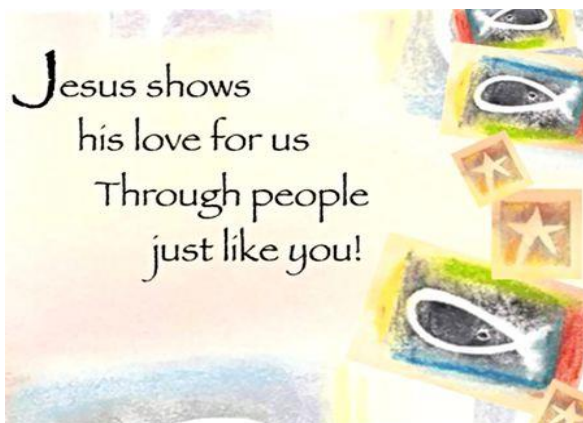


Note from the Editor

It's hard to believe I have been your Editor for a whole year now, but I would like to thank all "Roving Reporters" for your continued support and contributions because without you we would not have the wonderful publication we have each month.

However special thanks this month should go to Jayne, Rhianne and the rest of the Collinson family from Canada who over the past year have allowed us to share their Farming journey by writing every month for us. I know some of our farming community will miss the monthly updates from Canada not to mention the Collinson family here in England.

If you don't see anything in this issue of the Newsletter from your Church it probably means your Church doesn't have a "Roving Reporter", so if this is something you would be interested in, I would love to hear from you, my contact details can be found on the back page. The deadline for January's Edition is Friday 20th January 2023. Thank You – **Amanda Milner (Editor)**



Rev'd Gareth – Happy New Year, a reflection

Happy New Year. We wish this to each other year upon year and yet it remains but a wish. What makes a year happy? I wonder what we give priority in our lives. Is it financial wealth, or is it health or something else, such as finding a romantic partner. Priorities are different for everyone, but whilst those without money might wish for wealth or those in ill-health wish for good health, often it's beyond a person's ability to influence change. Whilst I am not suggesting we cease wishing people happiness, sometimes words are all we have, yet words alone do not always make a difference by themselves.

Across this country local churches and community groups will be continuing in the new year just as they were in the last. With the cost-of-living crises continuing and the ludicrously high energy costs, many need support. Foodbanks, community larders and warm spaces are some of the ways which support is given. Initiatives such as these have become a pivotal part of local communities demonstrating the difference people are able to make when working together. A tin of soup donated to a foodbank shows a level of generosity, like the widows' mite, this is given from all someone has to give. All those single items when brought together make the widows' mite a bag of hope for getting through the week for someone or family in need.

The new year is typically when Methodists hold covenant services based around the covenant prayer which was written by John Wesley and prayed by millions over the years. The early origins of what inspired John Wesley to pray this prayer was his and his fellow holy club members engagement in visiting workhouses, prisons and meeting the needs of those most in need. Yes, we can hear John saying, 'go not to those

who need you, but those who need you most.’ Priority for John was to identify and minister to those whose need was most. There is another common phrase, ‘a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.’ Can we really claim to be a wealthy country whilst people queue at foodbanks. Can we really claim all the achievements of advancements when people cannot warm their homes. When so many are facing daily struggles to have their basic needs met. If the nation was a chain, how strong are we?

The strength of love and care on the other hand is tremendous. People refusing to let their neighbours go without food or even without somewhere warm to spend awhile, all given to alleviate another person’s struggle. The strength of these community links is something which offers hope and encouragement. The volunteers who give of their time to run these community support initiatives are of all faiths and non. It is my opinion, that the volunteers demonstrate through their giving something of the love of God irrespective of their personal beliefs. God, who is with us, is compassionate. Jesus showed this through the numerous times he had compassion and reached out his hand, to heal, to feed the hungry, or even to turn water into wine. People who were at the edges or even outcasts of society, Jesus brought into the centre and showed them they mattered. When we do not ignore the needs of others who have been left to face uphill struggles alone, we show them that they matter too.

Stepping into 2023, may I wish you happy new year. May our priorities for the year ahead be those which God places before us and may we embrace the opportunities before us with the same love that God pours into our hearts. When we come to pray the covenant prayer, let’s hold it before us that we might live it faithfully throughout this coming year. Amen. – **Revd.**

Gareth

New Year Greetings from south of the Tanfield Bridge!

