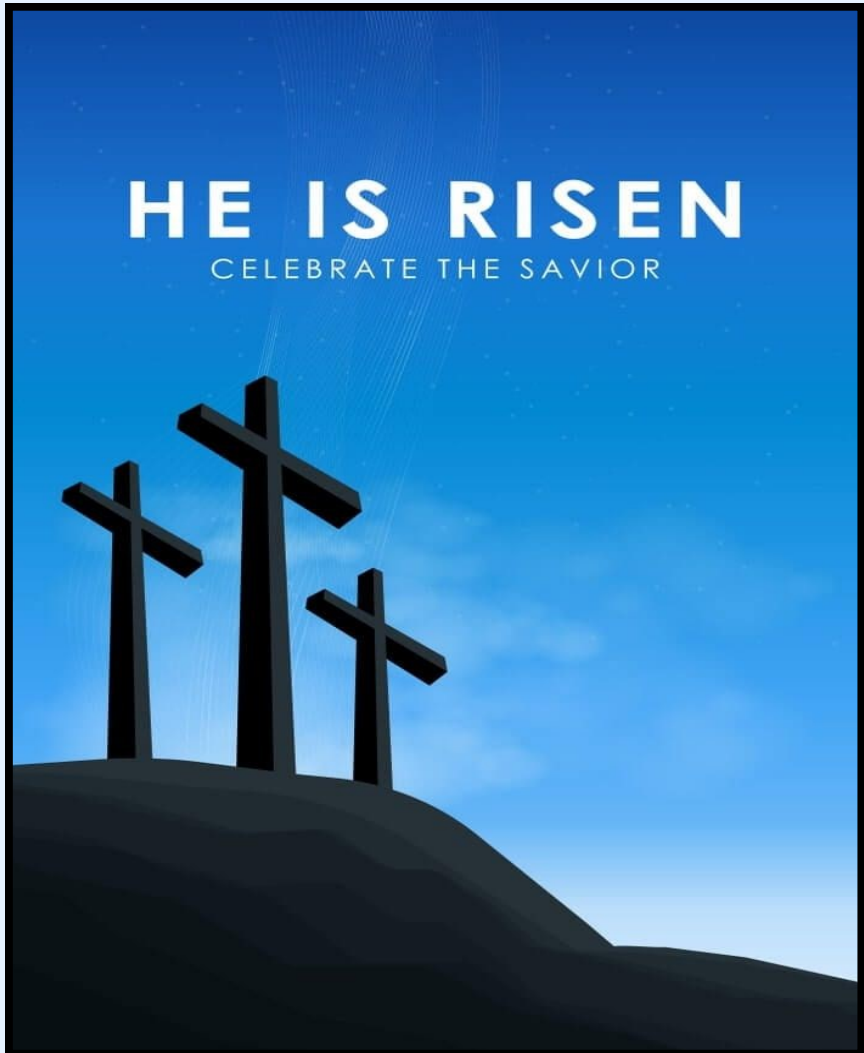


# MEMO

*Middlesbrough & Eston Methodist Outburst*

**MARCH — MAY 2023**





# The Superintendent's Letter

**Dear friends,**

I write these words in the middle of winter while looking forward to warmer weather and the promise of spring. Inevitably, as the days lengthen, my thoughts turn to Lent and then to Easter, which is the most important Christian festival of the Church year. I am conscious that neither Lent or Easter are easy seasons to engage with. Christmas, in contrast, is about the birth of a baby, which everyone can identify with and celebrate. Easter, however, is about death and Resurrection which are more disturbing and uncertain themes.

I never understood how difficult it is to move from the Crucifixion to the Resurrection, until I suffered the loss of a close friend on Maundy Thursday a few years ago. To say that I was in a state of shock and grief over the Easter weekend does not really do justice to the way I felt. I did my services in a state of numbness and heaviness of heart. It never occurred to me until then that the move from the desolation of loss on Good Friday to the joy of Resurrection on Easter Day is an impossible one to make. How can anyone possibly make that jump in 48 hours?

When we read carefully the accounts of Resurrection in the gospels, we find unsurprisingly that none of Jesus followers could make that jump either. When they encounter evidence of the Resurrection complete with empty tomb and angels, we find that they were frightened, perplexed, confused and even amazed at what they saw. But what we do not find straight away is belief and faith. That takes time to develop and come to terms with. In order to say that 'yes' to Resurrection faith, they first had to say 'no' to the grip of desolation and death which held them fast. It all takes time. The gospel stories tend to truncate this process, but if you read them carefully you find plenty of hesitation and doubt in evidence amongst the followers of Jesus.

Of course we have an advantage over those first witnesses of the Resurrection. We now know the end of the story, that we serve a risen Saviour in Jesus Christ. We know where to look for hope in the middle of our desolation and grief. And this is a great strengthening comfort. It was the experience of the disciples and it is our experience too that eventually, in Christ, grief gives way as Resurrection breaks in. It happens just as surely as Winter (eventually) turns to Spring. This is the wonder of our faith and this is our hope, that death is not the end of the story. May we have confidence in that hope and may we claim it for ourselves and for those we know and love.

With best wishes for the Lent and Easter season,

**Rev. David Godfrey**

# FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

As I write this it is January and the new year stretches ahead. What will it bring for you or me, for our church, for the World? It is a time for planning and moving forward as a church and as a Circuit. So as we look forward, we believe in the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to live our lives individually and as churches as God would want us to do.

When we look at the time period of this 'Memo' it covers some of our Christian festivals.

We will be in the time of Lent which will help us to think more deeply about our faith and what it actually means to us. We may do this individually or as a group, it is still an important festival.

We then move into Holy Week and Easter, the climax of our Christian year, the celebration of Jesus risen for us all giving us the gift of hope and new life.

