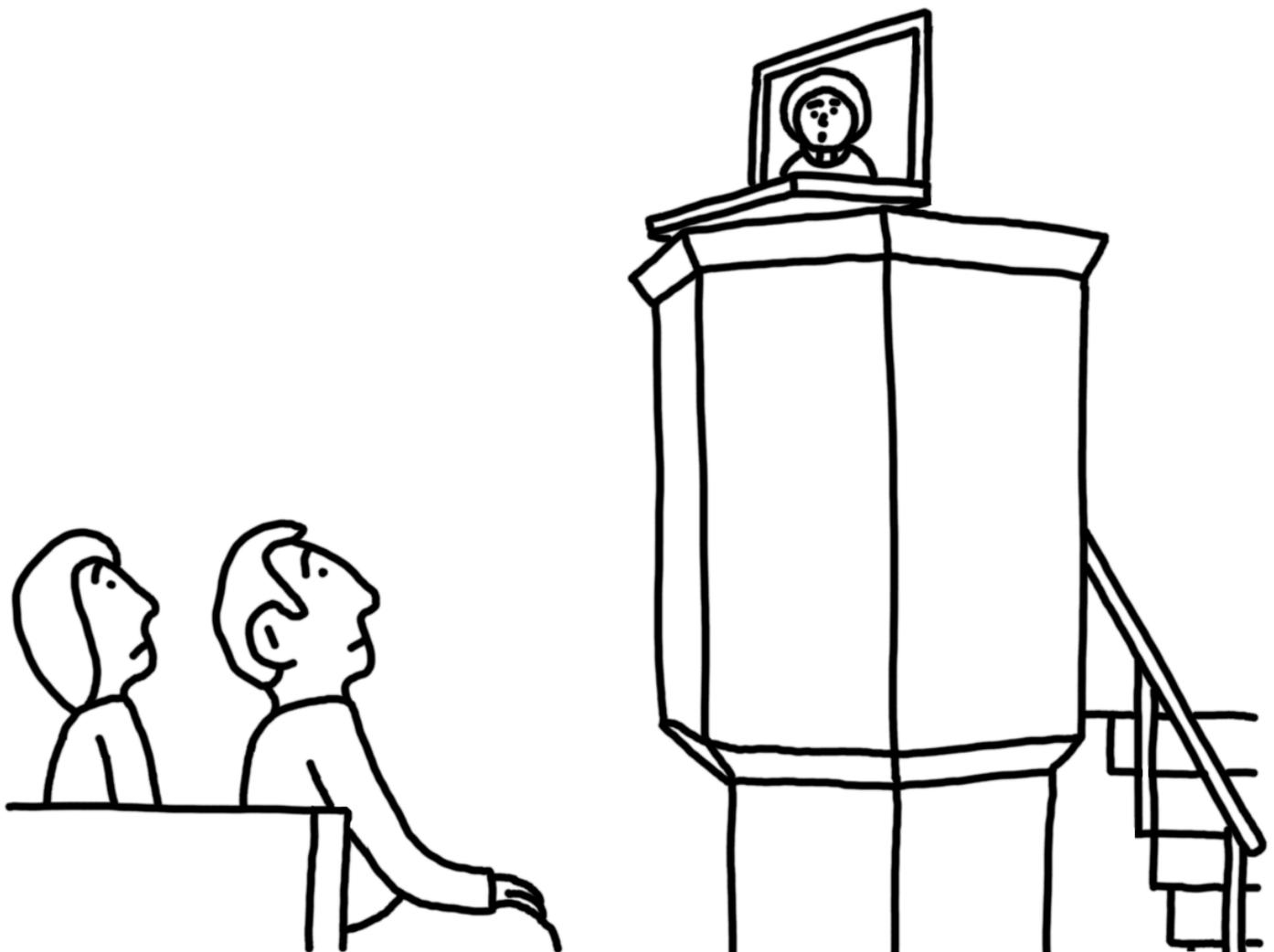




“Immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed.

Mark 6:51.



cartoonchurch.com

Please note that Circuit Office staff are mostly working from home during the pandemic. Please email or call on mobile numbers rather than calling the office phone.

