



# York Methodists

# Circuit Newsletter

# Summer 2022

Contact the Circuit Office if you would like to receive the weekly Circuit News email.

Visit our recently revamped website for information and other resources:

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

Subscribe to our YouTube channel for online worship:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMZlI3vyksFEonZ-EQbbhuQ>

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/>

*Revd Ian Hill reflects on his years in ordained ministry. We wish Ian well as he moves into retirement and there will be an opportunity to say goodbye at a service on 17<sup>th</sup> July.*

## **The changing face of Ordained Ministry: 1990-2022**

I have thought a lot recently about the changes I have seen over the past thirty-two years. Most obviously, there is the decline in our work with young people. In the early days of my ministry this work occupied a very large proportion of my time and I miss that dimension of ministry enormously. However I would have to be realistic and admit that, even where there are such opportunities, I am getting too old and out-of-touch (and tired!) to play an active part now.

Another striking change has been the diminishing acceptance of the Church as a significant player in the community. I used to have automatic involvement in schools, hospitals and many community organisations. It now seems a distant memory that I had to go to Town Council meetings to lead prayers or that there were so many school assemblies that fitting them all in was a problem. It is probably right that the church should earn these privileges rather than being granted them automatically, but those open doors were very valuable. We have to work much harder now to find ways of being alongside people.

It is easy for such reflections to become 'Change and decay in all around I see', but, paradoxically, I find the church to be more healthy in many ways than it was in the 'good old days'.

It was not uncommon for Church Councils and the like to be confrontational and abrasive, so I still tend to dread such meetings even though they are usually conducted in a spirit of co-operation nowadays. In general I find the churches to be more tolerant and outward-looking places than they were. We are more inclusive, both in terms of Connexional policy and local welcome.

I also rejoice in the growing recognition that 'the minister' cannot be good at everything, so we are appointing gifted people to deal with aspects of administration, property and finance that I have previously struggled to manage. I realise that people in most professions grumble about the increasing burden of administration taking them away from their 'real' work, so I think it is a challenge to society as a whole to consider how to free up doctors, nurses, police officers, teachers and many others to do what they are trained to do. So many people feel that far too much of their time is taken up with things that bear no relation to their skills.

So I look forward, not to doing nothing, but to being able to help only with those things where I have something useful to offer!

Every blessing, Ian Hill

## ECO TASK FORCE

It's been 9 months since we had our first conversations about getting an Eco group together. The time has flown and it has been so encouraging to have people engage with the idea of coming together as a circuit to share thoughts and experiences. The mailing list has expanded month on month and many people have dropped us a line or expressed interest in Eco Church. The group has been made "official" by the Circuit Council, our role being to advise, encourage, equip, inform and co-ordinate all the great work that is being done around our Circuit. The Circuit is also now working towards an 'Eco Circuit' status. The Eco Task Force has a growing group of people coming to the meetings, so we really do have a 'hive mind' of great ideas and insights; if there is anything you want advice on, someone in the group will know!

### Monthly meetings


The group have naturally fallen into a pattern of meeting once a month. Alternate months are online, to save fuel and the climate. But we do recognise the enormous value to meeting in person; judging by the many conversations buzzing around the room, ideas can be shared more easily, connections can be made and friendships formed. We take a theme, based on the different areas of Eco church, which we then explore. This might be through someone giving a talk, a video, or someone sharing their experiences. Here's a flavour of what we have been up to so far:

**February** – a meeting at Haxby and Wigginton to throw around ideas and see where people's interests and passions are.

**March** – Bill Topping shared the 'Journey so far' for Poppleton Methodist, working with their Anglican neighbours in working towards Eco Church. The emphasis was on 'getting started' (which often seems like the hardest thing to do!)

**April** – we met at met at Acomb to be shown around their community garden. We were also joined by Beki from St Nicks to talk to us about their 'York Green Corridors' Project.

**June** – Looking at the 'Lifestyle' area of Eco church.

Are you looking to live more sustainably? We'll post some easy ways to help you do it. 