In May we have Ascension Day and Pentecost. Our festivals are to remind us of our faith by looking at important events in the life of Jesus. These festivals are also about our own lives and what they say about our journey of faith. I am sure there will be great celebrations in our individual churches in the weeks to come. As always we look for contributions to 'Memo' from all of you, thank you for those articles we have received for this 'Memo' They tell our individual stories and the

stories of our churches. This publication is so important for all of us as we can, through it's pages, build each other up as we share our faith. It also acts as outreach as many people may read this on the website and learn what we are about as Christian people. If you have never written anything for 'Memo' before, then be inspired and send us your news and the news of your church. Details for deadlines are in this edition.

Lastly thank you to Elaine at the Circuit Office who works so hard in putting 'Memo' together along with all the other things she does for our Circuit.

**Dave Elliott**

on behalf of the Communications Team

## **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](mailto:mbrocircuit@gmail.com)  
by **1st April 2023**

# Middlesbrough and Eston Circuit

## LENT COURSE 2023

You are warmly invited to join a Lent Course through which you will discover more about the adventure of discipleship, as you follow Jesus through the weeks of Lent as part of a small group.

The weekly course sessions will be held on Zoom, each approximately one hour in length, beginning at 7.30pm on Thursday 2nd March and subsequent Thursday evenings during Lent.

There will also be the opportunity for participants to join together on Zoom for further reflections during Holy Week.

During the course we will be looking at ten key practices or “Holy Habits” in the life and passion of Jesus. The ten habits are: biblical teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, prayer, sharing resources, serving, eating together, gladness and generosity, worship and making more disciples. In each session focus will be given to one or more of the habits that Jesus teaches his disciples by modelling them himself.

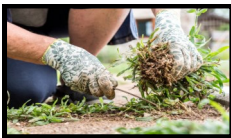
If you can't make one or more of the sessions, you are still very welcome to join us on those evenings you are free, as each session stands on its own.

This course for Lent, is written by Andrew Roberts, Methodist Minister and author of the best selling book, Holy Habits.

For further information and to register for the course, please contact **Rev. John Howard-Norman**, by email: [john.howard-norman@methodist.org.uk](mailto:john.howard-norman@methodist.org.uk) or by phone on: 07809 686867

The study guide, **Holy Habits: Following Jesus** is published by Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) and will enhance your enjoyment of the course, but is not an essential requirement. If you would like a copy of the study guide, it is obtainable from the publishers at [holyhabits.org.uk](http://holyhabits.org.uk) or can be ordered through your local bookshop, price £6.99

### ADVICE TO GARDENERS:



The easiest way to tell the difference between young plants and weeds is to pull up everything. If they come up again they're weeds.

**Anon.**

**5<sup>th</sup> April is the end of the tax year. So, you may want to reflect that...**

A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well.  
A few more deductions, and your take-home pay isn't going to be enough to get you there.

A penny saved is a government oversight.  
It should be easy for any government to please the people. All we want is lower taxes and more spending.

The government not only has the bad habit of living beyond its income, but also beyond ours.

## **GROVE HILL WARM SPACES.**



It seems rather ironic, that as I write this article we are having heating problems at church resulting in some 'cold' spaces at the moment!!

We are confident the heating problems are being dealt with.  
We have had some meetings with Middlesbrough College who in the pre Covid days provided meals for people at our church. This was successful and attracted many people from the local area.

We have, prior to the College meetings, been considering how we could be a 'Warm Spaces' church.

When I was contacted by the College a little while ago and they were wanting to start providing meals again as part of their catering students' work experience, I said yes please.

The people from church who have volunteered to be on the Warm Spaces team met with the two College lecturers and we have managed to sort out dates and volunteers.

The church will be open on Fridays from 12pm to 2pm and a hot two course lunch will be provided for £3.50. People can come in and not have the lunch just enjoy the warm welcome if they wish to do that. We have had some funding from Councillor Higgins so we can buy for example; phone chargers, newspapers games for people who come to join us. Our team of volunteers will be there just to speak and listen to the guests.

We are asking our volunteers to offer maybe one Friday per month for two hours and some are offering far more than that.

It will be interesting to see how we progress. Maybe I will provide an update in the next 'Memo'. We pray for our efforts in reaching out into our Community.

**Dave Elliott**

## For Mothering Sunday:

### StF 120 *We gladly celebrate and praise and When Mothers of Salem*

What are your memories of Mothering Sunday in days past? I have vivid memories of Mothering Sunday [this year March 19<sup>th</sup>] from my childhood. My father would make a great effort on the Saturday to find a bunch of violets from the market for my brother and me to give to our mother.



We did not buy cards and I can't remember making them but we usually made an effort to give mum breakfast in bed! Perilous! Toast crumbs in the sheets with added smears from greasy butter fingers and sticky marmalade thumbs. Mum seemed to like it. Nothing special happened in chapel but of course we were the only children there in a congregation of perhaps 20? We might have sung the Sunday School hymn *When Mothers of Salem*, with its pretty tune, but its lyrics were

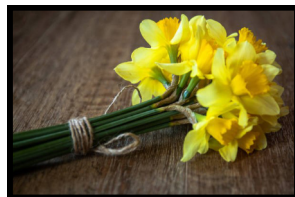
more a justification for aggressive conversion of "heathen" children in far off lands, than a celebration of mothers. Though you may remember singing it, it's not in our hymnbooks for a reason!

When I was a mother myself, things were different. First the commercialization had begun in earnest. There were cards to be purchased but no violets. Instead chocolates and daffodils. And in chapel the Junior Church teachers at Nunthorpe made sure that children gave thanks for and appreciated their mothers. The Women's groups too, made sure that bunches of daffodils, made by them, were given to mothers, [that would be them] during the service, as well as the prayers offered. And it is still the same. Over the past 10 years or so my grandchildren have given out bunches of pre-prepared daffodils, only these days the festival is more inclusive, men may receive them, and those to whom the "gift of motherhood" as Alan Gaunt's hymn puts it, has been denied. No distinction is made between women and mothers. As a church we are rightly more aware of mothers "faced with grief and loss" through the death of children unborn, as well as those whose children have sadly, died or still suffer in some way. Like the mothers of Salem who were "suffered" [permitted] to bring their children to be blessed, today we offer names and thoughts for blessing.

