



Autumn 2022

The Gospel of Surrender?

Dear All,

I wonder, have you ever been in a place where the good and right choice felt costly and counter-intuitive? Let me tell you, you are not alone. The thing is, such decisions can seem hard, and we can resist them with so much of our spirit. We feel we need to hang on, when we would be much better surrendering to the moment God has put before us.

I don't know how familiar you are with Jeremiah 38. You might want to take a break from my letter, to read it for yourself. It is a fast-moving chapter at the beginning of which Jeremiah has some bad news for the soldiers in Jerusalem. Rather than telling them everything will be fine, he tells them that if they stay in the city, they will die. It won't surprise you to hear that his words are deemed bad for morale. To shut him up, he is thrown down a cistern to die. He is then rescued through the instruction of King Zedekiah and brought to the King's presence. The King directs Jeremiah to speak the truth about what is going to happen to him, but Jeremiah is quite cautious, and for good reason. After assurances, Jeremiah finally tells Zedekiah the news he knows will be hard to hear. If Zedekiah does not surrender, then an awful outcome awaits him, his household, and his people. Zedekiah is afraid, but Jeremiah gives him this encouragement: "Just obey the voice of the Lord in what I say to you, and it shall go well with you, and your life shall be spared."

Zedekiah is being told that he should not fear surrender, because that is the will and desire of God. That is what is best for him and for his people. All he needs to do is obey. However, if he does not surrender, then much worse will happen. (Spoiler alert: If you read on, I am sorry to say that Jeremiah's advice was not followed, and the outcome was bleak!)

The reason I share all of this is because there is a temptation in some of our churches to hold on, to keep surviving. However, I wonder if there is, for some, a better choice. The choice is to obey God and embrace the gospel of surrender. In doing this, people can let go; be released, along with their resources, and instead become a blessing to others and to God. What if rather than clinging on in a place, we listen for God and ask – are we to stay here like this, or to surrender our place here for a better good for others? It does not mean we will not return, but it may be we will resource work elsewhere and then return as a better church with a renewed purpose.

I ask, what might the gospel of surrender look like in your life, in your church, or in your circuit? What might God be assuring you about if that is the path you were to take?

If it is God's call to you, then enjoy the gospel of surrender, rather than fearing it.

God bless you,

Revd Kerry Tankard
Chair of District

DISTRICT NEWS LETTER

MEET THE PEOPLE



Name: Revd Graham Thompson

Role Title: President of the Methodist Conference 2022-23

What does your role involve?

Every year the Methodist Conference elects a new President. The first responsibility is to preside over the Conference and this happens as soon as a new President has been inducted. For the rest of the year of office, a President serves in a representative role as visits are made to churches, circuits and Districts and meetings are held with ecumenical and other partners.

Some other denominations have a person of power at the pinnacle of their structures - often called a 'bishop'. The Methodist Church does not have this kind of structure and has always been cautious about the way in which power and authority is invested. The Methodist Conference is the closest thing that we have to a bishop. It is the Conference that ordains and stations (appoints) our ministers; the Conference also exercises discipline and serves as the main governance body of the Methodist Church. The President is - for one year - the person who represents the Conference and is, in effect, the servant of many.

Tell us a bit about yourself:

I have been a Methodist Minister for 36 years and served in appointments that have a rural feel to them. I am primarily a pastor who loves to preach and lead worship.

I was brought up in a Methodist family, rebelled in my teenage years, encountered God and made my first Christian commitment when I was 17. I embarked on an initial career in accountancy and had the ambition of being the first Christian accountant in Manchester to make a million pounds and give it all away! However, God called me into ministry but had to work very hard to persuade me that accountancy was not for me.

I am married to Alison, we have two sons - Adam and Andrew - and two grandchildren - Niall and Lyra. We have lived in different parts of the country and have recently moved to Norfolk.

How can you be contacted?

Via pandvp@methodistchurch.org.uk or the District Office.