A January newsletter is a good time to reflect on journeys and encouraging signs around us on them. I can't believe come February; I will be halfway through my appointment in the Circuit. I'm not sure I've made much difference since arriving with Covid and illness and sabbatical leave and adapting to less staff in my part of the Circuit, but in sending you New Year greetings I am reflecting on the signs God may be at work around these parts...

Both the Ripon churches have opened weekly warm spaces. The numbers coming aren't large but to be readily open to provide help is a good thing. Allhallowgate are hoping to launch Messy Church in April.

The community larder at Boroughbridge on a Wednesday continues to grow. Since it opened nine months ago, ten tonnes of excess food from retail outlets have been saved from landfill.

Boroughbridge and Bishop Monkton are still in conversation with architects and funders to make improvements to their premises to be better equipped for community use. If anyone has any spare money let us know (!) Grewelthorpe also have adventurous refurbishment plans ahead. They are also seeking funding. A fabulous three course Christmas dinner was held in the village hall in December as part of their fund raising.

Dallowgill had a rearranged carol service on Thursday 22 December.

The chapel was full and there was a fabulous spirit as people requested their favourite carols and we sang some to very local tunes!

We've had two baptisms in the section over the last couple of months. Sawley was full for one on the last Sunday of October as was Bishop Monkton on the Sunday before Christmas. We are beginning to get into schools at last. I have regular slots monthly at Fountains and Grewelthorpe schools, occasional ones at Bishop Monkton and I'm working on contacts now with some Ripon primary schools. We are also beginning to pick up some care home services. This has been hard to start again post Covid and with Catherine moving north and Nigel moving south, I'm only now finding eight days in the week...

Kirkby Malzeard had their final Church Council in December. Members are transferring to Grewelthorpe or to Harrogate Road. We had a carol service in the mechanics institute, and we begin 10.30 worship in the lady chapel of the Parish Church on the last Sunday of the month beginning on 29 January. We are also starting a Wednesday morning fellowship in March.

I think the highlight for me of the last few weeks has been visiting a lady bereaved after her husband's passing after many years of marriage. It was good to suggest she might start coming to church. Our churches have things to help people, to give companionship and most of all to offer Christ. Knowing he is at the heart of all things; we begin 2023 confidently.

As the old hymn said:

"Resting on his promise, what have we to fear? God is all sufficient for the coming year." – **Revd. Ian**

What is it time to do now?

Everyone has different thoughts and emotions about the four seasons. Is winter darkness a time for misery or rest? Is summer sunshine a time for joy or merely heat and pressure? And what about spring and autumn? In some parts of the world the seasons are less marked than in the UK. Would you enjoy living in a place where all-year round everything remained more or less the same?

Read Ecclesiastes 3.1-13 and it suggests that our lives have seasons as well. And, like seasonal weather, these human seasons can be unpredictable. We may find ourselves in a 'time of building' where we are productive and fruitful, only to find that a sudden and unexpected time of mourning has come upon us. The challenge is to accept each season and seek God within it. It is tempting to assume that when we are in a season of despair or pain we have been abandoned by God. It is also tempting, when life is full of joy and good things, to forget that God is there at all.

So, the discipline of seeking God in every season – and not ever giving up – is surely an opportunity for growth. Sometimes we can rejoice that God is easily to be found; we shouldn't let such moments pass us by. To borrow Ecclesiastes' style: a time to pause and wonder, and a time to praise and rejoice; a time to dance and a time to laugh; a time to tell others about it, perhaps. There will be other times when we need a lot of perseverance to find God. But that steely determination to keep looking, whatever life throws at us, can bring unimagined blessings that may have passed us by if we had given up on God.

