



**York
Methodists**

Plan and Circuit News



Easter cross at Thornton le Clay, April 2018

February to April 2019

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Dear Friends,

Welcome to the first Newsletter of 2019, and to what promises to be another interesting and challenging year in the life of our Circuit. Last Quarter I mentioned that we were to hold a Circuit Synod – a day to think and pray about our life together and to look at ways of reimagining and reshaping how we do things. Around 100 people were involved and while we were not aiming to come up with easy answers or quick-fix solutions, two clear messages were heard:

- **STOP!** We cannot keep adding to the list of things to do unless we also have a list of things to stop doing. Particular mention was made of avoiding duplication and repetition and of the need for cooperation.
- **LIBERATE!** There was a call to find ways of freeing individuals and churches from burdens of buildings and money and from guilt that if they don't go to a small church it will end. We live in transient communities and we can find renewal by 'moving on'.

Neither is straightforward and both involve a significant change in how we work. Another key idea within our discussions was what being 'present' as a Church in a local community means. Too often our presence is linked to a building which is, or looks, closed – something which obscures the active presence of individuals engaging in God's mission. Conversely, there are many local communities which no longer have a Methodist Church building and where people therefore assume that there are no Methodists!

In trying to put a framework around the many other ideas and thoughts which were shared on the day, the familiar phrase "**Unity in Diversity**" seemed appropriate. Picking up on the theme of avoiding duplication, one group said, "*We don't have to do everything in every church or the same things in every church*" while another group put the emphasis on "*lots of disparate small groups engaging people where they are with our buildings changing to engage with people doing things that aren't what we think of as church.*" Similarly, another group imagined a Circuit made up of "*Local buildings as mission centres facilitating e.g. street pastors in parks, men's sheds and community activities.*"

The other related idea in terms of how we might organise ourselves is usually called "**Hub and Spoke**". Several groups suggested roles and services which could be focused on a central or an area hub, thus liberating and facilitating local churches to follow their calling. Allied to this was the suggestion of exploring a greater use of team ministry across a group of churches and the use

of technology in order to live stream between churches and to link their activities together. and in all of this there was also the recognition of the need for ecumenical co-operation rather than competition, and the ability to celebrate our differences together.



Discussions at the Circuit Synod, November 2018

It is a long time since the wise person from China pointed out that ‘a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step’. Perhaps the Synod was that step but, if so, there are clearly many more steps ahead. The Circuit Staff and Stewards are meeting in January with a view to bringing some suggested steps to the February Circuit Council. In the meantime, I encourage you all to speak with your Circuit Council representatives and look at the more detailed report from the Synod that they have. And I encourage us all to pray together as we try to discern what is of God in our wrestling, our thinking and our planning.

The annual Methodist Conference begins by singing Wesley’s hymn *And are we yet alive? (Singing the Faith 456)*. It’s a great hymn which is realistic about our life together. The final verse, though, says it all: “*Let us take up the cross, till we the crown obtain; and gladly reckon all things loss, so we may Jesus gain.*” Our Calling in a nutshell!

With every blessing,

Keith

Circuit Youth Worker

We are pleased to report that Amy Shephard has been appointed as our new Circuit Youth Worker. Amy is a member at Haxby & Wigginton Methodist Church and has previously been involved in youth work at Haxby and around the Circuit. Amy will be starting work in February 2019 and will be working with churches around the circuit to develop youth work. Please pray for Amy as she prepares to start work.

250 Years of Methodism in Stillingfleet, 1769 – 2019

As Methodism spread throughout the land in the life time of our founder John Wesley it appears to have reached Stillingfleet and been introduced to the villagers in 1769 when a small class was formed.

Services were conducted by local preachers who would hold meetings in any house open to them. If no invitation was forthcoming the village green would be used as a point of assembly. There was no official building so homes used had to be specially registered giving them permission to hold dissenting worship. Records show this been done in 1774, 1787, 1797, 1809, 1810 and then in 1812 when a barn was registered. The first record of any money being paid to the circuit was in 1780 when 9 shillings (45p) was given.



The determination and dedication of these early Methodist people was incredible. 50 years later a site was donated by Francis Sledge and the chapel was built at the cost of £140 with an extra £1 for fittings!! One can only begin to imagine the celebrations and joy which must have taken place when the chapel was opened in 1819. If only the walls could talk.

Today after many highs and lows we still worship in this same little chapel – the oldest chapel used in the York Circuit, now 200 years old. So every good reason for the special celebrations and thanksgiving.

We are planning to hold a special circuit service on Sunday 5th May 2019 and we would like everybody to come and share this joyous thanksgiving service

with us. A special booklet has been written containing more details of Methodism in Stillingfleet over a 250 year journey. It will contain a full history of Methodism and the chapel throughout this time.

