

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

We continue to live in interesting times! September arrives with the anticipation of the welcome of new ministers, of a new Methodist year, of new possibilities in our churches and communities, but all in a context wildly different from the one we were in last year. Covid-19 has changed so much about our world and created an uncertainty most of us will never have encountered. Of course, we have often lived with uncertainty due to the actions of human beings: war, terror, economic collapse. At times parts of our world have lived with uncertainty due to natural events: earthquake, tsunami, flood, drought, but never has the whole world been so affected by a natural occurrence. This virus has brought low colonial powers and global economies, while also devastating communities in nursing homes, villages, and towns. We could argue that some indeed should be brought low, but would we not, also, have wanted the others to be raised up?

This virus lives among us, a natural phenomenon, but one which has powerfully reminded us as human beings of our collective frailty. As human beings we often have become overconfident in our capacity to be self-determining. However, from a prime-minister in office to a retired cleaner in her 80s, we have become aware of how we are subject to a power we cannot see with our eyes, nor control with money, power, or privilege. We are learning a new humility, and not always willingly. Its impact is wider than this though. It is felt by us where we live and in the churches to which we belong. Our responses to this situation are many and varied. Selfishness to selflessness, both can be witnessed. I hope as Christian people the latter is more prevalent than the former!

As we continue to live within the pandemic, I offer these words from the Psalmist:

Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures through all generations.

The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises
and faithful in all he does.

The Lord upholds all who fall
and lifts up all who are bowed down.

The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food at the proper time.

You open your hand
and satisfy the desires of every living thing.

The Lord is righteous in all his ways
and faithful in all he does.

The Lord is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.

He fulfils the desires of those who fear him;
he hears their cry and saves them.

The Lord watches over all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy. (Ps 145)

Rather than more words from me, re-read those lines again and again. Then ask, what is God saying to me; to the church I am part of; to Methodism as a whole?

The virus is with us, and pushes us to a recovered humility; God is with us and gives us the assurance of generosity, sustaining love, and faithfulness.

Peace,



Revd Kerry Tankard
Chair of District

MEET THE PEOPLE

Name: Revd Andrew Webb

Role Title: District Rural Lead

What does your role involve?:

My role is to positively promote and support Rural Mission and Ministry across the Yorkshire West District. I chair the District Rural Strategy Group and am part of the steering group for a newly formed online event called Positively Rural. In my first year in post I have been trying to develop a network of rural contacts across the District and develop my own understanding of rural issues through undertaking the Germinate Leadership course organised by the Arthur Rank Centre.



It is good for me to highlight the fact that there are large rural areas within the District which include parts of the Yorkshire Dales. These rural areas have outstanding beauty and face the balance of sustaining farming and tourism which are both key to their economy. In terms of churches, 59 of our District churches are located in rural or semi-rural communities. This is over a quarter of the District churches. These range in membership from one to over 100. The total membership of these churches is 1,868 which is 17% of the District membership.

How can you be contacted?:

My contact details are andrew.webb@methodist.org.uk and 01756 691057.

Which church do you attend?:

I am the Superintendent minister of the Skipton & Grassington Circuit and have pastoral charge of St. Andrew's Methodist and United Reformed Church and Trinity Methodist Church, both in Skipton.

Tell us a bit about yourself:

I have been a minister for 23 years, much of which has been spent in rural areas, including the North of Scotland and Cumbria. I am married to Sarah and we have two grown up sons, Samuel and Joseph. Food is an important part of my life, both cooking and eating! I also enjoy the outdoor life and am often found running along the country lanes and footpaths round Skipton.

Tell us something that few people know about you:

I have delivered a lamb and milked a cow - good qualifications for a Rural Lead!



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For girls like Nawalat in Uganda, bicycles are more than a means of transport - they are a way to break the cycle of poverty.

This year, you can join All We Can and be a part of the change that is happening.

