



Learning & Development Newsletter

Message from Katie Deadman-Vernall

Welcome to the Learning & Development Newsletter!

Giving Thanks: Embracing Change and Diversity in October

In this month of October, Autumn announces its arrival; the evenings are beginning to draw in, the air is noticeably cooler, and the once green landscapes are evolving into palettes of yellows, oranges, reds, and browns. Therefore, it is fitting to focus this month's newsletter on "Giving Thanks." During this time of seasonal transition, our attention may be drawn more acutely to the wonders of creation, the cycles of life, and the blessing of God's presence with us—going before us, following us, and journeying through us as we embrace change in all its forms.

Through our current Harvest Festival celebrations, we give thanks for God's abundant gifts of creation, for the sustainability and enrichment our world offers, and for the food we have access to, including its origins and the people who help make it available. We express gratitude for our roles as stewards of the earth, recognising the privileged responsibility we have in caring for our environment, and for the learning and joy that comes from doing so justly and kindly.

Since we, too, are part of God's glorious creation, this season inspires us to give great thanks for one another—celebrating how we have been wonderfully and uniquely made, and appreciating the beautiful, diverse global community to which we belong, rich with varied cultures, histories, and experiences.

Black History Month this October invites us to honour and respect the achievements, creativity, and resilience of Black people and communities. It serves as a reminder that we must cultivate our relationships, and lands, diligently, nurturing each other with love and appreciation, and ensuring that everyone is treated as an image of God; that every living thing is treated as part of God's divine artistic tapestry.

As we observe Black History Month and the Harvest Festival, we must also acknowledge that injustice shapes our shared human history and experiences. People mistreat one another and wider creation, and this continues today. Habitats for countless life forms are being destroyed at a rate that exceeds efforts to save or create them. Many people lack access to enough food, clean water, or shelter; millions live in war zones, in fear of violence. Painful stories are carried by most of us—and by our earth itself.

Let us give thanks for God's presence in our suffering, for God's ongoing forgiveness and hope, and for the growing divine wisdom that guides us to be better caretakers of our world...of each other.

May our gratitude lead us toward justice, care, and love for all of God's creation.

For further information and resources on Black History Month, please visit:

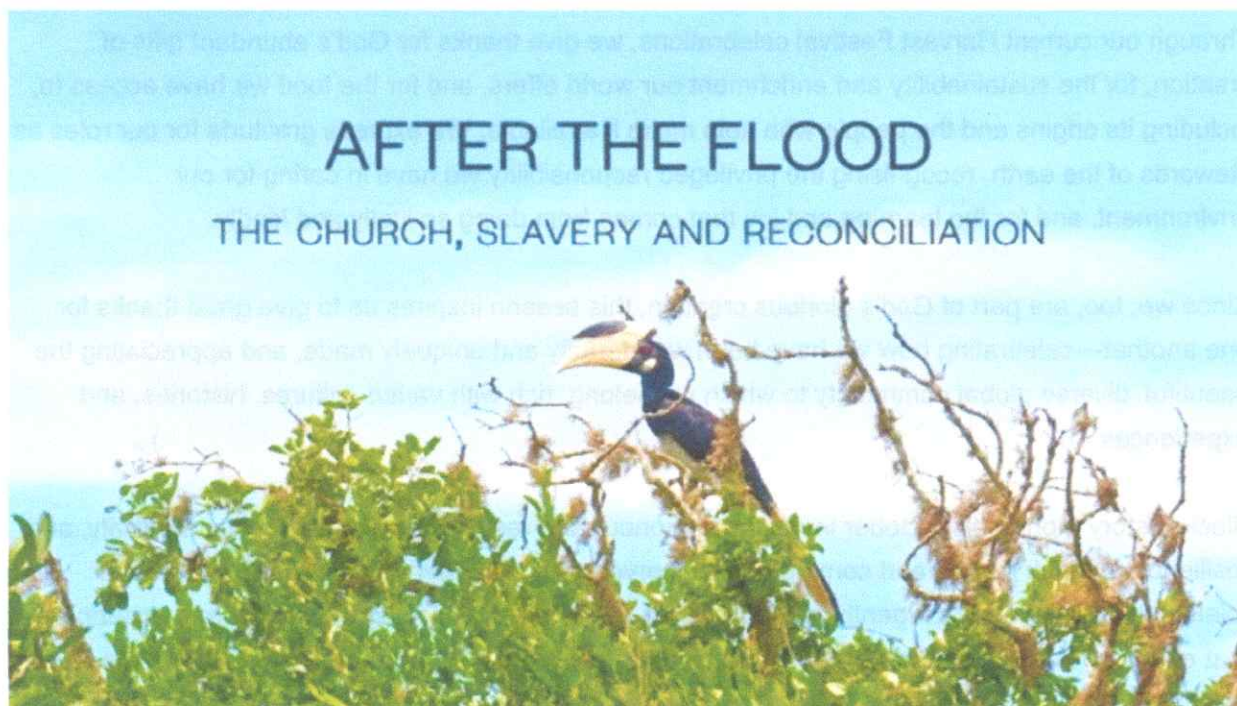
- A prayer for [Black History Month](#) by Inderjit Bhogal and other links
- Bevan Powell's blog post on his presentation to the UN Committee on the [Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#).
- The wider resource area for the [Inclusive Methodist Church](#)
- Jasmine Devadason's Thursday Thoughts reflections on our [Facebook Page](#)

