

PRAYER DIARY

JUNE 1st Pray today for Revd David on his Sabbatical that he will have a valuable time. Pray for all students busy with examinations at this time. Pray for Nunthorpe.

JUNE 8th Pray today for Revd John and for Grove Hill. Pray for the Circuit meeting on Wednesday. Remember the work being done in our churches in reaching out to their communities.

JUNE 15th Pray today for Revd Charity and for all her work in the Mission to the Town Centre. Pray also for those working alongside her. Pray for Linthorpe Road and for the Resource Centre and for Project Manager; Andrew Glazebrook.

JUNE 22nd Pray for the Preachers' meeting this coming Thursday and for Revd Charity leading the meeting. Pray for all our Preachers both Lay and Ordained and our Worship Leaders. Pray too for those people who may be feeling God's call to them to preach, that they will feel able to talk to people about that call and act upon it. Pray for Normanby

JUNE 29th Pray today for our Methodist Conference, for the important decisions made and for all who will be ordained to begin their Ministry. Pray for the new President and Vice President. Pray for Marton

JULY 6th Pray today for all who are ill in body, mind or spirit. Pray for those in hospital or in a home, and all who care for them. May we in our churches be aware of all who need our help and care. Pray for Revd Anne Coates. Pray for the Chinese church.

JULY 13th Pray today for school children and staff breaking up for the Summer Holidays in the next few days. Pray for those who will care for children during the holidays and especially any church holiday projects. Pray for Trinity Family Friendly Centre, EcoShop and for all who serve the church and the community.

JULY 20th Pray today for all those people who may be visiting our churches on holiday or coming to join us for the first time. Pray for Methodist Homes for the Aged Communities Teesside for Barbara Robinson the Chaplain and all involved at Montpellier Manor.

July 27th Pray for those who find it difficult to fit into our communities, those who are excluded because they are different. Pray for Methodist Asylum Project (MAP) for Billy Barnes the Project Manager and all who help in the organisation and who include all who need help to settle into our town and our country.

August 3rd Pray today for those Christians who are involved in their local communities and whose faith makes a difference to the work they do. Pray for Mark Braithwaite our Circuit Safeguarding Officer and for those who have this special role in our churches.

August 10th Pray for Elaine and all the work she does from the Circuit Office. Pray for David Everitt our Circuit Webmaster as he helps to spread the good news of our churches.

August 17th Pray for all those students receiving examination results at this time. Pray for Methodist Women in Britain.

August 24th We pray for all those who are preparing to start again the activities of our church lives as we move towards a new Methodist year.

August 31st Pray today for Ministers soon to arrive in their new Circuits. Pray for our District for all the many different church families and the work we do. Pray for Revd Richard Andrew, our District Chair and now the President of the Methodist Conference.

MEMO

Middlesbrough & Eston Methodist Outburst

JUNE - AUGUST 2025



**My soul shall be joyful in
the Lord: it shall rejoice
in his salvation.
Psalm 35:9**

FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Welcome! Whether you're new to church, an occasional or regular churchgoer, or someone who visits (or is thinking of visiting) a Methodist building for another reason, YOU ARE VERY WELCOME.

As you read this Memo, we are nearly half way through the year!! A lot of events, both at home and in church, will now be memories but there is always more to look forward to. We hope you enjoy reading this issue of information about our churches, what's on, letters, jokes and more series thoughts.

If the weather during April was anything to go by, it should be a great summer. Many of our church activities will soon be taking a break for the holiday season. Maybe we enjoy a rest, a chance to sit back and reflect on where our church is going. Maybe we find it good to have a change of routine, feel the warm sun and to see the beauty of our gardens and parks and country side a real sense of new life. For some however, will miss the activities of our church life.

With millions of people continuing to face tough social and economic conditions, in this issue we highlight our churches work that have been trying new things in order to support their local communities.

It's our hope that, wherever you are in your own life and on your own faith journey, you will be inspired by reading about the people and projects featured in these pages. It is the exchange of news as to what churches are doing that provides ideas to others to develop and strengthen their mission. So why not share these with the rest of the Circuit and beyond. Remember that MEMO is about us and for us, it would be wonderful if every church could contribute something, no matter how small!! We know that there

are some good things happening out there in our Circuit.

On behalf of Dave, Anne and Elaine in the Communications Team, We would like to wish you all a happy and sunny summer.

Many blessings from us all.

CIRCUIT SERVICE

*Trinity Methodist
Church*

**Sunday 29th June a
at 10.45am**

*Live streaming of the
Service at the Methodist
Conference
See page 6*

DEADLINE FOR NEXT EDITION OF MEMO

Please send all contributions
to the
Communications Team
C/O the Circuit office,
Nunthorpe Methodist Church,
Connaught Road, Nunthorpe,
Middlesbrough TS7 0BS

Or email to
mbrocircuit@gmail.com
by 27th June 2025

Get involved!

The ministry we offer in the town centre is on your behalf. If after reading this something is stirring within you and it feels like you want to get involved we are ready for you. There are lots of opportunities to get further involved in the mission and ministry of the town centre. *For a role description or an informal chat about any of the roles or activities please contact Revd Charity*



A Prayer for August

Lord, in a year of changes in our country and in the world, we thank You for the regular rhythm of each year.

We thank You for August, the month of holidays and rest for many, especially for families and those tied to termly timetables.

We pray for Your blessing and restoration for all. As we take time out of normal routines, help us to still make space for You; to be refreshed spiritually as well as physically.

