

Circuit Newsletter Summer 2023



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York Methodist Circuit Hub

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Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Circuit Newsletter. I hope you will enjoy reading something of what is happening across the life of the circuit at the moment. As summer approaches and we all move towards the end of both the church year and the academic year, the next few months will bring with them some changes. This is particularly true for three members of our circuit staff team, who, in different ways, will be moving into a new phase of their lives.

After a significant period of ministry as a lay pastor, not only in the York Circuit, but in Cornwall too, John Bailey has decided that it is time for retirement. Following a couple of years in the circuit as outreach worker in the Lidgett and Poppleton communities Bill Topping is heading for Birmingham to begin his training for the diaconal order of the Methodist Church. On Sunday 25th June John Hayward will be received into full connexion and ordained as a Methodist presbyter. The ordination takes place at the Methodist Conference and is being held in Coventry Cathedral.

We are extremely grateful for the distinctive ways in which they have contributed and will continue to contribute to the life of this and other circuits, offering their own unique experience, skills and personalities in their particular roles. We are thankful for their friendship and the ways in which they bring the best out of us.

We look forward to celebrating their ministry among us in the Circuit Service on Sunday 9th July at 10.30am at Haxby and Wigginton Methodist Church. We look forward also to the Ordinands' Testimony Service for John Hayward, which is to be held at Huntington Methodist Church at 3.00pm on Sunday 11th June.

Whatever changes you may be experiencing over the next few months, may you travel well.

With my best wishes to you all,

David

Circuit Diary Dates

Ordinands' Testimony Service, 11th June 3pm, Huntington Methodist church

Circuit Council & AGM, 13th June, Haxby & Wigginton Methodist Church

200th Anniversary Service at Thornton-le-Clay Sunday 18th June

Circuit Service 9th July 2023 10.30am, Haxby & Wigginton Methodist Church

Circuit Council, 13th September, Haxby & Wigginton Methodist Church

Thank you and goodbye (ish)

This summer will see change for two of our lay pastors and community workers, as John Bailey retires and Bill Topping leaves the Circuit to go into training to become a Deacon. We asked them for their thoughts as they prepare for these next steps in their journey of life.

Bill Topping

I came to this circuit with no inkling that I might leave it just a couple of years later as an accepted candidate for ordination training.

In September, I begin that training. I am incredibly excited.

While this will be the start of the formal process it acts as a continuation of the learning I have undertaken while being part of the York Methodist Circuit. My experience among the teachers and friends of this community has helped illuminate my sense of call and the lessons I have learnt and the wisdom shared with me have gone a long way to preparing and inspiring me for this next chapter.

This is a circuit with lots going for it and I have enjoyed so many of the blessings it has to offer. My work involved most directly the beautiful communities of Lidgett and Poppleton Methodist Church. They know this but I describe those churches as the ones that “tipped me over the edge” – leading to my exploration of a call – something I share with them with the utmost fondness and gratitude.

I am excited to see how the great work done out of those churches continues to flourish in the years to come and urge anyone who has not yet enjoyed a treat at Lidgett’s Community Café or a feast at Poppleton’s Coffee on the Green to pay a visit. In addition to the wonderful hospitality of the churches, their concern for the community has been a privilege to be involved with. The foodbank and Little Lambs at Lidgett and the Youth Club and Ebor Court visits at Poppleton are all projects worth getting involved with for anyone with time and energy that want to do some good. These are such important expressions of God’s love in the community and have been a real honour to be part of.

The commitment, faith and wisdom within this circuit has been clear to see in the time I have been here. The willingness to engage with future uncertainties (not just anxiously!), the creativity with which we met, discussed and shared and, on a personal note, the generosity and support of my own candidating journey has marked this out as a particularly impressive group of churches.

