

KNOCKING ON THE DOOR

Dear Friends,

A new year is upon us, and it is one that feels at times as uncertain as the one that is passed. That doesn't overwhelm me, but it does make me cautious about what I anticipate and expect. Sometimes I sit back and think I have lost the last 18 months, and at other times I realise that they were not lost, they were just different. More recently I have started to consider them as an unexpected guest and in doing that I am drawn to one of the stories of Jesus, in a new way. The Message translation tells it this way:

"Imagine what would happen if you went to a friend in the middle of the night and said, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread. An old friend travelling through just showed up, and I don't have a thing on hand.'

The friend answers from his bed, 'Don't bother me. The door's locked; my children are all down for the night; I can't get up to give you anything.'

But let me tell you, even if he won't get up because he's a friend, if you stand your ground, knocking and waking all the neighbours, he'll finally get up and get you whatever you need."

An old way of reading the bible was to do it allegorically. This died out for several reasons - sometimes it just got plain weird in the hands of some ancient commentators, and then we thought a more scientific and rational approach was better. I want to go back for a moment to the weird and wonderful way if I may. What if we are the family tucked up in bed, and change is knocking at the door; change is there because people are not receiving the bread of life and we are one of the keepers of it.

Change (God?) has been knocking on the door of the Church for a long time, and if we are honest our response has not always been warm. Often, we have shouted in our polite Methodist ways from our metaphorical beds, "Awfully sorry, we're tucked up in bed and quite comfy. Off you go." The knock of change has become even more persistent this last 18 months and I wonder how have we been responding?

We have been disturbed from our beds; we have scrambled around, in the dark at first, finding what we had to share. Sometimes we didn't get our hands on the best bread first, but it at least responded to the immediate emergency. The last 18 months have been a disruption to us, but have they at the same time enabled us to recover our generosity, and also our awareness of the wider hunger and need for God in the world? Are we predisposed to get back in bed, or to get up and rethink how we are open to others?

When I look back on the last 18 months and consider them as an unexpected guest, I begin to wonder about the better ways that we have been prompted to embrace, rather than the more self-serving ways we had got used to.

I pose these questions for you to reflect on together:

How is change (God?) knocking on the door of your church? What is change asking of you, and who is it asking for?

What does your metaphorical bed look like? How are you comfortable in church and what would it take to get you out of bed?

How have the last 18 months caused you to rethink the purpose of your church and what you are called to be?

How has Covid disrupted you, and what was God saying to you in that disruption?

How is your church/circuit re-imagining life in a world that is living with Covid, and what does getting out of bed look like for you?

Yours in Christ.



Revd Kerry Tankard
Chair of District

WHATS HAPPENING?

QUILT & FLOWER FESTIVAL AT SILSDEN METHODIST CHURCH

**Come and see the beautiful quilts
and flower arrangements matching the quilts.**

Friday evening, **1st October 2021** at 7 pm:

Talk by local quilter, Jenni Smith, on her book "Quilting with Liberty Fabrics" and some of the quilts from the book will be featured in the display.

Tickets are available from Twiggs Newsagents in Silsden or direct from the Church (contacts below) - **£5 each to include light refreshments** (there will be a raffle in aid of Sue Ryder Manorlands Hospice).