Feed us, Lord, by Your Word; revive us by Your Holy Spirit; encourage us by Your indwelling presence, so that we might naturally reflect Your love to all we meet, on holiday or at home or at work.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Daphne Kitching

Answers to Quiz on Page 5

1. Summer Holiday
2. Bread, berries and sugar
3. Ruth
4. 15th August 1945
5. Porgy and Bess

Evening Prayer & Pub-Theology

From Easter Sunday we will begin to meet in the Hub's café space every other week (initially) for a short form of evening prayer before wandering to a local pub for some 'pub-theology'; pub theology is really just about sharing faith with friends and taking church into the local economy. We buy a drink, chose a topic and try and work out where God is in that topic over conversation, laughter and friendship. We are building a community of disciples who are confident asking questions. *Anyone can join in, sit and listen or get stuck into the conversation. Sunday's 6pm Middlesbrough Methodist Hub Café Space then onto the pub.*

Town Centre Walk-Around

Rev'd Charity does an intentional town centre walk around a couple of times a week where she chats to people and tells anyone who will listen how fabulous, beautiful and loved they are. It keeps her grounded in the town centre and helps to remind people that they matter. *If you want to join her on a 'walk-around' get in touch with her.*

Team Gatherings

The town centre mission team meet together each week to pray, share scripture, talk through what is happening that week in the town centre whilst drinking tea and eating the occasional biscuit. *If you'd like to sit in on a team meeting contact Rev'd Charity.*

Projects:

Jesus Rocks: Our team member Lee is taking the lead on this mini-mission-project. You may have seen on social media people painting pebbles and leaving them in random places for folk to pick up, re 'hide' or take home. On the back of the pebbles are the details of a Facebook group so that people can photograph the pebble and post it on the group's page. Lee came up with the idea and name for Jesus Rocks, a version of the painted pebbles where we paint Christian 'things' on the pebbles. We plan to use a different theme/ scripture reading/ story/ prayer each week. *If you want to paint a pebble you can do this at home and pass them on to us or hide them in the town centre yourself or you can come and paint a pebble with us sometime!*

The Middlesbrough Grief Project: We are really pleased to be doing the preparatory work on 'The Middlesbrough Grief Project' over the next few months too. This is a big project in which we will be partnering with Borderlands (Creative People and Places Programme for Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland) and South Tees Public Health. The project has three parts to it. We will work with bereavement organisations and the local council to offer 'Grief letterboxes'; letterboxes painted white into which people can post letters to people who have died, it offers them the ability to say things which have been unspoken. These letters will never be read. People will also be directed to support services.

Alongside the post boxes we will run a 'Grief Café' in which we will provide a safe space to speak openly and at which we will have input from hospice nurses, funeral directors, bereavement counsellors, end of life specialists and others.

Additional to these two strands of the project we also aim to work with arts organisations and individuals to produce and curate some installations around the town centre relating to grief.

If you are interested in any of the above please contact Rev'd Charity.



The Superintendent's Letter

Dear Friends

I must confess I have been looking forward to the Summer months for some time now, not least because these are the months when I am on Sabbatical. Sabbaticals are compulsory for ministers in the Methodist Church and take place after an initial ten years in ministry and then every seven years. I'm not sure where the years have gone, but it is frightening to think that this will be my fourth! It is a very special gift from the church to the minister which allows him or her to withdraw from circuit life for a while. Most ministers use the period to study, reflect, travel and do a variety of other things which will help to renew their ministry.

My own Sabbatical lasts for three months, which is the usual period. It begins on Monday 19th May and ends on Tuesday 19th August when I return to work. I have prepared a program which, like the old advert for Mars Bars, involves a mixture of 'work, rest and play'. The 'work' element will centre around reading, writing and reflection on the twin subjects of vocation and preaching. I have always felt that the ministry of the word is not the only call God places upon my life, but somehow it is central in what he wants me to do. I have always been fascinated by the power of words to encourage, heal, renew and generally shape our faith. I've always believed that the best sermons take the form of stories which engage our hearts and imaginations. I will certainly explore these themes (and more) with the help of some well chosen books and the latest scholarship. In many ways, this study is a re-visiting of my MA in Theology and Ministry which I completed through Durham University in 2015.

In addition to the above I will also do a little travel with Carolyn as she completes her term of office as Vice President of the Methodist Conference. I will attend the Irish Methodist Conference as a visitor with her in Portadown in June. It will be interesting to see the kinds of issues that are discussed in the Irish Connexion. I suspect they will be similar to the issues we face. I will also attend the Cliff College Festival with her at the end of May and the opening of our own Methodist Conference in Telford at the end of June where she will pass on her cross of office.

The 'rest' element of the Sabbatical will take the form of a few days retreat with the Northumbria Community, which I will do right at the very start. This is a guided retreat over five days and I will be staying at the 'Mother House' of the Northumbria Community. I do of course acknowledge that the whole Sabbatical is 'a rest' in the sense of the old saying, 'that change is as good as a rest.' I will take the opportunity to worship in different churches and denominations as a visitor and experience their hospitality too. The Sabbatical also includes three weeks of holiday which is our usual pattern of summer holiday. We will be having a week's holiday in Northumberland

with friends in June followed by two weeks with our younger daughter in Scotland in July.

It all seems rather a lot to fit into a 3 month Sabbatical, but many of the activities overlap into each other in ways I cannot explain in such a short letter. I will start to feed back the things I have learned when I return at the end of August. No doubt I will bore you silly with my hobby horses. All of the above means that at the time of writing (just after Easter) there is still a lot to do in Church and Circuit before I begin. I am very grateful to Revd. John Howard-Norman, Kay Braithwaite and Doreen Mealing for offering to be on my Sabbatical Support Group. We are working together with others to make sure that appropriate cover is in place for the churches and for the circuit.

I know Sabbaticals are compulsory, but I do want to thank the church and circuit for this gift. It is much needed and will be well used.

With every blessing,

Revd David Godfrey

STANTON VILLAGE
BIG SING
wit
MARSKE BRASS BAND
Led by
Revd Charity Hamilton & Revd Laura Wild
Sunday, June 22nd at 3pm
MELDYKE SQUARE
Come and join us in the open air
Refreshments in the Memorial Hall

The Team

Dawn has been a church steward, circuit steward and district synod rep. Her faith journey began as a small child hearing the teacher say she was a bit strange always choosing Bible stories to read! Her journey from curiosity to faith has been a long and winding one, joining a church in 1991 she will say that she has maintained the 'bit strange' label! For Dawn it has been a bumpy road at times but worth the journey. Dawn brings experience of faith both 'inside' and 'outside' the church, work with families and children and an ability to accept people where they are at.