I particularly enjoyed engaging with the folk I met at Places of Welcome, learning about poetry in our Lent group and expressing ourselves through rounders and running, crucial elements of the life of any circuit. Travelling around the circuit to worship and participate in services at a was a particular joy and I hope to get to those churches I haven’t visited at some point in the future.



As I embark on some formal theological study I take with me an abundance of experiential learning as a result of my time here. One of the questions asked of me during my district candidates committee was, “where is Jesus in this?” Clearly I had not been explicit enough about my identification of Jesus alongside me during this journey. As I reflect on my time in York I am certain of Jesus’ presence in and amongst the work of God done within this circuit. Thank you for your encouragement and please look out for dispatches I send back from college. I look forward to continuing my relationship with the circuit out of which I am candidating, I hope to be able to reflect the best of this community in my ministry going forward.

John Bailey

John will be retiring this summer. We wish him all the best for his retirement and hope to still see him around!



The Circuit Service on 9th July at Haxby & Wigginton Methodist Church will include an opportunity to express our appreciation for John and Bill’s contribution to our Circuit.

Flourish- Rooted in Love, 14th-16th April 2023



Many folk from around the Circuit joined with others from the Yorkshire North and East District for a weekend of worship, teaching and workshops at Scarborough Spa. With a diversity of worship styles and speakers there was so much on offer that sometimes it was hard to choose which sessions to attend!

Taking Ephesians 3 verse 17 as our motto for the weekend, we looked at how what it means to be ‘rooted and grounded in love’. On the Friday night we were welcomed by Chair of District Revd Leslie Newton, with worship led by Matt Beckingham and band. and the theme for the weekend was introduced by President of the Methodist Conference Revd Graham Thompson.



Some of the many folk from around the Circuit who attended Flourish 23

On Saturday there was the option to choose between three different sessions looking at Ephesians 3: 14-21, led by guests John Bell and Paula Gooder or an intergenerational session. This was followed by workshops on everything from Eco-church to Lego church! In the evening there was again a choice between sessions, with Rachel Gardner speaking on being rooted in love in the main hall alongside musical guest Philippa Hanna. Sessions for children and young people were also running throughout the event.

On the Sunday there were a variety of options for Communion followed by a 'Final Flourish' as everyone joined together for a final session of worship and to think about what we had heard



John and Sheila Middleton with rose 'Deep Secret' given to our Circuit.

over the weekend. People were encouraged to write what they had found

helpful about the weekend on cardboard bricks which were then built into a wall representing our grounding or foundation in love. Circuits were then presented with roses, which will be planted to remind us to be 'rooted in love'. We hope you will be able to see them flourishing very soon!



A wall made of bricks with things people found good about Flourish written on them

Flourish 2023- from the children & youth team's perspective!

In November I wrote an article for the newsletter about running the marathon, which was titled 'never again.' I was tempted to use the same title for this article, it certainly felt like running a marathon – except it was more exhausting!!

As well as the youth stream, the CYF team ran the children's activities, a young adult stream and intergenerational worship on Sunday morning. Despite the exhaustion, the weekend had incredible energy, and the children and young people seemed to have a great time.

The children had a workshop with Lynne Norman, from the Connexional CYF team, about how to be agents of change; in which she encouraged them



to think about the ways they can get their voices heard – young as they are. They also played with Lego, had a pyjama party when they watched the Lego movie and used cardboard bricks (are you sensing a theme here?!) to think about how we are stronger in a community rooted in God’s love.

The youth had the choice to engage with the event as a residential or to stay with parents or carers overnight and join us during the day. Whichever option they chose, they were offered a range of youth activities as well as having the opportunity to join in the workshops, worship, and activities going on the Spa. The Saturday night quiz was much enjoyed despite the fact they won the wooden spoon!

On Saturday night we also played a version of Ready, Steady, Cook! I am reliably informed that this is the highlight of the weekend, several of the young adults joined us to ‘help out.’ Don’t tell the young people – but this is simply a sneaky way of getting them to cook their own dinner! Seriously, I am always both surprised by the quality of the cooking skills on show and relieved that we manage not to set fire to the youth hostel or give anyone food poisoning! The photos do not do justice to either the noise or the chaos of the event...although we were all cleaned up by 10pm which is an improvement on last time.