Mobile **07984 019995**

Email yorkcircuitoffice@gmail.com

Website www.yorkmethodist.org.uk

Circuit Hub **Melbourne Terrace Methodist Church, Cemetery Road, York YO10 5AF**

Dear Friends,

At our recent Circuit Staff Meeting we were reflecting on the old story of Noah's Ark. One colleague made the observation that the Ark was designed to float, not to sail – it was a place in which to survive until the flood was over, after which as the waters receded it had done its job and the inhabitants could abandon ship. The parallels with our common experience of the past year or so were clear in terms of survival, but much less so looking forward. The coming weeks and months may involve flying a few ravens and doves as we seek to assess the lie of the land and come back together again. Hopefully, there will be plenty of olive branches to retrieve!

One of the ravens we did release came back in the form of a rather unusual looking new Circuit Plan! As I said in the covering letter it was always going to be somewhat provisional and incomplete, but it also revealed some important truths. Many churches are not ready to simply resume the worship pattern they had, and some may never do so.

I have long wondered whether the pattern of trying to gather the whole congregation every Sunday fits our patterns of living anymore and it will be interesting to see how things develop.



The ongoing provision of material and acts of worship online to resource churches and individuals is something the Circuit has committed itself to, and I am grateful to all those who are making this possible.

Observant folk will also notice that the Plan has the churches listed in a different order to before – neither alphabetical nor sectional. Those Churches able to live stream services, and therefore help out others, are listed first but there is more to it than that. Before Covid we were struggling to provide preachers for every planned service and so we were exploring whether the resourcing strategy, which the Circuit Council agreed in terms of staffing in 2020, might help determine where priorities for providing preachers and leaders of worship might best lie. Given what I have said earlier, this is very much a work in progress.

It feels like a strange time to acknowledge that this is my final Newsletter as Superintendent – but then it feels as though much of the past two years has not exactly gone according to plan! Extending the Ark analogy, I don't expect Ruth Duck or myself, who are retiring, to be abandoned on Mount Ararat for archaeologists to discover in years to come – for we too are entering into a new phase of ministry, albeit one with fewer responsibilities. We also recognise that Stephen and Liz Spain, who are heading to Oxford, are beginning something new while many others within the Circuit are ending particular periods of service.

Elsewhere in these pages there are details of the Circuit Celebration and Farewell Service on 11th July at Acomb and I hope that as

many as possible will be able to be there, either physically or virtually. Once the next stages of the government's roadmap are announced further updates will be given in the weekly Circuit News.

Writing as I have, it is hard to avoid thinking of the final part of T.S. Eliot's *Little Gidding*. First he writes,

*“And to make an end is
to make a beginning.
The end is where we start
from.”*

And a little later he continues,

*“We shall not cease from
exploration and the end
of all our exploring will be
to arrive where we started
and know the place for the
first time.”*

For me, the Christian faith is rooted in the hope that 'an end is a beginning', and it is fed by the enterprise of exploration. I hope and pray that as we all emerge from various bits of the Ark and wonder what lies ahead, we may remember and discover afresh our primary call to glorify God and make God's love known in everything we do.

With every blessing

Keith

“The water decreased steadily until the tenth month, in the tenth month, on the first day of the month the tops of the mountains become visible.”



KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE CIRCUIT

Circuit Weekly News

If you'd like to hear from the Circuit every week - news about worship, service sheets to use at home and whatever else is happening around the York Circuit - straight to your email inbox, please email Lois at yorkcircuitoffice@gmail.com and ask to be put on the mailing list for the 'Circuit News'.

(Please note: if ever you do not receive the Circuit News please check your email's Spam / Junk folders as it may be sent there. It may help if you add yorkcircuitoffice@gmail.com to your email contacts list.)

