

Ripon And Lower Dales Circuit Newsletter

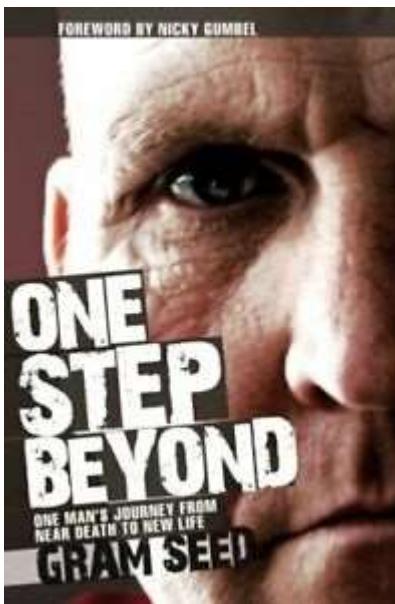
Welcome to this month's issue of the Herald. Our vision is to provide a helpful place for connecting with some of what God is doing across the Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit. To give voice to those experiencing the love of God in their daily walk of faith. To celebrate and share the good news of God's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

'Worship the Lord your God and serve only him.' [Luke 4:8]



Book review “One Step Beyond” – Gram Seed

Available from Amazon Books, and on Kindle.



In July 2010 I was on holiday in Cornwall, it was a time of rest and contemplation following the end of my time at Bible College in Oxford. Jane and I really felt that God was calling us to Middlesbrough and we spent many hours praying about all the “if’s and buts”. I had been given a book to read and this book would become one of the defining reasons in our eventual move to the town.

Gram Seed was one of those people who you would avoid at any cost, particularly at a football match. At over 6 feet tall, with hands the size of spades, intimidating is really an understatement. The book follows him through a life of crime, violence and alcohol. He was ostracized by society and his life almost ended on a bench outside his local shops. This untimely end was however, not in God’s plan, and coming out of a coma in hospital, Grams life would be transformed.

The book follows his life from childhood through to his amazing transformation into an evangelist and Pastor. You are guaranteed to laugh and cry at the many stories that are encountered through his life. Gram grew up on estate called “Whinney Banks” and it is that very estate where Jane and I moved to and spent seven wonderful years working with the many families that lived there. Gram now runs a charity called “Sowing Seeds Ministries” and we had the pleasure of working with him on several different projects. Reading Grams story will certainly be uplifting and encouraging, and I would certainly recommend it!

Deacon Nigel Perrott



Jane with Gram Seed at Trinity Methodist Church in Middlesbrough



Picturing something different, praying God's kingdom come.

I'm the kind of person who likes images and can imagine how something might look before actually seeing it. Sometimes this can be problematic. For instance, when I attended first aid training the course leader would often give examples of first aid emergencies and my vivid imagination would mean I start to feel a little queasy. Yet when I found myself faced with the reality of first aid situations, coped well and was not fazed by the sight of blood. However, being able to picture something can at times be helpful. Especially so when I am being creative, on the rare occasion I paint for example.

What about picturing something different in terms of how we see life and the world? Anyone who prays The Lord's Prayer will have prayed 'your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.' I wonder what comes to your mind and heart when you pray these words. I believe these words hold an expression of obedience to God and a desire to see values realized because of living by grace, God's kingdom rule. I have regularly talked with people about how being a Christian means we don't just look to the hope in the future, rather, we live in future hope now. Salvation isn't about when we die but about how we live, as Christian Aid put it in their slogan, 'We believe in life before death'.

During this last year we have had glimpses of what things might look if things were different. These glimpses have not all been good, far from it. Yet some have helped to provide a glimpse towards picturing something different. When the world of transport stopped creation awoke new, with reports of strange animal behaviour and sightings in urban settings. For some the slowing down, speaking with neighbours and valuing the more ordinary things of life raised questions of 'what was I rushing for again?' A revived appreciation for relationships extended globally with compassionate humanity seeking all people to access to the same salvation (as it's been put) of the COVID vaccine regardless of a country's wealth.

