



# Plan and Circuit News

Dear Friends,

It was wonderful to share together on 4<sup>th</sup> July at our Circuit Celebration and AGM. Thank you to everyone who worked hard in planning and delivering the event and to all who attended. Such was the turnout that we would have struggled for space to accommodate many more people. And huge thanks to Margaret and Robin Jackson for their hospitality and welcome.

At the AGM we celebrated the new Circuit Vision which was unanimously approved at the recent Circuit Council. This is a very significant document and the bringing of it to life within local churches and Circuit as a whole is important work for the coming years. The statement speaks of Our Calling being to **Growing in Christ**, taking seriously our commitment to **Worship, Learning & Caring, Service and Evangelism**.

The Vision Statement also recognises that if this is to happen the Circuit needs to adopt some important principles:

- Inspiring Ministry**
- Witnessing in the World**
- Valuing Diversity**
- Nurturing Relationships**
- Offering Hospitality**
- Developing our Gifts**

I hope and pray that the Circuit Vision will inspire the Vision of every local church. Let's be in no doubt: there is so



Local preacher Robin Jackson and Revd Leslie Newton at the Circuit Celebration.

much more that God would wish to do through us... so many folk to reach with Good News, so much deeper we can grow in our relationship with God, so many ways in which we can grow in faith, so many opportunities for us to challenge injustice and poverty.

The Vision Statement is reproduced in this Newsletter. I commend it to you. You will also read of the new Vision Coordinating Team which will take on the next steps of bringing the Vision to life. If you are interested in knowing more about this please be in touch with me.

As we embark on a new Connexional year let us praise God for all that's been, and trust Him for all that's to come.

Yours, Leslie Newton.



Revd Ian Hill leads worship at the Circuit Celebration.

## **Ebola appeal**

Our appeal to support children orphaned by Ebola closes this summer. Over £10,000 has been raised as we go to press and is being sent to the 'Children of Hope Foundation' in Sierra Leone to support those in need. A final total will be given at our circuit service on 6th September.

So far at least 121 children in the Kailahun District who lost parents as a result of Ebola have been reached with help. Travelling to the remote areas of the district is difficult but it is hoped to reach all the areas where help is needed soon. Please pray that Ebola remains under control and that the number of new cases in the country declines. Thank you for your support for this appeal.

## **An introduction to Ministerial Development Review**

Ministerial Development Review (MDR) is an annual process designed to support ministers both to grow in their ministry and to contribute to circuits and districts in their mission. It does so by providing a framework for ministers to engage in reflective practice in the context of their current appointment and by enabling and encouraging discussion, development and growth.

MDR applies to all Ministers (Deacons and Presbyters) in a Circuit or District appointment, and to all District Chairs and those in Connexional and other appointments.

The process of MDR involves each Minister meeting, each year, with a Lay Contributor (a member of a local church) together with an Ordained Contributor (for Ministers within a Circuit, usually the Circuit Superintendent, and for the Superintendent, the Chair of District.)

This meeting is an opportunity, prayerfully and reflectively, to:

- **review** together the minister's work over the past year, in the context of their current appointment, and against any hopes and goals set and recorded at the previous meeting – noting successes, challenges, changes in circumstances and learning;
- identify together **new hopes and goals** for the coming year in the context of Circuit / District / Connexional priorities
- identify together areas for **learning and development** to support the Minister during the coming year.

This process may sometimes involve nominating other individuals who have knowledge of their ministry to feed into the process by responding to feedback questions.

I am very grateful to those folk who serve as Lay Contributors in this Circuit. It is an important role and one which I know is appreciated by the ordained staff. Thank you too to those who, from time to time, are invited to offer feedback on a particular aspect of a Minister's vocation and work. As we all seek to "Grow in Christ" this way of supporting and watching over one another in love is important and highly valued.

Leslie Newton

## **Freedom, Freedom, Freedom!**

It seems a long time since September 2007 when I finished working for the Connexional Team in London and started working part time, from home, in the York North Circuit assisting the minister at Huntington and Thornton-le-Clay.

I believe everyone is called to something and that call is constantly being honed. My call is simply to set God's people free using my life skills, my training as a technical illustrator/graphic designer and my experience over two decades working alongside circuits and churches in the UK and Ireland with a mission focus.

What I do now is part of the ongoing shaping of my call, constantly evolving as I share my journey of faith with the folk of Huntington, Thornton-le Clay and now Poppleton and Southlands where by journeying together we constantly find God in the unexpected.