Despite my best intentions, this is one I always struggle with. These are some things I try to do, but honestly, some weeks go better than others! See how you get on:

- If you don't do this already, try planning a menu and sticking to it. Factor in using leftovers from the previous day and days when you won't have time to cook. Don't sweat it if everything goes to pot, though, and you order pizza one night!
- Cook extra and then freeze the leftovers so you always have a stand by meal in the freezer when you're too tired to cook.
- Cutting back on meat and dairy is so much easier (and cheaper) these days. You don't have to go full-on Vegan to make a difference. Bulk out your bolognese with veggies or have a meat free day once a week. It all helps.

**July: Avoiding Food Waste**

**July** – Wednesday 20th July, meeting at St Everilda's in Poppleton at 7pm. They have been working on their graveyard for Eco Church. We will then go to the Methodist Church to talk about their building work and their heat pump. Refreshments provided.

The thing I love about the meetings is that they are overwhelmingly encouraging – no-one is judging anyone and we are all just trying to learn from each other. None of us pretend to have all the answers or to get it right all the time; we are all doing our best to do the next right thing, however imperfectly!

If you want to go on the mailing list, then pop me an email. We look forward to hearing from you.

The Eco Task Force.

Contact: Lorraine Jones 07850 631168 [lorraine.jones@methodistyouth.org.uk](mailto:lorraine.jones@methodistyouth.org.uk)

### **Community Garden – exciting news!**

The tour of Acomb Community Gardens was very timely for the Haxby and Wigginton Eco Church folk as they entered discussions with NHS Property and the GP Surgery to create a Community Garden on the site, which is a few doors down from the Methodist Church. The Methodist Church itself has very little land to speak of, so the group struggled to do very much in that area of Eco Church. But, with a handful of very timely conversations, everything came together and now the project is beginning in earnest. As the project team in Acomb know full well, there's an awful lot of work that needs to happen before a plant even gets in the ground, so there will be nothing



*Acomb Community Garden*

to really see until next year. But the team is excited to get going. It will be called 'Whole Life Community Garden' and aims to encourage physical health through gardening and growing your own fruit and veg, but also mental health; through social prescribing, mindfulness and being with others in a peaceful place to produce something beautiful.

### **Prayer for the planet**

God of justice: We pray for world leaders as they navigate their way through the cost of living and energy crisis. We ask for your wisdom so that solutions can be both fair and respectful of our planetary limits. Amen.



# Climate Sunday

Can your Church hold a climate Sunday this year? Or do you want to make it a whole week in September?! There are plenty of resources and ideas on these websites.

<https://www.climatesunday.org/>

<https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/great-big-green-week>

## Podcast Recommendations:

'Untelevised the Podcast' This offers a wide range of interviews with activists, giving plenty of interesting perspectives and food for thought.

'A Rocha Field Notes podcast' – exploring the themes of conservation through a wide lens.

## Book Recommendations:

For younger audiences: Naomi Klein, 'How to change everything. A Young Human's guide to protecting the Planet and Each other.'

'Less is more, how degrowth will save the world' by Jason Hickel. This book questions whether we can still have economic growth as it stands and still stop climate change. Can new technology save us? Is there a different way forward? Fascinating stuff.

## POPPLETON CO-OP SUPPORTS COMMUNITY CAFE

In response to the recent commitment by Poppleton Churches to become an Eco Churches we have arranged with our local Co-op store to collect from them any exceeded 'best before' date produce destined to be thrown away. Much of this can be used to make soup for our community cafe, Coffee on the Green, thereby contributing in a small way to the reduction of perfectly useable produce going to food waste.



Coffee on the Green is a community cafe run by a team of volunteers in Poppleton Methodist Church Hall. Open Monday 10am to 4pm and Tuesday 10am to 2pm for morning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea using locally sourced and Fairtrade products. Why not come along and enjoy top quality refreshments that won't cost the earth. Everyone will be made very welcome - please pay us a visit some time - we'd love to see you there!