It will also contain messages of greeting from former ministers and friends, and greetings from our Methodist President and also the Archbishop of York. Displays will be staged in the chapel of events over the years, a fascinating display of hymn books and bibles used over the years, also memorabilia of old preaching plans and magazines used in the circuit. There will also be a photographic display of village involvements.



Grace Atkinson

Please make a note in your diary to come along to Stillingfleet on

Sunday 5th May 2019.

Approximate times are as follows:

1.30pm Chapel will be open for viewing the displays, e.g. hymn books, bibles, circuit magazines, plans and much much more from over the years.

3.00pm Thanksgiving service in St. Helens Church (wheelchair accessible) speaker Rev Leslie Newton who is the Chair of the Yorkshire North and East Methodist District.

4.30pm A Stillingfleet Celebration Tea will be held for everyone in the village hall. (The village hall is located opposite the church)

The chapel will remain open until 7.30pm.

Circuit Celebration and AGM

This year's event has been provisionally arranged for **Sunday 14th July at Acomb Methodist Church**. The Circuit Council agreed that this would take the place of all main morning services around the Circuit.

The plan is that we gather at 11am for a short act of worship, reflection on the past year and the business of the AGM. This would be followed by sharing lunch together with the opportunity for fellowship and visiting stalls and displays. Finally we will have a Circuit Service at 1.30pm with the event concluding by 3pm.

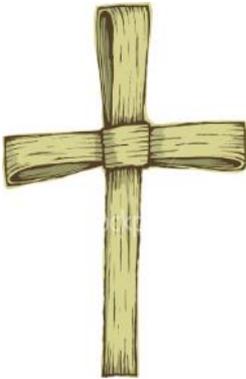
Please book the date and look out for further updates via the weekly Circuit news.

Lent Course

We are planning on arranging a Circuit-based Lent Course for 2019 which will explore the 'Our Calling' materials, and in particular the idea of a Methodist 'Rule of Life'. The hope is that we can form a number of regional groups around the Circuit, on different days and times, which will enable us to meet with people from a variety of churches rather than simply our own.

Again, please look out for further updates via the weekly Circuit news.

Lent and Easter services

	Maundy Thursday	Good Friday	Easter Sunday early morning
Acaster Malbis			
Acomb		10am A Lindley 11am Walk of Witness Messy Church	A Lindley HC
Alne			
Bishopthorpe			
Brafferton			
Helperby			
Central			
Clifton	7.30pm E Cushion		8am A Foster
Clifton Moor			
Copmanthorpe			
Cornerstone			
Dunnington			
Easingwold	7.30pm TBC	10.30am E Cushion	8am TBC HC
Haxby & Wigginton			R Dalgliesh HC
Heslington			
Hessay			
Heworth		10am R Muthoni	8.30am R Muthoni HC
Holgate		10.30am TBC	
Huby		2pm Walk of Witness	

Please inform the Circuit Office of any events you would like publicised.

Lent and Easter services

	Maundy Thursday	Good Friday	Easter Sunday early morning
Huntington	7.30pm K Albans HC	11am L Harrison	8.30am K Albans HC
Husthwaite			
Lidgett		10.45am I Hill	
New Earswick			
Poppleton	7pm I Hill HC	6pm I Hill	8am I Hill HC
Raskelf			
Rufforth			
Sheriff Hutton			
Southlands	7pm J Bailey/ TBC	10.30am TBC	
Stamford Bridge			
Stillingfleet			
Stillington	7.30pm TBC		
Strensall			
Tholthorpe			
Thornton-le-Clay		6.15pm K Albans	
Trinity			
West Thorpe	7pm A Lindley		

More details will be circulated nearer Easter.



Mission begins with Listening

Some ideas adapted from *Rural Mission Solutions*.

Effective local mission is incarnational and gracious. It is interwoven with local culture and context, gently but firmly showing a different way of life based on vibrant relationships with God and other believers. Here are some headings to help you map a path into Mission in 2019.

- **Prepare.** Link up with those who are there. Meet, share, pray, read.
- **Pray.** *What* God is calling you to do in your local community? Drop your ideas. Ask daily, then listen and look for opportunities and guidance.
- **Prayer walk** with open eyes to see what the place is like. How is good news shared? Deepen awareness. Go slowly. See, smell, taste, listen, touch.
- **Place.** *Where* is God calling you? Where is He already doing stuff? Where is God breaking your heart? Let God show you new places among the familiar.
- **Probe.** Explore the spiritual archaeology. Where are the boundaries and significant buildings? Where do people like to go? Do demographic research.
- **Partner.** Go with. Individually in twos. Organisationally in twos. What could churches do while volunteering with local charities? Who can we work with in the community without compromise? Lead as Christians; do not lead a Christian Group. Be salt and light.
- **Pliable.** Stop this; try that. Be open to the Spirit's calling. Avoid pre-set ideas.
- **Perception.** Be alert to small signs, a snatch of conversation, an unexpected sign of need. Listen with two ears: to people and to God.
- **Providential opportunities** will come. God is up to stuff already.
- **Perpetual.** Keep going back to the community.
- **Perseverance** Do not go from house to house. Be ready to stick around.
- **Presence.** Being there is enough.
- **Proselysation.** *Mission* is not this. i.e. it is not evangelism though evangelism can be part of it.
- **Permission to fail** – have a go and see, without criticism at early set backs or **Problems.** We go 'like lambs among wolves...'