Huntington's refurbishment allowed the After 8 Band to develop its unique style of multi-media café worship that has taken us around the circuit and to Manchester. Cell groups and a healing ministry have emerged- a testimony to build on a firm spiritual foundation taking the whole church forward in mission, another adventure with God.

At Thornton-Le-Clay, a small membership have discovered the possibilities of using limited resources and facilities in outreach through Alpha and a Bible study group. Taking a fortnightly assembly in the small village school led to the setting up of Messy Church in 2011 attracting between 30-44 folk. The help and skills from some of the folk from Huntington have contributed to the success of this venture- a great example of churches working in partnership.

More recently the circuit has expanded my role to include Southlands and Poppleton mission initiatives, as well as Poppleton's RUACH project.

My Circuit Pastoral Assistant's role is varied, sometimes slow, occasionally frustrating but often immensely rewarding. Helping people in their journey of faith takes time. It is a very privileged position to have and for that I am deeply grateful to those who are sharing the journey with me. Someone once asked me to define success- as I see it, we all work together for one changed life, a deepening of faith, in which we rejoice and give God the glory.

Jesus said, “If you hold to my teachings, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free”.

William Swires, Circuit Pastoral Assistant

## **Acomb Jubilee Project**

Acomb celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its church building and 270 years of Methodism in Acomb last year. It was also the point we were able to unveil our vision for the future. Starting with a survey in 2013, and in conversation with other local churches, local government officers, charities and individuals we have drawn up a vision for mission which encompasses broadening our worship, offering new community events, deepening our spirituality and renewing and developing our premises. Our building was already urgently in need of repair, but we held off on all but the most pressing of those repairs until we had our vision in place.

New worship and hospitality are at the heart of the internal changes to the building. We plan to significantly increase the size and visibility of the side entrance with a new external courtyard. By expanding into the present choir and office spaces we will create a new café and reception area. This new area will offer visibility down our long corridor, but also widen the entrance to the sanctuary.

We also plan to move the main hall forwards, so that it is accessed off this new vestibule and within these spaces, as we do today, we’ll offer new family friendly worship alongside Messy church. The hall has also been configured so it can act as a community cinema, and storage is being rationalised.



Alongside these visible changes, we'll be replacing our defunct gas boiler, with a new high energy efficient zoned system and double glazing throughout, which along with increased insulation will cut our heating costs by around 40-50%. Sadly the Ground Source Heat Pump solution we were pursuing was not viable due to iron salts in York's water.

Finally, a previously neglected wilderness area at the rear of the church will be brought to life with a new landscaped garden, an insulated all year round log cabin and summerhouse and a garden room extension to the main building which will replace the present stage area in the hall. This will have a patio area leading out to this new quiet garden space.

We hope this new garden space will be used as a retreat space, a community garden and the base for our new Northumbrian community worship. We also hope to process the produce from the garden to aid the local food bank and other local charities.

We have made good progress already in pursuing these new opportunities. Over £50K has been raised. The side garden is now used, and the rear halls double glazed, and projection facilities installed. The rear garden has been cleared, levelled, marked out and plants are merrily growing. The new boiler will be installed during the late summer. We are presently working up the final architect's plans for the planning authority and circuit and district approval and hope to present them soon.

Please pray for us – and if you have gifts that would be of use, or you'd like to use our quiet space, then please come and have a chat with us.

Rev Andy Lindley.

### **Circuit Property Advisory Group**

The Circuit Property Advisory Group was formed earlier this year to advise the circuit council on property schemes proposed by churches, and to seek to provide help and advice to church property stewards. It is made up at present of Revd. Leslie Newton, Tim Duffy, William Swires, Peter Harrison, Angie Creswick and Lois Cross. Malcolm Parker will be joining us in the autumn.

So far we have met as a group twice, with discussions including:

- Property schemes being developed at Acomb, Central, Melbourne Ter-

- race, Poppleton and West Thorpe (among others);
- A visit to Southlands to advise on building concerns;
- How to assist stewards in getting the best value for property maintenance and utilities;
- Developing and sharing skills and knowledge across the circuit to help with property matters;
- Planning a training and get-together session for church property stewards for **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 10am-12 at Lidgett Grove**. If you're interested please put the date in your diary!

We hope to continue to offer advice and support to churches thinking about property projects, and to expand the help we can offer property stewards.

### **Unusual Visitors in Church**

It's always good to be able to welcome first-time visitors to church, and that's what the congregation at Poppleton were able to do one Sunday morning not long ago.