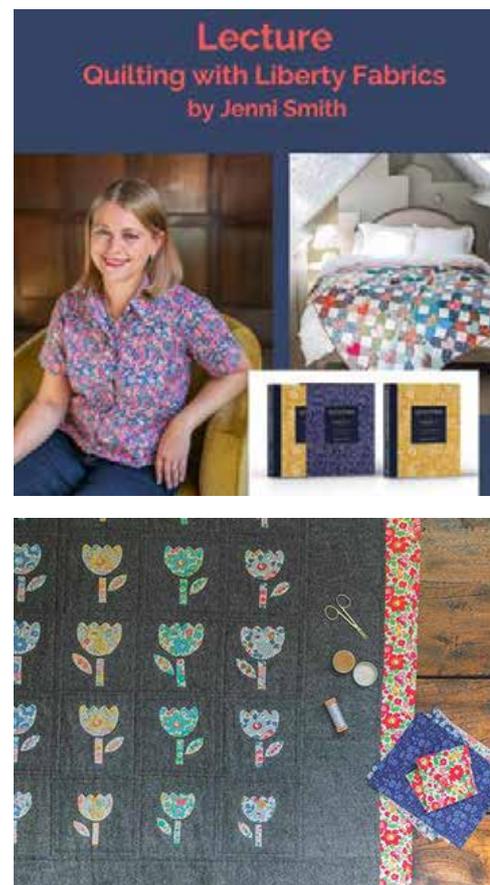
On **Saturday, 2nd October 2021** the Church will be open from 10 am to 4 pm and on **Sunday, 3rd October 2021** from 12.30 pm to 4 pm, to view the displays. Try your hand at machine quilting and find out a bit more about this fascinating craft. There will be quilts people have made or inherited and they will share the story behind them.

Both Saturday and Sunday entry will be free and lunches and refreshments will be available.

Any donations would be appreciated with all the proceeds going to Silsden Church funds and there will be a tombola on Saturday in aid of Sue Ryder Manorlands Hospice.

Further info: www.silsdenmethodistchurch.org,
williameileenjowitt@yahoo.co.uk, 01535 657256 or 01535 930109

Silsden Methodist Church, 80 Kirkgate, Silsden, BD20 0PA



The 2021 - 22 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:

01274 392628

(Tuesday to Thursday)

or

admin@ywmethoist.org.uk

to make arrangements
for payment.

From 1st September 2021 the District Office will be open

Tuesday to Thursday from 10 am to 2 pm.

If you intend to visit the District Office in person, please call beforehand on 01274 392628 to make arrangements.

We don't wish to appear unwelcoming but, to keep everyone safe,
we do need to limit the number of people in the office at any one time.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

CALDERDALE CIRCUIT

Here in the Calderdale Circuit, we offer a story of training future church leaders locally, and do so with grateful thanks to the Calderdale Circuit Meeting and Yorkshire West District for funding the project. It is just a snapshot of one of our many pieces of work.

Brighouse Central Methodist Church has designed and started running internships, becoming a kind of local church training hub. The aim is to develop leaders capable of fuelling growth. With one of the interns first coming to Brighouse as a ONE Programme participant, the church is looking towards establishing a pattern of leadership development and we seek to develop this focus through increasing circuit engagement.

The internships take an overtly Wesleyan approach to experiential education which has outcomes actively centred on God's mission in the world. The internship approach encourages study to become learning that can be applied and practised in a supervised programme. The experience suggests that the development and delivery of a well-planned internship, which focuses on identifying, equipping, and sending out lay leaders capable of leading an ecclesial community, cannot be overestimated in the present age.

The circuit is blessed with diversity and a depth of local church mission and leadership experience, which can be channelled into a guided internship format. Locating the internship in a safe and supportive environment is important, where the local congregation hold a commitment to equip the future shepherds of God's flock and understand their role in this process.

It has proved critical to the internship's success to construct a covenant group. Covenant group? Think Wesley's class meeting meets experiential learning theory and you won't be far off. The central role of the covenant group in the internships meant that it proved instructional to maintain the energy of the covenant group, including patterns of sustainable reflection. Not only the interns, but all the covenant group participants worked together in shared discipleship and leadership formation.

The growth for each intern showed that there is no substitute for practice or real-life application. The internships worked well, allowing for relevant, consistent theological reflection and they succeeded in identifying strengths related to discernment, calling, learning and leadership. It is also important to plan well for the steps that follow the conclusion of the internship.

The Biblical foundation for the covenant group was taken from the ideas of presence, commissioning and sending in relation to *John 20.19b-23*. There we can see a dynamic necessity of community which is integral to the formation of the student learner/intern/disciple.