Circuit Website

Visit our website for information on online worship around the Circuit and other resources:

<https://www.yorkmethodist.org.uk/>

Circuit YouTube Channel

Subscribe to our YouTube channel to access our latest online worship and news stories from around the Circuit:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMZII3vyksFEonZ-EQbbhuQ>

Circuit Facebook Page

You can follow our Facebook page for news and updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/yorkmethodistcircuit/>

and join our group to share with others:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/267605153386046/>



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

30 May

Trinity Methodist church closing service, 3pm

Sundays in June

Bible Month: Mark's Gospel

22 June

Circuit Council (venue TBC)

08 July

Circuit Council (venue TBC)
to look at **God in Love Unites Us**

11 July

Circuit Celebration - 3pm, Acomb
(live-streamed and in-person)

05 Sept

Welcome Service for Revds. David Bidnell and John Hayward (live-streamed and in-person), morning, venue TBC

20 Sept

Gathering of Church Safeguarding Officers, 7-9pm, venue TBC

PRAYER ROTA

23 May	Pentecost and Aldersgate	18 July	Clifton
30 May	Trinity	25 July	Clifton Moor
06 June	Bible Month	01 Aug	Copmanthorpe
13 June	MHA (Methodist Homes)	08 Aug	Dunnington
20 June	Refugees	15 Aug	Easingwold
27 June	Conference	22 Aug	Haxby & Wigginton
04 July	Action for Children	29 Aug	Heslington
11 July	Circuit Celebration & those moving on from the Circuit		

ONLINE WORSHIP



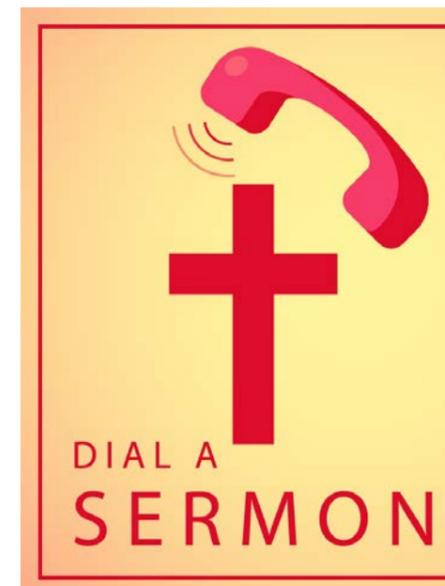
The Circuit continues to produce a weekly act of worship broadcast on our YouTube channel. This is in addition to services produced by churches and written orders of service which are circulated by churches and the Circuit weekly email.

Once a month the Yorkshire North & East District will be producing a service which you can watch on our YouTube channel.

The Children, Youth & Families team are also producing monthly all age worship called 'ONE Family' available through the Circuit YouTube channel and Circuit website - visit www.yorkmethodist.org.uk/what-we-do/one-family.html

SERVICES FROM THE CIRCUIT

16 May	Pre-recorded service for Christian Aid Week
23 May	District service
30 May	Live-streamed service from Huntington
June	Bible Month - Pre-recorded services available on YouTube and for small groups.
04 July	Pre-recorded service
11 July	Morning pre-recorded service for Action for Children PLUS afternoon Circuit Celebration service live-streamed
18 July	Live-streamed Keith's last service from Huntington
25 July	Pre-recorded service



Do you know someone who can't get to church or access online sermons?

For those unable to access the circuit YouTube services online, an audio recording of the most recent readings and sermon are now available by telephone.

Dial **01904 948409** and, after a short delay (about 20 seconds), the audio file will start to play and is usually around 10-15 minutes long.

You will be charged for a local call according to your current phone package.

OPENING THE MENU

We hope that by Pentecost churches will feel ready to have a regular pattern of worship in their buildings. We recognise that this will not be a return to 'normal' for many reasons. We are still unsure when congregational singing will be allowed indoors, or for how long masks and social distancing will remain necessary. While many members of our congregations, and some preachers and ministers, will have been vaccinated by the summer, others will still be waiting for some time.

There is also a recognition that we have changed during our time in lockdown. We have become aware of the strengths, as well as the weaknesses, of meeting together online, in enabling members who are unable to attend church buildings due to ill health to participate in worship, in enabling different congregations to worship together and get to know new friends, in reduced travel time and carbon emissions. We want to be able to carry some of those benefits over into our regular worship lives while enjoying the benefits of once again being able to meet together in person.

So as well as what we might call 'normal' services, led by a minister or local preacher for a congregation gathered in a chapel building, the Circuit expects to offer a menu of options, including:

- Livestreaming a service taking place in one building, and broadcasting it online enabling others to watch from their own homes, or to gather in another church building and watch it together with their own congregation.
- Providing pre-recorded services, both online and on DVD or other media, for churches to watch together as a congregation.
- In time we hope to be able to offer both 'traditional' and 'contemporary' online services (either livestreamed or pre-recorded), so there is something for those who prefer different 'flavours' of worship.
- Continuing to provide written service outlines and 'dial-a-sermon' for those who cannot access online services or services in buildings.
- Support for churches in running Own Arrangement services (e.g. the written service outlines and pre-recorded services mentioned above).