By Saturday night the group were exhausted – no complaints about the curfew or need to patrol the corridors to ensure they were asleep! Which made getting everyone up and out of the hostel and to the Spa in time for worship on Sunday morning something of a challenge. The children and young people had opportunities to participate in worship in a variety of ways, from Bible readings, to leading prayers or being communion stewards and it was both a powerful and moving experience to see them taking their place in the community.

Residential weekends like this are such a fabulous opportunity for children, youth and young adults to spend time with their peers, building relationships that we hope will help to



sustain them in their faith throughout life. So, maybe never again is a bit hasty...maybe in another couple of years...when we have recovered!

Victoria Etherington

News from the Children, Youth & Families team

This term started off with Flourish...the team are all just about recovered!

Hilda's Heirs

In March we visited Hull Minster to participate in a day that seeks to celebrate women in the church. A few people have asked why in 2023 we still feel that this is necessary – aren't women treated equally? The answer is complicated. Yes, the situation for women in society has improved dramatically, however we still face unseen bias as a part of our everyday lives. For today's generation of young women, they live in a society in which the films and television shows they watch tend to feature men as protagonist and women as the romantic interest or helper – men have twice as many speaking parts as women. In politics Boris Johnson was praised for promoting women in his first cabinet, however they still only occupied 8 of 38 positions. In business, women are outnumbered 2:1 on the boards of multinationals. In church God remains male. If you watched the coronation the significant roles were filled by men; the interest in Penny Mordaunt's role serves to underline the dearth of women. If we were more involved there would be less need to comment.

These are just a few examples of what has been termed 'the authority gap¹,' women experience. This is why it is important we celebrate the women in church and ministry, in the past as well as today. Events like this educate us all in the dangers of unconscious bias and open our eyes to other ways we might be biased as well as gender. A little comfort for the men – women are as subject to this bias as men!



Save the date

9th September Epworth trip

6th - 8th October 3Generate

21st October Joined Up York – children's youth and family workers training day. Victoria is keynote!

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/joined-up-north-conference-october-2023-tickets-472545545447> to book.

20th January 2024 Sleepout for Homelessness

9th March 2024 Hilda's Heirs at York Minster

Next March we will be at York Minster – please consider coming along and joining in the event. And if you are an incredible woman who would like to be part of the event – please contact the team, we would love to have you!

¹ It is also the title of a book *The Authority Gap*, by Mary Ann Sieghart Penguin 2021.

Open the Book

Lorraine helped to run an Open the Book 'air and share' for all of the Open the Book teams. It was a joint event hosted at Barlby Methodist and run by Goole and Selby's Children and Families work enabler. These events are always encouraging; giving the teams a chance to find out about new resources, events or training. We also had a chance to share our stories of time spent in the schools and gave each other top tips and prop ideas. If you want to know more about becoming involved in a local team, contact Lorraine on 07850 631168 or lorraine.jones@methodistyouth.org.uk

One X and One Family

Both these groups continue to meet regularly at the hub on Friday evenings, where we enjoy fellowship, faith and food together.

We are planning to explore membership with the One X group in the September term, as some of the group have expressed an interest.

One X dates: 9th and 23rd June, 7th and 21st July. 5-7pm at the hub

One Family: 14th July 4.30-6pm at the hub

We would love to hear from you if you have an idea you want to explore further or need any support to get a group or activity up and running. Please get in touch with the team and we will do our best to help. Lorraine is the person to contact for Open the Book, Eco resources, or the uniform bank, whilst Amy is the best contact for intergenerational church support.