Visit of the President of the Conference, Revd Graham Thompson

We are delighted to welcome the President of the Methodist Conference, Revd Graham Thompson, to our District on Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th October. He will be joining us at the following events:

Saturday 15th October - District Development Morning on the Presidential Theme, "The Foundation is Love"
10.00 am – 12.30 pm (coffee from 9.30 am) at Central Methodist Church, Newgate, Pontefract, WF8 1NB

Saturday 15 October – Trinity Mission Castleford's 10th Anniversary
Afternoon visit to Powell Street, Castleford, WF10 1EL

Saturday 15 October – The new Arts Initiative at Newmillerdam Methodist Church
Afternoon visit to 693 Barnsley Road, Newmillerdam, Wakefield, WF2 6QQ

Sunday 16th October – Garforth Methodist Church's 150th Anniversary
10.30 am at Garforth Methodist Church, Church Lane, Garforth, Leeds, LS25 1NW

Sunday 16th October – Launch Event for Leeds Sanctuary, The Methodist Church in Leeds City Centre
4.00 pm – 5.30 pm at The Royal Armouries, Armouries Drive, Leeds, LS10 1LT
Please register at: www.bit.ly/L-S-Launch

BI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

CELEBRATING 200 YEARS OF PRIMITIVE METHODISM IN HORSFORTH

Central Methodist Church in Horsforth, one of a very few “ex-Prims” chapels still open for worship in the District, are planning to celebrate the occasion of our 200th year in November 2022.

In 1822, two cottages in Dixons Fold, Kerry Hill were converted into a small chapel which became known as “Ranters Fold” – “Ranter” being the nickname of Primitive Methodists because they would return home singing loudly and praising the Lord.

In 1836, the trustees bought a plot of land and after much fundraising the new Primitive Chapel was opened in 1846. This was eventually replaced by the present building and Horsforth Prims was renamed Central Primitive Methodist.

Celebrations begin on Saturday 5th November with our Pre-Christmas Fayre from 10am until 2pm. This event will see the launching of a new book by Colin Dews detailing the history of Primitive Methodism in Horsforth. We are most grateful to Colin for the time and energy he has put into this project. In addition, we will have books, photos and various artifacts on display.

On Sunday 6th November, our morning service at 10.30am will be led by Revd Peter Reasbeck, a great friend of Central for many years. At 2.30pm that afternoon we are holding a “Ranters” hymn-sing of old favourites such as “Hold the Fort” and “We’re Marching to Zion”.

In addition, we are taking part in Yorkshire Historic Churches Open Day on Saturday 10th September from 10am – 4pm.

Refreshments will be available at both the 10th September and 5th November events.

All are welcome to help celebrate Central’s rich heritage.

Margaret Metcalfe & Mike Cooke



Demolition of Central Methodist Chapel, which had been built in 1846 opposite the Mechanic's Institute



In Sadness and Joy

The 2023 District Prayer Handbook is now available to order direct from the District Office.

Priced at **£2.50** (Incl. postage and packing)

AROUND THE DISTRICT

CALDERDALE CIRCUIT

The World Wide Web is our Parish

The churches of Calderdale have been getting to grips with the digital age and embracing new styles of worship and different forms of outreach. From our lovely new website to individual chapels finding ways to share the good news online, we're all trying to give it a go. We don't claim to be unique, or experts, but we share our experiences here to encourage others who are doing the same, and to offer ideas that may not have been tried elsewhere.

Christ Church, Hipperholme are trying to become more active online by recording all sermons preached and uploading them to their website via their YouTube channel, so that everyone has an opportunity to hear their wonderful preachers. They use Facebook to engage with their local community and to publicise events such as their wonderful Jubilee party or the distribution of their knitted angels at Christmas. Judging by the comments they receive, this is all very welcome.