We hope that these options will enable churches of all sizes and shapes to continue to develop flourishing worship lives, wherever and however they choose to gather.

END OF A CHAPTER AT TRINITY



In an earlier newsletter, Peter Kitchin shared the background to a decision made by the Trinity Church Council to seek permission to cease worship. Over the past few months that permission has been granted by both Circuit Council and District Synod.

We continue to hold the Trinity folk in our thoughts and prayers as they prepare for the closing of this chapter of their life together which will be marked by a **Service of Thanksgiving, 30 May at 3pm.**

Two previous Trinity Ministers, David Jones and David Godfrey will be leading that service. We are currently unsure how many will be able to attend but look out for an update via the Circuit Weekly News.

WHAT A PUZZLE!

If you're feeling clever, why not have a go at this fun puzzle to see if you can reveal the bible verse! All you need to do is fill in the missing consonants.



CIRCUIT COUNCIL MEETING: MARCH REPORT

TRINITY

Keith Albans informed the meeting that Trinity's request to cease worship was considered by the District Leadership Team who have agreed to recommend this to Synod.

LOCAL PASTORS

Alyson Christy and Liz Spain spoke about their roles as Local Pastors at Heworth and Haxby & Wigginton respectively. The role is different in different churches but has been focused on supporting the congregations in pastoral care, worship and outreach.

YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES

Amy Shephard gave an overview of the many activities the Children, Youth & Families team have been running, including OneX youth group, ONE Family worship, Breathing Space for parents, planning uniform swap event, and the ONE Movement group for young people to be heard in District policy making.

DIGITAL STRATEGY

Neil Craig gave an update on the draft Digital Strategy, and Circuit Council agreed to commit the last £4,000 of the previously agreed spending and establish a £500 training budget.

CENTRAL

Due to Covid uncertainty, Central Hall Westminster in January have suggested making an Interim Service Agreement instead of the previously planned Lease at this stage. Legal and professional advice is being obtained with the hope that this will come into force in the summer of 2021.

ROADMAP STAFFING

Keith set out the changes that have been agreed to the Roadmap for staffing (ministerial and lay).

- Ian Hill will now be working 83% of full time from September 2021
- Andy Lindley 30% in York Circuit (with the remaining 70% in the new Kairos Circuit)
- Revd David Bidnell (superintendent) and Revd John Hayward (probationer) will be joining us in September.
- Local Pastors will be appointed to work at Acomb and at Haxby & Wigginton (replacing Liz Spain) with other appointments being under discussion.
- An Outreach Worker, Bill Topping, has been appointed to work with Lidgett and Poppleton, and will be joining us in August.
- Applications for authorisation to preside at Holy Communion had been approved by the CLT for our probationer John Hayward and for John Bailey.

CIRCUIT FINANCES

The Circuit's financial position and the assessment due from churches for the next year were discussed. The assessment figures were agreed, but it was recognised that there may be the need to make assessments during the year, and this will be kept under review.

HUSTHWAITE CHAPEL

Circuit Council approved the sale of the former Husthwaite chapel building.

DIGITAL PREACHING PLAN

It was noted that it is hoped to produce a digital Plan for May and June, with a mixed 'menu' of preaching, online worship and livestreamed or recorded worship.

MEMORIAL

The LWPM proposed, and Circuit Council supported, a Memorial to be sent to Conference, pointing out the effect of the last year on local preachers in training and their ability to train, and asking for the time limit for training to be extended in these circumstances.

SAFEGUARDING

The updated Circuit Safeguarding Policy was approved, including the appointment of Amy Shephard as Safeguarding Officer (Children). Safeguarding training can now take place online as well as in person, and training dates have been circulated. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure our churches are safe so please check if you need to undertake or renew your training and book.

CIRCUIT DIRECTORY

A new Circuit Directory will be produced 2021-22, including the same roles as the last edition. Please keep an eye out for forms you will need to complete to be listed.



