lines of:

'What are you worried about for the future?'

'What are you thankful for now?'

'Who do you blame for the climate crisis?'

It turned out to be an extremely emotional and thought provoking session. Some of the ideas and stereotypes I held walking in there were completely turned on their head when I walked out. I used to think that all old people didn't care about my generation's future, but I had conversations with people four times my age who had been campaigning for climate justice and animal rights their whole lives. It was truly inspiring and with just what I needed at the time.

After a very deep workshop, I decided I needed something a little more chill: a conservation workshop run by St Nicks. St Nicks is a charity based in York which carries out practical nature conservation activities around the city to improve wildlife and habitats. One of their projects is called Green Corridors which aims to make a nature corridor (e.g. plants) for wildlife through urban landscapes from one green space to another.

In the workshop, we all had maps of Acomb and we were drawing where possible routes of green corridor sites could be placed. It was a fun, light-hearted session but also very inspiring to see what nature conservation activities are happening around York.

Finally, famished from an emotional and fun morning, we all made our way to the hall next door for a delicious choice of vegan soups. There, everyone had the opportunity to mingle, chat, get to know one another and talk about our separate experiences. It was during this time, that I began to fill out my role as eco reporter and I asked people why they have chosen to come.

One person said: "I heard a lot through our church... and because I think we can help something towards a greener future. I didn't before, but now I do." This, in a way, filled me with hope because it made me realise that people are waking up to the threat of the climate crisis.

Another person said: "I think caring for creation is one of the biggest issues - if not the biggest issue - of our time and we feel powerless sometimes. I think it's important to come together and learn more about what we can do and be inspired by others." This totally embodies the picture of the day and is exactly what happened how. How Christians came together to discuss faith, action and the climate.

In the end, this day was just what I needed and I'm sure the same applies to anyone else who attended. It gave me hope in dark times. I just hope that now, we all have the courage to pull together and save God's creation.

'Nature is the most amazing thing on earth, and if it didn't exist, I don't think life would be worth living anymore.' - Unknown

Katie Wrenn

Circuit Council Report June 2023

- Revd David Bidnell led the meeting in a discussion of issues of Justice, Dignity and Solidarity. Following small group discussions, it was mentioned that the Methodist Church has published a "User Guide to the Strategy for Justice, Dignity and Solidarity" <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-church/the-inclusive-methodist-church/strategy-for-justice-dignity-and-solidarity/user-guide/>. This might be useful for discussions in our Churches.
- The audited Annual Financial Report was approved. It was noted that the ongoing consultation would have an impact on how we manage our finances going forward.
- Eco church: 11 churches have registered so far, and 3 have already received awards. It is hoped we can work towards the Circuit Eco Award.
- Circuit consent was given for solar panels and heat pump installed at Acomb; for replacement windows at Heworth, and for reordering of the sanctuary at Central. It was noted that the sale of former church buildings is taking a considerable time due to legal complications.
- It was noted that Ruth Morrison will be moving away from the Circuit and so will be stepping down as a Circuit Steward, and the meeting expressed gratitude for her work during her time in that role. Best wishes were expressed to both Bill Topping and John Bailey. Bill will be undertaking training at Queens for the Diaconal Order and John will be retiring.

- It was reported that Louisa Taylor is embarking on the process of candidating to become a Presbyter, and will speak to the September Circuit Council about this.
 - From September 2023 John Hayward will be taking oversight of services in New Earswick, and David Bidnell will be taking oversight at Acaster Malbis.
- Steve Leah reported on the Circuit Consultation currently taking place, and consultations are now underway with Churches and a variety of different groups across the Circuit. The Terms of Reference they are operating under are:
- To conduct appropriate consultations across the Circuit including Carecent, so as to help us make suitable and realistic proposals as to how we can deal with the current financial deficit.
 - In so doing to propose a suitable staffing policy, work out what parts of the Circuit life are core to its budget and to be able to explain how our proposals help the Circuit fulfil its objectives and mission.
 - To propose how we might get to this point ready for the changes in staffing in September 2025.