Do internships work? The honest answer is yes! One intern is now part of the team planting a student church in Leeds and the other is now a Christian singer/songwriter capable of serving as a worship pastor. As you read this, another two interns are likely to have begun their journey on the programme.

If you'd like to know more please contact Revd Dr Mark Cheetham: markcheetham100@hotmail.com



AROUND THE DISTRICT

SETTLE CIRCUIT

As our churches begin to fully open again, a lot of new initiatives are starting to take shape.

St. John's, Settle, has recently formed a 'Climate Group' to build on its work and success in achieving an ecoChurch award and is raising awareness throughout the circuit with Climate Sunday services now planned in all of our chapels. St. John's is pushing forward towards its 'Silver' award, having recently completed a large cladding and insulation project on the church hall.

Hellifield Chapel is beginning a number of new initiatives supporting families and children, including Hellitots, Hellikids and Hellibabies! At the other end of the age range, a new weekly drop-in will help support the elderly and vulnerable. Hellifield Chapel will celebrate its Harvest Festival on 5th September this year with an open-air service on the Station platform, located at the southern end of the Settle - Carlisle railway, the building of which was the reason for the chapel's founding! The service will feature traditional Harvest hymns played by the Giggleswick and Settle Brass Band, and all are welcome to come along.

Commencing this October, Settle Church will be playing host to new PeerTalk groups, designed to help and support those for whom life can be overwhelming. This will be an important piece of support for the rural community. Meanwhile the church is also supporting an initiative for Settle to become a Dementia Friendly town, working with, and hosting, various groups to raise awareness of the issues faced by those living with dementia, and their carers, and to facilitate volunteers and training. In a busy time for the church the vaccination centre, begun in March this year, is also continuing through the Autumn, in association with Ingleton Pharmacy, providing a vital local facility to the community in Settle and the surrounding area. Each of these initiatives is intended to help the church make a deeper connection with the community in which we sit, carrying the good news in practical as well as spiritual ways.

Bentham, Burton and Newby churches are developing their strong links with local Anglican churches. Burton is currently meeting in the Parish Church during work on their premises, while Bentham is hosting the local Church of England congregation while work takes place in the Parish Church. There are plans for an Anglican baptism in Bentham Methodist Church and a Methodist baptism in Burton Parish Church! Newby is also working closely with neighbouring parishes, with a planned Forest Sunday and a series of Studies based on the book 'Jesus and the Earth'. Bentham is also hosting walkers from London to Glasgow for the COP26 Climate Conference.

Revds Tim Broughton & Stephen Caddy



DENBY DALE & CLAYTON WEST CIRCUIT

Congregations in Denby Dale & Clayton West are increasingly engaged with Green Church. The Climate Change Crisis confronts humanity across the globe and it's pleasing to see our churches seeking to obtain Eco Church (A Rocha) awards to indicate their common commitment to addressing Climate Change. Many of our churches now purchase their electricity and gas from providers like Pure Planet; we try to make sure that worship includes regular prayers for God's created order as it is damaged by human activity; we are beginning to hold outdoor worship events that locate us close to the natural world as we praise the One who made it. Several of our members were involved in hosting and attending the successful Climate Change Conference organised by JPIT Yorkshire in June. This has further inspired: activism towards COP 26 – we are starting a Craftivism group in the summer; and personal lifestyle changes that see us trying to reduce our own carbon footprints.

Our ministry with schools has inevitably been a little hesitant during lockdown, but we look to break out of that in the Autumn term and in the run up to Christmas. We have two walking nativities planned with different schools and their communities and are looking forward to beginning assemblies again with the seven schools we go into. It will be good to engage face to face with the children and teachers again after all the video work we did in the run up to Christmas last year using our home-grown resources around the *Jesse Tree*.

We continue to thank God for the work of the Denby Dale Centre, which was initiated by congregations some 15 years ago but is now a charity in its own right, with continued input from church members who make up the larger proportion of trustees on the board. The Denby Dale Centre has featured well in Government publications in recent years and has received visits from Government ministers to observe and celebrate its work. Our Chief Officer, Paul Jones, a member at Lindley Methodist Church in Huddersfield Circuit, received an MBE for his work during the pandemic as he worked with the Local Authority in addressing local need.