GOD IN LOVE UNITES US

Synod recently voted on the Resolutions contained in the God in Love Unites Us report, these were carried and will now go to Conference. It is recognised that whatever decisions Conference makes, some people will be hurting and we will need to hold contrary convictions going forward. A Pastoral Reference Group will be established to help us find ways to ensure an atmosphere of openness and fellowship going forward. An extra Circuit Council meeting will be held on 8th July to look at this issue further.

FINDING HOPE AND PURPOSE IN EVERY BROKEN THING



For the last few years, we've held regular craft evenings in Aroma, after we realised lots of people in our community enjoyed having a go at creative activities and were also looking for some company.

We quickly gained some regular attendees, many of whom have no other connection with Aroma or the church. We then discovered that several of the regular attendees were struggling with various issues, and started to wonder if there was any way we could offer more support, and it was then that we came across the Peaced Together course - a 10 week creative arts course with a difference for women.

The Peaced Together course comes from the belief that

good can come from negative and difficult experiences,

and, using five themed craft projects, the course encourages women to reflect on their lives and set out on a personal journey from brokenness to hope.

Each project helps the group explore topics such as

beauty, peace with the past and positive choices.

In 2019 the Aroma community fund gave us a grant to run a pilot Peaced Together course in Haxby. Four of us

agreed to support the trained facilitator to make the course happen and participants were recruited from craft evening attendees and church contacts.

Over the 10 weeks, we created some beautiful items (a mosaic mirror, a treasure box, a cushion, a painting and a weaving) but the course is far more than just an evening of craft. Each project relates to a theme and whilst we were working on our projects we were also discussing various issues relating to that week's particular theme.

For the duration of the course we were encouraged to keep a journal or scrapbook, something personal to remind

us of our Peaced Together journal.

At the start of the course I have to admit that I found the scrapbooking a chore, but by the end it became something I really looked forward to and is now a treasured item, reminding me of the things I learned about myself as we chatted and crafted.

Feeling that we had benefited greatly from taking part in the course ourselves, four of us decided we would like to be able to enable others to also benefit from a Peaced Together

course and so, with generous funding from the Methodist district, we recently underwent facilitator training.

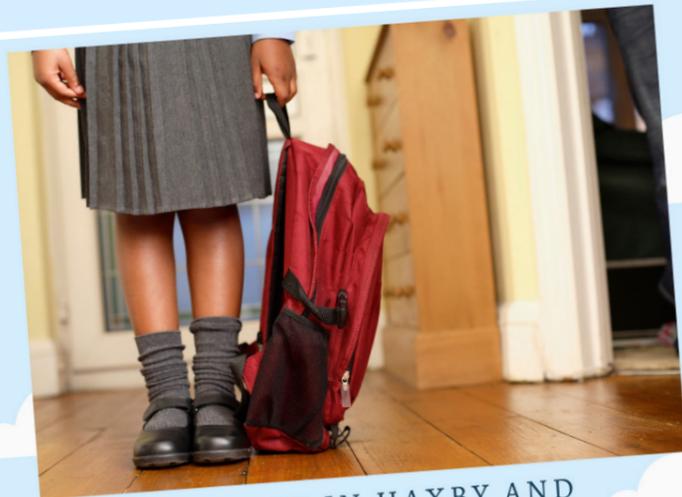
We are now excited to be thinking about the possibility of starting to run courses in the autumn 2021.

Peaced Together Courses

If you'd like to know more about taking part or hosting a Peaced Together Course at your church, in the Autumn please get in touch with

Steph Cooper
e: stephcooper46@outlook.com

www.peacedtogether.co.uk



CHURCHES IN HAXBY AND WIGGINTON

School Uniform Bank

YOU'VE OUTGROWN YOUR UNIFORM? AGAIN?!

Children always seem to have growth spurts at really inconvenient times. It can get a bit pricey too, so we thought we'd try and help.

We're setting up a uniform bank at Haxby and Wigginton Methodist Church, so local parents and carers can pass on good quality school uniform they don't need any more and then pick up a bigger size for their little darlings. All free of charge, so it's a way to tackle hidden poverty and we all get to do our bit for the environment too.