Circuit prayer rota

3rd Sept	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Acaster Malbis. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. At this time of year we give thanks for our world, and pray that we will be able to take care of it well. Pray for our political leaders at all levels to take this responsibility seriously.
10th Sept	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Acomb. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. Today we pray for students and those who work in schools as the new term begins. Pray too for those moving into further education or training. Are there ways you or your church can support them?
17th Sept	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Bishopthorpe. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. Sadly, many people in our circuit and around the world suffer from the effects of poverty and the cost of living crisis. Pray for those working to help those in poverty, and to bring about change so that everyone may have enough to flourish.
24th Sept	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Central. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. Today we pray for the work of foodbanks and other food sharing schemes. Could you or your church help this important work by encouraging donations?
1st Oct	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Clifton. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. Today we pray for the work of Carecent, the breakfast centre for homeless and excluded people in York. Pray for both those using the service and for those who work to keep it running.
8th Oct	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Clifton Moor. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. Today is Homelessness Sunday. Pray for those who are rough sleeping or living in temporary accommodation, and pray for solutions to ensure every person has a safe and secure home.

15th Oct	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Copmanthorpe. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. Today is Freedom Sunday when we pray for victims of trafficking and slavery. Are there ways you can increase your understanding of this issue? https://www.ijmuk.org/freedom-sunday
22nd Oct	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Easingwold. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. Today we give thanks for those called to serve the church as presbyters and deacons. Pray for all our ministers and their contribution to the life of our circuit.
29th Oct	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Haxby & Wigginton. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. Today we give thanks for our Lay Employees who work in many areas of our Circuit- pastoral care, outreach, children, youth & families, and support with property, finance and administration. Pray for all our staff and their contribution to the life of our circuit.
5th Nov	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Heslington. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. Today we give thanks for our Circuit Stewards. Give thanks for the time these volunteers put into consulting and making decisions about the life of our circuit, and pray for wisdom and sustaining strength for them.
12th Nov	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Hessay. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. This Sunday is Remembrance Sunday. Pray for those serving in armed forces, and for their families, and the families of those who have died.
19th Nov	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Heworth. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. 12th-19th November is Interfaith week. Pray for improved understanding and relationships between different faith groups, and those who work in this area.
26th Nov	The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Holgate. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place. Today we pray with women who have experienced violence at the hands of their partners, and pray for the right support for all who need it.

Reflections: Harvest

Celebrating Harvest

“You shall observe the festival of harvest, of the first fruits of your labour, of what you sow in the field. You shall observe the festival of ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labour.”

Exodus 23 vs 16

“You shall keep the festival of booths for seven days, when you have gathered in the produce from your threshing-floor and your wine press. Rejoice during your festival...For seven days you shall keep the festival...for the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all your undertakings, and you shall surely celebrate.”

Deuteronomy 16 vs 13-15



Many churches celebrate Harvest at this time of year, giving thanks to God for the produce of fields, gardens and orchards. But compared to the celebrations we find stipulated in the Old Testament we might think our events lack a bit of excitement! Celebrating harvest helps us remember that ultimately everything we have comes from God, and reminds us to give thanks. That might mean giving thanks not just for food, but for our homes, workplaces, churches and the people around us.

What is your 'harvest'? What (or who) is it in your life that sustains you, in body, mind and spirit? How might you go about celebrating that?

Stewards of the harvest

“God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.’ God said, ‘See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food.”



Genesis 1 vs 28 & 29

Most of us in modern times are not as deeply involved in producing food as the majority of people were in the past. We might grow a few tomatoes or apples and enjoy the fruit of our labours in season, but for the rest of the year we know we can depend on supermarkets for food of every kind. But over the last few years shortages and disruption caused by Covid 19, political uncertainty and wars have reminded us that we shouldn't take this for granted. The impact is much worse for those who were already struggling and for those in less wealthy countries. Some are already suffering the effects of the climate crisis, which are only going to get worse unless big changes are made.