That's why Alan Gaunt's hymn is a good one to sing this time of year. It's common metre so fits a lot of well-known tunes, including Crimond. Gaunt is a retired United Reformed minister, prayer and hymn writer. I particularly like the line "We trust the mother-love of God" Here, like Henri Nouwen did when he analysed the way Rembrandt's painted in *Return of the Prodigal*, the Father/God's hands as both male and female, Gaunt sees God as having "female/mother like" characteristics. Gentleness. However I would point out, some mothers are strong and hard, they have to be. Particularly in parts of the world where there is conflict, famine or threat and mothers have to fight for the health and lives of their children. Those mothers or people of Salem [Mark 10:13] surely were tough cookies too, pushing past the "stern" disciples to get their children to Jesus.

The Mothering Sunday festival was always the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent. Remember, in the past Lent was a time of serious fasting. So, in the Middle Ages when it originated, this special date with its welcome day's reprieve from fasting was very popular.

Christians, that would be most people, would return to their local mother churches, the one where they had been baptized, for a special service. In later centuries, Mothering Sunday became a day when domestic servants living and working away from home, were given a day off to visit their mother church, with a chance to see their own mothers and other family members at home. For tea there would be special cake baked and posies of flowers brought, picked from the hedgerows.



These days, 'Mother's Day' has become another term for Mothering Sunday due to American influence, but in the UK it continues to be held during Lent. We see lots of cards, florists are busy, tempting tacky gifts fill the shops, and infant and nursery school teachers guide little hands in making ingenious and sentimental home-made cards for "Carers" these days as well as mothers. Restaurants are fully booked. Nowadays it is more a celebration of motherhood, following the American tradition, rather than its original religious meaning. But as you can probably see it's always been an excuse for flowers, fancy food and a visit, bringing families together. **How will you celebrate it?**

**Ruth Lewis**

## SONGS OF PRAISE

I wonder how many of you enjoyed the Songs of Praise service at Avenue last October. It was a very special time especially as it had been so long since we had been able to have such an event.



Ron Mapplebeck and I so enjoy planning these services and we do feel it is a very special time of worship to bring us together as a Circuit.

We are meeting soon to plan the next Songs of Praise which will possibly be around May it would be good to include Wesley Day (May 24th) in our content.

As Ron and I chose the hymns for the last service, this next time we will be asking churches to choose and to say why they have chosen a particular hymn.

We will be moving to another church for this next service.

We are also looking at a Circuit Carol service in early December. This has been requested so we are pleased to answer that request.

Thank you for your support.

**Dave Elliott and Ron Mapplebeck.**

## 20TH MARCH - SAINT CUTHBERT'S DAY

*beloved monk and bishop of Lindisfarne*

Cuthbert of Lindisfarne (c 634-87) has long been northern England's favourite saint. It is easy to see why: Cuthbert was holy, humble, peaceable, prayerful, faithful in friendship, winsome, and really kind.

Cuthbert was born into a fairly well-off Anglo-Saxon family, and he became a monk at Melrose in 651. He and another monk, Eata, were sent to start a monastery at Ripon, but Alcfrith, who owned the land, insisted that they adopt the Roman customs, which Cuthbert's Celtic church did not allow. So, Cuthbert and Eata quietly returned to Melrose, where Cuthbert became prior in about 661.

Then came the Synod of Whitby in 663/4, and the Celtic Church formally decided to adopt the Roman customs. After this, Cuthbert was sent on to Lindisfarne as prior, where he sensitively introduced the new ways, and won over the monks there.

Cuthbert was very much loved at Lindisfarne. His zeal was evident in his constant preaching, teaching, and visiting of the people. He was also said to have gifts of prophecy and healing. Occasionally, Cuthbert reached 'people overload'. Then he would retreat to a tiny islet called Inner Farne, where he could pray in total seclusion. When, to his horror, he was told he had been made Bishop of Hexham, he immediately 'swapped' sees with Eata, and stayed on at Lindisfarne as Bishop. Sadly, Cuthbert died on little Inner Farne, only two years later, on 20th March, 687.

Cuthbert was buried at Lindisfarne, but that is not the end of his story. For it was only now that his travels began. After the Vikings destroyed Lindisfarne in 875, several monks dug him up and set out to find Cuthbert a final, and safe, resting place. For the next 120 years Cuthbert was deposited in various monasteries around the north of England and southwest Scotland. Finally, in 999, Cuthbert was allowed to rest in Durham, where a Saxon church was built over his shrine.

All that travel must have done him good; when his body was exhumed to be put into the 'new' Norman Cathedral in Durham in 1104, it was said to be still in perfect tact, and 'incorrupt'.

### **The Parish Pump**





# SEASONS

I like the cool of Spring  
when the trees are budding green,  
and the cherry blossoms pink  
are a joy to be seen.

When the birds are twittering  
all sitting in their nests,  
and nature is waking up  
from her long winter rest.

Now the Spring has come to stay,  
rejoice! Sing hip hooray!  
Dance the Morris in the lane  
and crown the Queen with May!

I hate the heat of Summer,  
the long and sweltering days.  
Plagued by flies and wasps as well,  
All I can do is laze.

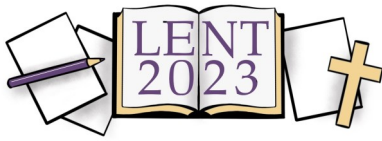
But how I love the Autumn,  
Colours, bronze, yellow, red.  
and the Harvest fruit ( yum, yum! )  
Then Nature's going to bed.

And how I hate the Winter;  
the cold days and dark nights.  
But with it comes our Christmas  
and trees adorned with lights!

I'm glad I live in Britain  
where seasons still do change.  
Of sun, snow and wind and rain  
we have a goodly range!

**Celia Shires**





## SOME HINTS ABOUT PRAYER THIS LENT

Prayer is instinctive for human beings, even those who don't regard themselves as religious. You are standing at a bus stop in the wind and the rain, thinking 'I do hope the bus will come soon'. It's an inner yearning. It defies logic: either the bus is coming, or it isn't. But we all do it. It's instinctive and it's the raw material of prayer. Hoping for something better is basic. Like all instincts, it needs to be trained.