It's a new adventure (which we are setting up with the local Anglican Churches), so we thought we'd try it out first to see how it goes. The hope is that we can build on it next year to be a fun community

When is this taking place?

This summer - July 2021!

Drop off date

Tuesday 27 July

10am - 4pm

We'll get parents and carers to drop off good quality, outgrown school uniform, PE kits and school shoes.

Collection date

Friday 30 July

10am-4pm

Parents and carers can come along to the Church to collect the next size up.

How can I help?

There are lots of ways to get involved. Contact Lorraine to have a chat and join our friendly team on

07850 631168

families@hwmc.org.uk

event and strengthen our community relationships.

We'll keep you up to date on how it goes but if you fancy joining in the fun, there's plenty of ways you can help, like sorting out, doing a bit of laundry and meeting and greeting! Lorraine Jones

COMING UP in June

As usual, June will be Bible Month as we join with churches across the country in focusing in detail on a particular book of the Bible in services and small groups.

This year's book is Mark's gospel.

BIBLE MONTH: MARK'S GOSPEL

Services

We will be producing a pre-recorded service for each week of June using the Bible month material, led by some of our local preachers and supernumerary ministers.

This will be available both as a full service, and as a video of just the sermon, so that if you wish you can fit the sermon into your own service either online or in a building.

You will be able to find all the services and sermons on our Circuit YouTube page and through our website so you can watch them on Sundays or at any other point in the week!

Circuit Website

www.yorkmethodist.org.uk



Photo by Fredrik Öhlander from Unsplash

Study material

We are also producing material for each week that can be used in a small group for discussion, or to study by yourself. You might be able to join groups on zoom, or to meet in person with a few others to look at the material, or set aside part of the week to reflect on it by yourself.

We will also be producing videos of dramatised adaptations of the stories in the study material for individuals or groups to use. These will be available on our YouTube channel and social media.

In preparation for Bible Month, check out our **Mini Reflections on Mark's Gospel** on the next page which you can do anytime, at home or with someone else!

Mini Reflections on 4 Stories from Mark's Gospel

As we approach Bible Month and start to focus on Mark's Gospel, we encourage you to reflect on Jesus' teachings through his actions in these four stories, and how you can apply these in your own lives.



The Paralysed Man in this story, had pretty great friends who went to extreme lengths to help their friend.

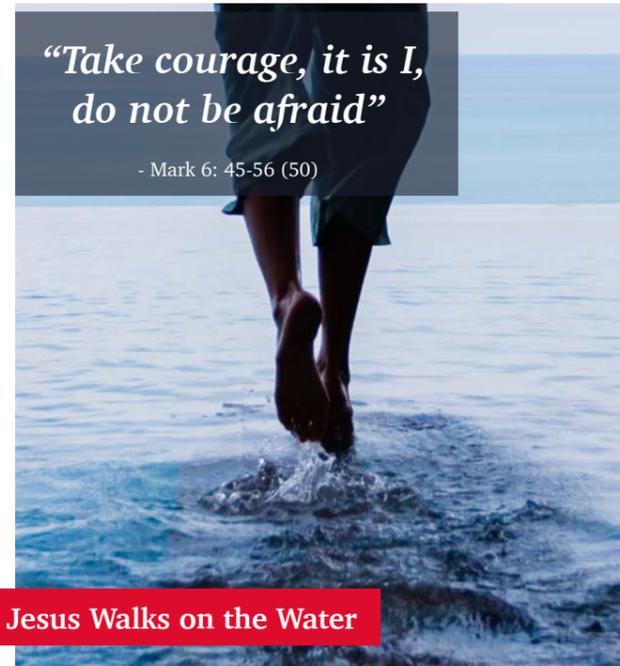
Think about a friend in your life and a great thing they have done for you.

Thank God for them, and maybe if you can, get in touch with them and thank them too. You could send them a letter or thoughtful gift or just give them a call and let them know how grateful you are for their friendship.

The friends in the story also had great faith in Jesus and his power to forgive and heal.

Do you know someone who would benefit from the power of forgiveness, or needs strength to heal?

Why not use your faith in Jesus to **pray** for them.