Genesis 1 shows God providing for human needs by giving us the earth. But that doesn't mean we can abuse the trust God has placed in us to care for our planet, or to consider the needs of the generations that come after us. Understanding where our food comes from and the effects of our choices can help us take better care of our world. How might you find out more?

Generous Harvest

“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare, or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the LORD your God.”



Leviticus 19 vs 9 &10

In a society with no ‘safety net’ the ability to pick up these leftover gleanings might have meant the difference between life and death for those without land of their own. Perhaps the best known example of this happening is in Ruth chapter 2.

Some landowners probably resented some of the crops they had sown and cared for going to others who hadn’t worked for them. But if everything we have comes from God (as we looked at in our previous reflections) is it really ours to keep? Is there perhaps a parallel with how we might think of our taxes being used to help others?

We should remember that God wants every one of us to have life in all its fullness. In the story of Ruth, gleaning led to Ruth coming to Boaz’s attention and an arrangement where she no longer had to survive on leftovers.

How might you- and your church- be generous with your harvest, whether of goods or money or time?

Harvest workers

“After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.’”

Luke 10 v1&2



Do you sometimes feel overwhelmed by the challenges your church faces? By the amount of work there seems to be compared to the small number of people available to carry it out? Jesus sent his followers on ahead of his journeys, sending them to tell people the good news, to preach and heal and do what he had been doing. He sent them in pairs so they

could support and back each other up. Do you work with others to share the good news of Jesus?

Jesus told his followers to pray for more workers, because there was so much work to do to bring in the 'harvest' God has planned. Do you pray for more people to join in God's work?

We can take some encouragement from this passage, because the reason we need more workers is because there is a plentiful harvest waiting. What might that look like for you and your church?

Safeguarding Foundation Module Required Attendance

- Presbyters and Deacons with an active preaching or pastoral ministry
- Lay employees and volunteer workers with pastoral responsibility
- Pastoral visitors
- Anyone working with children in the name of the church
- Anyone working in activities targeted at adults who are vulnerable
- Circuit stewards
- Church stewards
- Local preachers
- Worship leaders
- Those training for local preaching or worship leading
- Church and circuit safeguarding representatives
- Choir/music group/drama leaders – where there are children or vulnerable adults in the group.
- Monitoring and Support group members (for Safeguarding Contracts)
- Young Leaders (ages 16-18)

Safeguarding Advanced Module Required Attendance

Advanced module courses should be booked via <https://www.yorkshirenethodist.org/our-work/safeguarding/>

- Safeguarding officer - Church and Circuit
- Circuit stewards
- All presbyters or deacons with an active preaching or pastoral ministry (including supernumerary ministers)
- Those who are in paid employment or a voluntary role which includes leadership within the Methodist Church, involving direct work with children, young people or vulnerable adults
- Lay persons who are appointed to exercise pastoral leadership within a local church
- Local preachers
- Worship leaders
- Those who deliver the Foundation Module
- Evangelism/mission enablers
- Those in recognised roles involving pioneering, fresh expressions or evangelism
- Those with responsibility for supervision (either training or trained and accredited under the Methodist Church Reflective Supervision Policy 2021-26)
- Mentors for the Youth Participation Scheme

Creating Safer Space: Foundation Module

Safeguarding training session

(for both new office holders and those requiring 'refresher' training after 4 years). A list of those required to complete the training is over the page.

You can choose from either an online or in person training session- both cover the same material.

Wednesday 20th September 2023, 7pm, at Poppleton
Methodist Church

Saturday 14th October 2023, 10am, at Haxby & Wigginton
Methodist Church

Tuesday 27th February 2024, 7pm, Online course

More dates will be arranged later in the year.

Please book in advance by contacting the Circuit Office
yorkcircuitoffice@gmail.com with your name and email or postal address.

This module replaces both the Foundation and Foundation Refresher modules, and should be completed by any relevant office holder (see over the page) who has never completed Foundation training or who has completed the Foundation or Refresher training more than 4 years ago.

If you are also required to complete the Advanced module of training, you will now only be required to complete the Foundation module once and refresh the Advanced module every 4 years, rather than repeat both.