Lee was baptised in 2021, as someone on a journey as a F2M trans person, baptism was so important to him to declare his love for God as the person he believes he is called to be. Lee will tell you his journey has been far from straightforward lots of ups and downs and often feeling far from God but Lee is committing himself again to knowing more of God and sharing that God who loves him. Lee brings with him a humble honesty which rings true for most of us, life isn't always easy but God offers us the chance of new beginnings every single day.

Andrew a lifelong Middlesbrough resident, is currently the administrator for Middlesbrough Methodist Hub and was received into membership at Trinity Methodist church recently. Although he found faith only a few years ago it has given him new friendships and a positive outlook. Andrew hopes that the town centre ministry will spread love and faith to those unaware of its presence. He brings with him numerous administrative and creative skills and is in an ideal position to form a bridge between the groups that meet in the building, the wider community, the mission of the Church and the story of God in Middlesbrough.

Revd Charity was brought up in the Methodist Church but came to faith consciously as a teenager, never quite 'fitting in' within the church she went on to establish new forms of church/Church plants in Bristol in the early 2000's, was involved in FX, pioneering, emerging church and alt. worship. Charity just wants to create a space where anyone and everyone can know they are welcome and can come to know the love that God has for them. Charity has worked for the Methodist church for over 20 years and has been a Methodist minister for 15 years. She's still figuring out what it all means.

The core team are trying to live intentionally disciple-shaped lives and holding each other accountable whilst exploring ways to offer hope-filled hospitality to the town centre community. *[If this is something you are interested in please contact Revd Charity to find out more.]*

What's On

Weekly Email

Every week Revd Charity will be sending out a short email with news, information about what's on and most importantly prayer points. *If you'd like to sign up to the weekly email contact Revd. Charity (charity.hamilton@methodist.org.uk).* If you're on social media you can also see what's on. Facebook search for: Linthorpe Road Methodist Resource Centre. Instagram – follow Revd Charity: @charitykmmhamilton

Middlesbrough Methodist Hub

What will you do with this life you have been gifted?

“Live the life you are gifted”. This simply means whatever our circumstances, our limitations, our hopes, our struggles – God gifts us a life and its worth truly living it. The gift of life is precious and valuable. This means that those of us who call ourselves people of faith in our loving of people, want to help and inspire others to live the life they are gifted. This is what “loving your neighbour” means.

We think we do this best by being/doing three things.

The first is to live intentionally disciple-shaped lives, committing ourselves to talking with God, studying scripture, and walking alongside each other.

The second is to offer physical, mental and spiritual hospitality to everyone we encounter, by loving our neighbour.

The third is to remain authentic, always being our real selves difficult parts and all – no ‘candyfloss Christianity’ here! Its real, messy and it can be hard.

We believe that everyone in the town centre of Middlesbrough is worthy of the opportunity to ‘live the life they are gifted’ and we are committed to finding ways of enabling that. We are trying to live the lives we are gifted and to help others do the same through Middlesbrough Methodist Hub.

The Building

Middlesbrough Methodist Hub (*formally known as Linthorpe Road Methodist Church & Resource Centre*) is the Circuit’s physical form of presence and act of hospitality in the town centre of Middlesbrough. The building itself is home to a number of organisations and groups all of which serve the Middlesbrough and Teesside communities. There’s always room for more whether it’s a one off event or a regular space. The Hub has a part time administrator Andrew who can be contacted below.

Middlesbrough Methodist Hub administrator: Andrew Glazebrook

email mbromethodisthub@gmail.com tel: 01642 225396

(Working days: Monday 9-12; Tuesday 9-12; Thursday 9-12; Friday 9-12)

The Mission Project

There is a small but growing mission project based out of the Hub, this work is overseen by Revd Charity. There is a team of volunteers who are living intentionally disciple-shaped lives and holding each other accountable whilst exploring ways to offer hope-filled hospitality to the town centre community. There’s always room for more. Contact Revd Charity below if you feel like you might want a conversation about deepening your discipleship and offering some energy to the project.

Alongside this Revd. Charity also offers a form of chaplaincy to those who inhabit the town centre, whether that be shop workers, hospitality workers, shoppers, students, those with addiction and mental health problems, civic leaders & council workers, homeless friends. She’s available to ANYONE who is in the town centre and is happy to meet up and talk about any support that we can offer, especially if it involves a brew in one of the fabulous independent cafes that ‘Boro has to offer.



Like Father, Like Son

‘Dead Ringer’ is the odd phrase we use when referring to someone who looks like somebody else. Sometimes, instead, we say ‘spitting image’ when we see a likeness or similarity between one person and another.

Fathers’ Day (15th June) and is an occasion when dads are particularly remembered by their children. As far as the boys are concerned, how many have heard someone say ‘Oh, you really look like your father’?

One day, Jesus was talking to His disciples and said, “Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9) What an amazing statement! Jesus was saying that He was the dead ringer or spitting image of God! At another time Jesus said, “I am in the Father and the Father is in Me.” (John 14.10) These words must have shocked His hearers, for He was saying that He was equal with God. No one had said anything like this before, but certainly His miracles were proof that He was different. No-one else could do what He was doing. Some people wondered - could He really be who He said He was?

So Jesus attempted to make His position clear and said, “If you knew Me you would know the Father also.” (John 8:19) The people were being urged to know Jesus more. They had to look, listen and believe. Were His deeds of God or not? They had to decide!

Today, we all stand in a similar position. Who is Jesus? Do we look at Him and say ‘Yes, this is God in the flesh’ or ‘No, He was just a good person - but also perhaps, deluded or crazy?’