To whom do we pray? What you pray, and the way you do it will be shaped by your view of God. Christian prayers are fashioned by what we know of Jesus and what He taught about prayer.

We pray by invitation. Again and again, Jesus encouraged His companions to pray. A couple of His parables on the subject have been misinterpreted as instructions to persuade a resistant God to do what we want. Have a look at Luke 18, verses 1-8, about a widow whose perseverance finally persuaded an unwilling judge to rule in her favour. The lesson is that God is *not* like that! Similarly, an unwelcome neighbour who persistently calls for help in the middle of the night gets what he wants (Luke 11:5-13). The lesson? If tenacious lobbying can overcome human unwillingness, *how much more* our gracious God will heed His children's cry.

Pushing at an open door. Jesus is already praying for us. So, when we start to pray, we step on to an already moving staircase. Sometimes prayer seems tougher than it need be. Jesus invited us to be linked to Him, in the way an inexperienced bullock is yoked to a mature ox. Have a look at Matthew 11:28-29, which concludes "for my yoke is easy and my burden is light". When Marion Bartoli unexpectedly won the 2013 Women's Wimbledon final, she said "I believe if you put all your heart and effort into everything you are doing, then God is there to help you."

Is your prayer on the right lines? Try adding "for Christ's sake" at the end. "Please let my marrow win the Gardening Club competition"? No. "Not my will but yours" is the key. So when praying, don't give God instructions, just report for duty.

### The Parish Pump



## Circuit Easter Offering Service 2023

This will be held at Grove Hill Methodist Church on Sunday May 14<sup>th</sup> at 6.00pm.

The service is prepared by Methodist Women in Britain on behalf of the World Mission Fund. In this act of worship, we shall dedicate our Easter Offering and hear stories of how the World Mission Fund supports God's mission in different parts of the world.

**Everyone is invited to share in this service, men and women.**

# Welcome Spring!

Isaiah 61:11

*For, as the earth puts forth her blossom or bushes  
in the garden burst into flower,  
So shall the Lord God make a righteousness and  
praise blossom before all the nations*

## EASTER EVENTS AROUND THE CIRCUIT

(not on the Plan)



### Marton

Thursday 6th April - Maundy Thursday Communion Service at 7.30pm  
Friday 7th April - Good Friday Walk of Witness from Church at 8.50am to  
Nunthorpe Methodist Church for the Good Friday Sectional Service at  
10.00am

### Normanby

Saturday 1st April - Easter Fair 10.00-12.00 noon Cake Stall, Book Stall,  
Chocolate Egg tombola, raffle - admission £1.50 includes refreshments.  
Thursday 6th April - Maundy Thursday Communion Service at 6.00pm  
Friday 7th April - Good Friday Service at 11.00am

### Nunthorpe

Friday 7th April - Good Friday Sectional Service at 10.00am led by Rev.  
David Godfrey

### Stainton

Friday 7th April - Good Friday Walk of Witness from Marton Methodist  
Church at 8.50am to Nunthorpe Methodist Church for the Good Friday  
Sectional Service at 10.00am

### Trinity

Friday 7th April - Good Friday Service at 10.00am 'An Hour at the Cross' led  
by Rev. John Howard-Norman



# Wesley Day

I often wonder how much we as Methodists celebrate and remember May 24th each year.

It is the day when John Wesley went to Aldersgate Street in London and listened to a preacher and in listening a great transformation took place for John. He said he felt his heart strangely warmed, he realised Jesus had died for him. Even though John Wesley was a man of great theological knowledge and also a preacher, some how that personal conversion had eluded him until that particular date.

We all know how John went on to do great work in this country and beyond and we need to remember that having a personal faith and being able to act upon that faith is what our Methodism is based on.

As a Preacher maybe I don't challenge my congregations enough to actually feel that 'warmed heart' to look at our own faith journey and be so inspired by the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

I think all of us should take time to read a little about the life of John Wesley and his brother Charles to see what an inspiration they can be to us.

I look at one of my favourite Wesley hymns; 'And can it be' and for me the key verse which says so much every time I sing it is; verse 4 with those special lines; 'Long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound by sin and nature's night, thine eye diffused a quickening ray, I woke the dungeon flamed with light. *'My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose, went forth and followed thee'*. Does it move you too when you sing that hymn?

Maybe conversion is not a word we use much nowadays, but let us try to remember May 24th and to see it as a way of looking again at our conversion, how did we come to know God to have our hearts strangely warmed and make our pledge to follow Jesus.

**Dave Elliott**

## GROVE HILL CENTENARY

We are having a display of the life of Grove Hill over the years during the month of March.



On March 11th at 10.00am to 1.00pm we invite you all to come and see the display. On that day David Lyness will be reading the whole of Mark's gospel during that time and is happy to receive sponsors for our church charity; North East Air Ambulance

**A future date;** we are having our Centenary Service at 2.00pm on Saturday September 16th, a date for your diaries.



## **MAP Project Managers report (Sept 2022-January 2023)**

Our year begins on September 1<sup>st</sup> in accordance with the Methodist church year. This was the start of our second post-covid year. Although numbers at activities are not quite what they were before the pandemic they are rising and consistent and our key activities are effective and well supported.

### **Events:**

**Volunteer day. 24th November 2022.** We invited volunteers to MAP for a day of fellowship and development; to say a big **thank you** for their service and to listen to guest speakers from our partner organisations (including Open door Northeast' Health-watch, Terry Doyle and Middlesbrough FC Football Foundation) to give some insight into the range of MAP's work and the extent of our community engagement. The day, which included lunch, enabled time for volunteers to mix and share their different experiences with each other learning a little about the differences and similarities between our many activities in MAP hubs.

There was a wonderful atmosphere in the hall, helped by the delicious lunch cooked by Bob and Bel our Chefs. In all we had 28 attendees (which is roughly half of our active volunteers across Middlesbrough and Redcar). Feedback was very positive, and we shall look to further meetings in the year ahead.