Remember, whatever season we are in, God is

faithful. Whatever we may be feeling in a particular moment, God is here, and God does care. In this new year, whatever time, or season we find ourselves in right now, let us commit to walking with each other through those seasons never doubting that God is faithful, and with us, and waiting to be sought out.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a joyful, healthy, prosperous and happiest new year ahead! Happy New Year – **Amanda Milner**

For everything there is a season, and a time for everything under heaven:

a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to weed what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones,
and a time to gather stones together;
a time to hug, and a time not to hug;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace. 🕒

What benefit have the workers from their efforts? I have seen the task that God has given to everyone to be busy with. 🕒

He has made everything suitable for its time; also, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live. It is God's gift that all should eat and drink and feel good about their work. 🕒



Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

Last Year – New Year

Time is something we like to measure, appearing to move slowly when young and faster when older. The years we measure in terms of good and bad times.

Have you ever looked back at time used, wondered what if, wondered should I have done? Growing up provides options and a need for decisions. Careers, marriage or not, where to live, children, schools, holidays or not. Many people say, “I wish I could play a piano.” If you’re serious, just do it! “Oh I’m too old, maybe if I were younger.”

If you like the sound of an instrument and would like to try it, you can without compulsion. The Bedale Band have a variety of instruments unused for you to try. They meet weekly in Leeming Village Hall and help beginners, young and older, Wednesday between 6.30pm and 7.30pm. After that the band assemble for practice. Why not make, “I wish,” happen in 2023 with help from friendly people?

December 2022, Stoller Hall attached to Cheetham’s School of Music, Emma Johnson clarinet, Martin Roscoe piano, Fenella Humphreys violin, Cara Berridge Cello and Ben Goldschneider French Horn.

They played Beethoven and Brahms voices from the 19th century and Vaughan Williams from the 20th century. The players were born in the 20th century, performing in the 21st century. Later Emma Johnson surprised the audience with a piece she had arranged for the quintet. It was the poignant song of a Ukrainian monk. Musical voices from across the world and across the centuries. Some spoke of pain and loss, some of romance, others of unrequited love. The final piece after individual solos and recalls to stage echoed each other playfully and with joy.

What was exciting and dramatically spectacular was a

conversation without words between the musicians. A glance, a facial expression, a simple nod of the head and the music danced between the players. It was an interpersonal joyful conversation in an auditorium. But the audience heard the interpretation of voices across the centuries and the present. The bodies of the musicians bent and stretched, nodded and shrugged, feet were lifted and torsos twisted. This is what the pitch and volume demanded as the composers shouted angrily and spoke tenderly over the centuries about unseen moments with deep emotion. All this touched the emotions of the listeners with joy and sorrow, at times invoking, a chuckle within and smiles without. Time was unimportant!

Afterwards, joyfully reflecting, a nod to holy ground, the burning bush, God's voice stating he is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Transfiguration, Moses, Elijah, Peter, James, John and Jesus. Later Jesus would say, I'm the God of the living not the dead. Last year, this year is of this world not of the Kingdom. God's presence is a Song without words, a time eternal, in every century, providing hope in the resurrection of the crucified Christ. Joy, love and peace to you as the Kingdom approaches in fullness, the music continues. Happy New Years eternal, brothers and sisters in Christ! -

Deacon David



Kathy's Corner

As I'm writing this piece for January 2023, I probably should be wishing you all a Happy New Year. But, are we really feeling happy as this new year begins? In January's Kathy's Corner for 2022, I asked you to look out for friends and neighbours struggling with rising costs – and talk to someone if experiencing them yourself. At that time I don't suppose any of us expected things to get as bad as they have for many. 2023 is not going to be an easy year.

So, it's definitely going to be a year when we need some good guidance, and we Christians have the best pathway to follow – a well-lit road, even if rather narrow, as Jesus lights our way. I recently came across a novel idea for us to think about at the start of this year on the Singing for Faith website. We Methodists do like to “sing our faith”, and many of us have favourite hymns we like to sing at particular times in our lives. But have you ever heard of a Compass Hymn?

Laurence Wareing explains: For many of us, hymns are a way of expressing what we believe and describing the kind of journey we want to be on as a Christian. As we prepare ourselves to enter another year, consider choosing for yourself a “compass hymn”. One that will see you through 2023, and maybe beyond. What is a “compass” hymn? It's a hymn or song that helps us set our direction; it will say something about the journey we want to be on.