How might we see more than a glimpse? Might we picture something different as we pray God's kingdom come. Might we picture a world that doesn't accept homelessness, poverty, hunger, and desperation as a by product of the wealthiest striving for an economy which leaves many behind. Might we picture a world that doesn't push people to the point of protest before taking note or action. Instead, a world where people are noticed, are valued and our actions are sincere, even loving.

Might we picture a world that cares about climate change and about those whose lives are already being devastated. Do we dare imagine a world that is healed and shaped by God's kingdom rule? And will we dare to live it until we see it, 'your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.'



Worship Album Highlight - Kevin Max - Revisiting this Planet (November 2020)

There are 2 albums in the history of Contemporary Christian Music recognised as ground breaking. Only Visiting this Planet by the first Christian Rocker Larry Norman in 1972 is an absolute classic, taking Christian music out of the church and into mainstream asking Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music? Why, indeed? A couple of decades later in 1995, came DC Talk's Jesus Freak, widely considered to be the most influential album in this genre. So when Kevin Max, formerly of DC Talk, releases a cover of Only Visiting this Planet, that is real cause for excitement. Remaining faithful to and without undermining the spirit of the original, this Revisit updates the sound and feel of the album, adding typical Kevin Max glamour and flair. Its good, very good, but is it as good as the original? Well that's a matter of taste and no doubt age, but they are both superb and worth a listen.

<https://youtu.be/4V30260uj8g>

Review by Clare Nelson



Horse Racing & the Church?

When I first told people that I was going to be a chaplain at the race course in Ripon I had some different reactions, some positive and some negative. What on earth is a Minister doing wandering around a racecourse watching people gamble!

As a Methodist Deacon, my ministry is often beyond the walls of the church. To help understand this, I want to share the words that will be read at my forthcoming Ordination in June.

In his name you are:

- to assist God's people in worship and prayer;
- to hold before them the needs and concerns of the world;
- to minister Christ's love and compassion;
- to visit and support the sick and the suffering;
- to seek out the lost and the lonely;

and to help those you serve to offer their lives to God.

In order for me to carry out this call, there is a need for me to go outside the walls and meet people where they are. The racecourse in Ripon can often see thousands of people gathered together. My role is very much one of "presence", my bright red coat allows me to stand out from the crowd. I am often asked by those attending, what do you do? My answer is simple, "I like to chat, and I am here to do exactly that!"

You would be amazed at some of the conversations I have: everything from the sore feet of the security personnel, to someone who recently lost a loved one. A wander around the course will lead me to the stable canteen for a bacon roll and another chat with the stable girls and boys. These young people often live in isolation working long days and being paid the minimum wage. They love their jobs, however, many being young and also vulnerable. The racing industry takes welfare very seriously and as Chaplains we work with them in many courses. A chat over breakfast gives them an opportunity to share any worries and concerns they may have.

Some days at the circuit are “family days”, a petting zoo, bouncy castles, and a BBQ are provided to create a fun day out for the whole family. I often meet people from the local community, and it’s lovely to catch up with them. It is in these informal places that I am able to form relationships, and be able to share something of my faith with them. It’s not about inviting them to church, that comes much later.

So writing this short piece, I am also demonstrating, what it means to “hold before you the needs and concerns of the world”.

There are many needs and concerns that will be found on the racecourse as there will also be in the City Centre.

This ministry is not confined to those who are Ordained, and many Chaplains come from all walks of life.

Perhaps this is something that may interest you? Is God giving you a nudge! I will shortly asking for volunteers to join me, and if you would like further information, please feel to get in touch.

The past year for the racing industry, as with so many others, has been very hard. It has a huge financial implications to all the people associated with it. The catering vendors, the gate staff, the cleaners, the security, the list goes on. So do please hold them in your prayers as they hope to recommence in the near future.

Deacon Nigel Perrott



Let us continue to be a people of prayer.

God you are ever near when we are found in the wilderness or the fruitful orchard.