One visitor was a friend of a couple who worship regularly at the church. They had invited their neighbour to come with them – a lovely act of quiet evangelism. She had come along and, despite being rather hard of hearing, was made very welcome and was given a personal greeting by a number of people.

Poppleton welcomed other visitors that same morning. Some had six legs: they were stick insects. Others had long ears and whiskers: a pair of fluffy rabbits. Some visitors had two legs and feathers: a pigeon and a quail, each in their own private travelling cage. About nine or so had four legs and hairy coats: these were the dogs, in various shapes, colours, and sizes ranging from Chihuahua through Sheltie to Cocker Spaniel.

It was a Pets' Service. The idea of holding a service for people and their pets was mentioned some time ago, and the Discoverers, the Poppleton Sunday morning young people's group, were enthusiastic.

The readings, hymns, prayers, and the PowerPoint<sup>®</sup> pictures all reminded us of the huge variety of creatures in God's wonderful world. We thought together about how God wants us to care for them, and how our pets can teach us about love and responsibility as we look after them.

We were all introduced to the pets one by one, including the ones represented by pictures (for the animals that didn't travel well and couldn't be there in person). The pets themselves were beautifully behaved; some dogs joined in singing the hymns and commented on the service from time to time. At the end, the animals gathered at the front of church with their owners for a prayer of blessing.

Afterwards there were even more conversations than usual as adults and young people chatted together about the animals. Clearly some of the pets present reminded some of the older folk of the ones they themselves had looked after in past years.

"When can we do this again?" more than one person asked afterwards. I wouldn't be at all surprised if people decide to hold another Pets' Service at Poppleton next year.

Thank God for an experience everyone both learned from and enjoyed!

David Priestnall.

## **Aroma**

Aroma Coffee Shop in Haxby is quite unusual as many of you will know. It was started by Haxby & Wigginton church in 2008 as a means of outreach to the community, to provide good quality coffee and lunches in a friendly informal setting, and as a means of promoting interest amongst local people in church events and the Christian religion.

Whilst much of what it serves and seeks to achieve isn't unique amongst church cafes, it is unusual in that it is open 6 days a week from 9 to 5, it employs six staff as well as using the services of up to 60 volunteers - and it is in a location remote from the church which sponsors it.

From the beginning we have felt God at work in what we do. We have been successful financially, recycling profits into the community each year, but more importantly we have undertaken numerous outreach projects from the shop.

For example we have run a significant number of evening courses, classes and meetings which between them continue to cater for different needs in the community, such as a support group for the carers of people with de-



mentia; we have held occasional short services at certain times of the year and coach trips and free afternoon tea on Sundays for those who would otherwise be alone.



The interesting difference over the last 6 months has been the opening of strong 'coffee shop' competition in the form of Costa across the road. This has reduced our footfall somewhat, with the result that we have less profit to give away this year than previously. But our business model is sound, our staff and volunteers are wonderful and most of our customers remain very loyal.

So we go forward in faith, as convinced as ever that God is leading us on and in early May we served our 200,000th customer. We have reached this milestone in six and a half years and York Press and Vale Radio were both happy to feature it for us.

We look forward with enthusiasm to the next six and half years and beyond, and perhaps to our half millionth customer.

If you would like to join us as a volunteer you don't have to be a member of Haxby & Wigginton church or indeed even resident in the community or a committed Christian. We'd love to hear from you whatever your circumstances and however much or little time you may have to spare. You could help take food to tables, clear away, wash up, bake cakes (almost half of the cake we sell is homemade) or perhaps a small job on the admin side. If you'd just like to be a customer and enjoy a terrific coffee in convivial surroundings whether or not you've visited us before, then we'd love to see you too!

More coffee anyone ?

Martyn Holman.

## **Easingwold Methodist Church “ Ruby Do” Celebration**

A year in the planning, a week of practical preparation and three days to share the church's 40 years since it was built with hundreds of people coming from all over Easingwold and its connected village Methodist Chapels, down into York and beyond. Everyone seemed to appreciate the beauty of the floral arrangements and showed great interest in the displays of photographs going back to the stone laying and on to the present time.

The York Gospel Choir entertained and brought the message of God's Love to a good sized audience on Friday evening. The strong, cold, gusty wind on Saturday caused some of the planned outdoor activities to be cancelled but there was plenty to interest people inside and to be enjoyed by everyone.