Thomas, the disciple with the nickname ‘doubter’, exclaimed: “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28). Thomas was convinced that he was in the presence of God, in human form. And when the Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Colossae he said clearly: ‘It was by God’s own decision that the Son has in Himself the full nature of God’ (*Colossians 1:19*). Like Father, like Son!

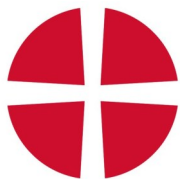
The Parish Pump



Here are Summer Quiz questions to get your brain working

1. In which of his films did Cliff drive a double decker bus?
2. What are the 3 main ingredients for Summer Pudding?
3. What is the name of the tune for H&P 361 Summer Suns are Glowing?
4. If VE Day was 8.6.45, what was VJ Day?
5. From which Gershwin opera does the song “Summertime” come?
6. Which person from Luke’s gospel has a month named after him?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 23



Join the Celebration at Methodist Conference 2025!

The Methodist Conference is an annual meeting of representatives of the Methodist Church within Great Britain.

Every conference is special in its own way, but last year especially so as, with great joy and celebration, our own Carolyn Godfrey was inducted as Vice-President of the Conference, together with Revd Helen Cameron as President. Both the President and Vice-President serve for twelve months before handing over their responsibilities at the next Conference.

This year, we in the Darlington District have another reason to celebrate when our District Chair, Revd Richard Andrew will be inducted as President of the Conference, in the opening session to be held in Telford on **Saturday 28th June at 2.15pm**. Following the induction of the new President and Vice - President, guests of the Conference from the worldwide church are presented to them. Following the presentations, Richard will give his Presidential address. The session should finish by 4.00pm.

You may not be able to travel to Telford to be present in person at the Conference, but there is an opportunity for you to enter into the spirit of what is sure to be a wonderful celebratory weekend of events. Why not come along to **Trinity**, where you will be able to watch the opening session of Conference live, on a big screen!

The following morning, **Sunday 29th June**, there will be a special **Circuit Service**, beginning at **10.45am at Trinity**, which will feature a live broadcast of Worship from the Conference on the big screen, including, the reception into Full Connexional of Ministers to be ordained later that day at churches in and around Telford. One of the ordinands this year is Revd Rachel Pinkney, who some of you may remember was on placement in our Circuit. No one who has been present at Conference Worship will ever forget it. This year the service will be attended by about 1,000 people in the hall. The music and singing will be amazing and you will be able to join in!

Do come and enjoy these very special celebrations in person with fellow Methodists.

Alternatively you should be able to join the live stream of the Conference Service 2025 via the Methodist Church website.

Revd John Howard-Norman



*When one door of happiness closes,
another opens; but often we look so
long at the closed door that we do not
see the one which has opened for us.*
~Helen Keller

LOCAL PREACHERS: UPDATE

I am always so grateful that we have a group of enthusiastic and committed preachers, both lay and ordained. Every Sunday worship takes place in our churches led by an Ordained Minister, Local Preacher, or Worship Leaders, unlike some Circuits we don't have to ask churches to do Local Arrangements.

So we thank God for our team of Preachers and Worship Leaders, but it would be great to have more preachers.

The Plan is often difficult to make, I am privileged to be on the Plan making group along with Revd David, Ron Mapplebeck and Elaine.

There are times when certain preachers such as myself, Ron and Ruth have to make repeat appearances at some churches, sometimes with only a few weeks between appointments. This is unavoidable we do try and use all our Preachers and to make sure they get around all the churches whenever this is possible. In the coming Plan, with Revd David on Sabbatical then there has been more demand on our Local Preachers and a couple of ministers from other Circuits. However, I know we are pleased and privileged to be called to these appointments.

It always seems strange to me that in Methodism, Local Preachers cannot take a Communion Service, yet, with permission, we can take Communion to people who may be house bound. I preached at St Andrew's URC church on Easter Sunday. I shared the service with one of their Local Preachers and she took the Communion part of the service. This is the practice in the URC, although in discussing this with my friend, she says it is possibly because of a shortage of Ministers.

So, when we make the Plan, we need to ensure every church has Communion once per month and thankfully we have Ministers available to enable that to happen.

So please pray for the Preachers, we need your prayers!! Pray too that if you feel God is calling you to Preach, then have the faith to do something about it. Talk to a Preacher or to a Minister, trust in God who if he calls you will lead you and support you in becoming a Preacher.

For me Preaching is demanding some times nerve wracking, but always a joy in answering God's call.

Dave Elliott

Town Centre Mission Team Retreat Day

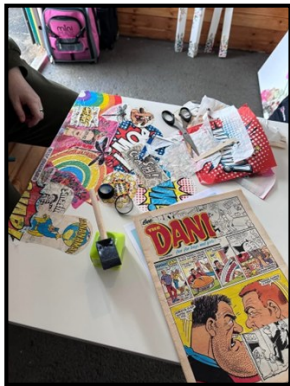
At the end of February Dawn, Andrew, Lee and Revd Charity (the town centre mission team) spent a day with each other and with God, to do some of the 'inner' work so that we could become more confident with the 'outer' work. I had arranged the retreat from my hospital bed in the summertime and had decided it would be a great idea to hold a retreat day in *February* in a beach hut in Saltburn!! It actually turned out to be a sunny day and none of us froze, I was even a little grumpy that I hadn't gone in for a swim that day!



A retreat is traditionally an opportunity to remove yourself from the focus of your daily life and to spend some time with God, doing some of the prayer and discipleship work that perhaps gets pushed to one side in your life. Working on things in your journey with God that can fuel and nourish you moving forward. A retreat can be a day or a week or many months. They can happen in any 'holy' space, and the only thing that makes a space 'holy' is an awareness of the presence of God in it so whether it's a monastery or a beach hut it's a holy space.