If you would like any further

information or to chat with any of the team, please get in touch:

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Victoria victoria@methodistyouth.org.uk 07473 065856

Stamford Bridge Methodist Church 1828 - 2023

Many residents will have fond memories of the Methodist Chapel which has served the community for almost 200 years.

John Wesley, a founder of Methodism, preached in Stamford Bridge in May 1753 and increasing numbers of people interested in the Methodist faith in the surrounding area resulted in a large, galleried building being erected in 1828 to accommodate around 200 people. Later a Schoolroom was built to facilitate midweek Prayer Meetings, Bible Study,

Boys' Brigade Clubs, Women's Fellowship, a toddlers' Nursery and other mid-week events which were an important part of the service to the community. The Chapel has survived many floods (when The Square and nearby areas were regularly awash before the building of the Flood Wall) due to it being accessed by steps: the Porch being built quite recently. Later the Chapel became a Grade II Listed Building.



OUTREACH is an important part of Methodism: A thriving Sunday School existed with Sunday School Anniversaries (where young children recited poems they had learned and rousing choruses were sung followed by a lovely tea party). Each summer coach trips to the seaside would be organised: a big treat for families then. Music has an important role and concerts and recitals were appreciated by the local community. Outreach ventures working with external groups included the popular 'Village '87' team. For many, many years regular Coffee Mornings have been held in the Chapel Schoolroom, the proceeds of which have been distributed to various charities and good causes.

Some of the Methodist Ministers I particularly remember include: The Reverend Dolman who rode around the fairly extensive rural Circuit on his bike to deliver sermons; Reverend Dr Keith Albans who began his Methodist Ministry here at Stamford Bridge and finally ended his career in this Circuit before retiring; the Reverend Vinaya Moses, our first Minister from India, with his charming, loving attitude also the Reverend David Hall, a retired Missionary who served in India and gave of himself, along with his wife, as and when required to continuing the work of the Chapel during his 'retirement' and finally Rev. Dr. John Schofield and his wife Ruth who also supported our coffee mornings.

LOCAL PEOPLE gave willingly to the building, upkeep and improvement of the Chapel over the years - people like the Clarke family, the Broadbent family, along with many other folk. The Sharman family, who worked tirelessly over the years in the 1970/80's to make the Chapel's message relevant to the rapidly increasing population. They and so many more gave of their time and talents to make the Chapel relevant to the residents of Stamford Bridge until it proved impossible to maintain.

A Thanksgiving Service was held at 2pm on 14 May 2023 before the church ceased worship.

With thanks to Ivan Elcock

Some thoughts on Thornton-le-Clay chapel



Two hundred years is a long time in human terms. No one is alive today who knew anyone who was alive in 1823. So, is there anything special about 1823? George IV was the king, a fact but not especially remarkable. It was the year that William Webb Ellis “invented” rugby which is perhaps interesting for those who like sport. For me the most important and special thing about 1823 is that it was the year that Thornton-le-Clay chapel opened.

Standing in the High Street, this small chapel, has born witness to Christ’s saving grace for two centuries. The chapel has remained largely unchanged for the whole of that period except for the addition of electrical heaters, new windows and doors, and the recent addition of toilet facilities. To mark the bicentenary there will be a special church anniversary service on Sunday 18th June at 3pm with the Reverend Leslie Newton as preacher. The service will be followed by afternoon tea and a display of the history of the chapel in the village hall.

History is important, but the chapel remains an active place of worship, albeit as a class of Huntington Methodist Church, with strong links into Foston C of E Primary School. Becoming a class of another church is often a precursor to the closure of a chapel but this is not necessarily the case and Thornton-le-Clay is a good example of what can be achieved when churches work together to support one another.

The chapel is open for worship on the first and third Sunday of the month which is a very small part of its witness. The chapel works very closely with the local school, housing the school’s library which is used by the children every week. Members of the chapel also help with weekly Open the Book sessions at the village hall. This relationship with the school extends to regular visits by me as minister to events at the school and periodically leading assembly.

