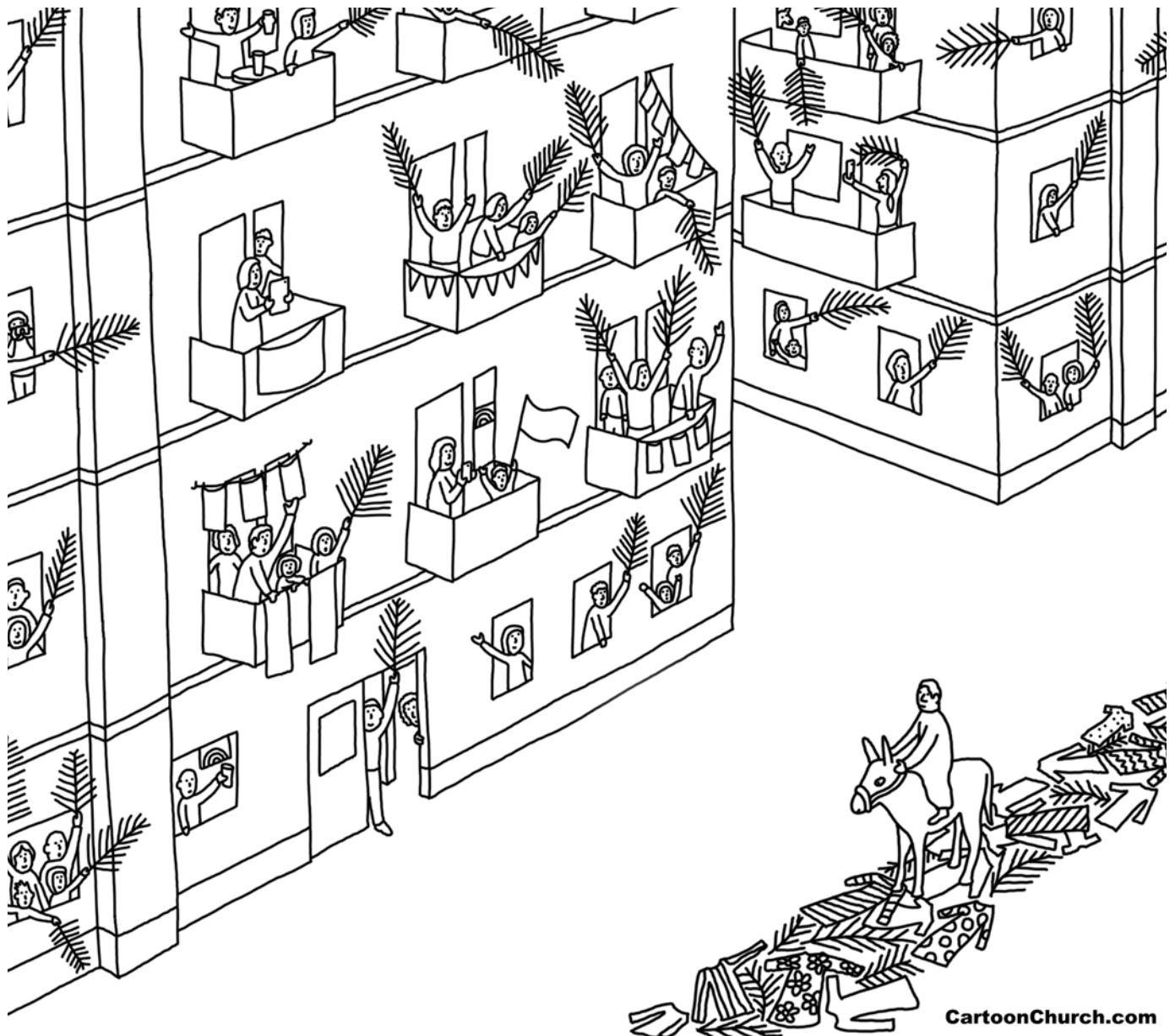




“Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!”

- John 12: 12-13



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,

The season of Lent – lasting as it does for 40 days (the Sundays are in Lent but not of Lent) – is usually viewed alongside Jesus' experience of testing in the wilderness (see **Mark 1: 12-13** or, for a fuller account, **Matthew 4: 1-11** on the next page)

And of course the number 40 is also linked to the years the people of God spent there during the Exodus. The Bible is clear that in both examples the wilderness was a place of encounter with God and of discovery, both of identity and vocation.

I wonder to what extent the past 12 months have mirrored that experience for us, as individuals, churches and a Circuit?