Sunday morning saw the chapel filled to capacity when Rev Ruth Duck returned to lead our worship, picking up the theme of "The Open Door". Our new glass doors allow people to see inside from the outside and they even open if you approach. We are a body of people who welcome all comers and aim to share what we experience inside with the people we meet outside.

The early evening service at five pm brought everything to a climax when our current minister, Rev Elizabeth Cushion started the service with the congregation inside to dedicate the new doors before we all emerged to share in a 'Songs of Praise' service outside on the chapel forecourt in the evening sunshine.

The number of people involved in making the weekend such a success is too large to mention but they all deserve a big and heartfelt Thank You.

Easingwold Methodist Church.

## **The Encounter Programme**

Are you looking for an opportunity to join with a group of Christians to reflect on Christian living and to discern what God may be calling you to do?

If you are then the Encounter programme may be just what you are looking for.

Encounter is a programme of exploration into discipleship and vocation developed and run by the Methodist Church. It aims to help people to know themselves better, develop a deeper relationship with God, identify their gifts and discern who and how they are to be in the world, including exploring various possibilities for service.

Encounter helps you reflect on your journey to see where God has called you in the past and may be calling you now. Together with others you will reflect on what you already do as a follower of Christ, share and reflect on some new experiences and learn more about the Christian faith.

I have recently taken over as York and Hull District Encounter Coordinator. If you would to have a chat about Encounter and how it could benefit you please give me a call on 01904 761605 or email me on [rob.cooper@2bpeople.com](mailto:rob.cooper@2bpeople.com). Alternatively, please visit the Encounter website <http://www.methodistencounter.org.uk>



**Rob Cooper**

### **Bringing Vision to Life - The Vision Coordinating Team**

After approving the new Vision Statement (see the following page), the Circuit Council then also agreed to the establishment of a new team, the “**Vision Coordinating Team**”, to help the Circuit take the vital next steps in bringing the new Vision to life.

This team will have a key role in:

- embedding the Vision throughout the Circuit;
- regularly producing for the Circuit Council specific objectives for approval. These objectives will develop through a process of careful listening to the needs and aspirations from local churches, together with an audit of resources that are available around the Circuit.

It is our expectation that as the Team undertakes its work new Action Groups will be formed to pursue particular pieces of work.

The Team will be made up of about 8 people: a combination of staff, Circuit Stewards and lay people from around the Circuit. If you are interested in knowing more about the team, please contact Leslie Newton.

# York Methodist Circuit Vision Statement

**Our Circuit's Calling is to encourage growth in Christ through:**

## **Worship**

*Increasing awareness of God's presence and celebrating God's love*

## **Learning and Caring**

*Helping people to learn and grow as Christians, through mutual support and care*

## **Service**

*Being a good neighbour to people in need and challenging injustice*

## **Evangelism**

*Making more followers of Jesus Christ*

*In fulfilling  
Our Calling we will  
seek to embody the  
following principles:*

## **Inspiring Ministry**

*Encouraging and supporting risk-taking mission alongside affirming care and fellowship*

## **Nurturing Relationships**

*Treasuring our Methodist belonging alongside deeper ecumenical and community partnerships*

## **Witnessing in the World**

*Deepening local engagement alongside involvement in national and world concerns*

## **Offering Hospitality**

*Maintaining and resourcing premises for mission alongside outreach beyond existing buildings*

## **Valuing Diversity**

*Affirming each other alongside the pursuit of variety*

## **Developing our Gifts**

*Enabling lay leadership and participation alongside a strong staff team*

# "Growing in Christ"

**Inspiring Ministry:** *Encouraging and supporting risk-taking mission alongside affirming care and fellowship*

We look to Christ and are inspired by both his call to 'follow him' to new ground and his command to 'feed his sheep'.

**Our Vision:**

Our vision is for every local church community to feel sufficiently cherished, inspired and supported by the Circuit that they have the confidence and faith to look outwards and take risks.

**Witnessing in the World:** *Deepening local engagement alongside involvement in national and world concerns*

We look to Christ and are inspired by his example of speaking to the needs of the world around him and his command that we should be salt and light'.

**Our Vision:**

Our vision is for local churches and the Circuit to be confident, become involved and speak out in matters of everyday life and concern in the world.

**Valuing Diversity:** *Affirming each other alongside the pursuit of variety*

We look to Christ and are inspired by his open armed welcome and offer of grace to everyone.

**Our Vision:**

Our vision is for diversity of worship, ministry and mission to all, to be encouraged, supported and developed in an environment of mutual respect. Every local expression of Christian community will have confidence in the Circuit's support.