The relationship with Huntington has given the opportunity to run a quarterly messy church at the village hall with members of the congregation supported by a team from Huntington. As part of the bicentennial celebrations, we will be holding a Messy Birthday Party for the chapel at 4pm on Sunday 9th July.

Are there any lessons to be learned from Thornton-le-Clay chapel’s continuing work as a class of a larger church? I believe there are. The first lesson is to view joining together as an opportunity rather than as a sign of failure. Perhaps the language of becoming “a class” of another church has not been helpful in the past. This is recognised in CPD, the Methodist Church’s rule book, which now uses the language of merger. Huntington recognises and

supports Thornton-le-Clay's local mission. There is a Thornton-le-Clay steward involved in all stewards' meetings and matters at the chapel are always discussed at Church Council. Eco Church initiatives were launched at both sites on the same Sunday and expertise from both is pooled to assist in the running of church and chapel.

The second lesson is to do the merger before it is too late. It was often a short step for churches becoming a class to closure of the building as all energy in the church had been expended before taking steps to merge. CPD encourages all churches, not just those with low membership to consider whether they can be more effective in their witness by merging with other churches. We have a recent example with the Villages Together but perhaps all our churches should be actively considering this.

Will Thornton-le-Clay chapel still be active in another 200 years' time? None of us know, but that is not the point. What is important is that it lives out its witness to God's love and grace today in a way that it could not otherwise have done without being a class of Huntington. If you have never been there, please come to one of our regular services, our messy church or our anniversary celebrations and learn more about what we do. You will be made most welcome.

Rev'd John Hayward

News from the Circuit Eco Task Force

Hope

The theme for this section came about after reading a book by Jonathan Porritt, formerly of Friends of the Earth and other notable positions, and a lifelong environmental activist. It's called "Hope in Hell. A decade to confront the Climate Emergency". It is hard hitting and comprehensive in setting out why we need to take action urgently. It's hard not to feel anxiety, frustration and despair when you read how interconnected, entrenched and far-reaching the crisis is. The answers are all within reach, however, but it will require big asks of everyone of all walks of life and in all places of the world.

Yet there is hope in many places. Porritt directly points to the role people of faith have in helping solve the crisis. With billions of people over the globe, the different faiths represent a significant proportion of the world population. We have an important role to play in shaping the world around us; the way we see our relationship to God's creation and our place in it and the way we see our role in helping our neighbour can have a significant impact. As individuals, we might feel powerless, but coming together as a movement we have a voice. Together, we have influence in our neighbourhoods and are more visible to those wielding power.

In this newsletter, I therefore offer you the voices of different people, keeping hope alive in different ways. First is Katie Wrenn from Acomb Methodist, one of our ONE X youth group and newest member of the Eco Task Force. Reading her piece brought a lump to my throat; you can hear her frustration with the lack of action and the legacy her generation will be left with:

My Hopes for the future – by Katie Wrenn

Despair and hope. Those are the two things I feel when someone mentions the climate crisis. I feel despair because I know we have less than seven years to slash our emissions in half before bringing them to zero very quickly. I also know that a lot of the older generation don't really care about the future or climate change because they won't have to live through the consequences.

I also feel hope. This is because I know I am not powerless even though my power is significantly less because I am 14. I know that people are waking up and there is help I can do. Hope is the only thing that keeps me going.

My hopes for the future is a world where climate change has been eradicated and future generations won't have to grow up in fear like I am now. Will this come to pass? I do not know. But it's nice to dream.

The Big One – Our hopes and dreams

The Earth day protest in London was billed as 'The Big One'. We went in the hope of realising our dream that we could all be good stewards of God's Creation, preserving the wonder and beauty of it for future generations. We registered with Green Christian and joined over 100 other partner organisations such as Tearfund, Christian Aid and CAFOD for a peaceful rally on 21st – 24th April, co-ordinated by Extinction Rebellion (XR). The aim was to urge the government to take action on Climate change.