I can't be alone in that, while I can testify to experiences of encounter, I have struggled with understanding both who and what I am meant to be and do. And that has been accentuated by the current lockdown extending so far into what is the final year of my active ministry.



The people of God were formed in the wilderness – that's where the commandments were given, and it was from there that they journeyed to the promised land that would become their home. But they were also formed by the later experience of exile and subsequent restoration.

I've been reflecting on these two phases of formation and how they might relate both to our current experience of lockdown and the hoped for experience of coming together again and seeking out whatever the 'new normal' might turn out to be.

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah are not amongst the most widely read books of the Bible, but their setting is the return from exile. In Nehemiah 8, the story is told of the reading of the rediscovered book of the Law in the assembly of the people. Their reaction is to weep as they become aware again of their identity and of their story, but they are told to celebrate and give thanks. In Ezra 3, we're told the story of how in returning, the foundation for a new temple is being laid alongside the ruins of the old. The reaction of some is celebration, whilst the older priests weep because of what has been lost. And in verse 13 we're told no one could distinguish between the noise of shouts of joy and the sound of weeping!





BIBLE TALK

While I am sure that we are being called towards something radically new in the life of the Church, I'm becoming equally sure that the experiences in Ezra and Nehemiah have a lot to say in directing the way.

— We will come back to where we were, to rediscover who we were, not to be what we were but to celebrate whose we are and to discover who and what we might become.

Thus, when we do return we will need time to tell again our foundation stories and to lament our losses, as well as to share our testimonies of what we have learnt in exile.

I was introduced this week to a book with a great title – How to lead when you don't know where you're going: leading in a liminal season – and the writer makes use of the Ezra and Nehemiah material. Interestingly it was published in 2019 – BC or 'before Covid'.

Lent is a liminal season, and this year it will have a peculiar poignancy, and while we know that it will bring us to Easter, don't rush it, for it is a gift to be lived each day at a time.

With every blessing,

Keith

Mark 1: 12-13

¹²At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, ¹³and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

Matthew 4: 1-11

Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness

4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." ⁴Jesus answered, "It is written:

'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶"If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: " 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.' "

⁷ Jesus answered him, "It is also written:

'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written:

'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.' "

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

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

17 Feb and throughout March

Online activities for Lent - see Circuit News emails and the Circuit website for more details

23 March

Circuit Council, 7pm via Zoom

28 March - 04 April

Holy Week and Easter online services - see Circuit YouTube channel

30 May

Trinity Methodist church closing service (TBC)

Sundays in June

Bible Month: Mark's Gospel

24 June

Circuit Council, Time/ Venue TBC

11 July

Circuit Celebration - service streamed from Acomb at 3pm

PRAYER ROTA

14 Feb	Sheriff Hutton, Racial Justice	28 March	Tholthorpe, Palm Sunday
21 Feb	Southlands	04 April	Easter Day
28 Feb	Stamford Bridge	11 April	West Thorpe
07 March	Stillingfleet	18 April	Acaster Malbis
14 March	Stillington, Mothering Sunday	25 April	Acomb
21 March	Strensall		

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 produced on the first Sunday of the month (see www.yorkmethodist.org.uk/what-we-do/one-family.html for resources)

The Circuit are aiming to produce resources for Holy Week and Easter, visit our YouTube channel or check the weekly news email nearer the time for more details.

RESOURCING STRATEGY AND STAFFING UPDATE

Last February the Circuit Council approved a strategy for staffing and resources across the Circuit that was planned to lead to the creation of a number of Local Pastor roles to be part of the staff team alongside ministers and specialist lay roles in ministering to churches.

Since then **Alyson Christy** (Heworth) and **Liz Spain** (Haxby) have joined **John Bailey** (Holgate, Southlands) as Local Pastors and their role has been welcomed, despite the difficulties of getting to know people during the pandemic restrictions.

We are in the process of recruiting another local pastor role, to work at Lidgett and Poppleton churches with a focus on outreach.

Since the strategy was approved there have been a number of changes and updates made to the plan for staffing.

Revds Keith Albans and **Ruth Duck** will be retiring in the summer of 2021, and **Revds Ian Hill** and **Andy Lindley** will reduce the hours they are working in the Circuit.

We look forward to welcoming **Revd David Bidnell** as Superintendent from September 2021. David will be working with Central (alongside Deacon Judith Stoddart) and New Earswick churches.