## CHILDREN'S, YOUTH AND FAMILY TEAM REPORT

We have returned to our home in the hub, and it has been lovely to meet with the young people and families once more.

In September we started the year with an escape room...

With a little help we all escaped within the allotted hour!

We began with a mixed approach to One X meetings alternating between zoom and physical formats. It became



apparent very quickly that the young people prefer the physical get togethers. So, other than when we have visiting speakers, we are now meeting fortnightly at the hub. Since Christmas we have been focussing on mental wellbeing, working on the ways we can help ourselves and our friends as well as being able to recognise when we need to seek help. As part of this we have run sessions for the families as well as the young people, these have been enjoyed to the extent that we are thinking of installing a bell so we can call time!

One Family has continued once a month and has a small but committed group of families.

The volunteers network is still struggling to recover, with very small numbers coming along. As a team we think this is partly due to churches not restarting CY&F work alongside several volunteers reviewing their commitments. We are keen to support churches in their work and are seeking ways to do this, if you have something we can help with please get in touch.

As a team we have built a large library of resources, some of which are stored at the hub, others belong to us personally. We have a list of these, please let us know if you would like access to it, or if you have resources you would be prepared to share with other churches.

Alongside this ongoing work, the team continue to focus on their areas of expertise.

Lorraine has started Open The Book at Crayke school and is organising second hand school uniform sale in July. Amy continues her preaching studies and is supporting churches to develop more intergenerational worship. Heather has been focussing on parental support and has just begun a four-week course with Acomb church. Victoria tends to get the glamorous role and does the necessary planning and admin – if you need a risk assessment, she is the go-to!

Our focus continues to be on relationship building, both between the team and families and young people, as well as between the young people and families, such an approach does not yield quick results. However, this year one of the One X group became a member at his church and is now a connexional youth rep. Others have been in the group before during and after Covid. Still others have joined due to being invited by their friends. We are seeing steady increases in other groups we are supporting, as a result of this Heather is exploring setting up a group for teenaged mothers. We also encourage the young people and their families to be active in areas of social justice, engaging with the climate walk earlier this year and joining with York Pride in June.

As always the team would be delighted to hear from any church that would like support, guidance or just a listening ear.

The CYF team- Amy, Heather, Lorraine and Victoria.

## **POPPLETON METHODIST CHURCH – NEW HALL**

Poppleton Methodist Church has completed the construction of a new hall at the rear of the existing chapel as phase 1 of the redevelopment of the whole premises.

This consists of a hall with a separate side access, bifold doors opening on to a patio and the large rear garden. The hall has a stage recessed into the floor which can be raised for performances including the annual Poppleton pantomime. The hall is equipped with stage lighting, speakers and a projector and screen. In addition to the hall there is a separate meeting room, a galley kitchen, toilets, a store, cleaner's room and a loft store. The new hall is linked to the existing premises at present by a ramp.

The whole of the phase 1 project including the garden is designed to provide step free access for all users and when phases 2 and 3 go ahead the same approach will be followed by lowering the existing floors to pavement level on the Green in front of the chapel.

The new hall, which is a timber frame construction, includes solar photovoltaic panels on the roof, under floor heating and an air source heat pump so is a major step on the eco road.



*First Christening party – internal view of hall.*

Before the new hall was built the use of our building was constrained by safeguarding requirements when the Under 5's Playgroup was in session. This prevented other events taking place – even funeral teas. The playgroup is now able to meet in the new hall, with direct access to the garden, the new toilets and the galley kitchen all of which can be locked down. This means the chapel and the old hall and kitchen can be used alongside the playgroup which creates opportunities for new users.