Our day started at St John's, Waterloo with around 1400 Christians attending a debate between two peers (a bishop and a Lib Dem) and two activists (from Tearfund and XR). They discussed the importance of the Lords Climate Change Committee and of good communication with lobby groups. Then the meeting was gate crashed by Piers Corbyn, who denied climate change and told us all that we were doing the work of the devil. The vicar of St John's escorted him out as we all sang Amazing Grace to drown out the rant. The panel then thanked us for letting Mr Corbyn have his say and later, when we met him at Westminster we picked up his flier to read on the way home.



The service that followed was amazing, as we sang hymns old and new backed by a Salvation Army Band in the gallery and Engage Music up front. We heard about burnt out fields causing hunger in the Philippines and Pacific islands disappearing as sea levels rose and we prayed for God's guidance and support in playing our part to combat climate change.



Then Archbishop Sentamu appeared and led us on a Pilgrimage to Westminster, it was wonderful to walk and talk with Christians from as far away as the Iona Community, as well as with friends from 'All We Can' and our very own Rachel Lampard. We were ushered along streets cordoned off by XR banners and motorcycle police, with a stop for a prayer at the Shell HQ, where Lord Sentamu was prevented from delivering our message. Then over Westminster Bridge and onto the Houses of Parliament with Mike from a Chesham Church bearing his banner proclaiming "God's Creation, our responsibility".



Diverse processions from all over the city arrived including XR drummers, a Climate Community Choir, Red Rebels, and an XR undertaker.

We lost touch with our Christian friends; all passionate about being good stewards of God's creation. Instead we met folk from Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Save our Rivers, RSPB, World Wildlife Fund and of course Extinction Rebellion, all just as passionate about caring for our common home. It was such a friendly, peaceful, caring and exciting gathering. The feeling was summed up by Natalie from Manchester 'I just had to be here, so I came down for the day. I just left my medication, my cats and my mum and caught the train to London. I am just so grateful that you are all here with me as we try to get action on Climate Change'.



Is our hope and dream a little closer to becoming reality after our day in London? With God's help we believe it is. If tens of thousands of people and more than one hundred organisations can peacefully unite in friendship with the common purpose of saving our planet, then surely our leaders can do likewise. But we still pray that our new grandson, Arlo and all your grandchildren will know the beauty of God's creation and be keen to be stewards of it.

John & Sheila Middleton

Hope in Individual Action

Helen Tulloch from Haxby and Wigginton Methodist continues in her quest to minimise her environmental impact. She is all about progress rather than feeling she has to get it right all the time. That would just be exhausting! She sees results in that her black bin is never more than two thirds full. Her and husband Ken have been re-using whatever they can; when decorating recently they washed and re-used the previous lampshades which came up as



good as new. Some tiles that she had found hidden away made an excellent splashback for the sink in the downstairs loo. It's all about rethinking what you already have. She also added that rabbit poo is the only animal waste that can go in the compost bin. Her bunnies seem rather enthusiastically contributing to her compost! Helen and Ken are also keeping hope alive through their love of nature. Husband Ken is a keen photographer and took a photo of a Bluebell Wood on their recent holiday in Norfolk.

ACT Now! Hope through being more informed.

The Eco Task Force decided not to hold a meeting in May since several of the team were involved in the Eco Event at Acomb Methodist on the 13th May. The event is designed to encourage conversation, find out more about Climate issues and make space to breathe and prevent 'Eco anxiety'. The rest of the Eco Task Force happily agreed to support the event. At the time of writing, the event will happen in the coming weekend. I personally find hope in being with others who are also passionate about taking action as well as finding out more about positive actions we can take in tackling the crisis together. An intrepid reporter from the Eco Task Force will be there to find out more - we will report back in the next newsletter!