We will also be welcoming **Revd John Hayward** as probationer minister at Huntington (with Thornton-

Le-Clay), Strensall and Sheriff Hutton churches.

Also unforeseen in the strategy was the need that arose during 2020, to work on developing our online worship and resources. **Neil Craig** (Digital Development Enabler) and **Hannah Carter-Brown** (Creative Content Assistant) started work with us in the autumn - more about them overleaf!

The strategy is still evolving, and will continue to do so as needed, but the aim of creating a skilled staff team of lay and ordained people to enable churches to flourish has not changed and we look forward to seeing the fruit of this in our churches.

THE FIRST FEW MONTHS...

In October/November last year we welcomed Neil and Hannah onto our circuit staff team to help with digital church and online services (although we haven't actually met them in person yet!). We thought it would be good to see what they have been up to during their first few months...

Neil, Digital Development Enabler:



Since joining I have been working to understand the digital situation of the circuit. I have been joining in various online services (one advantage of services being online is that you can do this from

the comfort of home!) to get a feel for the different styles of worship and congregations in York. An overview of online services was created on the circuit website.

The Circuit Digital Strategy is being developed in terms of a 'roadmap' that moves from where we are now ('As is') to a vision of the future ('To Be') and identifies the incremental steps to move forwards with this journey. Therefore, I am undertaking a series of directed conversations with churches or sections to identify the current ('As Is') situation with respect to digital – what has been offered, what worked (or not), what difficulties are encountered, how much engagement through different channels - and the potential future vision ('To Be') in terms of local mission and resources. An element of these discussions is also to identify digital training needs or support

that will enable people within churches to develop their online presence and activities more effectively and utilizing existing skills across the circuit where possible. In the near future, we hope to offer/signpost some training according to the priorities emerging.

In practical terms, equipment for a 'Zoom Room' was successfully installed at the Circuit Hub in December which will allow for online meetings, video conferencing or broadcast worship (however, utilisation of this facility is limited by current restrictions). As an example of an online activity, a digital quiz was held in December. From the administrative side, we are exploring usage of a cloud based storage and collaboration system to facilitate working together, security and backup.

Hannah, Creative Content Assistant:



With a background in graphic design I knew that I could bring a lot of creativity, in my supportive role, to York circuit.

I got straight into editing the circuit's online Sunday services, with support from Keith and Mark. I also set up a number of 121s with other staff members, so I could get to know people a little bit, which is important when the majority of your work is done alone and online! It's good to know how you fit into the wider community.

I quickly moved into producing creative content for Advent and Christmas, including the Advent candle liturgy we used online, and digitalising

Amy's Acts of Kindness Advent Calendar for use on social media. A busy time, as it is for everyone, doing both church work and several of my own freelance projects, so it was good to finally have a break over Christmas with my family and spend time away from the computer.

By the time New Year swung around I was ready to get back and start afresh with some new exciting projects, including this new-look newsletter! I am now turning my attention to looking at websites, how we can make better use of social media and improve the design and communication across the circuit. It's a big job and may take the better part of the year to complete but little by little you should start to see a few improvements here and there.

I'm going to be working in collaboration with the District to produce an online service for Palm Sunday - so make sure you check that one out!

I'm also looking at creating a catalogue of resources for others to use in their services, such as different versions of the Lord's Prayer, bible readings and blessings.

Although I am working alone, I do have those I can reach out to for support. I have regular catch up meetings with Keith, and once a week myself, Neil and Andy get together to check in with our projects. We're still figuring things out but it's good to know we're in it together! And we have also formed a Digital Reference Group, made up of both staff and non-staff across the circuit who have experience, knowledge or an interest in all things digital. We get together once every few months to discuss digital projects and how to move things forward. I really enjoy working collaboratively so it's nice to have a place to bounce ideas off each other,

raise questions or concerns and figure out a solution. If you'd like to be involved, have a word with me, Neil, Lois or Keith.

Starting a new job is always a little bit daunting and it can take time to settle in and ease into the role, but I'm at a point now where I have a better understanding and clearer path of what I am doing.

Part of our job is about helping people to connect - connect with God and with each other. I think those 'connections' are one of the most important things we can have right now and many of the connections I've been making in the past 4 months have been new ones. It makes me happy to think that when I eventually move back to York, I will know a lot more people (through this job and other groups) than when I left!

For those unable to access the circuit YouTube service online, an audio recording of the most recent readings and sermon is 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.