Support All We Can's *Change Begins with a Bicycle* campaign using the resources available to order or download from allwecan.org.uk/cycle

LEEDS METHODIST MISSION

4 WAYS TO STAY POSITIVE

I sit here pondering what a fraught few months we have had as a country and as a world. A pandemic tearing our 'ordinary' lives apart, causing untold suffering through grief, unemployment and poverty; horrific racial injustice being brought into stark focus with the Black Lives Matter movement; as well as humanitarian disasters happening around the world. Like most people I have felt these societal hurts on a personal, emotional and spiritual level. We are all connected and what happens to the least and the lost has implications for all of us. How do we come to terms with the brokenness of our world and our society? How can we take care of ourselves, those close to us, but also the many struggling in wider society?

Here are just a few ideas I came up with:

- 1. Control your information.** With everything going on in the world it can feel like an information overload and none of it very positive. If you are feeling overwhelmed, turn news alerts off on your phone, stay off social media and only read minimal amounts of news so you stay informed of key developments but don't end up feeling exhausted.
- 2. Connect with people.** After nearly six months of lockdown, and no clear end in sight, it is important to make sure you are staying in touch with loved ones. At the start of lockdown, I did well at keeping in touch with people but it has started to slip as these physically isolated times continue. None of us want to feel lonely and isolated so should all keep reaching out to friends and family!
- 3. Take some simple action.** Many of us feel powerless in the face of a global threat. If you want to do something small that feels impactful, you could make some face masks for carers in your area, or make a green heart for your MP as a reminder to keep climate change on the agenda. A bit of information and some ideas for Craftivism are available on our website: <https://leedsmethodistmission.co.uk/2020/08/10/craftivism-as-lockdown-eases/>
- 4. Give yourself a break.** When everything feels incredibly difficult and daunting in the world, take some time for yourself. Spending time doing something we find relaxing and fun is so important for our wellbeing, especially in the current time. Whether it is walking in nature, praying, exercising, seeing friends or meditating (maybe try some of LMM's meditation resources: <https://leedsmethodistmission.co.uk/category/meditation/>), allow yourself to take that time out of the busy-ness and the stress.

Anna Bland

Leeds Methodist Mission Development Worker

LMM is a Yorkshire West District project in Leeds city centre which focuses on wellbeing, contemplation and gentler forms of activism. Find out more: www.leedsmethodistmission.co.uk or find them on social media: www.facebook.com/LeedsMethodistMission & www.twitter.com/LMMinthecity

BETTER DAYS ARE COMING BETTER DAYS ARE COMING
BETTER DAYS ARE COMING HANG IN THERE
BETTER DAYS ARE COMING BETTER DAYS ARE COMING
BETTER DAYS ARE COMING BETTER DAYS ARE COMING

AROUND THE CIRCUITS

NORTH KIRKLEES & MORLEY - AFTERNOON TEA

At Drighlington Methodist Church our 'Coffee Pot Memory Café' was preparing to celebrate its 3rd birthday. As it fell on VE Day it was going to be a double celebration and be very special.

We currently have over 50 people attend our monthly café who enjoy lunch, games, hand massage, music and much fun, chat and laughter. It was with immense sadness that we had to postpone the café due to Covid-19, as it gave people affected by dementia a vital break in a warm, relaxed, safe and friendly environment.

Being in lockdown for 12 weeks was a daunting prospect for everyone, but added to the huge challenges faced everyday by people affected with this horrible disease. We have kept in touch with all our users by phone, letters, cards and email. We provided practical help with shopping, gardening and even walking the dog! We had a chat line which people could ring, anytime, for a chat, a cry, a laugh or just to let off steam. This was well used.

After two months, as many were on the edge of despair, we knew we had to do more! We decided we would supply and deliver Afternoon Teas to their door, so although we weren't together we could all eat together and think about each other. As the idea unfolded we added many more of the most lonely and vulnerable members of our community, even if they didn't come to the café, and finally our volunteers delivered 74 Afternoon Teas! They were so well appreciated and although the weather took a turn for the worse they were enjoyed by all.