Your compass hymn may not be the one you first think of. How have your “helpful hymns or songs” changed over the years? A song we frequently turned to as a teenager might have been very meaningful then but doesn't fit your life now. If we're going on a long journey, we need a reliable compass – one for climbing a few mountains, not just for popping out to the shops. So, you'll want your compass hymn to be a sound,

honest companion on the way. Our journeys can meander unexpectedly, and on occasions we'll feel like we've come off track. That's a good time to re-read the words of our compass hymn, and hum its tune (or even change it, if another hymn is now more appropriate or helpful)

I wonder what compass hymn is yours 2023? Let me know when you see me. Mine is StF 519

Father I place into your hands the things I cannot do.
Father I place into your hands the way that I should go
Father I love to walk with you and in your presence rest
For I know I always can trust you.

Kathy Lowrie



Vic's Monthly Musings

How time flies. It seems only yesterday that I was introducing my family in Canada to the readers of "The Herald". I am sure that you will all agree that Jayne, Rhianne and family have provided us with an interesting view of farm life in Ontario over the last twelve months. I have had very positive feedback, from readers all over the circuit, so I am sure that we have all eagerly followed their activities from month to month. As I have mentioned before "We all like to find out about how the other half live"

On behalf of all the readers of "The Herald", I would like to take this opportunity say a very big "Thank You" to the Collinson family for their dedication and competence in keeping us up to date with "Farming in Canada" and a special "Thank You" to Jayne, who has kept the communication ticking over. She has told me that they will be very happy to include an article from time to time, when some project of interest crops up.

I am now going to try and fill the spot with several articles that were passed on to me from a dear friend called John Bishop. John and I worshipped together at Kirkby Malzeard for many years. He would be the Mainstay of many of our Own Arrangements and he also wrote many little articles on the weekly notice sheet to help, encourage and sustain all the members of the congregation in their Christian Journey. He has now sadly passed away, but his son Roger has given his permission for these articles to be published in "The Herald." I am sure that you will find them interesting, entertaining and encouraging.

For want of a better title to these articles, I shall simply call them "Vic's Monthly Musings"

The first one is entitled:-

“Count your Blessings.....Things we should be thankful for....”

For the teenager who is not doing the dishes, but is watching TV,

Because that means he is at home and not roaming the streets.

For the taxes I pay,

Because it means that I have an income to be taxed.

For the mess to clean up after a party,

Because it means that I have been surrounded by friends.

For the clothes that fit a little too snug

Because it means that I have enough to eat.

For the shadow that watches me work

Because it means that I am out in the sunshine.

For a lawn that needs mowing, windows that need cleaning and gutters that need fixing

Because it means that I have a home.

For all the complaining I hear about the government

Because it means that we have freedom of speech.

For the parking spot I find only at the far end of the carpark

Because it means that I am able to walk and that I have been blessed with a car

For my huge heating bill

Because it means that I am warm.

For the person behind me in church that sings out of key

Because it means that I can hear.

For the pile of laundry and ironing

Because it means that I have clothes to wear.

For the alarm that goes off in the early hours

Because it means that I am still alive.

For weariness and aching muscles at the end of the day

Because it means that I have been capable of working hard.
AND FINALLY
For too many e-mails
Because it means that I have friends who are thinking of me.

Things, I am sure you all agree, we should be thankful for.

Wonderful News from the Circuit Finance Officer.

Our congratulations go to Diane Ashby and Lee on the arrival of their beautiful twin daughters Faith and Ava. Their family of three has become five with their son Sebastian, becoming a big brother. We pray that they will continue to know God's blessing upon them, and that Diane will have a wonderful time during her maternity leave. When the time comes, we look forward to welcoming Diane back to work and getting to know her growing family. For now, we send our love and hold you all in our prayers.



In our Hearts, Thoughts & Prayers throughout the year not just Christmas

Whilst visiting my Auntie last October, I sat down waiting for her as she went off to make a cup of tea. After a few moments I became aware of a single Christmas card on the mantelpiece. It seemed a little odd but wondered if it had been sent very early or extremely late or had another purpose of being there.

I got up trying not to make it too obvious as she was out of the room and in case she came back as I didn't want to draw too much attention to it and found it was signed by a good family friend called Betty. I sat back down wondering how tactfully ask 'Why have you got a Christmas Card on display in October?'. Curiosity did get the better and the reply I got truly played on the heart strings and blew me away.