For further information and resources relating to Harvest Festival, please visit:

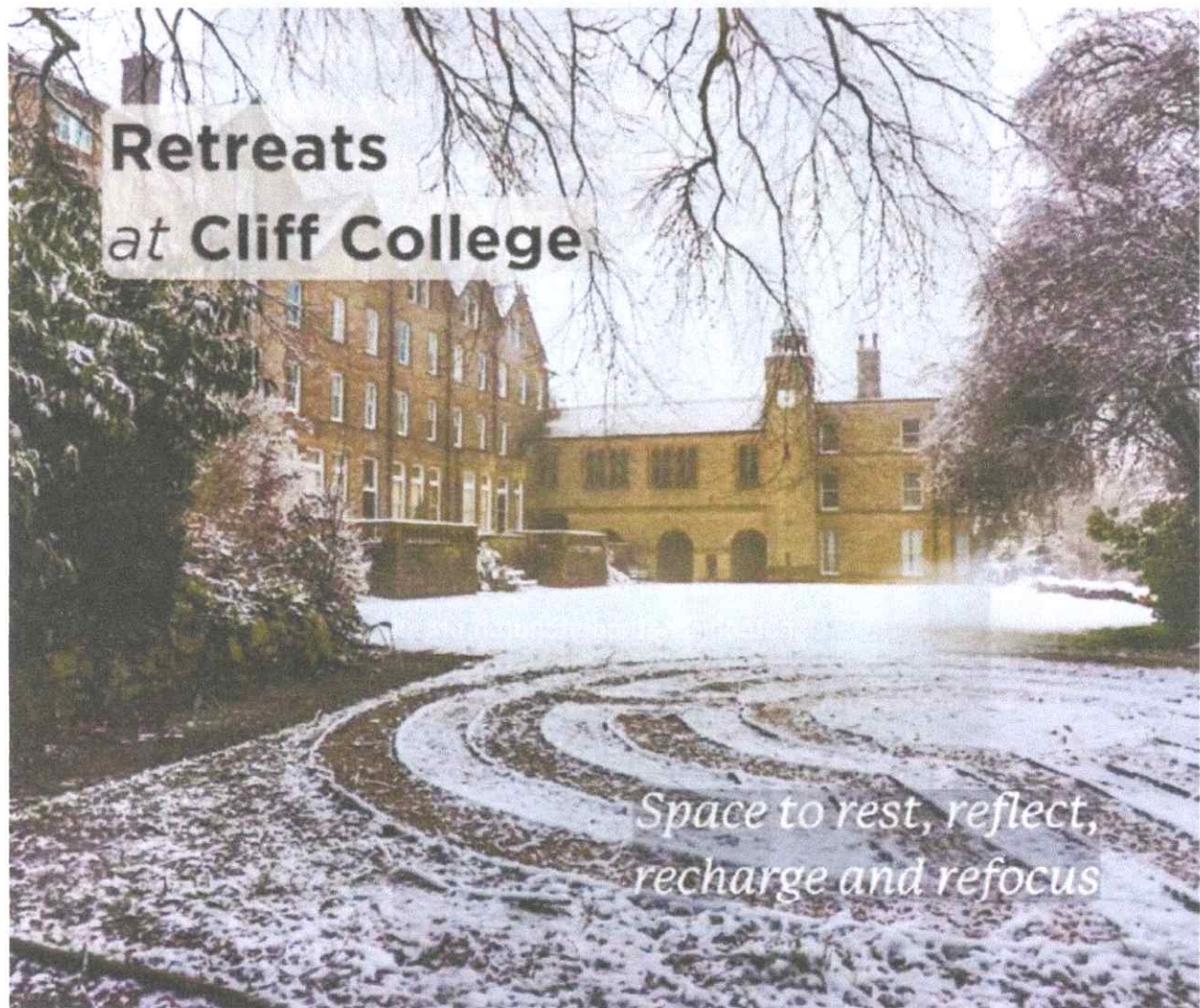
- Beyond Consumerism - Harvest! Thank you to our Farmers' resource by [The Arthur Rank Centre](#)
- [The Arthur Rank Centre](#)
- [Worship and Learning Resources](#) from All We Can.
- The Methodist Church's '[Environment and Climate Change](#)' resource area:
- [Climate and Creation Resources](#)