CIRCUIT COUNCIL MEETING: DECEMBER REPORT

- Discussion in breakout groups focused on people's experience of church during the pandemic and what we might learn from these experiences. It was agreed that nobody should feel any pressure to be where they may not feel safe – that includes church stewards and other volunteers as well as staff. We have many vulnerable people in our congregations and should take that responsibility seriously. Just because we are allowed to open buildings does not mean it is the right thing to do in the circumstances.
- Victoria Etherington reported on the work of the Children, Youth & Families team, including that the OneX Circuit Youth group has been meeting regularly on zoom, providing support for a growing number of young people. The Team have also been producing worship resources to be used with all ages including the One Family monthly online worship and a pack of resources for Christmas.
- The Circuit voted to support the decision taken by Trinity Methodist church to close. This will now be referred to the District. It is provisionally planned to hold the final service on Trinity Sunday - 30th May 2021.
- Circuit Council approved the appointment of an Outreach Worker to work at Lidgett and Poppleton, as part of the developing Strategic plan for staffing and resources.
- Nick Dawson reported on the Circuit's finances and the effect of this unusual year on church and Circuit finances was recognised. It was agreed to freeze the February assessment payments at the 2019-20 levels, and a group was appointed to liaise with church treasurers and bring proposals for the May 2021 and the 2021-22 assessments to the March 2021 Circuit Council meeting.
- Janet Bowling, Nick Dawson and Joyce Jinks were appointed as signatories to sign legal documents on the Circuit's behalf.
- The meeting voted to support the deferred resolution proposed by the Methodist church to allow the leasing of our buildings to other denominations for longer than 12 months.
- It was noted that the Methodist Conference had requested Circuits look at whether the number of trustee bodies (church councils) was appropriate, and further discussion will take place in the future. Churches were encouraged to consider local possibilities about clustering with other churches to share trustee responsibility and to talk to Keith and the Circuit stewards about this.
- It was reported that Victoria Etherington is close to completing her training as a Local Preacher, and the meeting approved her admission to full Local Preacher status subject to the completion of her trial service and the recommendation of the Leaders of Worship and Preachers' Meeting.



CARECENT NEWS

Keith Albans spoke to Nicky Gladstone, the Project Leader at Carecent, and Cat Tottie, who will be taking over when Nicky leaves later this spring.

Nicky, you've been at Carecent for the last eight years but will be leaving later this year- why are you leaving and where are you going?

Nicky: I'm going to be ordained in the Church of England later this year, I've been training for three years so now is the time to step back from Carecent. Now it's getting close it's beginning to feel very real!

Cat, we're welcoming you to Carecent, where you are currently working alongside Nicky but will be flying solo from April. But this isn't your first experience of Carecent?

Cat: Yes, I've volunteered for Carecent for 3 years, starting when I was doing a Masters degree researching homelessness including interviewing people from Carecent. I've spent the last couple of years doing housing support work and as a domestic abuse practitioner. When the Carecent job came up it seemed the right step. I love Carecent and it's closely shaped to the way I've practiced in my professional career.

And you're bringing a lot of experience and expertise from those other roles.

Cat: Yes there's a lot of crossover. I'm aware of the challenges as well as the successes. I'm really excited to get going.

Nicky, Carecent's had to work very differently over the last few months. What have been the major challenges and how have you met them?

Nicky: At first it was frantic as we didn't really know what to do, but after a short time we settled into providing packed lunches every morning as we are still doing. It's been important to be resilient and adaptable, and we've had fantastic support from our volunteers. We've carried on doing what we thought was right and it seemed a robust way of doing something to keep the community going. We were concerned we'd lose a lot of the community feeling, but feedback from customers is that coming every day to get their lunch has been important in helping them keep going. It's not the same as we did before but it's been positive.

Looking back on your time at Carecent, what are the things that you'll take into your new role?

A JOURNEY TO LOCAL PREACHING

Since joining the Circuit as Youth Ministry Leader in 2016, Victoria Etherington has been on a journey towards being recognised as a Local Preacher.

On 14th February we will be celebrating the completion of Victoria's training at a Circuit Service. Ahead of this, Revd Keith Albans spoke to Victoria about her journey.

When did the preaching journey begin for you?

That's a good question, and there are two parts to the answer. As a teenager, when I first attended church I felt that it might be something I could do, but didn't recognise this as something I should do anything about. Later on I was working with young people doing talks as part of leading holiday clubs, and leading all age worship services. I then moved to the USA and attended seminary training which included preaching. Preaching to 300 seminary students was scary, but if you can do that then you can do anything! Then as part of my role working in the Episcopalian church my preaching became a more formal call to preach in the main adult services, not only all-age worship.