Blackshaw Head, a small rural church in the upper Calder valley, were extremely resourceful during the lockdowns. The singers amongst the congregation recorded themselves singing various hymns, which were then edited together into a choir. Thirty minute services including these hymns and songs, as well as prayers and reflections on the readings, were posted to Facebook every week. Having reached a peak of 883 views one week during lockdown, they now have a regular following of about 50 people from far and wide. Not bad for a church of just 17 members! When the chapel reopened for worship, they were reluctant to stop their online worship as they felt that would be abandoning their regular followers. Therefore, they created weekly online worship called As We Are Gathered as "an online spiritual gathering place for scattered souls". www.facebook.com/BlackshawHeadChapel/

St. Andrew's in Halifax kept in touch using their toddler group's Facebook page. They shared news of services being held online and outdoor events/gatherings as they were permitted. They even offered weekly craft "makes", demonstrated in pictures for children and the young at heart to try at home.

St. Paul's Sowerby Bridge and **Hebden Royd** chapels have seen the benefit of streaming services to those who are unable to attend. They have upgraded their AV systems to do this! On occasional Sundays they "Zoom in" to share each other's worship. Both chapels also use Facebook to share news of events such as the Live Nativity in Sowerby Bridge, which involves animals in church. Hebden Royd Sunday Club joined with Blackshaw Head's on Zoom during the lockdowns to share resources and worship together.

The Upper Valley Section have come together thanks to Zoom. A weekly Bible Study started during lockdown, and was so much appreciated that it has continued. Zoom Coffee mornings during lockdowns enabled new friendships to be forged across the five churches, and Sunday evening services on Zoom are very popular, not least because no one has to go out on dark, wet nights to unlock a cold chapel!

Revd Kathryn Heathcoat

WHARFEDALE & AIREBOROUGH CIRCUIT

Transformational, missional and sustainable

On 31 July a circuit service was held to mark the retirement of Deacon Liz Day. Ben Rhydding Methodist Church was packed for the occasion and Liz's work for the circuit and with the Methodist Homes Association was celebrated. We hosted a service of welcome at Otley Methodist Church on 3rd September for Revd Cameron Stirk who will have pastoral charge of Otley and Pool, and a new circuit role in enabling mission, including digital church outreach and development. Newly appointed Circuit Manager Juliana Caukwell, who comes to us from Nidd Valley circuit, also joins us in September to work with a team of employees and volunteers looking after property, finance, communications and administration.

Our circuit Mission Project, Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Debt Centre, led by Manager Sam Price,

AROUND THE DISTRICT

has successfully enabled a number of clients to become debt free, and continues to provide hope through much needed support to those enmeshed in toxic debt.

In June, Christchurch Ilkley opened a Saturday drop-in centre for Ukrainian refugees and their host families. "We opened the doors for a 'coffee and cake'/ 'meet and share' time, prayed for God's blessings, and waited to see if anyone would come. We're pleased to say that guests and hosts are coming; usually around 40 people each week of all ages." said an organiser. The children enjoy games and soft play in "Dan's Den" while parents make new friends. With the help of volunteer interpreters, the church and community are now better able to help them with what they need, such as clothes, toys, transport to hospital appointments, how to get work, and/or food bank vouchers.

Our day retreat centre, Norwood Chapel, in its beautiful Washburn Valley setting, continues to host away-days and quiet days, and is a venue for Bank Holiday teas, much enjoyed by circuit friends, visitors, walkers and cyclists. Churches in the circuit are currently working on growth plans. We seek to focus our development on three key aspirations: *transformational, missional and sustainable*. In the New Year we will be rolling out a preaching series exploring these themes.

Vivien Pitts



NORTH KIRKLEES & MORLEY

Update from Drighlington Methodist Church

This summer has been remarkable for Drighlington Methodist Church members, as "normal service" was resumed and people flooded back to be together! All groups for different ages and abilities have swelled beyond recognition. We are very close to the M62 so some come from a distance, and we are very happy that our friends in The Marthoma Church and The Church of South India & Malayalam have returned to share worship and fellowship in their own languages during their Saturday slots each month. Due to our determination to continue serving no matter what, our community has been appreciated by the wider world and resulted in so many outstanding awards being bestowed on our co-workers here!