The church café fits in to our mission in that it provides us with a bridge into the local community. A lot of church people use the café but also Anglicans and non-church people – particularly the elderly. It provides a means for retired people, many living alone, to meet for social interaction and many groups of friends meet regularly. We can now operate the café at the same time that the playgroup meets and hope to get parents of the young children frequenting the café as well – after drop-off or while waiting to collect. The people that run the café are all volunteers and the cakes and sandwiches are all homemade. All café users are made welcome by the waiting staff and encouraged to return.



*New garden view from hall bifold doors.*

We are now able to experiment with longer opening hours for the café. We offer morning coffee, lunch and afternoon tea. The redevelopment of the café with new kitchen etc is part of our phase 2 development for which we will start fund-raising once the new hall is fully complete (and especially the garden area).

We are delighted that we have been able to offer Dementia Forward the use of the new hall on Tuesdays for their meetings. Previously they had been unable to find suitable premises in Poppleton. They can take advantage of the café as that also is open on Tuesdays. Once the garden is complete it will have a sensory area of planting which we hope the dementia group will enjoy. More community groups are enquiring about the use of our facilities and recently a youth club started to operate in the old hall.

David Johnson and Peter Scholtz



## **Circuit Council Report March 2022**

- Various Circuit appointments were agreed, including signatories for finance and legal documents, and Circuit representatives to the District Synod.
- Villages Together update- the villages of Alne, Huby, Stillington and Tholthorpe have been sharing worship and working together, and have decided that they wish to come together as one church on different sites. There is a lot to work out practically, and there will be another meeting at the end of March to discuss the questions of Church Councils. If all goes according to plan, it is hoped that the proposal to merge will go to the individual Church Councils prior to the June Circuit Council, with the aim of implementation in September 2022.
- Circuit Council accepted the request to cease worship at Stamford Bridge, as despite efforts the church there is faced with declining membership and increased building costs. Circuit Council also accepted the request to cease worship at New Earswick, where the congregation hope to continue worshipping together but to cease to have the responsibilities of the building. Both these decisions will be referred to the District.
- Finance: it was noted that the audit of last year's accounts was still ongoing. While the Circuit owns several buildings, it takes time and effort to sell these to supplement our reserves. It was agreed to sell the manse at 3 Headley Close, and to let out the manse at 10 Copperclay Walk, Easingwold, after Elizabeth Cushion has moved, if it is not required for a minister. It was noted that increased energy prices were affecting churches and the Circuit and this will need to be monitored.
- Andy Lindley paid tribute to Neil Craig and Hannah Carter-Brown and all they have achieved, as their contracts end at the end of April 2022. They have done a huge amount of work behind the scenes to pull things together and define a digital way forward for the Circuit. They did not just follow the role but worked with real passion and brought many new ideas for mission, and Andy said that he was sure they would wish us to continue to work on all they have developed.
- The Safeguarding Policy was approved and Rev Ian Hill was thanked for his work over many years as the Circuit Safeguarding Officer.

## **Circuit Council & Annual General Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

- Thanks were expressed to those stepping down from various roles including Revd David Jones (who has been working with several churches) and John Middleton (circuit steward).
- Deacon Judith Stoddart reported on Carecent, the last couple of years have been challenging but much has been done to help people. Work is being done on improving procedures and changes to staff roles.
- The Circuit Council approved a resolution allowing Alne, Huby, Stillington and Tholthorpe Methodist Churches to merge into a new Villages Together Methodist

Church from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022. Approval was also given for Stillingfleet Methodist Church to cease worship, this will now go to District.