You came back to England and joined the York Circuit. Has it been a difficult journey to transfer that wealth of affirmed experience and qualification into recognition within the Methodist context?

Nicky: The people! Relationships are what get you through, with the customers, the volunteers and the other groups we work with. You can't do something like Carecent alone or drag people along against their will. Carecent is a community of fantastically generous, humour-filled, grace-filled lovely people and I will miss them all, on both sides of the counter. That kind of relationship building is what I hope to take into ministry- if you've got good relationships you can't go far wrong.

Cat, you're joining a well-established project at a peculiar time. What are your dreams and aspirations as to how Carecent might develop in the future?

Cat: At present people are focused on getting back to some kind of normal service. Carecent is very special, partly because it doesn't put much expectation on service users- we just want them to come and have a good time and go away fed- if we do that it's a job well done. I would like to look at ways to help make life easier for people and keep people well- wellness can fall to the wayside in worrying about paying bills and housing. I hope to look into improving access to health services for those who are often left out of GP practices and vaccinations. We hope that we will be able to gradual shift back to normality and will be looking at how to do that effectively.

Thanks to both of you, and welcome to Cat. We hope to find a way of celebrating Nicky's time at Carecent before she leaves.

You can find out more about the great work of Carecent and how to donate via their website:

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



It's not been easy, and painful at times to have that prior experience and training seen as invalid by Methodist connexional rules. But the Circuit and District have been affirming, especially my former Circuit mentor Freda Taylor. Freda was very confident in her own calling and skill as a preacher, and understanding of the different styles different people bring to preaching. She was able to challenge without making you uncomfortable. This support and affirmation enabled me to complete the training.

You are right to point out that we all bring different experiences and understanding to worship - we are all different, and worship has to be different in different contexts.

Your final Trial Service had to take place as a filmed service (available on YouTube). This was the first time you had led a digital service, how was it different to your previous experience of leading worship?

I find it hard to stay focused when taking part in online worship as a member of the congregation. It's also hard when you are leading because there is no interaction or relationship with the congregation - you can't see how they have reacted to what you have said, or pick up where you should or shouldn't say more. You have to be careful if you are challenging people, recognising that it's hard to provide pastoral care if someone is affected by what you say.

Your service of Recognition as a Local Preacher will take place on 14 February. What do you think will be your central feeling about the service and your journey to this point?

Embarrassed! I'm uncomfortable with being the centre of attention in the service. It's different when you are preaching because God should be the centre of attention. It will also be affirming, but the real affirmation has come from the Circuit and Leaders of Worship and Preachers' meeting during this journey.

You can also watch this conversation on our YouTube channel



SLEEP OUT FOR HOMELESSNESS

On December 7th 2019 a small group of people from across the district slept out for one night in the yard at Central Methodist church in York to raise money for homeless people.

This year the event took place on 23rd January and a larger group of people slept out; this time due to Covid-19 restrictions, in their sitting rooms, garages, sheds and gardens - to raise money and awareness for Carecent and SASH.

During worship the following morning we shared our experiences of the night; the temperature dropped to -6 during the night, meaning that our bedding felt damp and cold. We also talked about how painful it is to sleep on a cold hard surface rather than a bed. However, for most of the group it was the realisation that being homeless is more than the lack of a roof. It is to be without community and support. As we prepared to sleep out we had the support of the rest of the group, as well as family, friends and the wider church community through sponsorship and messages of encouragement. Loneliness and isolation remain huge challenges for homeless people.

Many of the group also shared that they had felt guilty as they left their tent to go inside and get breakfast.

Sadly, many of the places homeless people could go for warmth, companionship and support have had to close their doors due to the pandemic. Although Carecent continue to offer packed lunches and hot drinks, this is not the same as being able to meet in the warm and welcoming café. There are now very few places that people can go to get a hot meal or to properly dry out their clothing and bedding.



This situation is exacerbated by a decrease in funding for many charities. This is largely due to the cancellation of many fundraising events and activities. Jenna Goodridge, community fundraiser at SASH said:

“It really means so much to us that The Yorkshire North and East Methodist district have chosen to support SASH and Carecent with their Sleepout challenge. Every year we support hundreds of local young people who are facing homelessness and this would not be possible without the support of our community with events like this. These fundraisers ensure we have the funds to continue supporting local young people in crisis and continue on our mission to ensure no young person has to face homelessness”

Want to know more?