Trevor and Margaret Martin went to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party in May, having been nominated by our local MP, Andrea Jenkyns. They manage the Dementia Memory Cafe and the Foodbank, managing rotas of community teams, coordinating supplies and sourcing funding, etc.



Julie Roper, our Girls' Brigade leader, was nominated for the 2022 Child Friendly Leeds Awards in the "Adult making a Difference" category, which she won, receiving her award at the famous City Varieties Theatre in Leeds!

Terry Hallsworth, Senior Steward, also received a Platinum Champions Award on behalf of the Royal Voluntary Service from the Lord Lieutenant and Lord Mayor at Leeds Town Hall in July.

Our Calling is to serve as Jesus' hands and feet in our world in as many ways as we can, whenever we can and to welcome all. To receive such acknowledgement from secular sources is good but to God be the glory! To see more about us and our work please see our website -

www.drighlingtonmethodist.org.uk

Margaret Newton

AROUND THE DISTRICT

DENBY DALE & CLAYTON WEST CIRCUIT

Ordination Celebrations

In June this year, the Denby Dale & Clayton West Circuit celebrated my being received into Full Connexion and Ordained as a Methodist Presbyter. As you will recall, the impact of Covid19 during the prior two years had resulted in several restrictions, with ordination services initially being postponed and then a year later, attendance being restricted. For many people this year marked a delightful return to a sense of normality. The Methodist Conference was once again fully attended with representatives and guests, and as the June Sun shone brightly, Sunday morning Conference worship began with song led by the Ghanaian Methodist Fellowship UK Choir. As I looked across the hall from the stage, it was a spectacular sight to see so many people worshipping together! When Methodists sing, they can certainly sing, and I can only describe this as being a spiritual moment for me. This moment continued through to the afternoon Ordination Service, which was held at All Saints Church in Wellington, Telford. Again, as I looked across a packed church to witness an enthusiastic congregation respond with, "They are worthy!", there was a moment in my ministry that was both uplifting and humbling, and one that I will never forget. The sheer force of the sound wave nearly knocked me off my feet. It was a joy to be part of this church celebration and I was delighted that so many people were able to feel part of it; either by attending physically or, as many people have subsequently informed me, by attending online.

Revd Nick Biggar



SETTLE CIRCUIT

Developments in Settle Circuit

St John's in Settle were delighted to receive their Silver EcoChurch award earlier this year. This recognised a lot of work done with the physical building, in terms of cladding and insulation, as well as a renewed focus on engaging with our local community and with other churches as the lockdowns eased. The church Eco-Group have set up a very popular recycling centre for used medicine blister packs and have created plans for a community "Let's Talk Rubbish" day on 24th September, with speakers from the North Yorkshire Waste Recovery Centre, "North Yorkshire Rotters" and "Everyday Essentials" Refill Centre, alongside stalls with information on recycling and "living lightly", and representatives from both Settle, Craven and North Yorkshire Councils. The church group are also in the process of creating an Eco Garden on a previously tarmacked yard, with recycled furniture made from old pallets and bee- and insect-friendly planting. A competition was held with the local Primary School to design the garden and an insect house, with the winning entry brilliantly titled "Buggingham Palace". The garden will be officially opened on the evening of the "Lets Talk Rubbish" day!



Following the refurbishment and upgrade of the inside of the small chapel at Haw Grove, Hellifield Methodist Church have now installed TV screens and sound facilities to supplement their services. A monthly Café church on the 4th Sunday of each month began in Spring of this year and has attracted new members and families to the worship time. A new initiative on the 2nd Sunday of the month – Lego Church – is due to commence in September and run through the Autumn, building on a successful morning gathering with young families and teens. We are really excited for these projects, which build on recent community engagement initiatives including Hellitots, Hellikids, a weekly drop-in and a Friday Pantry.