**Nurturing Relationships:** *Treasuring our Methodist belonging alongside deeper ecumenical and community partnerships*

We look to Christ and are inspired by how he reached out to others and drew people together to work for the Kingdom.

**Our Vision:**

Our vision is for our Methodist heritage to be offered in a wide variety of relationships: within the Circuit, with ecumenical partners and in partnerships in the community and the world around us.

**Offering Hospitality:** *Maintaining and resourcing premises for mission alongside outreach beyond existing buildings*

We look to Christ and are inspired by his example of building community with people, particularly with those who feared they were excluded or marginalised.

**Our Vision:**

Our vision is for Christian communities that offer welcome with a purpose and role at the heart of the community.

**Developing our Gifts:** *Enabling lay leadership and participation alongside a strong staff team*

We look to Christ and are inspired by his call to everyone, and how he enabled people to discover 'life in all its fullness'.

**Our Vision:**

Our vision is to release the potential of congregational gifts supported by a strong staff team and lay leadership.

## **Circuit Council report 17th June 2015**

- The new Vision statement was received and agreed. A Vision Coordinating Team will be established to take forward how this is to be implemented.
- The Circuit Invitation Committee has appointed supernumerary ministers to work part time to care for churches where a minister has not been stationed: Clifton: Revd David Godfrey; Trinity: Deacon Cedric May.
- Sue Swires, Philip Turner and Andy Lindley will be taking their sabbaticals in the next year, and arrangements will be made to provide care for their churches.
- Sally Gall was thanked for her work over the last year as Senior Circuit Steward. Christine Stephenson will be Senior Steward from September, and two new circuit stewards– Sue Gill and Rosemary Freeborn– will join the existing team (Tim Duffy, Martyn Holman, Carol Parker, Peter Metcalf).
- Plans and grants for several property schemes around the circuit were approved.
- Past cases review: a report was circulated concerning the Connexional review of past safeguarding cases. Recommendations have been made by Connexion and we are likely to see the effects over the next few years.
- A new Circuit Safeguarding group is to be formed to oversee safeguarding issues.

### **Diary dates**

Sunday 6th Sept	3pm New year service, Central.
Weds 9th Sept	Leaders of Worship & Preachers' meeting, Stamford Bridge.
Weds 16th Sept	Circuit Council, Poppleton.
Tues 29th Sept	Supernumeraries gathering, 10am, Haxby.
Saturday 3rd Oct	10am Circuit property training morning, Lidgett Grove
Thurs 19th Nov	Circuit Council, Haxby.

## 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 10am at Acomb.
Easingwold	Prayer meeting every Friday 8.30am.
	Thursday café service, 2nd & 4th Thursday of the month 7pm.
Haxby	Ecumenical prayer 9am every Wednesday (please check the notices for venue).
	Oasis: a time of reading, music and quiet reflection. 10.00am on 7 <sup>th</sup> Aug.
Heslington	Holy Communion, Thursdays 9.15am. Christian Meditation Group, Fridays 10.30am. Prayer Group, Tuesdays 10am.
Holgate	Prayer and Care, Thursdays 10am.
Heworth	Prayer meeting, Thursday 7.30pm
Huby	Prayer meeting, Thursdays 8am.
Huntington	Prayer meeting, 1st Friday of the month at 7pm
Husthwaite	Prayer meeting, 1st Wednesday of the month 9am.
Poppleton	Prayerful Reflection, Tuesdays 10am-10.30.
	Wellsprings– Time for God, Wednesdays 6.30pm (dates vary).
Sheriff Hutton	Prayer meeting Wednesdays 8.30am.
Southlands	Concern: a meeting for prayer, Wednesdays 10am.
Tholthorpe	Prayer meeting, Wednesdays 8.45-9.15am.

### Circuit Staff rest days

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

# Circuit New Year Service

Sunday 6th September, 3pm  
Central Methodist Church

Including:

- Commissioning of ministers for Clifton and Trinity
- Commissioning YPS interns for 2015-16
- Presentation of Local Preachers' long service certificates
- Sending out Paul Parker to train for Presbyteral ministry
- With Revd Stephen Burgess, chair of the York & Hull District



## Property information morning

District property secretary Nigel Hardwick will be leading a session for property stewards and others on the issues and demands of the role.

Please do come along if you are involved with looking after property matters for your church or for the Circuit.



Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October from 10am-12 noon,  
Lidgett Grove Methodist Church.