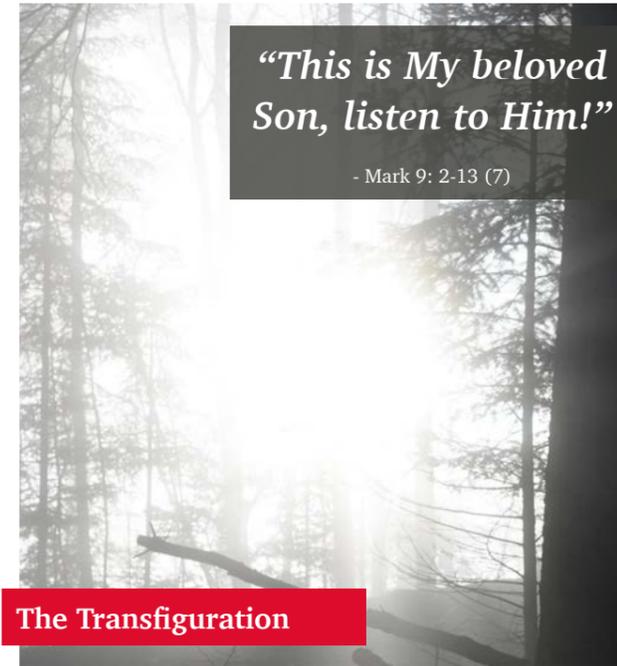
Being in a small boat in the middle of an ocean, with a storm approaching, must have been incredibly worrying. Not to mention seasickness, and what you believe to be a ghost walking past you! It's no wonder the disciples lost their faith in that moment.

Have you ever been afraid of something you didn't think you could face on your own, or been half way through, had a little wobble and started to doubt yourself?

Have there been times where you have or haven't put your faith in Jesus and faced your fear? What was the outcome?

We live in complicated times, and many of us struggle with fear on a daily basis; seeing a spider in the bathtub, failing an exam, losing a loved one or what tomorrow will bring.

In this story, Jesus reminds us that he is there walking beside us and if we put our faith and trust in him, we will find the strength and courage we need to get through anything.



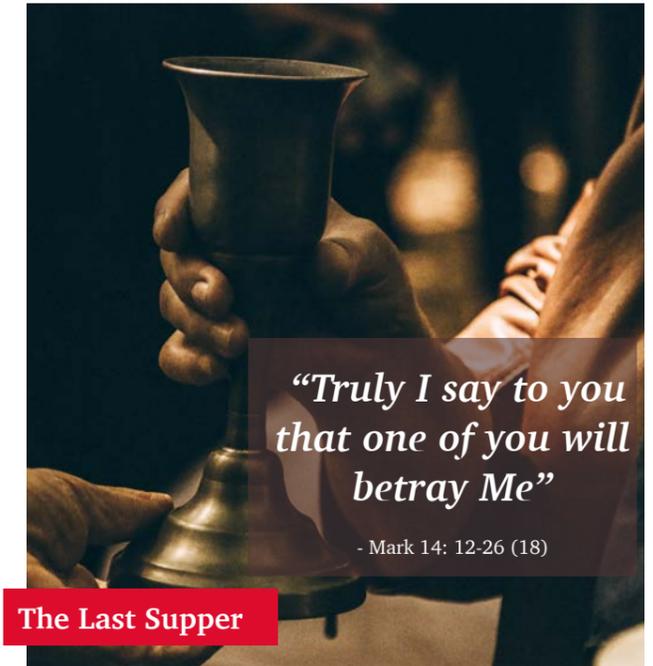
In this story, the glory of God was shown to Peter, James and John through Jesus's transfiguration.

Our clothes won't glow bright white like they did for Jesus, but that doesn't mean we can't recreate the transfiguration in ourselves now. God is in all of us, and it's through us, by following Jesus in our lives, we can show the glory of God to others.

Think about ways you could show the glory of God through your own actions.

How can you demonstrate kindness or concern toward others?

Do you know of a friend, neighbour or stranger in need? If Jesus was here what would he do? What can you do?



Having a meal is a great way to bring people together - sometimes with people who don't know each other, or in the case of the Last Supper, close friends and family. Jesus spent some of his last moments having a meal with the people he was closest to.

As we begin to come out of Lockdown and can gradually spend more time with each other, **think** about who you would love to share a meal with and **invite** them to join you. You could suggest an online meal where you all cook the same thing and sit down at the same time, or plan a picnic in the outdoors where you can easily socially distance.