Deacon Sue Culver, (*Mission Enabler for the Cannock Chase Circuit & former warden of the Diaconal Order*) travelled up from the Midlands to lead our day together. She used a reading from Genesis about four different rivers and then we each had a small side table

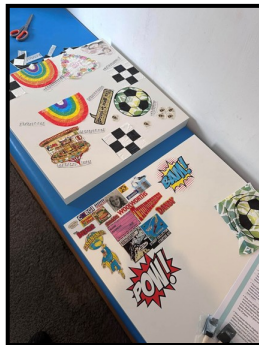
which we were encouraged to decorate with magazines, wrapping paper, and comics. Each table represented something of our individual uniqueness but when all four tables are put together they tell a bigger story of our little team.



It was just a good day to spend with each other and God away from the weekly focus of the Circuit's mission in the town centre, to breathe and be and to think more deeply about who it is that God has made and called us to be. I'd encourage any of you, whether it be as an individual, with friends, in a small group or as a whole church congregation to seek out spaces and

places of retreat in your journey with God,

Revd Charity Hamilton



Aspirin



I had a slight headache this morning but felt much better after following the instructions on the aspirin bottle:
'Take two and keep away from children.'

The Parish Pump

News from the Circuit Meeting 12.3.25

Welcome – we were pleased to welcome Karen Robinson to the meeting as a representative from Normanby Church

Stainton Church – have requested permission to 'Cease to Meet'. This was fully supported at the Circuit meeting and subject to Synod granting permission, the church will close and the building will be sold.

Services are held monthly at Montpelier Manor and have invited members of Stainton to join them. It was noted that these services are well received and have been well supported.

Eco Churches – it was noted that both Trinity and Grove Hill have been awarded bronze and silver awards for the work going on in their churches to become as Eco friendly as possible. They are both working towards achieving Gold Awards. The meeting encouraged other churches to consider if working towards becoming Eco friendly was something they could become involved with.

Town Centre Mission – it was noted that this is a Circuit project and there are opportunities for helping/volunteering. Anyone interested should contact Rev Charity to get more information.

Trinity – continue with their fundraising and are well on the way to having the funds for the next phase of their development plan which will be an extension.

As part of Trinity the work of the TFFC continues with the garden, the community café and the recently opened Eco shop which has been a big success. All these project link together very well in supporting the local community.

Chinese Church - the congregation primarily consists of retired individuals from Hong Kong, along with families from mainland China and Malaysia. While a few students from Teesside University attend services, their involvement tends to be transient. Apart from the Sunday service, there are two Sunday School classes catering to different age groups, currently serving around 35 people in our Sunday service and 20 children in Sunday School.

Methodist Women in Britain



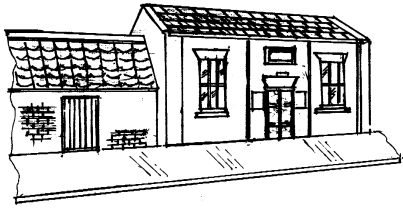
DISTRICT EVENTS

SUMMER EVENT

Wednesday 25th June 2025 at Marske Methodist Church, Hummershill Lane, Marske TS11 7DH

Singalong with Afternoon Tea from 3.30pm to 5.30pm

Beryl Haggath



MEMORIES OF STAINTON METHODIST CHURCH

How sad to see this lovely Church having to close. I know this will be such a sad and difficult time for members of the church family and we keep them in our prayers and welcome them to our churches should they wish to join us.

I have so enjoyed preaching at Stainton since the 1970's when I first began preaching in our Circuit, in those days the premises was very old fashioned. There was a coke boiler in the church which was rather smokey at times, but at least it kept the place warm in the winter. The benches were the ones which could be turned to face two ways and they were hard wooden seats. There was no toilet which was thankfully sorted in the modernisation.

There were two elderly brothers who ran the place. They sat on the front bench in their three piece suits and watch chains, and they were so proud of their church. I remember one Sunday I had driven through from our caravan in Nidderdale to take the service. I mentioned this to them. When I left the whole congregation stood on the front to wave me off!!

In March 1978 the day of our son's baptism, Middlesbrough was cut off by the snow. I was planned to preach at Stainton and was unable to get through because of the snow. There were no mobile phones and nobody to contact. I received a stern word the next time I was there!!

Over the years, various people have worked so hard to keep the church going. The interior has been changed to the comfortable modern room it is today. It is however the people who make it the place I love to preach at, and the place I shall miss so much. They are kind and welcoming and so grateful. It has also been a good place for new preachers as they have felt comfortable there because of the lovely support they have received.

The joy of the 'Big Sing' was very special. We would sit in the Square and hold an Open Air service with singing accompanied by a Brass Band. There was such a great act of witness as people walked past or listened from their houses. Various Ministers have led worship and it has always been a very special occasion. I am so glad it is going ahead again this year. It was ministry shared between the Methodist and Anglican churches in the Village.



One last story. In January I had a call from Ann to say she and Claire were both ill so would I collect the key from her house. I called about 2pm and went to get the key and arrive early at church to get the heating on as it was bitterly cold. I also had to play the organ as Ann would have usually done this. Only five people came, but we had a lovely time and when they had all gone, I turned off the heating locked up dropped off the key and went home.

StF 251 Jesus Christ is waiting, waiting in the streets

Here is another hymn set to the delightful French carol tune Noel Nouvelet which I wrote about [last time](#). The juxtaposition of this pretty little tune with John Bell and Graham Maule somewhat challenging words is very effective.



Its simple message is a challenge to the Christian to engage with social justice, a major theme of the Iona Community which Bell and Maule were key founders.. The hymn is effectively a dialogue spoken [sung] between Jesus Christ and the individual Christian who re-commits in response to seeing what Jesus is doing "in the streets". This urban setting rather than rural, suggesting pavements, traffic and front doors, rather than grass, trees and ploughed fields, gives the hymn a relevance to today's congregations mostly found in towns and cities. Jesus Christ in the present tense, **NOW**, waits, rages, heals and dances in these streets. When he is waiting, he is alone, neighbourless; when he rages, it's against injustice; when he heals the suffering, he touches them and of course, surprisingly, he dances when he sees hatred defeated with love.