We give thanks and praise to the God who moves among us in Spirit and to Christ Jesus who draws us on to new opportunities for ministry and mission. We give thanks for our unity in Christ as we invest ourselves purposefully in the Kingdom of God.

Revd Dr Philip Bee



Photo courtesy of John Steel Photography

AROUND THE DISTRICT

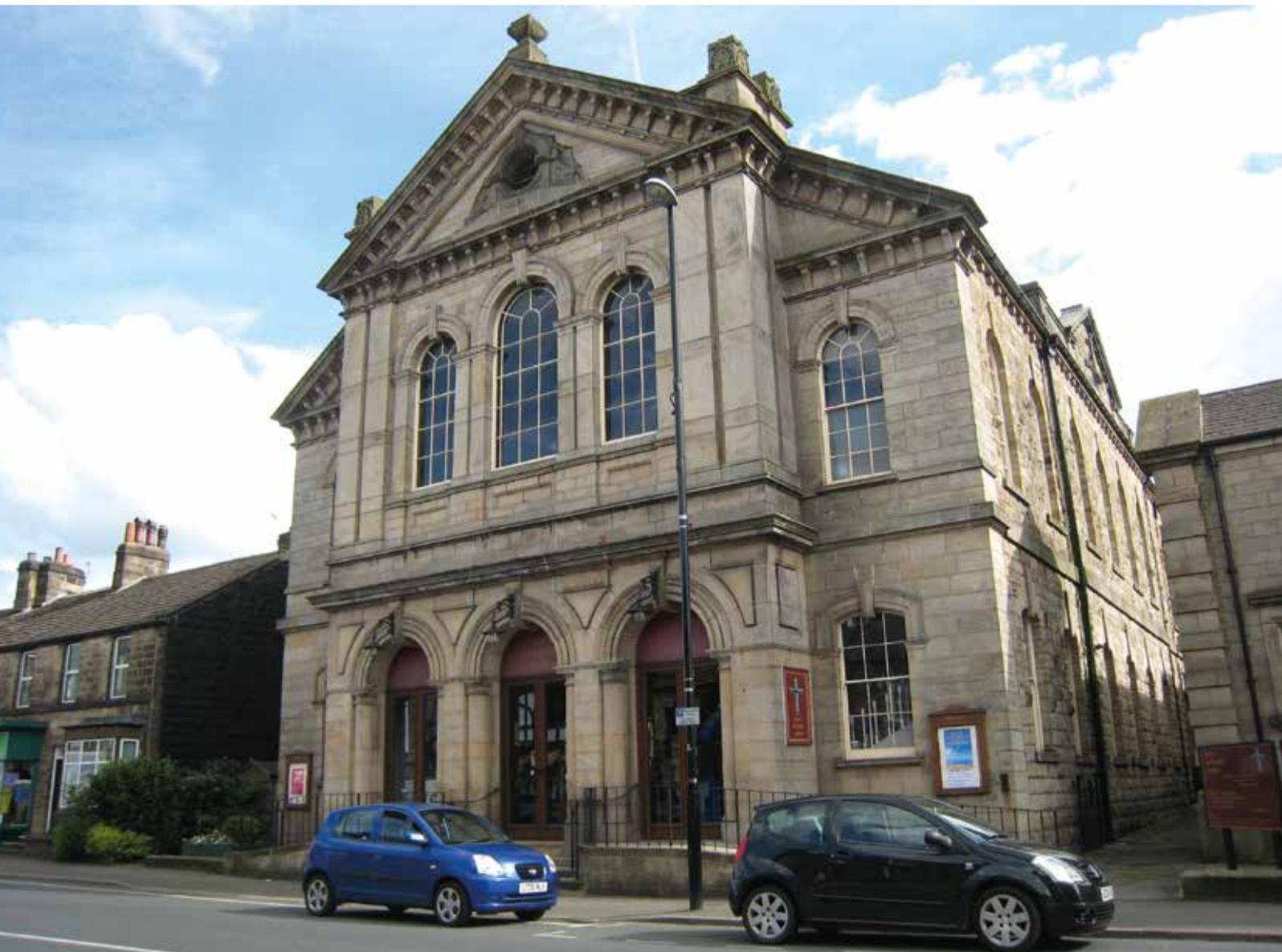
WHARFEDALE & AIREBOROUGH CIRCUIT

“Letting Go and Letting God”