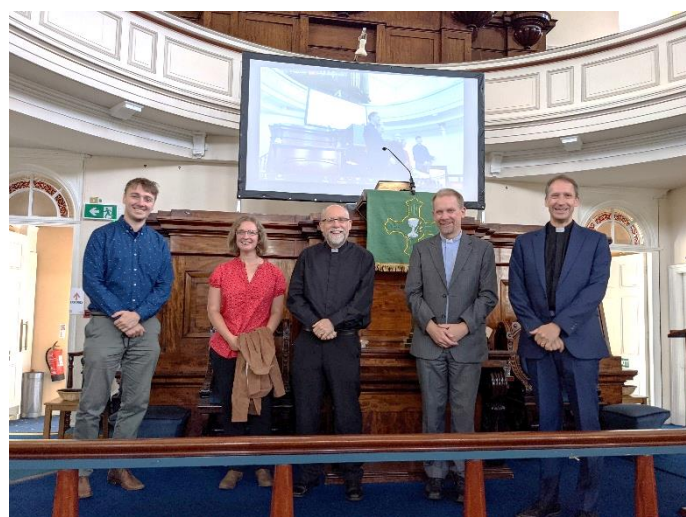
- It was noted that Alyson Christy would be working with Easingwold as well as Heworth, alongside David Bidnell. David will take on responsibility for Villages Together Methodist Church. John Schofield will have responsibility for Bishopthorpe and Copmanthorpe, along with his role at York University Chaplaincy and Heslington. Louisa Taylor and John Bailey will continue to work with Andy Lindley across Acomb, Holgate, Southlands and West Thorpe.
- The Circuit Council approved the accounts for 2020-21, and received a report on finance. It was noted that we have a great deal of property but turning this into cash when required can be challenging and time-consuming.
- An update on the work of the Eco Church group was given, including a draft Circuit Environmental Policy for churches to consider which can both be found on the Circuit website Eco Church page: <https://www.yorkmethodist.org.uk/about-us/eco-church-and-circuit.html>

### DIARY DATES

Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> July, 10.30am	Circuit Farewell service for Rev Ian Hill at Poppleton.
Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> September, 3pm	Circuit Service at Sheriff Hutton Methodist Church with the rededication of Local Preachers and Worship Leaders.
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2022, 7pm	Circuit Council, Haxby and Wigginton.
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> December 2022, 7pm	Haxby and Wigginton Methodist Church.

### STAFF DAYS OFF

Staff member	Day off
David Bidnell	Friday
Elizabeth Cushion	Friday
Rory Dalgliesh	Friday
John Hayward	Monday
Ian Hill	Friday and either Thursday or Saturday
Andy Lindley	Monday
John Schofield	Friday
Judith Stoddart	Saturday
John Bailey	Monday
Alyson Christy	Monday
Bill Topping	Monday



*Welcome Service 2021: Bill Topping, Louisa Taylor, John Hayward, David Bidnell and Leslie Newton*

## CIRCUIT PRAYER ROTA

- 3rd July The church on the Circuit Prayer Rota for 3rd July is Rufforth. Thank God and pray for the work of God in that place.  
Over the last few weeks several churches have been looking at the book of Isaiah as this year's Bible month. Pray for them as they consider Isaiah's message of love and justice.
- 10th July The church on the Circuit Prayer Rota for 10th July is Sheriff Hutton. Thank God and pray for the work of God in that place.  
Today is Action for Children Sunday. Pray for those who work to support children and young people.
- 17th July The church on the Circuit Prayer Rota for 17th July is Southlands. Thank God and pray for the work of God in that place.  
Today we gather to say goodbye to Revd Ian Hill who will be retiring and leaving the Circuit. Pray for all those moving into new places and new phases of life.
- 24th July The church on the Circuit Prayer Rota for 24th July is Stamford Bridge. Thank God and pray for the work of God in that place.  
Last week was Rural Mission Sunday. Give thanks for the rural churches in our area, and their witness in their communities.
- 31st July The church on the Circuit Prayer Rota for 31st July is Stillingfleet. Thank God and pray for the work of God in that place.  
Our prayers over the summer will be looking at 'A Methodist Way of Life.' This week we think about Worship- how is your worship life? How could you make prayer, worship and being aware of the presence of God part of your life?
- 7th August The church on the Circuit Prayer Rota for 7th August is Stillington. Thank God and pray for the work of God in that place.  
Our prayers over the summer will be looking at 'A Methodist Way of Life.' This week we think about Learning & Caring- how do we care for ourselves? How could we practice hospitality and care for others?
- 14th August The church on the Circuit Prayer Rota for 14th August is Strensall. Thank God and pray for the work of God in that place.  
Our prayers over the summer will be looking at 'A Methodist Way of Life.' This week we think about Service- how can we value and care for those around us, and for our world?
- 21st August The church on the Circuit Prayer Rota for 21st August is Tholthorpe. Thank God and pray for the work of God in that place.  
Our prayers over the summer will be looking at 'A Methodist Way of Life.' This week we think about Evangelism- how can we live in a way which draws people to Jesus?
- 28th August The church on the Circuit Prayer Rota for 28th August is Thornton-le-Clay. Thank God and pray for the work of God in that place.  
This week we pray for all those who are moving to new jobs, new schools, or new places. We pray that they will know that God is with them everywhere they go.