Book recommendation: **The Hidden Life of Trees** by Peter Wohlleben

Two of our ministers noted that they found it fascinating to discover how trees 'feel' and communicate. They also create 'community' with their environment.

Over to you! How do you find hope in a Climate Emergency?

Do you have books or podcasts to recommend? Do you take action in your own unique way? Do you like to write to you MP? If anyone has any thoughts to share, please let Lorraine Jones know. Lorraine.jones@methodistyouth.org.uk or 07850 631168.

Circuit Council March 2023

- Steph Cooper from Refugee Action York spoke to the Circuit Council about the work RAY are doing with asylum seekers and refugees in York.
- The Circuit's safeguarding policy was reviewed and approved. If you have any concerns, please speak to Revd John Hayward.
- It was agreed that the Circuit Stewards & circuit council secretary would work to come up with a proposed plan to address the financial situation. It was further agreed that unless there are unanticipated and significant changes to the situation, there would be no change to existing staff structure until 31st August 2025 at the earliest. Lay employee salaries from 2023 were agreed in line with the ministerial stipend increase.

- Circuit council approved the planned assessment increase of 7.5%, and delegated to the Circuit Leadership Team negotiating with churches who feel unable to commit to this. The budget for 2023-24 was also agreed.
- A number of Circuit appointments were approved, including:
 - **Circuit Stewards:** Janet Bowling, Ruth Morrison, Ann Smallwood, Vic Paylor (Property), Nick Dawson (Finance)
 - **Reps to District Synod (from September 2023):** Ruth Morrison, Janet Bowling, Sue Gill, Nick Dawson, John Middleton, Lydia Harrison
 - **Circuit Leadership Team:** David Bidnell, Elizabeth Cushion, John Hayward, Victoria Etherington, Louisa Taylor, Janet Bowling, Nick Dawson, Ruth Morrison, Vic Paylor, Stephen Leah
 - **Circuit Invitations Committee:** David Bidnell, Elizabeth Cushion, Rory Dalgliesh, John Hayward, Andy Lindley, John Schofield, Judith Stoddart, Stephen Leah, Janet Bowling, Ruth Morrison, Vic Paylor, Ann Smallwood, Nick Dawson
- It was noted that work will be undertaken to clarify the position and running of Carecent to ensure there is appropriate oversight and management of finances.

Circuit prayer rota

4th June	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Hessay. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>Today is Trinity Sunday, when we remember that God is made up of different parts- Father, Son and Spirit- which are in relationship with one another. How do you relate to the people around you? How do these relationships show your faith?</p>
11th June	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Heworth. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>This Sunday is Methodist Homes Sunday, when we celebrate those in later life and those who work with them. You can find out more at https://www.mha.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/mha-sunday/</p>
18th June	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Holgate. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>Next week is Refugee week. Pray for all those who are seeking sanctuary from war, poverty or oppression. Is there anything you can do to support them, either financially or by volunteering, e.g. with Refugee Action York? https://www.refugeeactionyork.org/</p>
25th June	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Huntington. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>The Methodist Conference meets this week. Pray for all those involved in making decisions, and for those being ordained including our own Revd John Hayward.</p>
2nd July	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Lidgett. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>As we near the end of term, pray for all those preparing to leave education or move school, and for those who teach them.</p>