During lockdown my Auntie and Uncle had walked along to St Hilda's Church in Hartlepool (I hasten to added when you were allowed to go for a walk!) and picked up a newsletter were they shared the idea that after Christmas you select some cards maybe from special friends or simply because you like the picture or people you don't see regularly and then put up 1 card on display for say a week at a time and use it to bring that person specifically to mind and include them in your prayers for that week. A beautiful but simple idea.

I personally think this is a fantastic way of keeping in our hearts, thoughts and prayers all year and not just when we get a Christmas card and well worth sharing hence doing so now with you. I have also read the idea this year in our local Parish

Magazine, wonder if they got it from St Hilda's in Hartlepool?

So if you visit my home and spot a card on display you will know it has a purpose and not the fact I haven't dusted since January and left it up!!! – **Amanda Milner**



Covenant Service:

Throughout January we will be celebrating a very special Service in the Methodist year, The Covenant Service in our individual churches.

At the start of the new year Methodists make a distinctive resolution and hold an annual Covenant Service, at which we celebrate all that God has done for us and affirm that we give our lives and choices to God. The New Testament suggests that as we join the group of those seeking to follow the way of Jesus, we respond to God's challenge with him and begin to share his relationship with God as Father. Within the group of disciples, this leads to his Spirit bubbling up in us as individuals, encouraging and enabling us to live out our side of the relationship (i.e., "writing God's ways on our hearts" as Jeremiah 31 describes the Covenant). The traditional Covenant prayer (shown below) makes it very clear that this affirmation is a serious one that embraces the whole of our life, in all its parts. You will be welcome, whether you are sharing in a Covenant Service for the first time, have done it annually for many years, or simply want to watch what others do without taking part yourself.

Methodist Covenant Prayer

I am no longer my own but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you, exalted for you, or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing: I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen. **From the Methodist Worship Book**

2002 – 2012

ROOTS

'I am no longer my own but yours...'

A study on the Methodist Covenant Prayer

I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;
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let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
exalted for you, or brought low for you;
let me be full, let me be empty,
let me have all things, let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours.
And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Methodist Worship Book, page 290.
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You can find another version of the prayer on page 288/289 of the Methodist Worship Book.

Background notes

Methodists hold an annual Covenant Service – a celebration of all that God has done and an affirmation that we give our lives and choices to God. It is an invitation for people to renew their covenant relationship with God. Most churches hold the service at the beginning of the New Year, but some hold them in September at the start of the Methodist Year.

The Covenant Service goes back to John Wesley's time. He wanted a form of worship which would help people open themselves to God more fully. In 1755 Wesley created such a service, using material from the writings of the seventeenth-century puritans divines, Joseph and Richard Alleine. Over succeeding generations the Methodist Church has made changes to the service so that it continues to be relevant to congregations using it.

The aim of the service is to help people hear God's offer and God's challenge; to provide space for God to prompt and for people to respond. Yet, more than this, for the Covenant Service is not just a one-to-one transaction between individuals and God, it is an act of the whole faith community.

Both the Covenant Prayer and Service are regarded as jewels of Methodism and one of the most distinctive contributions of Methodism to the Liturgy of the Church in general. Other churches are now discovering it and making use of it in their worshipping life.

Make connections

What God offers through the Covenant is a loving relationship. It is not a business contract set up between God and humanity for the provision of certain goods and services. Rather, it is the means of grace by which we accept the relationship God offers and then seek to sustain it:

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant ... I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. *Jeremiah 31.31, 33 (NRSV)*

These words are read out as part of the Covenant Service.

The focal point of the service is the Covenant Prayer (above). It embraces the whole of life, in all its parts. Most people find it quite tough to say this and really mean it. It is uncomfortable and challenging. It asks questions of our faith and demands that we examine our relationship with God.

The Covenant Prayer has been compared by some to a set of New Year resolutions, but ones that emphasise the importance of doing and being as much as believing. But more than that, the prayer represents a commitment to being a disciple and putting God first in our lives and in everything about our lives: what we do, what we say and who we are. It is both a surrender to, and a trust in, God.

The final few words are a gracious reminder: 'You are mine and I am yours'. We don't pray and live just in our own strength – but in God's.