**Xmas party 10th December 2022.** This was brilliant. We entertained 164 people (including many families) with food fellowship Santa and singing. The room was full of joy and celebration Santa was very popular, the choir in good voice and many people had second helpings of the meal. It was such a lovely way to wind down our yearly programme. People left buzzing and in great spirits. Many thanks to all our volunteers who made it possible (I know some of you left very tired but fulfilled).

### **As mentioned, we have a full weekly programme which includes:**

**Teesville Drop-In.** Unfortunately, due to diminishing attendance we had to cease our work in Teesville, following consultation with the volunteers. We had a final gathering in September where I was joined by our chair Pat Martin to say thank you to the volunteers for many years of service.

**Tuesday 11.30am -1.30pm** Middleborough College drop-in. Which is a chance to meet chat and help asylum seekers and refugees who are students but who still have complex issues and questions. We are also able to liaise with the college on matters affecting the groups with whom we work, and this growing relationship is proving fruitful.

**Wednesday 10.00am-12.00 noon** Avenue drop-in and shop. We continue to distribute clothing and household goods including some high value new goods given from Tesco via MVDA. Most people most of the time can get what they need though we have had to introduce a voucher system to ensure fairness and ensure our stocks don't get too depleted. Donations are always welcome and encouraged but we are unable to take electric goods for health and safety reasons. During the drop-in we are now joined by staff from Mears housing (the Home Office contractor) who can offer guidance and

advice alongside myself; which is greatly appreciated and useful. In early Autumn we were able to finance 50 membership vouchers for the community shop at St Barnabas Church Linthorpe, these were distributed at Avenue and enable service users to buy affordable quality food. January has, as expected, been a quiet month but we hope to see a significant rise as soon as winter eases and new people arrive.

**Wednesday Football** Training continued until Xmas but is currently suspended while the foundation awaits further funding. MAP financed the coach to take players from Avenue to the Erlinshaw centre, but the training coaches are unable to continue until the funding arrives. This is a pity as those who play get a real uplift from participation, we hope to return soon.

### **Wednesday Redcar Drop-in and ESOL class 2.00pm-3.00pm Redcar Baptist church.**

Classes are strong despite losing (for a good reason) significant numbers of learners to Middlesbrough college. This is a sign of the success of our teaching volunteers as service users develop the confidence to take the next step in their journey of settling in. We have welcomed several new arrivals. The room always has a warm gentle feel and people are calm and feel at home. The group are also looking forward to better weather people can again spend some time after classes on the Baptist church allotment which many enjoyed before winter arrived.

**Thursday drop-in 10.00am-12.30pm and music café.** We have a small but loyal group of volunteers and service users who share time together and sing. Individuals also drop in for guidance and advice. Hamid offers a barber service free to asylum seekers. Terry Doyle leads a meditation group which is of significant benefit. The café is followed by our IELTS class for those seeking advanced English instruction.

**Friday 10.00am-11.30am Come and Chat English,, followed by meal and singing.** The Come and Chat numbers remain strong, with new people each week. Learners are taught at all levels. Fellowship, humour and socialising are encouraging features of the classes. For many asylum seekers C&C is central to their integration and orientation process and participants often give as much as they receive. Friday activities are usually our busiest and we look forward each week to welcoming so many of our service users.

**Singing.** We had moved singing to Mondays as a separate event in the café, but this did not work for many service users. So, since September, we have reconnected singing to its original slot following on C&C and the meal this works well with numbers rising (sometimes as many as 20 people) and spirits lifted. All who attend say that they feel energised and the smiles and laughter bear testament.

**Meal** This is a major part of our Friday work, sitting together in table fellowship helps people to gel more and the informal atmosphere of Fridays at MAP is further enhanced. Bob and Bel our cooks are very generous in their service and nobody leaves hungry. Everyone looks forward to this part of the day.

**Saturday Games** 1.30pm-3.00pm are still running in the Avenue church and we thank the volunteers who help facilitate this for their continued service and time.

**Partners in Ariadne.** We have recently received a renewal of our lottery grant to enable our work as a partnership for the next 3 years. Each partner has specialties, and we complement each other. Our partners are British Red Cross (tracing family

members, travel tickets, cash-time limited-for those without support). Open Door North East (help with food and housing for those without support, CV's, job searching and training, applying for benefits housing and NI numbers, internet access, activities and classes), Justice first (help with appeals when legal aid unavailable, research for evidence for fresh claims, translating complex documents, referrals for health issues). We have recently been joined by a new partner Refugee Futures , part of Catalyst, who do some similar things to MAP though in Stockton.

We liaise with each other regularly as well as with all pertinent local organisations. Ariadne enables us to get the right advice and help for service users and is a mutual strength in our work.

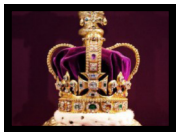
### **Some important thoughts:**

**ESOL classes/IELTS** ESOL means English for Speakers of Other Languages. IELTS is the International English Language Testing System needed for those wishing to apply to university or advanced employment. With these classes we cover absolute beginners to advanced/fluent speakers. Language learning is a major part of our welcome service it empowers service users and helps them in daily life, promoting their resettlement in the UK and enabling them to access services and take up opportunities, and build understanding of life in the UK. This is a central aspect of our work. Asylum seekers work hard to settle in and I witness everyday their struggles and triumphs which are inspiring.

In the near future and building on our work to date we are running a course from the North East Migration Partnership (NEMP) on living in the UK and some service users will also be able to participate in The Peoples Voice Media storytelling course. They will be trained to make a video media report telling their stories of life in the UK from an asylum seekers perspective. Participants will have complete agency and control over how stories will be told so that their voices will be heard. This is an important opportunity with regions throughout northern England participating and will positively raise the profile of asylum seekers when published and disseminated.

**Volunteers.** Finally a word reiterating MAP's thanks to our wonderful teams of volunteers without whom our work could not proceed. Their support and donation of time, energy and effort is a blessing to all of those with whom we work and is greatly appreciated.