## REFLECTIONS

*Based on the Bible Month study material on the book of Isaiah.*

### TOUGH LOVE

**Read:** Isaiah chapter 5 verses 1-7

**Think:** In this passage the vineyard represents Israel, and God is expressing his grief and anger that despite everything God has done for them, they have failed to live up to God's expectations.



Imagine you're listening to Isaiah tell this story. How would you feel?

The book of Isaiah criticizes the social injustice taking place in his country at this time, and talks about God's 'righteous anger' against those who commit injustice. What injustices do you think make God angry today? How can we respond to this?

**Pray:** Pray about injustice in our society. Pray for a deeper understanding of God's love and justice, and to be able to hear God in scripture and in the world.

### A LIGHT TO THE WORLD

**Read:** Isaiah 2 verses 1-4 or Isaiah 56 verses 4-8

**Think:** These verses show that all sorts of people from well beyond Israel will be drawn to God.



Is this inclusiveness encouraging to you? How can you and your church or community live in a way that draws people to Jesus? How might we be hospitable to those who might think they aren't welcome in the church, or who are seen as outsiders?

**Pray:** Pray for a spirit of hospitality, generosity, inclusion and welcome- that we would live lives that draw others to Jesus. Pray for a church that welcomes 'outsiders' who have been rejected by society.

## THE FAITHFUL SERVANT

**Read:** Isaiah 61

**Think:** Biblical prophecy is a difficult concept to understand, often referring to both events happening at the time and events yet to happen in the future. Isaiah 61 talks about someone who will come bringing justice and good news, prophecies that referred to Jesus's ministry.

What do you think this prophecy means for us today? How might it affect the way we live and speak of Jesus' love?

**Pray:** Pray for understanding of prophetic texts in the Bible. Ask for guidance on how we can be prophetic voices into society today. Thank God for always being with his people.

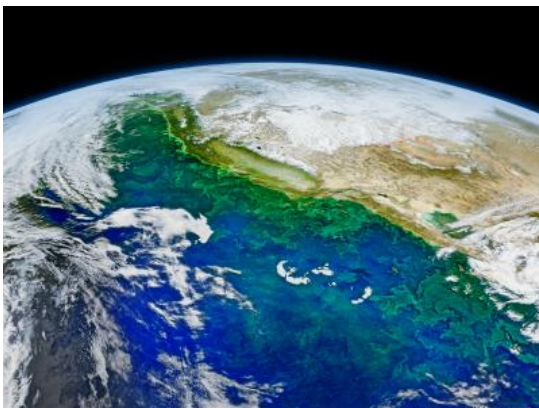


## A NEW WORLD

**Read:** Isaiah 65 verses 17-25

**Think:** Does the vision of God's new creation sound appealing to you? Do you think it would be appealing to other people in your community? Are there things you and your church could do to make the world a little more like the new creation?

How do we balance lament for the state of our current world, and our hope in God's new creation, given the state of our world today where war, poverty and sickness are major features?



**Pray:** Thank God for his vision of a new creation. Ask him to guide us in our roles in being ambassadors of God's kingdom on earth today. Pray that people would experience a yearning to be part of such a world.