Explore

Read through the prayer slowly, a line at a time.

- What jumps out at you?
- What would you find easy to say?
- What would you find difficult to say?

Think how it might apply to your life – the whole of your life.

- What things might God be asking you to stop?
- What might God be asking you to continue?
- And what new things may God place in your life?

Live in faith

Write down your thoughts in a letter to yourself. You may want to end the letter with a reminder of these words of Jeremiah: 'I will be their God,' says the Lord, 'and they shall be my people.'

Now put the letter in an envelope, seal it and address it to yourself (with a stamp).

Give it to a trusted friend and ask them to post it to you in six months time. It will be an encouragement and a reminder of your commitment, the prayer you pray and your journey of discipleship with God.

News from our “Roving Reporters” from around the Circuit

Snape - We have had a busy but happy Christmas time at Snape. We have had happy, and fun weekly practices for the last 2 months of a community choir for a Roger Jones musical, called Three Wise Camels. This was then performed the week before Christmas. A few children also took part, bringing in various gifts, Jesus, and building up a scene and reading a poem. Three narrators took the parts of camels, between the songs and it was a lovely evening. Sadly, due to the horrid bugs around we were 3 choir members and 2 children down, but we soldiered on.

During advent we had 3 camel heads that kept appearing in different people's gardens and then at chapel, and kept reminding people on Facebook as to where they were.

As the children were off school for quite a while before Christmas we organised a Christmas activity morning, where 16 children came along and had a fun morning of story, crafts, games etc. parents were then invited back for a while at pick up time to hear what we'd done, taste their ginger biscuits and have hot chocolate (with cream and marshmallows! 😊.)

We have had 2 nights Carol Singing around the village for Herriot Hospice and Tear Fund.

Andrew and Laura Gibson have recently become grandparents to Arwen Olivia Gibson, a beautiful daughter for their son Oliver and his wife Kathryn.

James Abel, son of Jackie and Jonathon Abel, recently married Liv Mortimer, so we wish them every happiness.

High Ellington - Our advent season has come and gone and by the time you read these festivities will be over and heading into a new calendar year.

Our advent consisted of 2 regular services led by Gareth Baron and Lister Baynes and our Carol service led by Linda Blackburn our congregation was somewhat depleted by sickness or other commitments, but our worship was a celebration.

Nearly all our regular members took part most by doing the many readings relating to the Christmas story but also we had a plethora of other items, we welcomed back Phebe from her studies who sung a duet with her sister Mary, Mary also accompanied with Guitar, Grace Barker who played Violin they played two pieces of music to help our worship. Other Musical items were played by Jessica Greensit one on her recorder and a second on the Flute and lastly our three youngest congregation members Ellie Greensit, Florrie Marsden and Jessica Greensit delivered a reading called “The Greatest Gift” with a very clear message behind it.

After the service we all enjoyed afternoon tea in the chapel which allowed us to share food and fellowship, something that is very important in all communities, and we have missed in recent years.

I wish everyone a Happy New Year and may God’s blessing be upon you and if you find yourself up our end of the circuit and we have a service pop in you will be most welcome.

Carthorpe - We began Advent with a meaningful Communion Service with Rev David Emison, we met in the back room, warm and cosy and a real time of Fellowship.

The 18th was our Carol Service which is preceded by Carol Singing round the top of the village then a Service in Chapel

at 7pm.

This year it was led by our local vicar and was much appreciated by a good congregation.

The singers continued in the very icy conditions and raised £650 to go to Yorkshire Air Ambulance and Friarage Hospital. Thanks to all who sang, decorated Chapel and provided the singers with supper.

We send our love and prayers to Chris Spence and John Foster who sadly were both were missing because of accidents. We wish you both a speedy recovery.

West Tanfield - We have been quite busy at Tanfield in recent days. Our first event was the Highside Singers concert on the 9th of December. It was an enjoyable evening. The choir sang a varied programme, and their conductor Keith Dale played some items on the organ, and it made a wonderful sound. He also told us something of the history of the organ which was interesting to hear.

On Tuesday the 13th the school Children were in the Chapel for their Nativity performance at :10 am and 2 pm. The very youngest in the school took part — such tiny tots!!! They were amazing. The Inn Keeper was so confident and had a big part. They all sang with gusto and the angels looked lovely as they danced and twirled to the music.