Many thanks to all who make things possible. **Billy Barnes.**



## *Coronation Celebration Event At Nunthorpe*

Will take place on Bank Holiday Monday 8th May  
at 11.00am till 3.00pm  
Refreshments available, Bouncy Castle, Stalls including  
Nunthorpe and Marton Knitters,  
Music, Coronation themed Crafts and more...



# SNAINTON NOT STAINTON

While we were given a very old Bible dated the early 19th century. The inscription inside was written in very ornate script which initially was read as Stainton Methodist Church and was displayed in our Church. However, on closer scrutiny it was realised that it didn't say Stainton but Snainton. So after discovering that Snainton is a village near Scarborough we decided this wonderful Bible should be returned to its rightful home. So it began its journey accompanied by Rosemary, who on arriving in Snainton wrote this poem, her first attempt at poetry.

While on holiday one fine day  
Thought I'd have a get away.  
Jumped in the car and off I went  
Sat in the car one hour I spent.

On a mission was I to do a good deed  
Delivering a Bible to a church indeed.  
It was given to us in our village called Stainton  
But it was meant to go to a place called Snainton.

Traffic is mad around Scarborough you see  
So that's why I set off early to do my good deed  
But oh for the Sat Nav. They save so much time  
That's why I had one hour to compose this rhyme.

Congregation was smaller than ours at home  
But a very warm welcome was given by all.  
Coffee was served at the end of the service  
Made by a very friendly lady called Mavis.

Oh where was the Sat Nav when returning home  
Not picking up signals left me alone.  
Never mind I arrived safe and sound  
To my little dog Milo, without even a frown!

**Rosemary Horrigan**

## **True, but odd**

The Bible is among the topmost shoplifted books in the world, according to several sources, including CNN and the New York Times.

**The Parish Pump**





**“It comes to something when the state of the pound is such that we hope to find lots of foreign coins!”**

### *Not expecting this*

The young minister took his wife to the Maternity Hospital and was told it would be a long labour. So, he agreed to ring at lunchtime for news. But when he phoned, he dialled the wrong number and got the County Cricket Ground. He said: “I brought my wife to your place early this morning. Is there any news?”

He was surprised to be told: “Yes, there are seven out and the last two were ducks.”

### *Judgement?*

This true story concerns the visit of a visiting preacher to a little village chapel... ‘He was a few minutes into his sermon when, without warning, about twenty square feet of thick and decayed Victorian plaster fell from high on one wall and crashed into a group of empty pews below. As the dense fog of dust began to settle, and it became clear no one was injured, the minister prepared to resume his sermon. Then he paused, and looked heavenward and in a slightly pained voice, asked: “Was it something I said?”’

### *Answer to prayer*

A small boy badly wanted a baby brother, so his dad suggested he pray every night for one. The boy prayed earnestly, night after night, but his prayers seemingly weren’t answered. So after a few weeks, he didn’t bother to ask anymore.

Some months later, his dad said they were going to see Mum in the hospital and he was going to get a big surprise. When they got to the room, the little boy saw his mother holding two babies. The little boy stood still for a moment, and then cautiously observed: “It’s a good thing I stopped praying when I did.”

### *With AGM’s at church in mind...*

A conference is a gathering of important people who singly can do nothing, but together can decide that nothing can be done.

### *Hereafter*

The minister came to see me the other day. He said that at my age I should be thinking of the hereafter. I told him, “Oh, I do it all the time. No matter where I am – in the bedroom, upstairs, in the kitchen, or down in the basement – I ask myself, ‘Now, what am I here after?’”

### *No sunbeams*

A small boy returned from Sunday School in tears. When questioned by his anxious mother, he explained: “This morning they told me that Jesus wants me for a sunbeam. But I want to be a train driver!”

## **The Parish Pump**

# MAJOR NEWS from 100 years ago

**It is surprising how many of the items we have access to today were invented in 1923. Take a look ....**

**January:** Juan de la Cierva made the first autogyro flight in Spain in an attempt to create an aircraft that could fly safely at low speeds. The autogyro could lift itself into the air without power in the rotor.

**February:** After spending a number of years excavating in Egypt, Howard Carter found the steps of Tutankhamun's tomb in November 1922. After some clearing of the entrance and cataloguing artefacts, Carter eventually opened the sealed doorway to King Tutankhamun's burial chamber in January 1923 and saw the sarcophagus.



**March:** The last article written by Lenin appeared in Pravda.

**April:** Warner Brothers established their film-studio company in Hollywood during this month after previously founding an amusement and supply company in Pittsburgh.

The first operation on a brain tumour under local anaesthetic was performed.

Insulin becomes generally available for use by people with diabetes mellitus after being developed during 1922.

Wembley Stadium was opened to the public after the first turf was cut by King George V. It was built by Sir Robert McAlpine for the British Empire Exhibition of 1924 at a cost of £750,000 (equivalent to approx. £46 million in the 2020s). The stadium closed in October 2000 and demolished in 2003. The top of one of the twin towers was erected as a memorial in a park near by.

**May:** The Irish Civil War, between the Nationalists and the Republicans which began in June 1922, came to an end. The first Le Mans 24 hour race took place in France and has continued to run annually in June.



**July:** The Hollywood Sign was officially dedicated in the hills above Hollywood, Los Angeles known as Los Angeles, California.

**September:** The Japanese cities of Tokyo and Yokohama were devastated by the Great Kanto earthquake. The 8.2 magnitude earthquake was the most powerful to hit the region at that time. Minutes after the quake, a forty-foot tsunami swept the region killing many and destroying a lot of property. Fires began in the wooden houses and buildings and up to 140,000 people were killed, many more injured in the devastation. Nearly all of Yokohama, Tokyo and the surrounding area were destroyed.

**November:** Hitler led about two-thousand Nazi party members in a failed coup against the German government in Munich. Twenty people were killed in the violence. Hitler was arrested and charged with treason. He was sentenced to five years in prison but was released after only nine months. Eventually the Nazi party took over Germany in the 1930s.