Trevor Martin



SETTLE - HELP FOR TODAY, HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

God is our refuge, a very present help in times of trouble. Psalm 46 v 1

"How are you doing?" has been a familiar greeting during the past few months and perhaps said with a lot more conviction than in the pre Covid days. Asking this of visitors to the Bentham 'Pop Up Pantry', an initiative started soon after lockdown, has produced a wide array of answers. Some, perhaps putting on a brave face, trot out the stock reply "OK" but for others it has provided an opportunity to open the emotional tap and admit that life has been tough. Whether through loss of income, or concern for their children or simply fear of what may lie ahead, the Pantry has provided a place of refuge at a difficult time.

For those serving in the Pantry, Christians drawn from local churches, and others perhaps not yet believers but with a desire to do something for the community, this has been an eye-opening experience. As Christians our circle of acquaintances can be quite narrow and this has taught us to see that the Gospel is more than coming together on Sunday. It means being at the heart of the local community, responding to needs, offering a friendly face (albeit behind a mask), an encouraging word and practical help where possible.

The Pantry team are careful not to refer to the facility as a food bank, aware of the stigma many find in having to access such venues, and have preferred to use the motto "Give what you can, take what you need". The dignity of making a contribution, no matter how small, has been a help in drawing people through the door and we seek not to be judgemental towards any who come on site. Like so much flowing from the pandemic, none of us know how the Pantry will function in the months ahead; but it has been good to have had the opportunity to meet people, to listen, talk, give, serve, and be ready to give an account of the hope that is within us.

The response for requests for donations has been humbling, with gifts of food and cash coming from many quarters but spearheaded by the Christians of the town, including from several who are shielding but who have wanted to contribute by sharing some of the handouts they themselves have received. After three months, opening three mornings a week as well as making home deliveries to those unable to leave home, the Pantry remains well stocked not only with groceries but with a wide selection of books, craft and other activities.

The Bentham Pop Up Pantry was started by the Revd Anne Russell, Anglican Vicar in the Ingleborough Area, supported by people from Bentham Methodist Church and Cornerstone Church. It is housed in the Community Youth Building in Main Street and opens Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 am until 12 noon.

Averil Bayes





AROUND THE CIRCUITS

CALDERDALE - WE RALLY IN THIS VALLEY

We rally in this valley - this was the slogan displayed across Calderdale after the ravages of Storms Ciara and Dennis in February 2020. Communities which had managed to rebuild after the Boxing Day floods of 2015 were stunned to be hit

again as the storms did their worst. Despite the flood defences that have been installed, many homes and businesses were flooded and the main road through the valley was impassable. Some businesses unfortunately did not rally, but most people simply cleared up the mess and started again. They took the slogan "*We rally in this valley*" to heart, and communities helped one another to rebuild. Church communities participated in this, offering a place of shelter if needed, and for some, somewhere to talk through what had happened.

We rally in this valley is a good slogan for the circuit. We are lively, we have open and honest discussions at Circuit Meeting but, despite our differences, we do stand together and encourage one another, and support each other as best we can. We have recently undergone a review which asked each Society to consider its approach to mission, and offered support from the circuit to try new ideas. Every church has responded and good practice has been shared between them to encourage one another to rally and reach out into the community. The work of Busoasis has been key to this for some chapels.

We rally in this valley has also been a good motto during lockdown. Churches have found interesting ways of keeping in touch with one another, from Telephone Prayer Circles, Zoom Coffee Mornings and online worship, meaning that some church members have discovered technological skills that they did not think they could achieve, whilst others have ensured that regular postal mailings of magazines and worship sheets to those who are not online has kept them in touch with church life. Blackshaw Head Chapel, high on the edge of the Calder Valley, have developed Facebook worship that is regularly enjoyed by people from Scotland to East Yorkshire. They have formed a small music and singing group who record their contributions separately before being synchronised into a harmonious whole and broadcast as part of the service. It is wonderful to see a small community chapel rallying and offering support to one another - not only do they provide online worship, they record it on DVD and send it to church members who are not online, and sometimes it gets delivered to them with a hot meal, or a seasonal treat, such as an Easter Egg.

Calderdale - the valley that rallies, the circuit that believes in resurrection and support, growth and hope, even in the most challenging times.