We come before you humbly in prayer bringing with love the needs that we see in the world around us.

We pray for our neighbours and local communities.

We pray for the hungry and those living in poverty.

We pray for the hurting and those living with wounds.

We pray for the environment and the effected by global warming.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen



You have 2 new message!

trypraying.

This month the ‘Try Praying’ mission campaign has launched across The Dales, Harrogate, Skipton, and other areas. With the aim of helping those who are seeking God, Try Praying is for those who are not religious and don’t do church. The aims of Try Praying are simple, it is an invitation for people to try praying.

Accompanying the banners are booklets providing a helpful resource for a 7-day journey. People wanting to try praying can visit the website or download the App too, and we can raise digital banners on the social media platforms we use. I hope as many people as possible will support the campaign in prayer. Our prayers are for both those we know by name and those we don’t know. Let us recognise that God knows everyone by name and loves all people.

When will churches reopen for acts of worship?

It is hoped that churches will be able to reopen their buildings for acts of worship at the end of May or June time inline with the government road map. As reported recently, delays are expected for the under 50's to receive their vaccinations which causes some concern, and we hope it gets resolved quickly.

The reasoning behind looking to the end of May and June for reopening is that it gives time for more people to have received their second vaccination which will help to keep everyone better protected.

The level of restrictions will depend on when a church reopens and so too will the ability of the circuit to resource a church with a minister or local preacher. Within the membership of the church, we have a high majority who fall within the high-risk group. Yet, everyone is vulnerable and at risk of contracting the virus. Local managing trustees have met and will be meeting remotely soon to consider the best way forward and notice of these meetings will be circulated through each local church. I would like to thank everyone for their continued care of one another. I would also like to thank those who have been faithfully circulating materials, those who have been involved in producing and facilitating worship at home services in all forms. May we continue with God in all we do.

Grace and Peace, Revd. Gareth

Circuit Phone Prayer & Reflection Call: 01765 530700 Calls are charged at a local rate.

The Prayer & Reflection will be updated weekly with a new prayer & reflection recorded by local preachers, worship leaders and Methodist Ministers from within the Ripon and Lower Dales Circuit.

Note from the editor – Thank you for reading this month's issue of The Herald. If you have an article, a book worth a 100-word review or a newsworthy story to share, please do get in contact on email: Gareth.baron@methodist.org.uk or **Could you write a Worship Album Highlight Review?** - Please email Graham at gpentelow@gmail.com

'For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.' [1 Corinthians 13:12-13]

FREE phone lines for prayers and news from the Methodist Church

Listen to a **prayer**: 0808 281 2514

Listen to the **President and Vice-President**: 0808 281 2695

Listen to **news**: 0808 281 2478



A Poem for lent inspired by Psalm 139.

'You Know' by anonymous

You are with me at my waking and at my sleeping,
You hear all that I say and know all that I see,
All the day long you are with me, and I look to you.
You know where I am and offer directions.
Even before a word is typed in my message,
You predict what I am going to say.
And whilst you may be smart,
No number of terabytes could ever comprehend the heights of God.
Apps can be helpful, but long before Bluetooth, WiFi or 5G, I prayed wirelessly.
How did this device get fixed to my hand?
I am not saying that Smart phones are the problem,
for all these habits have something in common.
Me.

Forgive me Lord, for Googling guidance before searching for heavenly information.
Forgive me Lord, for being glued to my phone, for not looking up and not calling home.
Forgive me Lord, for getting distracted by comic dog memes and TicToc antics.
Forgive me Lord, for not coming to you with empty hands reaching for You.
In your mercy I come to seek Your forgiveness,
For I know when you delete sin that it is gone.

Thank you, Jesus, for giving Your life for me, help me to live in a way that loves you.
Thank you for always being there with me, each day.
May You be the first in all I think, say and do.
To the One who knitted me together and spoke love before my mouth breathed air, be praised.
May my tweets, likes and posts reflect Your Glory.
Jesus may all see You added me and call me friend.
May all my life be clear for all to see that I follow You.