**December:** The chimes of Big Ben were broadcast on radio for the first time by the BBC.



**Anne Smith**

# Methodist Women in Britain



## MWiB DARLINGTON DISTRICT EVENTS

**MINSTERACRES OVERNIGHTER – Friday/Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> March 2023.** “A line of women” Facilitator: Mrs. June Anderson. Early booking advisable.

**EASTER DAY OF REFLECTION - Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023** at Greens Lane Methodist Church, Stockton, TS18 5HP. Refreshments from 10.00am, Service at 10.45am. Please bring a packed lunch, drinks provided.

## CIRCUIT EVENT

**CIRCUIT EASTER OFFERING SERVICE - Grove Hill 6.00pm on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023.** This service is prepared by Methodist Women in Britain. Everyone is invited to share in this service, men and women

**Anne Maplebeck**

## Good Friday Walk of Witness 7<sup>th</sup> April 2023



You are heartily invited to join John and Marilyn in carrying the cross from Marton to Nunthorpe before the Good Friday Service at 10.00am. As it is uphill this year, we are allowing a little more time than last year. For those wishing to complete the whole route, we will gather outside Marton Methodist Church at 8.45am in order to set off promptly at 8.50am. We are happy for walkers to join us along the route which will be up Dixon's Bank and along Guisborough Road.

Last year (see photo), there was a lovely group of mixed aged walkers with quite a few youngsters to share the task. It would be marvellous to have even more this year. The bigger the group, the more impact it has, creating a spectacle which reminds passers-by and motorists what Good Friday is about.

It may be possible to arrange lifts for those who need transport either to Marton for the start or from Nunthorpe at the end. If you let us know we will do our best to help arrange these.

**Marilyn and John Wilkinson**



**British Summer Time starts on  
Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March**

*Don't forget to put your clocks  
forward one hour.*



## The Wilderness.

Whoever thinks being a Christian is easy, has probably not fully surrendered their all to God. My walk looks completely different now to how it looked a decade ago.

The first seven years of my walk was just heaven on earth, I walked around with a smile on my face, I AM SAVED, I AM SET FREE, was the song in my heart! I thought this was going to be my experience FOREVER! In 2018, I began working at Trinity, it was definitely God ordained and I was excited to start work. However, when you are working with people in the community it can take its toll, with a million different problems to help people through. However, after some-time I noticed my joy dimmed, the light began to diminish. Each step was harder, what had happened, everything had been so good. I was growing in my faith, now I felt there was a blockage. I was not alone, millions of believers have passed through these same troubled waters and experienced the same emotions. People often refer to this season as the WILDERNESS! Are you going through the wilderness season? This is a hard place. However, it is crucial for our lives as it is painful. God is with You, He desires to use the wilderness for your eternal good. The wilderness can be described as a desert, with this in mind lets think of the Bible as our 'Spiritual Survival Guide'. We need to read, mediate on the Word of God, this is our spiritual food, the Bread of Life. This is where I noticed I had gone wrong; I began spending more time on 'other' things; watching Netflix to be exact. There is nothing wrong with watching television, but if the time you once spent in reading the Word of God, praying, and your time with the Lord has been put to one side then you will notice a difference in your joy and peace. We receive the fruits of the Spirit through these times so you will feel the desert overtaking these places. I woke up and had heard in a dream, 'Don't be left with an empty lamp!'. This really made me sit up and reflect on my current walk with Jesus, my lamp is not kept full because it was filled ten years ago, I need to keep filling up my lamp with oil. Read Matthew 25, which describes the parable of the ten virgins. Five had kept their oil filled up, awaiting the Lords return and five did not, they asked for some oil from the ones that had kept their lamps full. But were told by the five virgins that had full lamps, 'you need to fill your own lamp'. No one else can fill you up of the Holy Spirit, you must do this by spending time with the Lord, reading His word, and spending time fellowshiping with other believers. I have begun navigating myself back to that secret place with the Lord.

We should not be ashamed or embarrassed about the wilderness season because through it our character is tested, Read Romans 5:3-5, Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance, character, and character hope!

If we are in a season of drought and wilderness, remember you are not alone, as others mentioned in the bible were also sent to the wilderness, even Jesus! Can you list five others? Or more?

I am really excited to see how God has blessed Trinity over the years, and how we were able to support the disadvantaged families over Christmas. The hampers received were lovingly put together. We also had a Christmas party attended by lots

of families, every child was given a wrapped-up Christmas present from Santa. The focus of TFFC has changed throughout the years, to reflect the need of the community.

Most recently this has been the cost of living crisis, we are planning our outreach to meet this need. Please pray for TFFC development plans, Community Grocery and the continued Hope Café outreach. Please pray for funding opportunities, the volunteers and for the Community we serve.

**Sharon Sewell**  
Project Co-ordinator

***THE AMOUNT OF SUCCESS WE ACHIEVE DEPENDS ON  
THE AMOUNT OF SINCERE DESIRE WHE HAVE.***

***“GARDEN FOR SUCCESS”***

**IT'S TIME TO PLANT**

**First, plant five rows of Peas**

Prayer, Purity, Politeness, Promptness, Perseverance,

**Next, plant three rows of Squash**

Squash gossip  
Squash fault finding  
Squash indifference



**Then plant five rows of Lettuce**

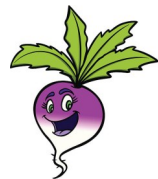
Let us be faithful



Let us be unselfish  
Let us be truthful  
Let us love one another  
Let us follow Christ

**No garden is complete without a Turnip**

Turn up for worship  
Turn up with a joyful heart  
Turn up with determination  
Turn up with creative ideas



**Then, reap a harvest of Blessing**

## **FIRST AID FOR MENTAL HEALTH COURSE**

I have responsibility on the Circuit Leadership Team for "learning and development". As such I would like to invite you to a "First Aid for Metal Health course" for churches to be held sometime late April/early May.