Revd Tim Broughton

Like many other parts of the District, the final three months of our Connexional Year have seen a change in our pattern of working while we reflect on the 2021/22 year and prepare for 2022/23.

Relationships within our Leeds Craftivists community have strengthened this year, and we have been able to encourage three members to step forward as leaders. We released a Climate Justice Resource in May, which includes a group session plan, discussion questions and a template letter; all free to download from our website. We have been so pleased to see the results of people's learning and action this year, in addition to the growth in the community, and will be returning in September with a hybrid event, following a pause in August.

Last year, we launched two additional regular communities, "Lunch and Prayers" and "Saturday Sanctuary", and these have grown in membership across the year since Covid restrictions eased. We are really excited to launch a new "pub theology" community called "What Does God Think About...?" in October, which we will be trialling at Leeds Dock.

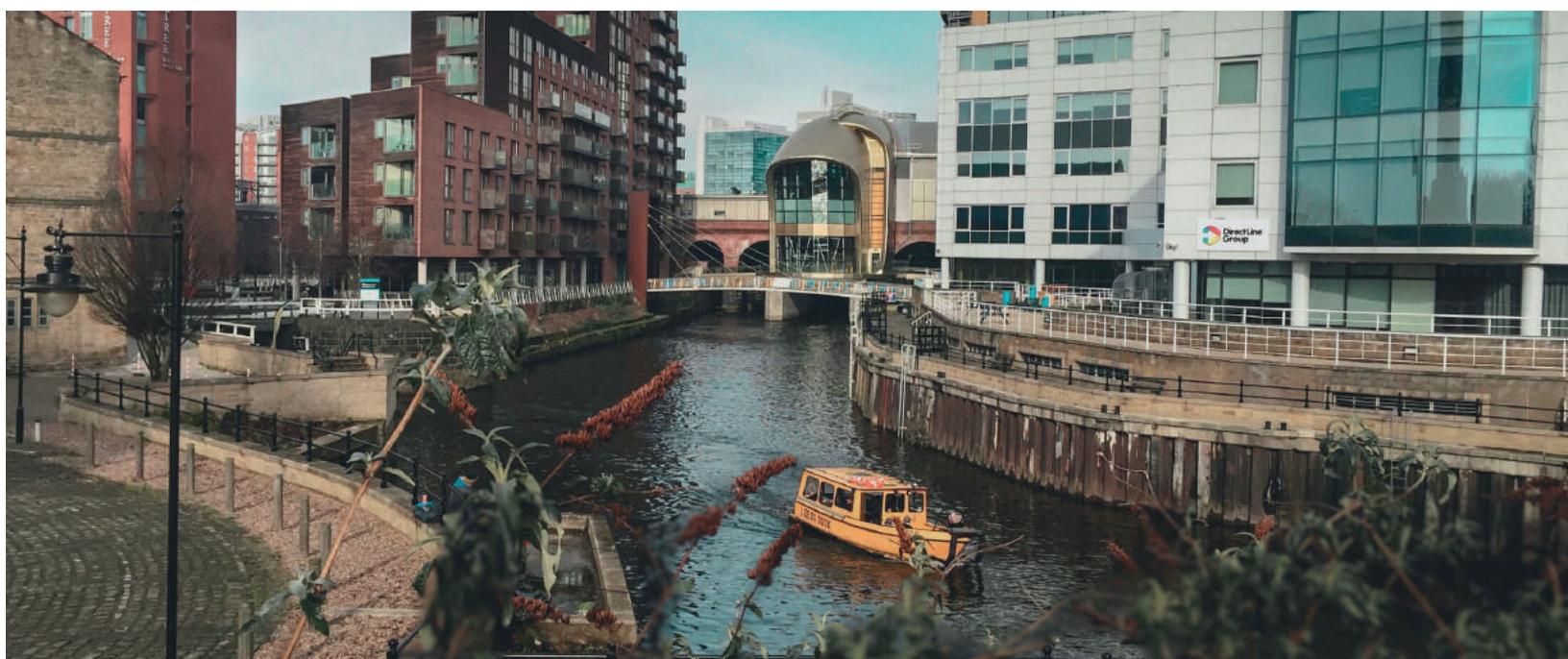
Sam has been making connections with other organisations and communities across Leeds, including the student and business communities. There is much "in the pipeline" so keep an eye on the Winter Newsletter (or our social media feeds) for more specific details!