Katie Deadman-Vernall

Learning and Development Manager



Starting in Black History Month, Methodist churches are invited to show the film "[After the Flood: the Church, Slavery and Reparations](#)" and begin a conversation about responding to the lasting damage caused by the transatlantic traffic in enslaved Africans. For more information on how you can organise a free showing of the film and send in your response, click [here](#).



Seasonal retreats at Cliff College

The Cliff College site in the Peak District is the ideal location for a retreat, whether alone or as part of a small group. Our next guided day retreat will be on Saturday 23 November, a week before the beginning of Advent, and will give you the opportunity to reflect on and prepare for the season when we celebrate Emmanuel, God with us. Find more information and booking on [the Cliff College website](#).

Upcoming Learning Opportunities

Change, Transition and Conflict

**Over two mornings
Tuesday 4th February and
Thursday 6th February
9.30am to 12.30pm**

**For more information please contact Brec Seaton
seatonb@methodistchurch.org.uk**

Book at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/positive-working-together-818889>



SCAN ME

The Methodist Church



**POSITIVE
WORKING
TOGETHER**



Spirituality, Scripture and Conflict

Tuesday 11th February 2025 or Tuesday 24th June
9.30am to 3.30pm on zoom

Deepening our understanding of the wisdom and impact of
scripture in managing change and transforming conflict.

Book your place here:

11th February: <https://SSC110225.eventbrite.co.uk>

24th June: <https://SSC240625.eventbrite.co.uk>



SCAN ME

Contact Brec Seaton:
seatonb@methodistchurch.org.uk



Reflect

Methodist Spirituality and Retreats

Retreat for Local Lay-Pastors: Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Led by Gill Dascombe, Former Vice-President of the Methodist Conference

25th – 27th February 2025 at St Columba's Retreat Centre, Woking, Surrey. Only £150.

The booking form is available [here](#).

Reflect Retreat for Local Preachers

21st - 23rd March 2025. At Thie dy Vea Retreat House, Isle of Man.

For further information, click [here](#).



rural
mission and ministry

course

£300 / or £150*
*including Methodist bursary

CIRENCESTER 20-21 MAY '25
WYDALE HALL 24-25 SEPT '25

Book online:
www.tinyurl.com/RMMC25

Rural Mission & Ministry Course - new dates & venues for 2025, including a 50% bursary for lay and ordained Methodists. For anyone in need of a rural refresher or considering a move to rural.

Click [here](#) to book.



faith-rooted
**community
organising**

church
at the
margins

GOD
FOR
ALL

Faith-rooted community organising - a weekend event at Cliff College is for those beginning a New Place for New People (NPNP) or Church at the Margins. Bookings are taking place for the months of January, April and October.

Click [here](#) to book and find out more information.



ONLINE Adult Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is a nationally accredited training course which teaches people how to spot the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and provide help on a first aid basis. It is a practical skills and awareness course designed to give you:

- A deeper understanding of mental health and the factors that can affect people's wellbeing, including your own;
- Practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues;
- *Confidence to step in, reassure and support a person in distress;*
- Enhanced interpersonal skills such as non-judgmental listening;
- Knowledge to help someone recover their health by guiding them to appropriate support.

To find out more and book on a course, please follow these links:

- [Tuesday 5th November and Tuesday 12th November, 9am – 5pm](#)
- [Tuesday 21st January and Tuesday 28th January, 9am - 5pm](#)



Rural & Wild - Pilgrimage Learning Community

Gather with others in the pilgrimage community for connection, reflection & action on Tuesday 26th November [Sign up here](#)



Are you connecting with new people? Could this be the start of a new Christian community? If your district has already started its district New Places for New People (NPNP) community, it's time to think about creating an NPNP in your circuit. Join our 60 minute online conversation to learn how to start an NPNP in your circuit. Sign up [here](#).

 **GET IN TOUCH !**

Have something you want to see in this monthly email?

The next newsletter is due to come out on Wednesday 20th November.

For any submissions, please email [Funmi Oyedokun](#) by **4pm Wednesday 6th November.**

To avoid delays, please include the following in your message:

- A paragraph of supporting text as you would like it to appear in the monthly mail
- Any and all links and email addresses that are required for readers to click for more information
- An image of the logo or anything related to the text, which should be clear and in jpeg format.