

Herald

Ripon And Lower Dales Circuit Newsletter

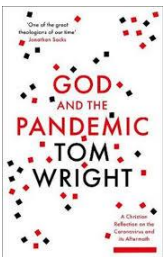
Welcome to this week's issue of the Herald. Our vision is to provide a helpful place for connecting with some of what God is doing across the Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit. To give voice to those experiencing the love of God in their daily walk of faith. To celebrate and share the good news of God's kingdom.

'For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.' [Romans 8:38-39]



Book review in 100 words

GOD AND THE PANDEMIC: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and Its Aftermath by Tom Wright.



Those familiar with the writing style of Tom Wright will know his accessible and well-grounded approach to leading others to consider things from a Bible based, no nonsense point of view. I pray this pandemic is a once in a lifetime event, it certainly is world changing, effecting the lives of everyone to a greater or lesser extent. In his book Tom Wright helpfully addresses some of the theories that have been bandied about in response to the 'why?' question and includes a look at the 'So what?' in terms of how people have acted in heroic and loving ways.

Circuit Coffee Morning over Zoom – Friday's @ 11am "A place of friendship and welcome"

The circuit coffee morning over zoom is a great place to catch up and connect with familiar faces and make new friends.

Everyone is welcome, so why not make a cup of tea or coffee just the way you like it and pop along to the **zoom coffee lounge**. If you would like attend, please contact Margaret Smith at margsmit@yorks21.plus.com for details.

If you are new to zoom and would like some help navigating the process, simply provide Margaret with a contact telephone number for 'how to help' beforehand.



Circuit Farewell service for Revd Helen Bell – Sunday 19th July at 3pm on Zoom



It is with mixed emotions that we approach the 19th of July. Farewells are never easy occasions and we often use hugs when words are not enough. The service on Zoom will look and feel different, but by no means will it have any less love and God certainly will be with each person as we gather in the digital room.

We continue to hold Helen and Fred in our prayers. We want to celebrate Helen's ministry in the Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit, and we want to bless Helen and Fred in going forward with God. It will be lovely to see as many as are able to attend the service.

If you would like to attend Revd Helen's farewell service on zoom, please email Pip Smith at Riponlowerdalessup@outlook.com to book a place and receive the Zoom meeting details.

Lockdown Lookout! This week we hear from Steve Laugher

So much of my world has changed during this time. Before - I travelled the world through airports and in airplanes, now I travel the world though the Internet and in my office. Before - I delivered training to small groups of about 12 people face-to-face, now I deliver training to larger groups up to 50 through screens.

Before - I was limited to being in one place at a time, now I can be in the whole world all at once. One thing that I have noticed is that I am meeting more people than ever I did. I can join in a meeting that before would have taken a day to get to and an overnight stay. But now with just a click I can be with others in a moment. It is almost as if the whole world was in the same room as me and I can just reach out and engage with them, and they with me.

And of course, all this use of technology has meant that Lynn and I can 'travel' to other churches and fellowships for our Spiritual food too. We have been in fellowships from Cornwall, to Scotland, and Liverpool, to Norwich, and we have settled on a Fellowship in Chesterfield for our Sunday teaching. That alongside the Worship At Home Services from Circuit and District and encouragement from so many sources, such as this one, means that for us our Church family has become so much bigger and richer than before the lockdown, and we have been very encouraged at meeting so many others who love Jesus.

I would really encourage everyone who can to reach out further, experience more and different and thank God for this opportunity to be part of the amazing global Church. Bless you all, Steve



Worship Album Highlight

Shane & Shane released their album *HYMNS LIVE* in 2019 with Well House Records. The duo, Shane Barnard and Shane Everett are gifted music artists and throughout this album you gain a sense of singing with all the saints. Thirteen familiar hymns which are so beautifully fresh and inspiring because they are played by Spirit filled worship leaders. If music is food for the soul, then this album provides great nourishment. *HYMNS LIVE* is an accessible and moving album, whether you are led to sing, dance or simply be with God in Worship this is a welcomed offering in these times of worshipping at home.

If you have a Worship album you would like to review and share with the Circuit, please send it to me at gpentelow@gmail.com



4 'Feeling Flat' and making a way through a desert place.

I think everyone at some stage in life experiences feeling flat, feeling like we need our batteries recharging; or needing to find our get up and go. I would suggest that 'feeling flat' is a natural part of life and often most regain their usual drive from taking a break and resting.

It struck me recently when I recalled watching a car show of a 4x4 being driven through a desert place that before venturing out across the sand dunes, the tyres are let down and made to feel flat. This technique enables the vehicle to travel across the desert with greater ease.

I wonder when we go through times of feeling a bit flat, what it is we might be journeying through. Is it ever a time when we journey better because we allow our human nature to surface? That we are venturing across a desert place in life and letting the tyres down actually helps to get through.

I suppose the real question is, who lets down the tyres and who do we go to when we feel this way. I would suggest that talking with someone can sometimes help gain perspective, and certainly placing yourself in God's care is the always best place to be.