On Saturday 17th we invited people to come from 2.30 until 4 pm to enjoy time together with drinks and cake in the school room and make Christmas decorations or just chat We really had no idea who would turn up (if anyone at all!!!). We were so pleased that 4 young Mums and 6 children came. We had a really happy time. Marjorie a lovely lady came and showed us how to make boxes out of old Christmas cards and how to make cards. We also had craft kits from Pip and Catherine. An enjoyable time for mums' children and helpers.

Yorkshire Speak Their Name Suicide Memorial Quilt –



This memorial quilt will be displayed in Ripon Cathedral between 28th December 2022 and 30th January 2023.

The Yorkshire 'Speak Their Name' Quilt has been created by people who have lost a loved one to suicide, in their memory. There are 4 panels each with 48 squares, and each square as individual as the person they represent. Every person remembered has a Yorkshire connection. It has brought people together in a mutually supportive way. Together they were able to share their loved one's stories and 'speak their name'.

Locally Philippa Woodyatt (nee Gray), previously a member at Harrogate Road Methodist Church, has made a square for her son Joshua Woodyatt who died in 2021, age 19. He is the grandson of Claire Gray of West Tanfield Methodist Church.



The quilt square for Josh represents some of his many interests including astronomy, karate, lifesaving, Duke of Edinburgh Award and his online character of an otter. He was a talented young man studying physics with theoretical astrophysics at university and is much missed by family and friends.

The group works to raise awareness about suicide and help with suicide prevention.

They are accepting squares for the next Yorkshire panel.

If you are interested in making a square, please email:

yorkshire@speakt heirname.co.uk

or follow on:

www.facebook.com/yorkshirespeaktheirnameevents

www.instagram.com/yorkshirespeaktheirname

twitter@Yorkshire_STN

If you or anyone you know needs support, contact Samaritans on 116 123

Allhallowgate - has been a very busy Church over the past couple of months with its members busy in many outreach projects as well as Christmas plans.

We opened our Warm Safe Place on November 19th; a Saturday from 10am to 3pm. We chose Saturday to try and help families who had children at home and not at school as they are on a weekday. The numbers haven't been overwhelming so far but we have 2 mums each with a child coming every week, 2 or 3 other regular adults and a few 'drop-ins' over the weeks that we have been providing this service. Thanks are due to District for the financial aid that will pay for the heating and congregants who are manning this project and

making donations towards the food/drinks. Thanks also to Morrisons who are making weekly donations towards the refreshments.

On the 6th December 40 congregants went to enjoy a Christmas Lunch together at The Inn, South Stainley, It was good to relax together in each other's company.

Now decorating the church building for Christmas is almost complete, including the stable outside the front of the building for people to see as they walk up and down Victoria Grove and Allhallowgate Road. It's sporting 2 'Room for All' posters so spreading the message of our faith.

Ripon is offering many Christmas events. Last Saturday we went to the Ripon Choral Society performance of The Messiah with a sprinkling of carols. Apart from the fact that the cathedral was traditionally freezing it was a great production and a boost to the Christmas feeling that grows at this time of year.

Allhallowgate sends good wishes for God's blessing upon all our friends within the circuit and look forward to meeting you in the New Year.

**FREE WARM
SAFE SPACE**

**ALLHALLOWGATE METHODIST
CHURCH**

SATURDAYS

10am to 3pm

Drinks and light lunch.

Come and Join us.

Finghall - Hustle bustle, rushing around getting ready for Christmas.

Planning, shopping, choosing gifts, arranging visits, writing and sending cards (the task of the lady of the house) etc. Oh what a circus!

Well, that was then when the children were growing up.

Now, we wait for them to tell us what we are doing each year which makes things a bit easier for us. Age does have some compensations.

Here in Finghall we are still moving forward with the organising of the home group with Reverend Gareth's help.

After a meeting with him a few weeks ago we are now ready to go ahead with our meetings under a new name.

This is The Friends of Finghall Christian Home Group which means it is open to all Christians and others who may wish to come along. Leaflets have been delivered to each house in the village and people are invited to our first meeting on Saturday 17th December at Normans home at 2pm. We have already received positive replies from some in the village for this meeting.