In each verse, the Christian on seeing what Jesus is actually doing, asks to join Jesus in his actions. Interestingly in the first verse, the Christian is lonely, like Jesus and asks to be made suitable "fit" to wait, like a servant, on Jesus. Powerfully, the second verse is advocating anger from the Christian; anger is not usually seen as a virtue or Christian gift of the spirit!! But the hymn says for the Kingdom's causes, rage is what is needed to join Christ. I'm not sure we often hear rage from Christian leaders about injustice in our world. We are much more used to hearing about the pity and care which Christians are supposed to feel, not the anger.



When Jesus sees hatred defeated, and good conquering evil, Jesus dances. Once again this is an action antithetical to what Christianity has approved over the ages. Dancing has often been seen as a sin. However the very early Methodists practised dancing, full of the Holy Spirit, and of course they famously commandeered the popular tavern tunes of that day and applied spiritual words to them. The Iona community too, uses Scottish folk tunes and sets new words to them. We might forward to seeing hymn writers using Elton John or Ed Sheeran's tunes this way!

It is in the last verse that we hear the call. Jesus is calling us, in the streets, **NOW**, to join him in his journey, to follow, to be a disciple. Once again the response made by the individual singer is positive. **Listen**, we sing again, that plea to be heard, "listen", is in every verse, but here the Christian asks that Jesus walk one step before him/her and that yes: I will follow you.

Ruth Lewis

June, July and August Flowers and their Meanings

June: Rose and Honeysuckle

Rose: June babies have one of the most popular flowers of all time as their birth flower! There are some 300 species of wild roses, and thousands of hybrids in every colour except for black. All of which have different meanings, roses are suitable for pretty much every occasion. Overall, they symbolise beauty, love, honour and devotion. Roses are a classic flower that has been loved and cherished by many for centuries. Ancient Egyptians used roses as offerings to the Gods. Ancient Greeks and Romans would identify roses with love. And they have been mentioned in history books since 551 BC!



Honeysuckle's fragrance is at its most overpowering, in the evening, to attract pollinating moths. This also accounts for its pale colour, which shows up better in darkness, and its long, trumpet-shaped flowers, perfectly designed to guide the moth's proboscis to the nectar. Because most honeysuckles are clinging climbers, they have been used to signify love that binds two people together and of course, because of their nectar, they're emblematic of sweetness.



July: Delphinium and Water Lily

Delphiniums got their name from the Ancient Greeks who thought that the shape of the flower bud looked like a dolphin's nose. They are said to symbolise an open heart, positivity, dignity and grace. So those who celebrate a July birthday are lovely, kind-hearted people to be around.



Water lilies were named after a Greek nymph and are said to symbolise purity, unity and finding peace and balance. The purple varieties are said to be a sacred flower to the Egyptians as they represented the sun and rebirth. Water lilies are also common in pink, white and red tones



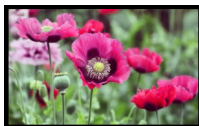
August: Gladiolus and Poppy

Gladiolus originated in South Africa in the 17th and 18th century and was named after the Latin word 'gladius' which meant sword for their distinct, pointy shape. They were traditionally used for medicinal needs. They were very important flowers in Ancient Roman times as gladiator champions were showered with them after winning a fight.



The gladiolus flower is known for representing strength of character, honesty, generosity and moral integrity. Those born in August must be really strong, independent and fierce people! As they also symbolise infatuation and remembrance, they're also the 40th Wedding Anniversary flower.

Poppies are well-known for their bright red colour and black centre. They symbolise hope and remembrance, hence why they are worn to commemorate and respect the fallen soldiers in all Armed Forces.



So we say farewell to a very special church family who over so many years have kept the faith and witnessed to that faith in the village. They have provided a place of worship and love and concern and that can never be forgotten.

I am grateful for all those happy times I have had at Stainton Methodist church.

Dave Elliott

Vintage Praise & Craft



AI tells us "Vintage" signifies something from a previous era, often implying a sense of quality, classic style, or enduring appeal.

It isn't just toddlers who like craft! Praise and Craft sessions for toddlers and their carers are where they hear a Bible story, sing some related songs and then make craft items along the theme of the Bible story. They are well known as a means of outreach, but what's **Vintage Craft**?

At Nunthorpe we termly hold Praise and Craft sessions for toddlers who come to our weekly Play & Chat, but in March we decided to offer a Praise & Craft session for elderly residents at The Oaks Residential Home at Nunthorpe. It was a great success.

In their large garden room, the theme was The Sower and Spring. We sang vintage hymns like *We Plough the Field and Scatter, and All Things Bright and Beautiful*, heard the Parable of the Sower and tried to remember what seeds of the gospel had been sown in our lives. Without prompting, residents remembered words of hymns like *Praise the Lord the King of Heaven*, and one ancient one from Sunday School: Little modest violet blue, spangled o'er with morning dew!! Do you remember that one? I do! Favourite stories from the Bible were: The raising of Jairus's daughter and Zacchaeus who climbed the tree! We noted that those seeds, telling us of God's love for us, though they had been sown years ago, they had born fruit because we remembered them. We said a prayer thanking God for Spring and for all those who had sown the seeds, the message of the Gospel, in our past and also today.

After saying the Lord's Prayer, the rest of the session was time taken in crafting little woolly sheep, Easter cards, little daffodils in pots, wreaths of flowers, etching little crosses. Lots of help was available and the residents and their carers enjoyed this session.



If Vintage indicates quality, it was a quality session with some quality hymns and crafts and some vintage [quality] people. What seeds [hymns, stories] that were sown in your childhood do you remember and cherish today?

Ruth Lewis

13th August – Octavia Hill, Social Reformer & Co-founder of National Trust

The urgent need for decent, affordable housing is a hot topic these days.