The Church Council of Otley Methodist Church has recently taken the very difficult decision to seek permission to sell their premises. The building is Grade II listed and dates from the 1870's. It was originally built to seat many hundreds of worshippers. It is a very formal building which is extremely expensive to maintain and the sanctuary itself does not lend itself to a more flexible or contemporary approach to worship.

Whilst there is great sadness involved in making this decision, both the church council and the congregation are firm in their belief that this is not the end of the road for the Methodist presence and mission in Otley and are actively seeking to discern the new future that God is leading them in to. We believe there is a good and appropriate future use for the premises but also a good future for the congregation away from it. At this point we are keeping our options open and exploring ecumenical conversations, other appropriate premises in the town and keeping an eye on the possible development of a new housing estate on the edge of the town. Each of these provides opportunities for different avenues of ministry and mission and we are working with the Circuit Leadership Team to discern the right sort of ministerial appointment to help lead the transition of what had become a tired congregation in a tired building to something new, vibrant and full of possibility!

Revd Tim Perkins





LEEDS METHODIST MISSION

FRESH STARTS & NEW BEGINNINGS

September always feels like a fresh start and a new beginning, particularly in the Methodist Church. After a busy summer I returned from my fortnight's holiday renewed and refreshed, looking forward to another exciting year of developing the Leeds City Centre project.

We invite each of you to be part of the work we are doing by trying one or more of the following:

- Make a Green Heart for your MP one Sunday morning ahead of COP26:
<https://leedsmethodistmission.co.uk/2021/03/25/green-hearts-climate-sunday/>
- Come along to the Leeds Craftivists group the first Monday evening of each month on Zoom.
- Join us on a Monday lunchtime for our free weekly mindfulness group led by Revd Tim Moore.
- Take a look at upcoming retreat days and our wellbeing course.
- Pray for our team and our work, that we may bring blessing and flourishing.

See all our events, courses and day retreats: www.leedsmethodistmission.co.uk/#events

See our latest blog posts and podcasts: www.leedsmethodistmission.co.uk/blog

Anna Bland
Development Officer

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 search for them on social media: **Facebook:** @LeedsMethodistMission & **Twitter:** @LMMinthecity

The Methodist Church Working towards being a Dementia Friendly District Yorkshire West District

The District is encouraging each church and circuit to actively participate in this important initiative. The District will:

- Offer opportunities to raise awareness and understanding of dementia and its impact on individuals and their carers/families.
- Enable people in specific roles, namely stewards/leadership teams, welcome stewards, pastoral visitors, worship leaders, local preachers and ministers to respond appropriately and helpfully to people with dementia and their carers/families.
- Provide training on creating and delivering dementia friendly worship.
- Facilitate training to enable ministry, such as offering teaching of storytelling techniques.
- Encourage churches to assess their buildings in relation to people with dementia.



Alzheimer's Society Dementia Friends Information Sessions

Dementia Friends gives people an understanding of dementia and the small things you can do to make a difference.