If you would like more advice on mission David Arscott is our Rural Mission Enabler, contact him on 07984 662109 or darscott@yorkmethodist.org.uk

Circuit Council Report 15th November 2018

- Revd Ruth Duck will be joining the circuit in September in a half-time appointment, we have not yet confirmed which churches she will be working with. We are unlikely to find out if we have been matched with a minister for Revd Julia Skitt's current churches until January 2019.
- Amy Shephard has been appointed as Circuit Youth Worker, starting in early 2019. The Circuit Children & Families Worker role has not yet been filled. Victoria Etherington is now working 2/3 time for the District and 1/3 time for the Circuit.
- The meeting approved the appointment of a locally funded part time administrator at Haxby & Wigginton to deal with administration and help the church connect with the local community via room bookings etc. It was noted that the 'real' Living Wage which should be the minimum paid to all church employees has been increased to **£9**.
- Outline Planning Permission for the Shipton chapel site has been applied for and the property will go on the market once this is received.
- A report on the work of Aroma coffee shop was received. Aroma is doing well and recently marked it's 10th anniversary. Aroma offers a neutral space for pastoral work in the community and space to build relationships. Profit is donated to local community projects.
- A discussion took place on feedback from the Circuit Synod day– see report elsewhere in this newsletter for more details. The Circuit Leadership Team will report on further discussions at the next Circuit Council.
- The Circuit Safeguarding Policy was approved, with the Circuit Safeguarding Team taking responsibility for implementing procedures in the circuit.
- Carecent's Annual General Meeting was reported to have been positive, and thanks were passed on to church members around the circuit for their generous support for Carecent. A new Constitution for Carecent has been drafted and approved in principal although further work needs to be done on one clause. Circuit Council delegated authority to the circuit stewards to do this and the final version will be brought to a future circuit council meeting to note.
- District Weekend 18th – 20th October 2019 at Scarborough. Please avoid organising events in your own Churches that weekend, and encourage participation in this District 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.
Heworth	Prayers, Tuesday 12.30pm-1pm
Holgate	Prayer and Care, Thursdays 10am.
Huby	Prayer meeting, Thursdays 8am.
Hustwaite	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, Thursdays 8.45am.

Circuit Staff rest days

Keith Albans	Friday
Elizabeth Cushion	Friday
Rory Dalgliesh	Thursday
Ian Hill	Friday
Andy Lindley	Monday

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

Our Calling

Worship



Learning & Caring



Service



Evangelism



Circuit Prayer Rota

Week beginning	Praying for our Circuit
3rd February	Work with children, young people and families
10th February	Those who suffer injustice and prejudice due to race
17th February	Those working in the health service
24th February	Politicians and leaders of our country
3rd March	Our preachers and those who lead worship
10th March	Worship: opportunities to worship God together and through our individual lives
17th March	Learning & caring: opportunities to learn more about God and to care for each other
24th March	Service: opportunities to serve our neighbours and world
31st March	Families, especially parents or those with parental responsibility
7th April	Evangelism: opportunities to tell our stories of good news
14th April	Opportunities to use our skills and gifts for God
21st April	A shared sense of Easter joy (Easter)
28th April	The church around the world

Circuit Services

Sunday 3rd March 4pm

Haxby & Wigginton Methodist Church

Join us as we celebrate the contribution of Local Preachers and introduce our Circuit theme for Lent.



Future circuit services:

5th May Stillingfleet Bicentenary service
3pm at St Helen's (Stillingfleet Parish Church).

26th May Easter offering service (4pm, Huntington)

14th July (TBC) Circuit Celebration

Diary dates

13th February	Circuit Council, 7.30pm, West Thorpe
3rd March	Circuit Service, 4pm, Haxby & Wigginton
20th March	Leaders of Worship & Preachers Meeting, 7.30pm, Huntington
30th April	Circuit Council, 7.30pm, Copmanthorpe
5th May	Circuit Service & tea, Stillingfleet, 3pm-6pm
26th May	Circuit Service, 4pm, Huntington
14th July (TBC)	Circuit Celebration