One in four people will experience a mental health problem at some point in their lifetime. We may be impacted personally or we may come across people suffering mental health issues either inside or outside of our churches. If we do, then it could well be that we don't know what to say or what to do.

### **The purpose of the course is to:**

Give an understanding and awareness of mental health including common mental health disorders and issues.

Help to reduce stigma and discrimination.

Provide guidance about how to encourage people to talk about mental health.

Learn how to apply knowledge of mental health through recognising and responding to the signs of mental health in themselves and others.

Learn how to be able to offer mental health first aid to people experiencing mental ill-health.

First aid for mental health is not intended to make us an expert, but to enable us to provide the initial support to a person experiencing a mental health problem until professional help is received or until the crisis is resolved.

The course is available free of charge and will be provided by folk from "Together Middlesbrough and Cleveland". It will last about 6 hours and can be done either: in one session on a weekday, in two half weekday sessions, or in three early weekday evening sessions (6 - 8pm). The course can lead to certification, but this is not a requirement (the group can be mixed and include those taking certification and those not).

So, could you please email me ([john\\_pat.hinton@live.co.uk](mailto:john_pat.hinton@live.co.uk)) by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March if you are interested and please indicate your preference as to how you would like it to be delivered i.e. in 1, 2 or 3 sessions - also indicate any day of the week you *could not* do it, keeping as many options open as possible please. I will then select the option which suites most people and let you know when it will be. Also feel free to email me if you have any questions.

**John Hinton**



## Earthquake Response

You will have seen the news about the terrible earthquakes on the Turkey Syria border.

One of the many towns and cities devastated is Antakya [Antioch from Acts 11:26 ] where the disciples were first called Christians. All the Turkish and Syrian peoples need help.

Over 36,000 dead, and tens of thousands of survivors have been left injured or homeless. An appeal has been launched by the UK's Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC). They bring together 15 leading aid charities to raise funds quickly and efficiently at times of crisis overseas. In these times of crisis, people in life-and-death situations need our help and our mission is to save, protect and rebuild lives through effective humanitarian response.

DEC chief executive Saleh Saeed described the scenes in Turkey and Syria as "heart-breaking", with thousands "losing loved ones suddenly in the most shocking of ways". "Despite the challenges they are all experiencing now... aid is getting through and they are scaling up," he said.

The UK government will match the first £5m of donations from the public. Money raised will also provide blankets, warm clothes and heaters for safe spaces.

If you have not done so already but wish to donate money, we recommend you donate on-line to <https://donation.dec.org.uk/turkey-syria-earthquake-appeal>

### The Electoral Commission

As you may be aware, there are local elections in May. The Government has passed a law which says that from now on people wishing to vote in person will need to show photo ID.

**A passport, a driving licence, blue badge or over 60s bus pass are all acceptable ID** but if people don't have any of those they can apply on-line to get a Free Voter Authority Certificate.

You can apply for a **free postal vote** up to 5.00p.m. on Tuesday 18th April at [www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk](http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk) or phone 01642 774774  
Or [www.middlesbrough.gov.uk](http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk) or phone 01642 729771) where no photo ID is required.



# PRAYER DIARY

**MARCH 5TH** We pray today for our Circuit meeting and for all who will attend as they represent their churches. May we be blessed in all the decisions we make by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We pray for Rev David Godfrey and for Stainton.

**MARCH 12th** We pray today for all our Preachers, both Lay and Ordained, and our Worship Leaders. May we thank God that we are called to this special Ministry, and may those who are feeling that call now, be encouraged to answer it. Pray for the Preachers' meeting this week. Pray for Rev John Howard Norman and for Normanby

**March 19th** On this Mothering Sunday we pray for all mothers for those who are no longer with us, and for those who are very much part of our lives. We pray especially for mothers who are having difficult times that they may be helped and supported in the important job they do. We pray for Rev Charity that she may soon be well enough to return to her active ministry amongst us. Pray for Grove Hill in this very special Centenary Year.

**March 26th** We pray today for the Circuit Men's Fellowship which meets at Grove Hill this coming Friday at 2pm. We pray for all the groups in our churches which bring people together in Christian fellowship. Pray for Nunthorpe and for Rev Mike Harland

**April 2nd** On this Palm Sunday we remember how Jesus came to Jerusalem to face up to those who were opposed to his ministry and where he knew he would face death on the Cross. May this day remind us of the need to stand up for our faith. Bless those who are persecuted for their faith. Pray for Marton

**April 9th** On this glorious Easter Day we thank God for the resurrection of His Son, Jesus, who gives us the gift of eternal life and hope for each and every day. We pray for Trinity, for the Trinity Family Friendly Centre, for Sharon Sewell and all the team.

**April 16th** We pray for all who are ill in body, mind or spirit, those in hospital and those in Residential Care. We pray for all who care for the sick in hospitals and in their own homes. We pray for Methodist Asylum Project, for Billy Barnes and all the team. Pray for the Chinese Church.

**April 23rd** On this day we pray for all teachers and lecturers for School and College Governors and for all who work with our children and young people in our Churches. Pray for Young Sunday. Pray for Elaine at the Circuit Office.

**April 30th** We pray for all the work our churches do in caring for the Community. We pray for Warm Spaces, for MHA and the care given at Montpellier Manor, JMA, Overseas Mission, Action for Children and Home Mission.

**May 7th** We think today of the Coronation of King Charles and for the great responsibility held by him and the Queen Consort. We pray that this weekend may be a time of rejoicing and of volunteering to care for others.

**May 14th** We think this week of Ascension Day of what that means to our faith through the power of Jesus as the Son of God, and in this miracle being united with God as his Heavenly Father. Pray for Methodist Women in Britain in all they do and in their service of thanksgiving today.

**May 21st** We pray today for young people involved in the stressful time of examinations and for their families. Pray today for the Avenue Team.

**May 28th** On this Pentecost Sunday we thank God for the power of the Holy Spirit living and working amongst us. Pray for the Darlington District and for the work of so many church families inspired by that Spirit to do God's work. Pray for Rev Richard Andrew, Chairman of the District.