



York Circuit of the Methodist Church

Methodists in York and the surrounding area

Plan and Circuit News March– May 2015

Dear Friends,

Leslie Newton

Embraced by the span of this plan are the latter weeks of Lent and Paschiontide, Eastertide, the Ascension and Pentecost. Through our regular patterns of worship, supplemented by other seasonal courses and special services, we will have opportunities to travel a most significant spiritual journey.

I encourage you take these seasons and festivals seriously. Through them:

- * our sense of following Christ can strengthen;
- * our appreciation of God's grace can deepen;
- * our wonder at the Christ who 'holds all things together' can grow; and
- * our openness to the Holy Spirit who offers fruit and gifts can increase.

The danger is that we simply 'go through the motions.' We travel, but fail to really take in the landscape and the wonder of the view. We travel but we are left unmoved by the journey!

One of the best-known post-Resurrection accounts is that of two followers travelling dejectedly the road to Emmaus. (Luke 24) But alongside them comes the Risen Christ, albeit unrecognised. He walks with them and listens carefully before responding by opening up the scriptures. The time comes for them to part but despite his anonymity there is something about his presence that attracts. The followers invite him to stay. And Christ enters, takes bread, gives thanks, breaks it and begins to share. In these moments his identity becomes clear. And the followers are transformed. They recall their hearts burning on the journey. There begins for them a new journey – back to Jerusalem – travelling now as witnesses to the Resurrection.

I pray for our journey – in personal devotion, worship, fellowship and service - over the coming weeks:

* may we share a humble trust that Christ is walking alongside us – whether we fully recognise him in our midst or not. May we keep our confidence that He is with us.

* may we yearn for hearts and souls that seek more of Christ, and purposefully invite him in more fully; and

* may we, through the breaking of bread in Holy Communion, truly recognise Christ's presence that 'makes the feast.'

So may we be transformed with hearts burning and lives travelling in the footsteps of the Risen Christ who still calls out to us, and all the world, "Follow me."

Our needy souls sustain
With fresh supplies of love,
Till all your life we gain,
And all your fullness prove,
And, strengthened by your perfect grace,
Behold without a veil your face.

Charles Wesley. STF 572

Circuit Fundraising Appeal

Before Christmas Francis shared with us something of the terrible effects that Ebola is having in Sierra Leone and other parts of Africa. We launched, in response, a Circuit Appeal to offer support to orphaned children. We are inviting churches to consider how they may raise money to help, and we intend to run this appeal for the rest of the Connexional year.

Thank you to those churches that have already responded by having collections and events. We would encourage you to continue in your efforts. Francis makes clear in his update below that our support will continue to be deeply needed in the coming months.

Thank you too to our Circuit Treasurer, Peter Metcalf, who has established arrangements to enable these monies to be forwarded directly and

without charge to the charity, **'Children of Hope Foundation'**, with which Francis has links.

We will keep you updated with regard to progress.

Revd Leslie Newton, Superintendent Minister

Update from Revd Francis Nabieu

The situation is still far from over, although there appear to be some signs of success stories in some regions of the country. For the last two months, the caseload has continued to increase in the Western and Northern part of the country.

One immediate effect of the Ebola epidemic was that Christians were not allowed to congregate in churches for Christmas and watch night services. Families were asked to lead prayers at home on Christmas day. The usual festivity was missing. The normal family gathering never took place and very few people went home for Christmas. This has another effect on the country's economy, as there is always an increase in business leading up to Christmas as a result of family members returning home.

Like in wartime, there are many organizations in the country helping out but it seems that they are all focused on the now. This is good because it all helps the situation today. But what makes our project different is that it is going to help address the issues of tomorrow.

In the Evening Standard newspaper on 12th December 2014, a British charity worker in Freetown was quoted as saying - "As many as 30,000 children in Sierra Leone and Liberia could be orphaned by Christmas, charities estimate, and he says their cause is just as important as eradicating the disease." Mr Sesay, who works for British charity 'Street Child' also

You can send money for the appeal to:

York Circuit Ebola Appeal
York Circuit Office
Strensall Methodist Church
The Village, Strensall
YO32 5XS

Cheques can be made payable to: **"York Methodist Circuit"**

said, “We have a situation now where it is children looking after children. We’ve got 13 year old kids who are now the head of the household taking the role of the parents who’ve gone. They are abandoned with nobody to turn to.”