Rev'd Terry Keen

DENBY DALE & CLAYTON WEST - LOCKDOWN LEARNING

It felt like being handed a short straw when the District emailed to ask for our article on good news events that had taken place in the circuit. I can't think of a single event that survived lockdown. Even now (July as I write), our churches are only just peeking round the side of the curtains. But good things have nevertheless been happening which portray a level of resilience and energy that might surprise.

We think of our Church as being sluggish when it comes to change, but the speed with which most circuits adapted to working online was really quite startling. By the second week of lockdown, our circuit had implemented a pretty slick new pattern for communicating with and caring for people. A preacher recorded a video sermon by Monday; it was edited by Tuesday and scheduled for release on Facebook and YouTube at 9 am the following Sunday. On Wednesday, a hardcopy newsletter, which included worship resources for those without internet and links to the video sermon for those with computers, was posted out. That pattern remains in place, with the addition of Zoom services from June where the video sermon is brought to life for up to 50 attendees, some of whom haven't worshipped with us for some time. The hard copy weekly worship is lapped up by older members who had long since become detached from our church communities and now feel in touch again. We are encouraged by comments to keep up these ways of working.

Pastoral visitors swiftly slipped into a new system of pastoral phone calls, where we kept in regular touch with members and friends. It's been a lifeline especially to those who have been isolated by Covid-19. And we have been blessed to have in depth pastoral conversations with people we had reached out to infrequently before lockdown. We are encouraged by comments to keep up 'pastoral calls' for the future.

Even now, as we emerge into a new socially distanced world, the Church is finding new energy among younger people who are stepping into roles that protect older members from responsibilities that might otherwise expose them to unnecessary risk.

I suppose we shouldn't be surprised that things have worked out so brightly even during dark times. After all, Jesus points to things like a mustard seed hidden in a field full of wheat, or yeast lost among the other ingredients that make up dough and says, "Just watch what happens! The Kingdom of God is like this." We're wondering with some excitement what God is going to do next!

Rev'd Dr Philip Bee

AROUND THE CIRCUITS

WHARFEDALE & AIREBOROUGH - PIZZA SUNDAY

Bramhope Methodist Church in the Wharfedale & Aireborough Circuit has started a Pizza Sunday. This is an ecumenical project with the Anglican Church. Twice a term the clergy alternate either hosting or leading the hour-long event which is popular with families.

The meeting space is transformed into a relaxed café style area, a crafts corner and a young people's lounge. The table tennis and pool tables are also popular. Christian music is played in the background and there are Christian based challenges to engage with during the evening, as well as take away challenges around themes such as love, hope and prayer.

Hospitality is a key aspect of the evening with hot and cold drinks, cake, and of course pizza from the local pizza shop. When the pizza has been delivered there is usually a short video and talk and people are invited to share their thoughts around their tables, or to respond by contributing using art or words that can be made into displays.

Throughout lockdown, the fellowship has moved online, and the members have written messages and letters of welcome to asylum seekers who are staying in a local hotel during the crisis. Pizza Sunday has become extremely popular with numbers consistently around the 50 mark. Through the success of Pizza Sunday, we are now looking to set up an ecumenical youth club in the village.

Deacon Jenny Parnell



ENERGY

*Walking in the hills, on the cliffs
across the sands ...
Windswept moorland, ancient
pathways, rushing beck ...*

*Colour, shape, form ...
... upon stretched canvas
on gallery wall ...*

*Each has fed my soul
And beckoned me into
a world beyond
the literal and immediate.*

*These things have I loved,
and I am thankful.*

Elizabeth Ann Smith (1957-2019)

The family of the late Revd Dr Liz Smith (Chair of the former Leeds District 2007-2016), who died in August 2019, has commissioned a series of paintings in her memory, now on permanent display at the Bexley Wing, St. James's Hospital, Leeds, where Liz received treatment for cancer over many years.

Inspired by the skies and moorland of mid Wharfedale, 'ENERGIES I - IV' are four works in pastel by the Ilkley-based artist, Lucia Smith (no relation). They have been created especially for the recently opened Clinical Research Facility, where patients take part in early stage and experimental clinical trials of new treatments.