It was an even more urgent need in Victorian London, where the homes of the poor were tiny, cold, damp, and infested with lice and vermin. Water came from an outside pump, and filthy outside toilets were shared with several dozen neighbours. Stoves were rare; most people ate cold meals. Labourers lived 22 years on average; more than half of all babies died before their first birthday.

Into this festering mess of disease and misery came Octavia Hill in 1852. She was determined to make a difference, and she did.

Octavia was well qualified for the job: though her family in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire were comfortably off, they had a passionate interest in social change. Her grandfather, Thomas Southwood Smith, was a national authority on sanitation and housing. Her father, a corn merchant and banker, worked hard for prison reform. Her mother managed a Christian Socialist co-operative in London, where the young Octavia met John Ruskin, and other notable figures with a passion for social change.

Once in London, Octavia began her first job, that of teaching poor children to make toys. It gave her grim first-hand experience of the horrors of life of the very poor.

By 1856 Octavia was helping run classes for women at the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street, and she and her sisters also started a school for very poor children.

But what really grabbed Octavia's compassionate heart was the housing crisis. By 1864, with the help and advice of John Ruskin, she had launched a business scheme for improving Victorian housing in London. Gradually her scheme and experience expanded, until a breakthrough came in 1884, when the Ecclesiastical Commissioners handed her a large part of their portfolio of properties to manage in Southwark. As the years went by, Octavia's help and advice were often sought in connection with promoting social reform by legislation, though her heart was always in the voluntary sector.

It has been said of Octavia that her Christian faith made her seek "to make life on earth as positive an experience as possible, particularly for the poor and disadvantaged."

But today Octavia is remembered most for something surprisingly different: her joint initiative with Canon H D Rawnsley and Sir Robert Hunter in founding the National Trust in 1895. It has become Britain's leading charitable organisation for preserving historical buildings and places of natural beauty.

Octavia's national fame never affected her – she lived quietly with her sisters in Marylebone Road until her death on 13th August 1912.

The Parish Pump

alternately for St Benedict or St Bernard, both significant figures in the history of the abbey.

Justin Scully is General Manager for the National Trust at Fountains Abbey. "I feel chaplaincy is an essential part of what the Trust does. The team connect our visitors, and indeed our staff and volunteers to the long monastic history and spirituality of the World Heritage Site. We always say that Fountains is more than simply a visitor attraction, it is so much more special than that and the chaplaincy team are a vital part of making it a special place."

The Methodist Church

A married couple were arguing who is making the coffee, the wife said that in the Bible it says that men should make the coffee and the husband asked her where it said that. The wife opened the Bible and said: "Right here in HEBREWS!"



The machine started its noisy motor

**I watched as it cut great swathes
through the long green grass.
The driver looking like an extra-terrestrial
with his huge black goggles and big black ear muffs,
flipped a small switch on the control box,
lifting one cutter.
With the delicacy of a ballet dancer,
the clumsy looking machine neatly negotiated
a sycamore tree standing in its way,
and with a sharp pirouette,
danced back to its original position.**

Celia Shires



A Chaplain in the Abbey

Fountains Abbey is Britain's largest monastic ruin and one of the few National Trust properties with its own chaplaincy team.



"I may never know how I have supported our visitors, however if they felt welcomed and had the opportunity to chat in this awe inspiring place, then I'm sure that was helpful", says John Ridley who became a National Trust volunteer in 2016 before applying to join the chaplaincy team. Dr John Ridley is a retired primary school headteacher and former lecturer with the Open University. He worships at Richmond Methodist Church, North Yorkshire.



Many visitors are surprised to see a chaplain working among the Abbey ruins and the Georgian water gardens. The role involves engaging with visitors and a lot of chatting about the historic location.

About 15 miles northwest of York, Fountains Abbey was founded in 1132 by thirteen Benedictine monks and is now a world heritage site operated by the National Trust, attracting thousands of visitors each year.

"I am aware that many visitors have an emotional connection with Fountains Abbey, perhaps through family visits past and, for them, returning is rather like a pilgrimage" says John. "Some visitors are curious and ask questions about my role, and often talk about their own church connections. On one occasion, I met a family who, with special permission, were scattering their grandparent's ashes, for them this was clearly a very special place. For others, who were feeling tired and exhausted, simply arranging a lift on the minibus is an act of Christian kindness."

"Some eye contact, a smile, and a general comment such as 'How's your visit going?' usually gets someone talking. I avoid pestering people and it is usually obvious if visitors wish to follow up with a conversation. I am an abbey guide and, in my chaplain's role, often talk about the history of the abbey and the life of the monks. Medieval history can be a reflective topic and prompt discussions about belief; the abbey was, after all, a powerhouse of prayer for 400 years."

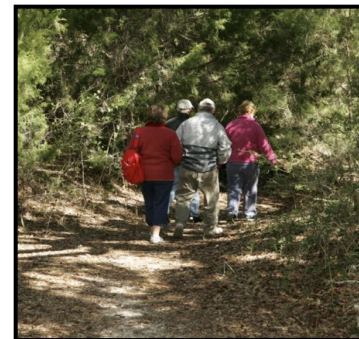
Chaplaincy has long been an important aspect of life at Fountains Abbey, "We are part of a long tradition of hospitality," says John. "Here the team works very much along the lines of the Cistercians who occupied the abbey until its dissolution in 1539, and traditionally welcomed travellers. St Benedict and his followers made a special effort to look after visitors and always looked for Christ in them. There is a sense that we carry on their legacy."

The Chaplaincy Team plays an important part in regular worship at the site, organising annual services in the abbey and leading the two Christmas 'Carols by Candlelight' services held in the cellarium, a large vaulted space in the ruins, each attracting around 300 visitors. On Good Friday, a chaplain leads a service and each summer a mass is held,



TRINITY RAMBLERS

"TODAY WE BLEW UP A TRIG POINT"



This year the weather has been so kind to us and so we have had three lovely walks. Our first leaderless or clueless – we walked along the sea front from Zetland Park in Redcar, South, towards Marske. At the turning point, that's when some of us realised we had to get back to our cars, a few returned walking along the beach, the rest back along the path. Great fellowship, some good laughter and Jean and I

stopped on the way home and had a very nice lunch at Tocketts Mill.