The charity Street Child is offering them food but there is a need to help them towards a future and school is the only answer. The effect of having children in the street is still fresh in the minds of people as some families never recovered from that after the war. Mr Sesay’s stories help to build a picture of life after Ebola. He described “how he had recently helped a 12-year-old girl called Aisha who lost her whole family to the disease. She was thrown out her family home by the landlord because of her association with Ebola and was refused entry to a shop to buy food because the owner did not want her “Ebola money.”

This does not make a good reading but the story needs to be told. However, there are success stories too. On the 6th January 2015, a 2 month old baby Aminata Lamin was discharged from the Hastings’ police training school centre. Her mother is still receiving treatment. Other good news is that the Pujehun district in the south of the country has been declared Ebola free.

A cure may not be far away but that is just the first phase of the problem. Join us to plan and prepare for the second phase of the problem, the after-effects on children.

Nativity Festival at Strensall

“You could do that at Strensall,” said David Godfrey at Christmas 2013.

“That” was hold a Nativity Festival..... Well, could we?

Huntington and Haxby have a Christmas Tree Festival and we are too close to them to do another- so - what about a Nativity Festival instead?

The seed was sown and took root. In late spring the idea was put to the congregation and in September, at the prompting of Leslie our superintendent minister, we decided to take it to the wider community. The result was that on 12th December we opened our first Nativity Festival with over 40 scenes on show.

We were delighted by the response from people. Much thought had gone into the making of many of the cribs; they varied from 6 inches to 3 foot and what a variety.

Many bought one, in all shapes, sizes and nationalities, but there were also a great variety of handmade ones, which were crafted from card, wood, wool, fabric, gingerbread, clothes pegs, lollipop sticks, pipe cleaners, paintings and fake stained glass, to mention just a few.



On Friday we welcomed 5 classes of children from Robert Wilkinson Academy and it was wonderful to see them kneeling at the Communion rail, hands together, looking at the biggest crib. One little boy was so interested that he went home, made his own crib and brought it on Saturday for us to put on show.

The accompanying teachers were so impressed they said to us: “I hope you do it again next year.” We will ! Perhaps next year the academy will do more than just come and look! Perhaps too you will find time in this busy season to come and see us. From all the comments this year we received there is no doubt that you would enjoy it.

Patricia Walton-Pratt

Transforming Central

During 2014 the congregation of Central reaffirmed its commitment to the church, the city centre and to fulfilling our vision as a community of welcome. We understand ourselves to be called to gather together as the body of Christ in this place which welcomes and celebrates human diversity; serve our wider community and congregation in ways which shows the love and compassion of God.

We have already extended a warm welcome to the homeless team of the Salvation Army whose work complements that of Carecent and hope to welcome other community groups and charities as 2015 progresses.

We aim to provide a sustainable home for the church and congregation, conserving and improving the facilities for our grade II* listed site (our listing places us in the top 5.4% of all UK listings).

In December of last year the Transforming Central project moved from a year of consultation and discussions to being an active project with the appointment of a dedicated project manager. From our discussions with others we realised that our increasingly expensive city centre lacks a single substantial site where charities and community groups can be based. We hope that we can be that home. The first half of 2015 will see our thoughts and aspirations turned in to a detailed project plan to deliver a series of phased improvements to the buildings. This will be funded in part with the recent sale of our old Priory Street property and we hope to add to this via grant funding.

Our project comprises:

- Undertaking a full structural survey to ensure the conservation of the site.
- Refurbishment of the rear ancillary buildings and church halls to create serviced offices and better equip our larger rooms for hire.
- Improving our disabled access provisions, especially within the church.
- A desire to bring the basement space under the church into community use through the provision of a community café and exhibition space.
- A desire to bring our courtyard into regular use by creating a glass atrium and extending the provision of office space over the remaining half of our church halls.

To achieve this will take several years and will help to secure the future of Central for the next 25 years or more as did its refurbishment in 1992.