If you would like to know more about the challenges facing homeless people, Mark Bevan has written a series of blogs which can be found here: www.yorkshirenethodist.org/category/sleep-out/

More information about the work of SASH or Carecent can be found through following these links:

<https://www.sash-uk.org.uk>

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

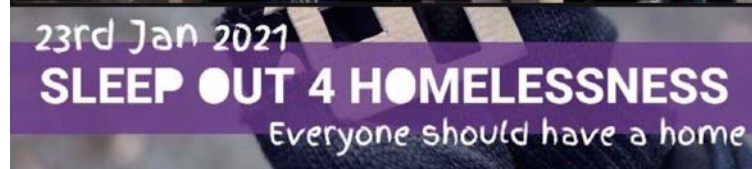
Want to support this cause?

It is not too late to support the event! At the time of sending to print we had raised £5,265 - more than twice last years total! Visit our Just Giving page to make a donation:

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/sleepout-forhomelessness?utm_term=EX7MeeMVX

Want to take part next year?

Finally, if you would like to join us next year get this date in your diary **22 January 2022**. Hopefully we will be able to get together by then!



REFLECTIONS AND WORSHIP OVER LENT

Lent Course

We invite to join us for an online six week Lent course focusing on John's Passion Narratives, with sessions on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays, beginning the first full week of Lent and ending in Holy Week.

The 6 passages are:

John 18: 1-11

For whom are you looking?

John 18: 12-27

Before the High Priest and Denial

John 18: 28-40

Before Pilate

John 19: 1-16

Mob Rule

John 19: 17-30

Crucified

John 19: 31-42

The Aftermath

Contact **Keith Albans**,
Ruth Duck or **Alyson Christy** for more information and to get the Zoom joining details.



Are you giving up something for Lent?

It's easy to pass over Lent without too much thought about what you are giving up and why so we've asked a few staff and volunteers what they are giving up this year..

MEAT

"I'm giving up meat for Lent to try and reduce my carbon footprint... I managed it last year so hoping I can again!"

TV

"I'm giving up TV for Lent as I often complain I don't have time to do the things I want to do, so by putting down the remote and turning off the power, I'm hoping to use that time to do other things I enjoy."

SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

"This is such a hot topic at the moment but I've found it so hard to be 100% eco-friendly. However throughout Lent I will try and go 'plastic free' or at least single use plastic such as not using/buying shopping bags, straws, takeaway cups or food containers. This may help to set future habits in place!"

SOCIAL MEDIA

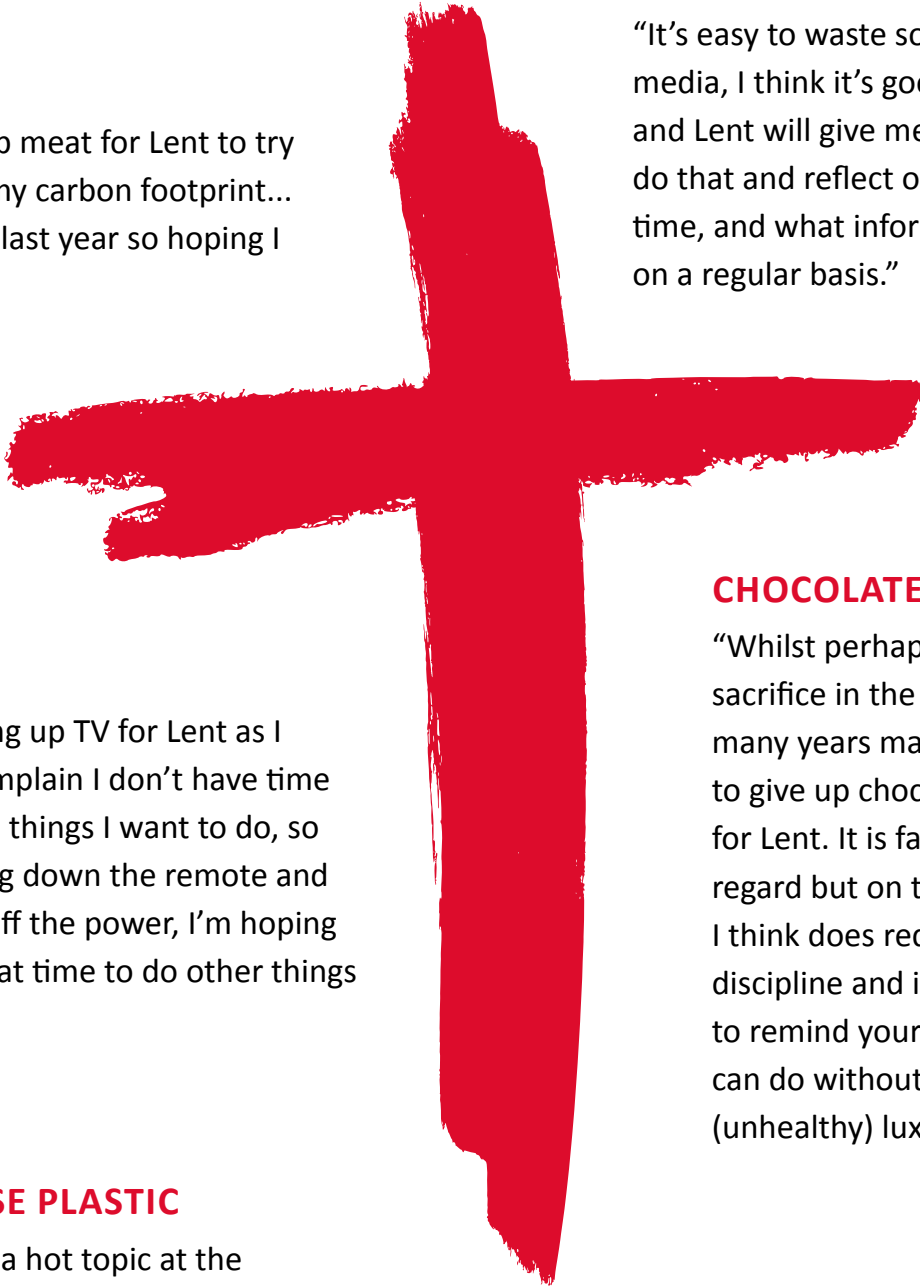
"It's easy to waste so much time on social media, I think it's good to take a break, and Lent will give me an opportunity to do that and reflect on how I spend my time, and what information I am digesting on a regular basis."