We are also looking forward to a number of individual events we will be hosting in the coming quarter. In September, we will be running a "Reflect and Create" workshop based on our book, "Everyday Sacrament", together with local artist, Shaeron Caton Rose. Touring art installation, "Gaia", will be visiting Leeds in November and we have been invited to host two events on the theme of Climate Justice at its temporary home, Holy Trinity Boar Lane.

David has been further building ecumenical relationships in the City and has been asked to preach at Leeds Minster on 20th November.

If you receive our newsletter, you will already know that we are very excited to be hosting a Launch Event on Sunday 16th October, which will be visited by Graham Thompson, President of the Methodist Conference. If you would like to come to the Launch, which will be at The Royal Armouries, please RSVP here: www.bit.ly/L-S-Launch

Emily Smith
Communications Coordinator



*Leeds Sanctuary is a Yorkshire West District project in Leeds city centre which focuses on wellbeing, gentle activism and discipleship.
Search for them on social media: **Facebook, Instagram or Twitter** at **@leedssanctuary***

SAFEGUARDING

2021/22 UPDATE

There has not been a newsletter for a while now due to Covid19. During that time, we supported people with mental health issues, those living alone, and those for whom going out and getting their shopping was a problem. Following Covid19 there has been a rise in domestic violence and online abuse of children in the community, the impact of which will be felt over the coming months.

In this last Connexional year, as well as our usual Safeguarding referrals, we have been very busy delivering Advanced Safeguarding training. The Connexion agreed that all those who needed to do the Advanced Session should have completed their training by the end of August 2022, and since last September we have trained 341 people, in face-to-face sessions, Zoom sessions and through a few one-to-ones, with people who for one reason or another were unable to access our other courses. I have up-to-date lists of everyone who has been trained, and these have been shared with our Circuit Safeguarding Officers as we have gone along. Between us we have removed people from the lists who have stopped doing the role they had for whatever reason, and we now have 775 people in the District who have completed the Advanced Safeguarding course. Over the last 7 years since I have been a District Safeguarding Officer, we have come such a long way in promoting Safeguarding, and the church is working well towards a culture where Safeguarding is routine and valued. There remain a small number of people who feel Safeguarding is nothing to do with them; and while it is important that we win hearts and minds, for some, completing a course does not do that. Overall the culture is changing and our churches are creating a safer space for people who have been abused.

Barbara and I will have retired at the end of August and we want to express our thanks to all our circuit Safeguarding Officers with whom we have a great team spirit. We also want to thank everyone in the District who we have worked with, and who have trusted and supported us over the years. We will certainly miss you all very much.

Sue Wishart

SPECIAL DAYS

11th September
Education Sunday

16th October
Freedom Sunday

30th October
Bible Sunday

14th - 20th November
Interfaith Week

9th October
Homeless Sunday
Prisons Sunday

23rd - 30th October
One World Week

1st November
All Saints Day

20th November
Women against
Violence Sunday

9th - 15th October
Prisons Week

24th October
United Nations Day

13th November
Remembrance Sunday

27th November
Advent Sunday

Items for inclusion in the Winter 2022 issue of the District Newsletter
should reach us by 12 noon on 15th November 2022


The **Methodist Church**
Yorkshire West District



Yorkshire West Methodist District Office,
Touchstone, 4 Easby Road, Bradford, BD7 1QX



admin@ywmethodist.org.uk

Please note the new telephone number for the
District Office is **01274 442670**

Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/YWMMethodist

Follow us on Twitter: @YWMMethodist

Visit our website: www.yorkshirewestmethodist.org.uk