Richard Ramsden, Project Manager

Deacon Ian Cartwright's developing Circuit role

Deacon Ian came to the Circuit in September 2012 with a brief to work with the congregations at Acomb, Copmanthorpe and Lidgett Grove. Since that time Ian has led and facilitated significant community-focussed development in each of these communities, and considerable fruit is growing out of this work.

At the November Circuit Council it was agreed that it is now an appropriate time to broaden Ian's role. Some developments in the original three churches are at a stage that enables some of Ian's time to be made availa-

ble as a circuit resource. This can enable a broader sharing of Ian's gifts and skills in the area of consultancy and mission-development.

In practice, this will happen by Ian working alongside a church or churches, depending on the size of the potential projects, for a particular period. Each project would be established with an expected time-frame which would be kept under review. This would enable Ian to keep moving on to work alongside another church, and would also highlight the need for each church to be thoroughly involved in Ian's work from the outset, so that they are able to carry on the work once his direct involvement has ceased.

A steering group has been approved, comprising Revd Leslie Newton (Chair), Tim Duffy (Circuit Steward), Revd Elizabeth Cushion (Staff) and Maureen Haith (Huntington.)

At our first meeting it was agreed to make this development known more widely through publishing this article. Requests for Ian to be involved in a local church, preferably from the Church Council, should be made to Leslie so that the Steering Group can help coordinate Ian's workload. It may be that you would welcome Ian coming to speak at a meeting so that you can better appreciate what he is able to offer. Please do feel free to invite him to offer such a presentation.

We look forward to Ian's ministry enabling new mission and action in different parts of our Circuit. Please pray for him as his role develops.

Leslie Newton

Parties, photocopying and the Plan

My job as Circuit Support Manager involves supporting the churches and people that make up the York Methodist Circuit in living out their calling to mission and ministry. I started working for the circuit in September 2013, and it feels like it's been busy ever since!

For a start, I support the staff, and especially the superintendent, in their work by arranging meetings, producing documents and ordering stationery. I collect the information needed to make the plan and print and fold it with the help of some wonderful volunteers. I also help with the work of some of the circuit's committee and action groups.

Part of the vision behind the circuit office is for it to be a point of contact for people wanting help or advice. I often get calls from people asking for information and people popping in for meetings, to bring in paperwork or to get some photocopying done.



It's great to have events that bring our different churches together, and last summer I was part of the team that organised the Circuit Party at Joseph Rowntree School. I also help with organising Circuit services, producing orders of service and publicity.

In a circuit as large as ours good communication is essential and part of my job is to make sure that everyone knows what is happening. As well as circulating a weekly news email and updating the website with reports on circuit events, I put together the quarterly newsletter that is circulated with the preaching Plan. If there is an event you would like publicised, or if your church is involved in something you'd like to tell others about, get in touch! It's great that there's so much going on in our circuit and I hope that by talking about it we can show that the Church is active in our communities.

Lois Cross.

Leslie Newton adds: I'm grateful to Lois for giving this summary of her role. As we might expect, she underplays the significance of what she does, I think! Since I arrived in the Circuit I have heard countless times of how highly she is appreciated because of her wide-ranging grasp of Circuit life, her efficiency, conscientiousness and attention to detail. None of those begin with a 'P' but they make her - and the Circuit Office - such a vital part of our Circuit. Thank you Lois!

Can you help?

The Circuit would like to draw up a list of people who are willing and able to independently examine the accounts of other churches in the circuit, as we know some people struggle to find someone who is independent. If you can help, please let the Circuit Office know. Thank you!

Summary of Circuit Council meeting 12th November 2014

-Paul Parker spoke of his call to ordained ministry as a Presbyterian and several ministers expressed their support. The meeting voted in favour of his proceeding to the next stage of the candidating process and prayed for him.

-The manse committee presented a report and proposed that after it is vacated in August 2015 the manse at The Avenue in Clifton be sold. A new manse will be bought for the incoming minister which is more in line with modern requirements, and a group was appointed to oversee this.

-It was decided to defer discussion of the sale of Ilton Garth manse until the situation regarding pastoral oversight at Clifton Moor is clearer.

-Ian Cartwright is to oversee a piece of work with the community at Ship-ton and report to a future Council meeting on the use of the former chapel. A steering group has been formed to oversee Ian's broadening role in the circuit.

-Central received approval of plans to employ a Project Manager to offer support to the Transforming Central project.