CHOCOLATE AND CRISPS

"Whilst perhaps not the greatest sacrifice in the world, I have for many years made it my practice to give up chocolate and crisps for Lent. It is fairly trivial in one regard but on the other hand I think does require some self-discipline and is quite beneficial to remind yourself that you can do without non-essential (unhealthy) luxuries."

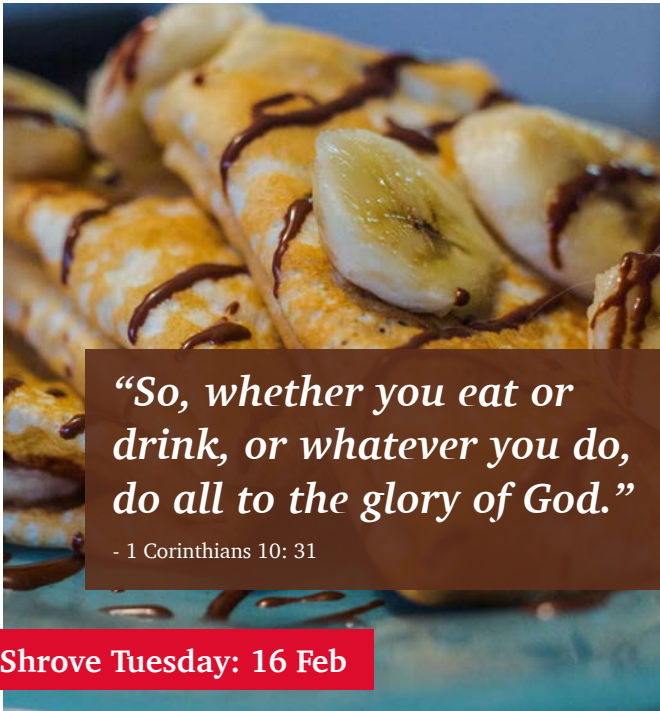
CLUTTER

"Maybe it's the 'spring cleaning' effect but I always feel like its time to have a clear out this time of year. This year I am going to get rid of 1 item each day throughout Lent, and either recycle, donate or upcycle the 40 items at the end. I hope this will help me to clear out the clutter (physically and mentally) and make space for reflection on the blessings we have."



Remembering Jesus' Journey to the Cross

Beginning with Shrove Tuesday here are some reflections to think about as we prepare for Easter Day and remembering Jesus' sacrifice to save the rest of us from our sins.