You have 3 new messages from the Superintendent

On Wednesday evening those who were able from the Circuit Meeting got together over zoom to pray for the Circuit. We prayed for each local church, for the witness, ministry, and mission of the church in the Ripon and Lower Dales Methodist Circuit. It was a privilege to share in a prayer time with folk from across the circuit and whilst we each prayed from our own homes, we experienced God with us.

I really want to encourage us all to pray. There is no one better to spend time with than with our loving God. What is more, I really want to encourage everyone to come to God just the way you are because we can come no other way and God already knows us and our situations. We can bring our sorrows and joys, the highs, and lows, we can bring our whole person and place ourselves in God's hands. So, let us pray and may we be held, guided, and carried by God who can do immeasurably more than we can think or imagine. Awhile ago, someone shared a saying 'Let Go, Let God'. It struck me that this saying had been a rule of life for this person in their walk of faith following the way of Christ Jesus. It conveys so much in it four words. If we are to give something to God we must let go, whether it is our offering or our cares, let go. It does not stop with letting go, it moves us to place our trust in God, let God. In trusting it invites an openness to let God into our lives and situations. Let God is also about letting the love of God rule in our hearts and minds. 'Let Go, Let God', what might this mean to you? You might find the new prayer page on the circuit website helpful. I have included the link/web address below.

<https://www.riponlowerdalesmethodists.org.uk/resources-during-physical-distancing/prayer.html>

THE LISTENING POST

- A time of Reflecting Together; Listening to God and Looking to how God is Shaping the church.

'What is the HOLY SPIRIT saying to our churches?' 'What understanding and knowledge have you gained of the love of God during the pandemic?' 'What holy rhythms and habits have you discovered over the last three months which have been nurturing your faith journeying?' 'What do you feel might be continued beyond the pandemic?' 'What release has been found?' The questions are many and I am sure the reflections have been many too.

The above are but a few of the questions and points of reflection which I have heard and which I welcome. But how do we translate these helpful questions into meaningful responses with the life of circuit and in the local churches/communities. I believe we need to come together and draw as widely as possible to fully appreciate the picture from different perspectives. In doing so I pray we will discover a way forward which is God led and continues to build upon the growth we have witnessed during the pandemic.

I also recognise that some questions and reflections are around struggles people have and are facing during this time. I welcome those experiences too and encourage people to be real because God is real.

You are warmly invited to 'The Listening Post' when we will seek to glean together from hearing what experiences people have had during the pandemic. We are looking to reopen the buildings but let us not miss the opportunity of surveying what building God has been doing of His Kingdom during this time. Furthermore, let us be sure we are moving forward with God, seeking to be a God led people now and always.

It will be great see you at **THE LISTENING POST** event on Zoom **WHEN: 22nd July 2020 at 7.15pm**

If you are interested in attending The Listening Post, please contact Pip Smith at riponandlowerdalessup@outlook.com to book a place and to receive the Zoom invitation.

(A paper will be circulated to all churches for distribution for those unable to access zoom)



GOOD NEWS! New exciting opportunities for growth and engagement with the Circuit Mission and Ministries Meeting. This week, along with some other essential items the Circuit Meeting took the decision to introduce a Circuit Mission and Ministries Meeting. The focus of the meeting will be to place of Steppingstones between conference, circuit meeting and local churches. It will be Encouragingly Modelling the Ministry and Mission of the whole people of God Growing from the grass roots, receiving nourishment from being in Connexion.

Please do pray for this new venture, especially praying for those who might consider becoming part of this group representing the local church councils.

I continue to pray for the circuit and although I am often praying for people without having met in person or even being able to picture someone's face, I pray that everyone would know God near at this time and always. I continue to long for the time when we can gather once again in person but remain thankful for the gift of technology which provides means of keeping connected. I have a real sense of God active within the circuit and I seek to see God's kingdom come.

Grace and Peace, Gareth

Let us continue in prayer and pray for each other

Loving God, we pray for all those who are struggle at this time, remembering especially...

- ...those who are bereaved,*
- ...those who have lost jobs and seeking new employment,*
- ...those who are feeling lonely and those feeling afraid,*
- ...those who are struggling with daily living of paying bills and buying food,*
- ...those who are finding faith journeying hard and those struggling to find faith.*



We know that many people are facing many struggles, that things are easing more from lockdown and yet the lockdown of difficult times continues.

We pray for each person, that they would find in your presence comfort, strength, love, and peace.

We pray that we would continue to see 'Christlike' living in our communities and across the world. That kindness, generosity and love would be held in the highest esteem.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers.

Note from the editor – Thank you to all who have contributed to this week's issue of the Herald and thank you for reading. The Herald is a Newsletter which seeks to hear different voices and perspectives from across the Ripon and Lower Dales Methodist Circuit. It welcomes first time writers and published authors alike. Please contact Revd Gareth Baron on Tel: 01677 989169 or email: Gareth.baron@methodist.org.uk

'Love righteousness, you rulers of the earth, think of the Lord in goodness and seek him with sincerity of heart'

[The Wisdom of Solomon 1:1]



Dial-a-Prayer

FREE phone lines for prayers and news from the Methodist Church

Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514

Listen to news: 0808 281 2478

Content is updated weekly on Thursday afternoon