Our next leaderless walk was from Preston Park along the Tees towards Yarm. When we got to the main road we noticed that on the other side was "Trinity Church" there was a lot of activity going on with people going in and out so Lesley eventually dodged the heavy traffic to discover there was a coffee morning. We never miss an opportunity like this, so across we all went. Inside we were made very welcome. In the room on the right we were able to make our own coffee, bacon, sausage butties and then along a corridor to meet more friendly people and to consume our goodies. I asked "how much" and "where to pay" – and was answered by a man who looked as if he knew what was going on, "Donations in that bucket" he said. After being shown around the church we continued our walk, returning to Preston Park where it seemed hundreds of dogs were taking their owners for a walk.

Our third walk this year was a request. Remember last year a walk broke all our rules – foggy and hilly, with a beautiful view which we couldn't see. This year our walk from Upleatham still broke a rule. The hills hadn't flattened, in fact, I think it had got steeper, but the sun did shine, we even saw the partial eclipse and the stunning views over Saltburn, Redcar and right up the Durham coast made the climb really worthwhile. As we came out of the wood instead of turning left and back to the cars, we turned right for an even better view from the trig point. It was here that the six of us surrounded the trig point, held hands and turned our faces to the sun and after a count of three blew upwards, and so on the 29th March 2025 we "blew up" a trig point.

Between our walks even more of us have enjoyed some lovely coffee mornings, at Rev John and June's, Strikes and Fletchers Farm. At Fletchers Farm we joined a queue to be led to a table. Two ladies were enjoying their coffee outside and when the gentleman came to ask Jean "a table for how many?" Jean's reply was "fourteen". The two ladies collapsed into fits of laughter and I will never forget the look on the waiter's face. After the shock he did lead us to two tables close together where again we enjoyed a great time of fellowship. You are welcome to join us, all you need are two feet, (a lot of walking sticks) and a sense of humour.

Bill Reeve

ECOSHOP Update

The EcoShop@Trinity is progressing well. We have a number of regular customers, but also new people each week. On average we have 30 to 40 shoppers per session. It isn't only food, but hygiene poverty is proving to be a problem too. We have just got on board with the NHS Healthy Start Scheme, which replaces the food voucher scheme, supplying parents with their money via a Mastercard which they can use in the shop.

Our cry is the same - we need more volunteers on a Tuesday morning, 10.00am to 1.00pm, usually fortnightly, or just an hour or two would help. Come along to see what happens, if you're interested in helping. You will need to be safely recruited, be DBS checked if you don't already hold one and be up to date with Safeguarding Training.

I look forward to hearing from you - june_hn2000@yahoo.co.uk or 07801549931.

Thank you.

June Howard-Norman

ECO NEWS - Grove Hill

We were delighted to receive our Silver Award some time ago for our Eco work at Grove Hill. However we can't stop working hard in our aim to look after God's creation in our small part of it.

We have installed some bird boxes on the church walls and we are hoping to make some bat boxes. Parts of the church grounds have been planted and we continue to expand that planting around the front of the church. One of our team has dug over various patches of the front grounds so these can be planted out with wild flowers.

Another team member has been growing lots of plants and flowers at home so some can be planted out at church. She is also having a Plant sale at church to raise funds for our Eco work. By the time you read this the sale on May 17th will have happened.

We had a Family Service to help us to share together the links between our faith and the way we look after God's world. Lots of positive discussion took place and I think people were even more motivated in doing this work.

Various members of the Church family have become involved in the Toilet twinning scheme, which provides money to build proper toilets in places where this is so essential. We encourage our members to be eco friendly in their own homes, in the products they use and we try to do the same in church.

We are so glad that the children of the church are eco aware and have become involved in the various activities, such as planting flowers. They are our Eco Warriors and we are proud of their enthusiasm.

So we continue with our plans. We do need to be more involved in the community in our Eco plans although we are not quite sure what this will involve at the present time. We do see eco activities and the eco philosophy being such an important part of the life of Grove Hill Methodist church.

Dave Elliott



"How thoughtful, wearing something all the wedding quests could shelter under in case of rain."

Game rules

During the local football game, the coach asked one of his young players: "Do you understand what cooperation is?" The little boy nodded yes. "Do you understand that what matters is winning together as a team?" The little boy nodded yes. "Okay," the coach continued, "do you also understand that when the referee makes a decision, you don't argue or curse or threaten to attack him, right?" Again, the boy nodded vigorously. "Good," said the coach. "Now go over there and explain all that to your mother."

Love!

They say he married her because her aunt left her a fortune. He hotly denies it, saying that he would have married her whomever left her the fortune.

Car-ride

A teenager who had just received her provisional licence offered to drive her parents to church. After a hair-raising ride, they finally reached their destination. The mother got out of the car and said in a quiet but fervent voice: "Thank you!" "Anytime," her daughter replied. As the woman slammed the car door she said, "I wasn't talking to you. I was talking to God."

Wedding Dress

When my sister Andrea got married, she asked to wear my mother's wedding dress. The day she tried it on, Mother's eyes welled with tears. "You're not losing a daughter," I reminded her in time-honoured fashion. "You're gaining a son." "Oh, forget about that!" she said with a sob. **"I used to fit into that dress!"**

Don't go far!

The minister went to the bank and asked for a statement of his account, adding: "We want to know how far afield we can go for our holiday." Handing him his statement the cashier enquired very gently: "Have you got a field at the back of your garden, sir?"

Hole in one

A golfing minister, after having been beaten by an elderly parishioner, returned to the clubhouse somewhat depressed.

"Cheer up," said the man. Remember, you'll eventually be burying me some day." "Yes," said the minister, "But even then, it will be your hole!"



The Parish Pump