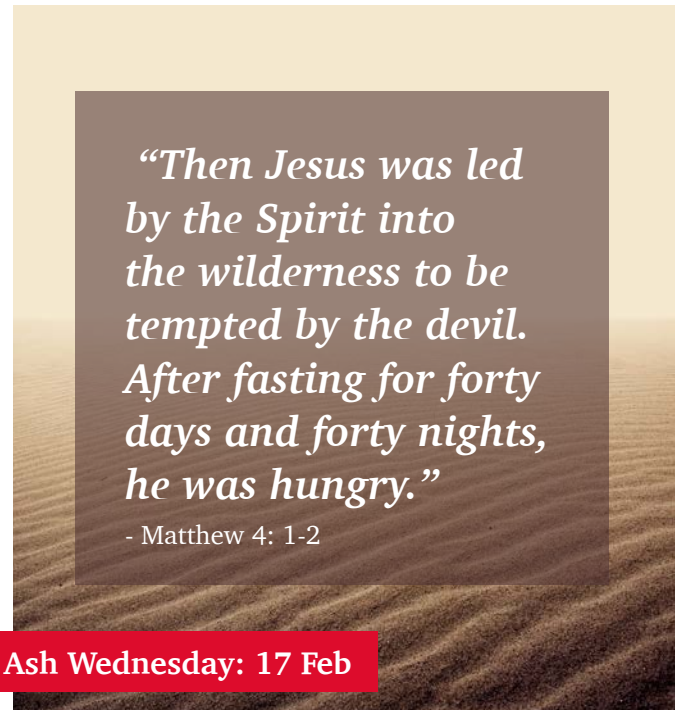


Today marks the feast of celebration before 40 days of fasting begins (or whatever you are giving up for Lent). In the UK, it is more commonly known as ‘Pancake Day’ as pancakes were a way of using up rich foods such as eggs, milk and sugar.

Here’s a classic pancake recipes:

Ingredients: 100g plain flour, 2 large eggs, 300ml milk, 1 tbsp sunflower or vegetable oil, plus a little extra for frying, and lemon wedges/caster sugar to serve (optional).

1. Put plain flour, eggs, milk, 1 tbsp oil and a pinch of salt into a bowl, then whisk to a smooth batter.
2. Set the frying pan over a medium heat and carefully wipe it with some oiled kitchen paper .
3. When hot, cook your pancakes for 1 min on each side until golden.
4. Serve with lemon wedges and caster sugar, or your favourite filling.



Today is the first day of Lent which lasts for 40 days (excluding Sundays) to mirror the 40 days Jesus spend in the wilderness being tempted by Satan.

So, as we read about Jesus’ time being tested, have a think about what are you going to give up for Lent and what temptations you might face.

Half way through Lent: 13 March

You’re now a couple of weeks into your Lent period. Keep going! You’re doing a great job!

“We must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don’t give up.”

- Galatians 6: 9

We should all be doing what we can to help others, especially at this extremely difficult time. Have a think how you might be able to help someone today - can you donate to a foodbank, or hunt through your wardrobe for clothes you no longer need.



Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”

- John 14: 6

Holy Week

Palm Sunday: 28 March

On Palm Sunday we commemorate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem riding on a donkey and passersby waving palm branches.

“The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!’”

- John 12: 12-13

Holy Wednesday: 31 March

Today we remember the ultimate betrayal - when Judas became a spy and arranges to hand over Jesus to the Romans. **Read Matthew 26: 14-16.**

Have you ever been betrayed by someone - maybe a close friend, family member or colleague? Were you able to forgive them?

Maybe today, hold out an Olive branch to that person and see what happens.

“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”

- Colossians 3: 13

Maundy Thursday: 01 April

Today we remember the last supper Jesus had with the 12 disciples. Together they broke bread and drank wine to symbolise the body and blood of Christ.

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

- Matthew 26:26-29

Good Friday: 02 April

Good Friday commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus and his subsequent death.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

- John 3: 16-17

Easter Day - Sun 04 Apr

On this day we remember the Resurrection of Jesus Christ; of God's almighty power and love conquering evil.

Jesus said to her,

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die."

- John 11: 25-26

Today, as we perhaps enjoy munching on our favourite chocolate Easter Egg, we remember that eggs symbolize new life, or in Jesus' case - re-birth! And that even though Jesus gave up everything and died so we that our broken relationship with God could be restored, his resurrection or re-birth means that we can have a personal relationship with Jesus because he is alive in all of us.

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.

- 1 Peter 3:18

"Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord!"

- Psalm 31: 24

**He
is
Risen!**