-It was agreed to form a Circuit Property Advisory Group that can offer advice to church property stewards and help with property schemes.

-An evening with the Assistant District Safeguarding Officer Laura Gallery has been arranged for 14th January to offer encouragement and training to church safeguarding officers, and a simple questionnaire will be circulated to churches to see where the Circuit can improve in this area.

-Stationing: A presbyter was matched with our circuit and visited but the match did not work out. We have now entered the next round and await further news in January.

-Revd Chris Humble will be on sabbatical from May- August 2015.



Save the date!
Circuit Celebration
Saturday 4th July 2015
More details soon!



'Come on and Celebrate.....'

Easingwold Methodists are celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the building of their new church. We extend a warm welcome to all in the Circuit to join us for our 'Ruby Do'.

This will be a fun-filled weekend of celebration and thanksgiving.



Friday May 8th - Sunday May 10th: **Flower Festival with refreshments.**

Saturday May 9th: 10am-2.30pm **Fun activities**

7pm **Concert by YORK CITY GOSPEL CHOIR**

Sunday May 10th 10.30am **Morning Service**

5.00pm **Ecumenical Songs of Praise** on the Chapel forecourt.

Look out for a poster in your church.

Diary dates

Sunday 22nd Feb	6.30pm Circuit service, Clifton
Tuesday 3rd March	7.30pm Leaders of Worship and Preachers' Meeting, New Earswick
Sunday 22nd March	4.30pm Circuit service, Haxby.
Tuesday 14 April	7.30pm Circuit Council, Acaster Malbis
Thursday 23rd April	10am Gathering of Supernumerary ministers, spouses and widows, Lidgett Grove
Sunday 17th May	6.30pm Easter Offering circuit service, Lidgett Grove.
Wednesday 17 June	7.30pm Circuit Council, venue TBC.
Saturday 4th July	Circuit Celebration (venue & time TBC)

Regular prayer meetings and weekday services

Please contact the Circuit office if there are updates or additions to this list.

Acomb & Lidgett Grove	Concern prayer meeting, Wednesdays 10.00 at Acomb.
Easingwold	Prayer meeting every Friday 8.30.
	Thursday evening café service, 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month 18.30.
Haxby	Ecumenical prayer 9.00 every Wednesday morning (please check the notices for venue).
	Oasis: a time of reading, music and quiet reflection on the 1st Friday of the month at 9.30.
Heslington	Holy Communion, Thursday mornings 9.15. Christian Meditation Group, Fridays 10.30am. Prayer Group, Tuesdays 10am.
Holgate	Prayer and Care, Thursdays 10.00.
Heworth	Prayer meeting, Thursday 19.30.
Huby	Prayer meeting, Thursdays 8.00.
Huntington	Prayer meeting, 1st Friday of the month at 19.00.
Husthwaite	Prayer meeting, 1st Wednesday of the month 9.00.
Poppleton	Prayerful Reflection, Tuesdays 10.00-10.30.
	Wellsprings– Time for God, Wednesdays 18.30 (dates vary).
Southlands	Concern: a meeting for prayer, Wednesdays 10.00.
Stamford Bridge	Holy Communion, Thursday mornings 9.30.
Tholthorpe	Prayer meeting, Wednesdays 8.45-9.15.

Circuit Staff rest days

Ian Cartwright	Monday	Andy Lindley	Monday
Elizabeth Cushion	Friday	Francis Nabieu	Friday
Rory Dalgliesh	Unknown	Leslie Newton	Monday
David Godfrey	Saturday	Julia Skitt	Monday
Ian Hill	Monday	Sue Swires	Friday
Chris Humble	Friday	Philip Turner	Saturday

Circuit Service

to celebrate the start of Fairtrade fortnight
22nd February 2015, 6.30pm
at Clifton Methodist Church

Come and share a time of worship and prayer & hear more about
Fairtrade including our Circuit involvement

Refreshments and stalls from 5.45pm to
include free tastings, recipes and a chance
to buy a wide range of fair trade produce.



Parking is available at the front of St
Peter's school.



Circuit Service

Including the admission of Paul Parker as a Local
Preacher

Sunday 22nd March, 4.30pm
Haxby & Wigginton Methodist Church