Monday, 11th October 2021: 7.30 - 8.00 pm on Zoom

Thursday, 14th October 2021: 2.00 - 3.00 pm
at Sandal Methodist Church

Tuesday, 2nd November 2021: 7.30 - 8.00 pm on Zoom

Wednesday, 10th November 2021: 10.30 - 11.30 am
at Silsden Methodist Church

Enabling Roles Training (to be held on Zoom)

More information to follow but please make a note of the dates now:

Monday, 17th January 2022: 7.30 - 9.00 pm

Wednesday, 19th January 2022: 10.30 am - 12 noon

Thursday, 3rd March 2022: 1.00 - 2.30 pm
'Facilitating Dementia Friendly Worship'

To book on any of the above sessions please contact Eileen Jowitt: safeguarding@airedalemethodists.org or 01535 657256
Further information is available from Sue Wishart, District Safeguarding Officer: wisharts@dso.methodist.org or 07875 195977

Revd Pam Malham, Revd Terry Keen, Revd Carla Quenet, Sue Wishart and Eileen Jowitt

MEET THE PEOPLE

Name: Peter Finneran

Role Title: District Grants Officer

What does your role involve?:

I work in partnership with Caroline Mason, the District Advance Fund Officer, presenting grant applications to the District Grants Committee which meets four times a year (dates are in the District Directory). I see my role as a District resource, not only receiving grant applications but someone with whom to discuss project funding routes and opportunities both within and outside of Methodist Church grants. I will always visit anywhere in the District for a conversation over a coffee about project funding.

How can you be contacted?:

I can be contacted by phone, 07717 888116, (do not use my home number as we have a Guardian phone!), by email, peterfinneran@sky.com, or snail mail, 33 Elder Drive, Upton, Pontefract, WF9 1NX.

Which church do you attend?:

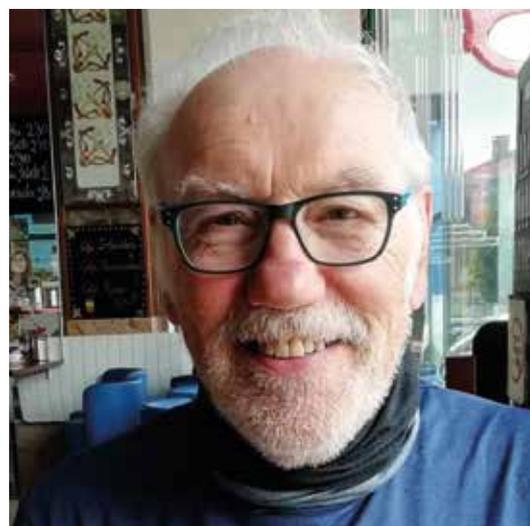
I am a member of Upton Methodist Church. Upton is a small village about seven miles from Pontefract. As a Local Preacher I tend not to be with my own church family, for Sunday Worship, very often.

Tell us a bit about yourself:

I have been married to Betty for 40 years; we had a son, Jamie, who sadly passed away in October of last year. Our granddaughter, Luca, has just received her amazing GCSE results and is going to college in September to study Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Spanish at 'A-Level'. Originally from Birmingham, we have lived in many places from Plymouth to the Highlands of Scotland. Before moving to Yorkshire in 2006 we lived in Inverness. Most of my working life was spent in the leisure industry. I have been an avid Aston Villa supporter since 1957 and have supported them through 'thin and thinner!' In my spare time I enjoy reading, favourite author C J Sansom, and listening to music, favourite band ELO.

Tell us something that few people know about you:

Back in the very early 1970s I was a Butlin's Redcoat in the Cliftonville Hotels, then Entertainments Manager at the Brighton and Blackpool Hotels before being appointed Cruise Director on the 'Monte Granada' cruise ship. In the late 70s I realised that I needed to get a real job!



SPECIAL DAYS

12th September
Education Sunday

10th October
Homeless Sunday

10th - 16th October
Prisons Week

17th - 24th October
One World Week

1st November
All Saints Day

14th November
Remembrance Sunday

14th - 21st November
Inter Faith Week

21st November
Women Against Violence Sunday
World Day of Remembrance for
Road Traffic Victims

28th November
Advent Sunday

1st December
World AIDS Day

Items for inclusion in the Winter 2021 issue of the District Newsletter should reach us by 12 noon on 15th November 2021


The Methodist Church
Yorkshire West District



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