

# Herald

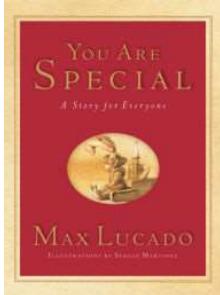
## Ripon And Lower Dales Circuit Newsletter

**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.

*'The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The LORD is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he had made.' [Psalm 145, verses 8-9]*



### Book review in 100 words



'YOU ARE SPECIAL: A Story for Everyone' written by Max Lucado and illustrated by Sergio Martinez is a beautiful little book. It's a heart-warming story that tenderly reminds the reader how much God, represented by the woodcarver, loves you. Not wanting to give the story away, here is the summary 'If you've ever wondered, "What do others think of me?" If you've ever felt judged by the world. If you've ever wanted to change only to please someone else. Then let this simple tale share a beautiful truth – you are special just the way you are! A book for all-ages.

### Lockdown Lookout! This week we hear from Gill Thornton in Aiskew.

When lockdown started, I was feeling very frustrated about not being able to do anything to help. Considered too old to deliver Meals on Wheels or volunteer for any other voluntary work and too 'out of date' to return to nursing or midwifery plus no church activities, I wondered what else could fill my day. After all there is a limit to tidying the garden when the tip is closed, or sorting stuff out in the house when the charity shops are shut!

Then I heard of Yorkshire Scrubs, a charity set up to help the NHS by making extra sets of scrubs, hats, masks, and laundry bags. Alleluia! something I could do and I love sewing, it was an answer to my prayers. At the same time I was contacted by a local care home about making gowns for their protection -the phrase about buses all coming along together came to mind.

So, along with other ladies in Bedale and surrounding area, I set to with my machine and lots of NHS blue fabric for scrubs and old bedding to make gowns. The group made almost 3,000 items for the Friarage, Harrogate and York Hospitals. We are having a break at present.

Meanwhile we continue our clapping for the NHS, Carers and Key Workers, maintaining contact with friends and neighbours whilst social distancing and for me, singing the hymns during Sunday Worship and Songs of Praise. Now looking forward to a return to normal life in whatever form that may be.

**THY KINGDOM COME** concluded on Pentecost (Whit Sunday). Yet, we journey on with God in prayer. Praying for our family and friends; praying for our local community and neighbours; praying for our nation and the nations of the world.

You may have shared in the Thy Kingdom Come Pentecost service led by the Archbishop of Canterbury and included contributions from Archbishop John Sentamu; Thelma Commey The Methodist Youth President and Pope Francis to name but a few. You can still share in this service and other video's via YouTube or Facebook. Simply search Thy Kingdom come and be inspired by God through all that has been offered.



# Bible Month 2020 Ruth

When was the last time you talked with a friend or family member about the Bible? Bible Month is a great time to invite others into conversations about the Bible by reading one of the smaller books together. Bible Month is all about encouraging a greater depth of Biblical understanding and is for everyone. The HUGE plus with getting involved with Bible Month is the great resources available from [www.preachweb.org/biblemonth](http://www.preachweb.org/biblemonth) The digital download is free to order.

Also, if you would like to share in a Zoom Bible study looking Ruth please email Pip Smith on [riponlowerdalessup@outlook.com](mailto:riponlowerdalessup@outlook.com) to book a place and receive your Zoom invitation.

The Zoom Bible study will run over four weeks on a Monday evening at 7.30pm beginning on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> of June.



On Sunday evening the Yorkshire North and East Methodist District held a Pentecost Zoom Gathering. It included speakers from across the District all offering a reflection upon the question, 'What is the Spirit saying to our Churches?' This is a question for us all to consider from a position of openness and responsiveness to how the Holy Spirit is leading and shaping the Church. All the reflections provided different perspectives and were both thought provoking and inspiring. I did not attend the gathering live, which included break-out rooms for small group conversations. I did join in by viewing the recording which is available on YouTube the link is below or simply search the District's name. You can also find the recording via the District's Facebook page. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFR2lk1hZwo>

This question 'What is the Spirit saying to our churches?' and the conversation is something which we will be continuing with in The Ripon and Lower Dales Methodist Circuit. Watch this space for further information once details have been confirmed. In the meantime, please do be encouraged to spend some time prayerfully considering this question. I believe it is important for us all to seek God and collectively reflect what the Holy Spirit is saying.

## #BLACK LIVES MATTER

I am sure you have seen or heard the horrific news of the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis, USA, which has filled our screens and newspapers this week. Since this tragic and shocking incident, we have seen so many stand up to speak out against this crime, calling for justice. People have been crying out for the end to racial discrimination, persecution and acts of violence which is persistently happening. There is such a great weight of sadness and despair that surrounds the murder of George Floyd because it is all too common, another news story of another Black man dying at the hands of the police. Let me be clear, that if this were one incident it would be one too many. We are part of a global community, which presently more than ever we are starkly reminded of with the ongoing grief, suffering and struggles of the Pandemic.

I believe ALL LIVES MATTER, and yet this ceases to hold substance when the evidence proves contrary. I believe that what we are witnessing, whether first or second hand, is something which needs everyone to be part of. Engaging in a global culture change that truly starts to see in real terms that All Lives Matter. When I hear stories of racism encountered by so many, I feel sickened, greatly dismayed, and almost lost for words. Some stories have been told by old friends, who have kept details of their racists attacks quiet but feel they cannot keep quiet anymore. I am 'almost' lost for words because I refuse to be part of the problem, I refuse to stay quiet no matter how uncomfortable it makes me feel and struggling for the right words. I refuse not to try, wanting to be part of the healing and instead of being part of the problem.