Liz's husband, Dr Peter Smith, who visited the hospital exactly one year after Liz's death with two of their three children, said, "We want to thank all those whose generous donations have provided a tangible memorial to Liz, and which may provide some comfort and inspiration in times of great uncertainty in people's lives."

Liz's astute observations of the natural landscape fed her faith and informed her theological understanding. An accompanying explanatory panel includes lines from Liz's own verse (left) which were read at her funeral .



WHAT'S OCCURRING

PLACES TO GO & THINGS TO DO

The 2020 - 21 District Prayer Handbook
will be available in September, priced at £2.00 including p&p.



If you would like a copy, please contact the District Administrators on 07713 997952 (M, Tu & W) or 07956 880734 (W, Th & F) to make arrangements for payment.



Beamsley Project

We are open!

We are very happy to announce that we will be re-opening our cottage from 20th July 2020

We plan for our Centre to open in September 2020 (pending government guideline changes)



For more info visit www.beamsleyproject.org
Registered Charity: 701574

CLIFF FESTIVAL 2021 (28TH - 31ST MAY)

After the success of our first online Festival at Home, we're excited to welcome you all back to Cliff College in May 2021 for Cliff Festival: Around the Campfire. This will be an opportunity to gather as church around the things that unite us, and to celebrate God's goodness and grace together. Booking for Festival 2021 is open now: visit <https://events.solidrock.io/cliff-college/cliff-college-festival-2021> for tickets, camping, accommodation (available from July 1st) and volunteer applications. We can't wait to see you there!

WORSHIP



Festival 2021

28TH-31ST MAY 2021

www.cliffcollege.ac.uk

WELCOME

FAMILY

CORNERSTONE CAFE

LOCKDOWN REFURBISHMENT

For the last 13 years, Cornerstone Café at Menston Methodist Church has provided care and hospitality to all those who have used the facility. It is also a Fairtrade Café and has donated significant sums to charity each year.

It is run by a team of over 70 volunteers, many of whom are from the wider community. The Church has taken the opportunity provided by our lockdown to review the life and mission of the Café and to embark on a refurbishment.

We have revisited the aims and vision of the Café and the final touches are being made to transform the environment into a more modern and family-friendly setting. We have increased the opening hours and aim to encourage further use of the Café space by community groups.

We hope that the new environment will help us connect with those previously nervous of Church, in a way that enables us to provide fresh opportunities to connect with faith outside our traditional Sunday services.

We hope we have set the scene and now pray for the Holy Spirit to take hold of what we have and use it to increase His Kingdom in His way.

SPECIAL DAYS

13th September

Education Sunday

20th September

Peacemaking Sunday

11th October

Prisons Sunday
Homelessness Sunday

18th - 25th October

One World Week

1st November

All Saints Day

8th November

Remembrance Sunday

8th - 15th November

Inter Faith Week

15th November

World Day of Remembrance for
Road Traffic Victims

22nd November

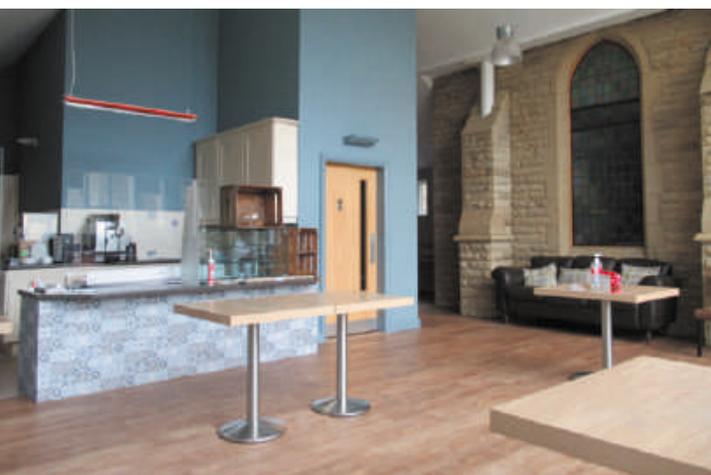
Women Against Violence Sunday

29th November

Advent Sunday

1st December

World AIDS Day



Items for inclusion in the Winter 2020 issue of the District Newsletter should reach us by 12 noon on 15th November 2020


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