

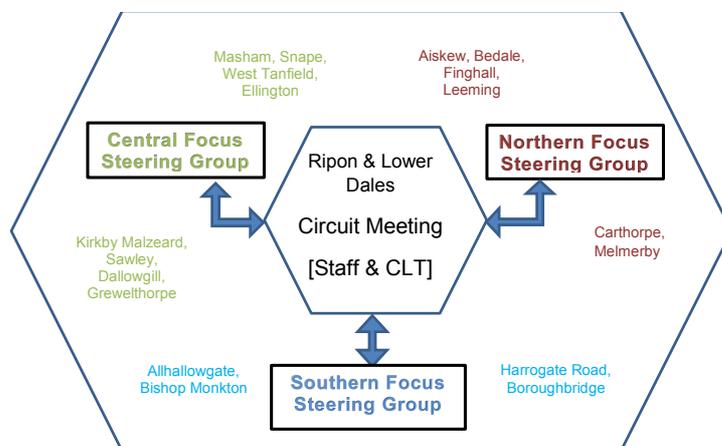


# NEWSLETTER SPRING 2015

## Moving Forward - Building Mission - Focus Groups Frequently asked questions

### So what are the focus groups?

The circuit will begin to work more closely across three areas, with churches grouped as shown in the diagram. The Northern Focus group will be overseen by Revd Kathleen Wood, The Central group by Revd Pat Malham and the Southern group by Revd Helen Bell. The Superintendent Minister, Revd Ruth Parry, will work across the whole circuit which will enable a clearer picture of what is happening as she gets to know people in all areas.



**FOCUS GROUP STRUCTURE**

### Working together?

#### What does that mean?

Well it means we can share our skills with our brothers and sisters in our local focus group. Whether that is to do with coffee mornings, leading worship, working with children, or managing accounts and admin, we will look to use our people resources in the most effective way possible. This will be coordinated through focus groups .

### What difference will it make to me?

We may have more joint services, or other opportunities for getting to know and working with the churches in our subgroups. You may notice new people involved in things, or you may be able to offer your skills and talents to other local churches.

### Isn't this a backwards, shrinking step?

No! In some ways we need to reorganise in order to manage our resources better, but right from the very beginning of the Methodist Movement we have arranged ourselves into bigger units than a single church, with the recognition that skills can be shared and beneficial across a broader area, our national constitution describes the circuit as the Primary Unit of Mission, and this focus on a cluster of churches working together rather than individual congregations is what makes Methodism different to other churches.

**If there are other things you would like to know then please ask the ministers or circuit stewards. There are no secrets - if you don't tell us what is worrying you we can't do anything to allay your fears!**

[My Sabbatical - Revd Ruth Parry](#)

Sabbaticals are a gift from the church to ministers to enable us to explore and develop our ministry in ways it isn't possible to do in the midst of a busy working life. I am so grateful to the Methodist Church and to my colleagues for making it possible for me to have three months sabbatical leave this year. So what will I be doing?

My father, who is now in his 90s, was the first European person to be ordained as a deacon in the newly formed Church of South India 65 years ago. As children my sister and I grew up with stories from India as dad told us of his friends and something of his life there. Nalamutu and Chinnupan were his good friends and we knew of far away places, Trichinopoly, Dharapuram and a place called The Village of Great Grace amongst others. Growing up in the late 50s/early 60s we thought it normal to eat curry and our language included words like thyava situ (not a correct spelling!) which is the Tamil for thank you and, for some bizarre reason, miniminipuchi - which is Tamil for glowworm! I have always wanted to visit and now seems the right time to go. So on the 26th March John and I will set off to spend some time in Tiruchirappalli in Tamil Nadu where the wonderful people have arranged for us to visit many of the places where dad lived and worked. They are insisting that they will look after our accommodation, transport and food whilst we are there - "it is our pleasure and delight to care for you". We will spend a few days at the end seeing some of the sites further north - it wouldn't feel right to go to India and not see the Taj Mahal!

Back home I will spend some time thinking about hospitality and welcome and how we put that into practice in our churches; I'm sure some of my thinking will be based on our experiences in India. The Church of South India was the first united church in the world and I will be interested to see how ecumenism has worked out in that context. In May I am going with an Anglican group to Rome and Assisi with the purpose of looking at ecumenical relationships there. It's a little known fact that the Methodist Church has a wonderful property on the opposite bank of the River Tiber to the Castel Sant'Angelo in Rome. The rooftop garden is in line with the Pope's apartments in the Vatican and just down the road is the Anglican Centre. The person leading the group used to be the Methodist Minister in Rome and has some good contacts. We need to learn how to work more effectively with our brothers and sisters in other denominations.

So - two strands to my sabbatical study time - hospitality and ecumenism. Added to that it will be good to spend time reading and writing and visiting family and friends which we rarely get the opportunity to do.

Whilst I'm away Pat and Kathleen will have an even heavier workload than normal as Pat will also oversee Harrogate Road and Boroughbridge and Kathleen Allhallowgate and Bishop Monkton. I'm grateful to them and I'm grateful to you and look forward to telling you about my travels.

*Holy Week & Easter***Holy Week 2015****Monday**

Bedale MC Annexe 7.30pm  
Taize Worship

**Tuesday**

Aiskew MC Hall 7.30pm  
Agape

**Wednesday**

Aiskew MC Hall 7.30pm  
Iona Style Worship

**Maundy Thursday**

Harrogate Rd 11.00am  
Meditation Rev Pat Malham

Allhallowgate 7.00pm  
Rev Kathleen Wood

Bishop Monkton 6.30 pm  
Rev Jonathan Singh  
'Telling the story'  
contact steward please

Boroughbridge 6.00pm  
Rev Pat Malham

Bedale MC 7.30pm  
Communion Rev David Emison

**Good Friday**

Boroughbridge 10.30am  
Meditation Rev Kathleen Wood

Harrogate Rd MC 11am  
Meditation Rev Pat Malham

Ripon Market Place 12noon  
Churches Together

Bishop Monkton MC 12noon  
Frugal Lunch and Worship

Bedale Market Place 11.00am  
Walk of Witness

Masham MC 2.00pm  
Walk of Witness

Kirkby Malzeard MC 6.30pm  
Meditation Rev Pat Malham

Masham MC 7.00pm  
Meditation

Bedale MC 7.30pm  
Meditation Rev David Emison