Racism is something the whole of humanity needs to address and actively work to eradicate. It is a crisis which will not just go away without serious engagement across all areas of society. We are one human race and my faith in God informs me that 'in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith', that God created our inmost being, that God knit us together in our mother's womb. Black lives matter to God just as all lives matter to God. I want to be part of a world which knows these highest values lived out, transformed by the Grace and Love of God.

**Let us continue in prayer and pray for each other –**

*Let us pray for the loved ones of George Floyd, that God would comfort them in their grief. And for the loved ones of others who have died due gross misuse of power by authorities and for whom incidents such as this serve as a painful reminder to their loss.*

*Let us pray for the loved ones of the police officers who committed this crime, having to come to terms with their cruel and devastating actions.*

*Let us pray for the protests to end because the changes that need to happen, happen.*

*Let us pray for the healing of relationships between the police and communities. And let us pray for the police officers who serve with love and care, that this approach would be what makes the news.*

*Let us pray for peace and healing for all those who carry scars and brokenness because of the damaging behaviour of another.*

*Let us continue to pray for all those whose loved ones have died due to Coronavirus and those whose loved ones have died during this pandemic. That they would all know peace and comfort in their bereavement during this especially difficult time.*

*Let us continue to pray for the NHS, care workers and key workers for whom this time remains challenging and traumatic. Let us pray for schools, for teachers, staff and children having to navigate a way forward which is demanding on all concerned.*

***Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers.***



**You have 1 new message, from the Superintendent Minister**

Dear friends, as we enter a new month it feels surprising how far we have travelled together through this Pandemic. We have been caused to celebrate Easter, Ascension and Pentecost in new ways, often carrying a sense of loss yet still being met by Our loving God during our worship at home services. I know there is a sense of loss that has been felt by many for many different reasons and I hold each in my prayers as I pray for the circuit. Amidst the ongoing difficulties we have also discovered loving care being shown both pastorally and with practical acts of kindness.

I would like to thank everyone for all the extra miles care and creative ways of staying connected which I have witness across the circuit. Those who have been making extra phone calls; printing out letters and services for others; getting shopping for those shielding and all who have contributed to producing worship at home services, and many more things people have been doing to support others during these last months.

As we look towards the future, we begin to prepare to say more farewells, as Revd. Helen and Mr Fred Bell move to Leicester in August for Revd. Helen's new appointment. Please can I ask everyone to save the date of the 19<sup>th</sup> of July when we have an online Circuit Farewell service. More details will follow once further arrangements have been made, but for now please do join with me in praying for Revd. Helen and Fred at this time. Moving appointments is a deeply emotionally and physically demanding time, more so when it is taking place within these unprecedented times.

As we have read in a previous issue of the Herald, Deacon Nigel Perrott will be received into Full Connexion when The Methodist Conference meets at the end of this month. We want to celebrate with Nigel and Jane in sharing the joy of this greatly significant and changing event. I am sure you will join me in praying for Nigel has he approaches reception into Full Connexion on Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup> of June at 6pm.

The Methodist Conference is going to be meeting online from the 25<sup>th</sup> of June to the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July. Please be encouraged to visit The Methodist Conference website for further information about this years Conference and to read reports which are being brought to the Conference. Also please do pray for all those who are involved in facilitating; Chairing; speaking; conferring; attending this years Conference. May God be known to each person involved and provide for all that they need to be fully present online. I pray we will also be actively engaged too. The Methodist Conference has been accessible via live video and recordings to watch again, for years. You might say ahead of its time on this. If you can, be encouraged to get engaged and involved with God in all that will take place at this year meeting of The Methodist Conference.

Finally. Please know my phoneline is always open if you need to talk. We acknowledge God is with us, but that does not mean we do not also find things difficult sometimes struggle. It is ok not to be ok and I am here if you need a listening ear. Tel: 01677 989169.

May we live, serve, and love each other in the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. *Revd. Gareth*



### **Worship Album & Artist Highlight**

You may be familiar with the gifted artist Philippa Hanna and her spirit filled worship songs. This year Philippa has released two new worship songs entitled 'You're Still God' and 'My Hope Is In the Blood' both are moving songs and like many spirit filled songs realised this year speak profoundly into our global situation. The song 'You're Still God' begins with 'when all foundations have been shaken' and concludes with 'you still reign and you're still God'. We have been shaken but the LORD is our rock who holds us. With these two songs comes the anticipation of a great new album. Philippa's last album released in 2017 is described as Country Gospel and includes popular titles such as 'Always on My Mind' and 'Million Flowers'.

**Note from the editor –** Thank you to all who have contributed to this week's issue of the Herald and thank you for reading. It really would be lovely to hear from you if you have a lockdown lookout story or news item to share. Perhaps you have read an inspiring book and would like to write a review in 100 words. Is there an Album highlight which you have found helpful in your faith journey and could share with others? If any of these ring true with you then please can I encourage you to get in touch. 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](mailto:Gareth.baron@methodist.org.uk)

*'Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given you the autumn rains because he is faithful. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before.' [Joel 2, verse 23]*



### **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