Is there someone you would like to get to know better, or someone you know is struggling with food?

Can you drop off a food parcel or something 'home-made'?

COMING UP in July



CIRCUIT CELEBRATION AND FAREWELL SERVICE

As part of our annual circuit celebration, we will also be sadly saying goodbye to several members of staff as they retire or move on to new churches.



Revd Keith Albans has been Superintendent since 2017 and has seen the Circuit through some difficult times as well as looking after churches including Huntington, Thornton, Strensall, New Earswick, Dunnington, Stamford Bridge and Trinity.

Revd Ruth Duck joined us in 2019 to offer a much appreciated ministry to Strensall and Sheriff Hutton. We wish both Ruth and Keith well in their retirement.

At the other end of the journey of ordained ministry we say goodbye to Liz and Stephen Spain as Stephen is stationed for the first time as a presbyteral probationer. Liz Spain has been Local Pastor at Haxby & Wigginton for the last year but was well known to many of us before that, and while we are sorry to see Liz go we know that she and Stephen will be a blessing to their new Circuit.

This service will be held at Acomb and we hope to have a congregation from around the Circuit present, as well as live-streaming the service so people can watch from home, or can arrange to watch with their church family in their local chapel.

Please be aware that if you wish to be present at Acomb you will need to book, as we will need to manage the numbers attending.

When is this taking place?

Sunday 11th July 2021
Starting at 3pm.

Where?

Acomb (please book), and live-streamed into your home

How can I book?

More information about booking details and online details will be circulated soon

Visit the Circuit website

www.yorkmethodist.org.uk

Or contact the Circuit office for more info!

BEING INTERRUPTED

Earlier in the year, circuit staff got together to read and discuss the book 'Being Interrupted'.

We had a chat with Rory Dalgliesh, Lois Cross and John Bailey afterwards about why it's a good thing to be interrupted...

What is the book about?

The book basically asks us to start thinking about 'the church' from an entirely different perspective. It challenges us to be less church-centred in our activities and build more inclusive relationships with our communities.

It doesn't give us the answers, but uses lots of stories exploring how we could move forward.

Aimed at everyone, the book is well articulated, not steeped in theology but broken down into digestible chapters. Some topics are challenging from the get go, so a willingness to stay with it to the end, is an important part of reading it. The staff group found different parts of the book challenging but it was good to feel frustrated, excited, annoyed and moved by it together.

What key messages / challenges stood out?

People's lives and social circles are often so bound up in the church that a lot of us don't know many people in the communities we live in. One of the biggest challenges of the book asks us to reconsider how we can live our lives in the community rather than being a church in the community.

A quote in the opening part of the book from Gloria Steinem says "If we have more power than the people we are with, we need to remember to listen as much as we talk. And if we have less power, we need to remember to talk as much as we listen. Both are difficult".

We often come up with an idea and then try to 'sell' it to our communities, persuade them to come and join us. *Being Interrupted* suggested the opposite approach - asking people outside the church what it is they feel is missing from their community, and assisting them in starting initiatives to enrich lives. The challenge then is how those initiatives speak of God - but if we believe God is in every part of our lives, surely that shouldn't be difficult.

It asks us to be more dynamic in how we respond to things. As humans we tend to stick to what we know, often hesitant to try new things. But Mark's Gospel reminds us constantly how Jesus operated outside of structure and routine, again and again. The stories are shaped by the moment he found himself in, far more than the moment he was shaping himself.

The Gospels are also clear that discipleship often means being uncomfortable. This book invites us into that space - to be willing and open to go on that journey with each other.

Why is 'being interrupted' so important?

Our lives aren't continuous or stable for long periods of time. The 'interruptions' we have, whatever they may be, usher in new possibilities and allow us to grow, discover our limits, where our poverty and strengths lie. **Interruptions make the journey happen and move us forward.**

COMING UP in September

EXPLORE 'BEING INTERRUPTED'

Join others across the circuit for a series of 12 online sessions exploring the book's themes and challenges together. Part one will take place from Sept - Dec, with part two starting in the New Year.

Everyone is welcome to join as many sessions as they like which will be led by Rory, Sunday evenings on Zoom. More details to follow!