9th July	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Poppleton. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>Today is Action for Children Sunday. Pray for the children and young people who are supported through AfC's work and for those who work with them. You can find out more at https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/seasons-and-themes/special-sundays/action-for-children-sunday/</p>
16th July	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Rufforth. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>Today we celebrate Rural Mission. Give thanks for our rural chapels and pray for them to continue being witnesses to their communities.</p>
23rd July	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Sheriff Hutton. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>This Sunday we give thanks for the world we live in. What do you find most amazing about our world? Give thanks for that.</p>
30th July	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Southlands. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>This Sunday we give thanks for water. Give thanks for access to clean and safe water for drinking and washing. Consider if you could help to ensure everyone has access to clean water, for example toilet twinning or tap twinning your home or church (https://www.toilettwinning.org/)</p>
6th August	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Strensall. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>This Sunday we give thanks for trees and plants. If you can, go outside and see what plants you can find nearby. Pray for those working to preserve forests and our green spaces.</p>
13th August	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Thornton. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>This Sunday we give thanks for the rhythm of our seasons and for our times of work and rest. Do you make space to rest? Are there any changes you could make to spend more time with God?</p>
20th August	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is Villages Together. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in Alne, Huby, Stillington, Tholthorpe and the other villages in this area.</p> <p>This Sunday we give thanks for our oceans. Sadly pollution with rubbish and chemicals threaten the quality of our waters, and rising temperatures are having an effect on many creatures that live in them. Pray that those with most influence will be open to making changes to reduce and reverse the damage.</p>
27th August	<p>The church on the Circuit prayer rota for this Sunday is West Thorpe. Give thanks and pray for the work of God in that place.</p> <p>This Sunday we give thanks for the great diversity of animals in our world. Habitat loss due to intensive farming, logging and mining threaten many species with extinction. Pray about anything you can do to help, for example reducing meat consumption or looking more closely at how the products you buy are produced.</p>

Reflections: Revelation

Our reflections this quarter are based on the Bible Month material for 2023 on Revelation (you can find out more at <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/the-bible/bible-month/>)

The Church Then and Now

“...someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.”



(Revelation 1 vs 13-16).

This kind of imagery helped signal to the original readers of Revelation that this was someone important- someone more than just an ordinary human. It also called back to various Old Testament passages (e.g. Daniel 7 vs 13-14).

What kind of language do you use to describe God? What kind of images or symbols could you use to convey who God is and what God is like?

The Triumph of the Lamb

“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and
strength and honour and glory and praise!”
“To the one who sits on the throne and to the
Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power,
for ever and ever!”

(Revelation 5 vs 12 & 13).



Revelation chapters 4 and 5 describe an incredible scene of praise, with angels and ‘elders’ and various creatures all praising the Lamb of God- Jesus- for his actions in redeeming humanity. There’s colour, light and sound everywhere- drawing our different senses into worship. Does the scene seem overwhelming, or make you feel small? Can you picture yourself there?

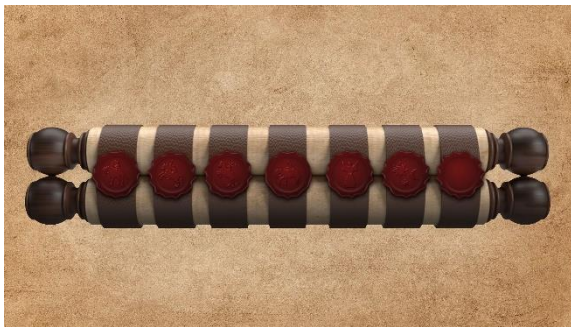
How does this scene resemble your worship? Are there ways you could use different senses, images, sounds to help you worship God?

Witness, Worship and Waiting

“They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.”

(Revelation 12 vs 11)

We saw earlier in Revelation that the churches were called to put their faith first- to be ready to suffer the consequences of their faith, even if it meant persecution and death. In chapter 12, those who endured and stayed faithful are praised because ‘they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.’



That doesn't mean we shouldn't enjoy life and the world around us- but the call to worship, to follow and to be witnesses to God should come first.

Is God always the first in your life- the first call on your time, your finances, your decision making? What stops God being first?

Heading Home

Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’”

(Revelation 21 vs 1-4)

The end of Revelation gives us a glimpse of what comes after the completion of God's plan of salvation- a new heaven and a new earth. Can you imagine what it will be like? God will be living amongst us, and there will be peace and an end to suffering. While we can't fully imagine this now, we can still try to reflect it in how we deal with the world around us. Think about whether there is anything you could do to make the world a better place.