**Held the first of these as I write and we had a good attendance too. Singing carols to music from Gareth's little wonder box and with prayer and reflections from the group, the fellowship was welcoming and good with refreshments. We meet again on Sunday 19th January at 2pm at Cynthia's home.

Our plan is to hold these meetings monthly with the venues alternating between Normans and Cynthia's homes and hopefully those of others in the group. All are welcome.

As always, and especially at this time, we live in hope.

Also there is a "Carols evening" in the Queens Head at Finghall on the 17th December to which the villagers are invited.

We look forward to these events. They bring us together in

spirit. Then of course there is Christmas!

And of course, the Christmas dinners, that various groups organise each year. Annual re- unions with lots of people, and old acquaintances seen only once a year. Already been to one in West Yorkshire. So many people and so much food and wine.

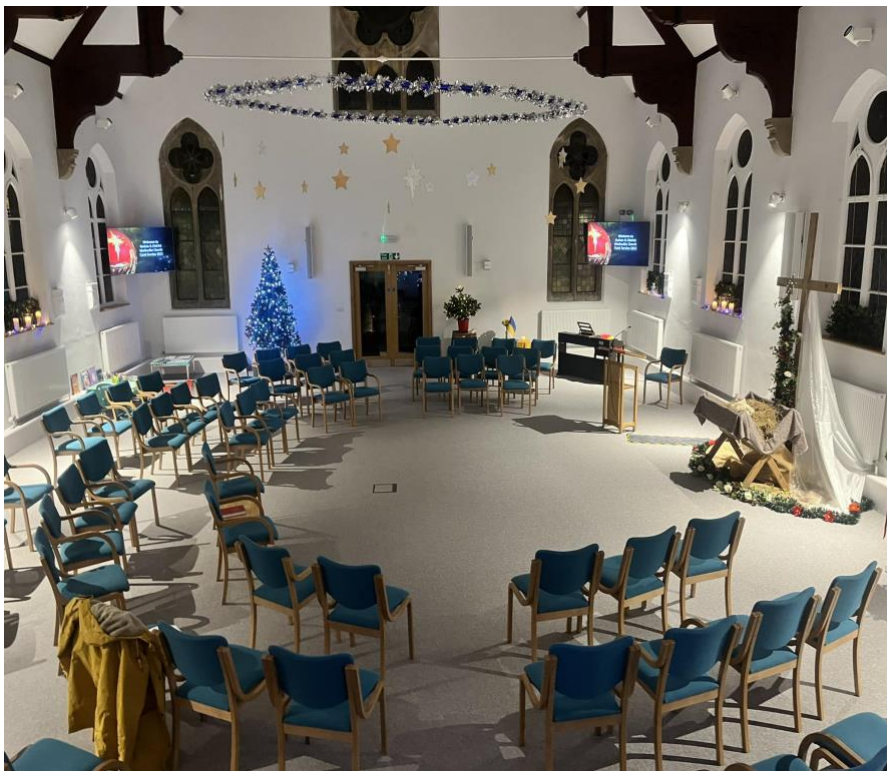
Some good, some not so good depending on the preparation. All of which fills our stomachs and sometimes overfills them! None of this however fills our lives with the joy, hope and love of that of the food and wine of which we partake in the service of the Sacrament, the filling of our hearts with the Holy Spirit from Jesus, whose birth we celebrate.

Blessings to all this Christmas and always from Finghall.

Bedale & District - What a fabulous time we had at our Lego Journeys Carol Service the week before Christmas. We told the story of Jesus' birth through the singing of Carols and listening to readings. Not forgetting the building of course...



Thirty-seven brave souls battled the freezing temperatures and the ice to sing their heart and souls out at our Carol Service... It truly was like a Choir of Angels 😊



Our Christmas morning service was led by the Revd. Gareth, and we were joined with others from around the Northern part of our Circuit to celebrate Jesus Christ The New Born King.

We also donated our building to the Bedale Town Council on Christmas Day, who had a team of volunteers who cooked and served Christmas Dinner for 40+ residents who were going to be alone or without Christmas dinner this year, there was a true community buzz in our building that morning

Prayer Page

God outside of time,
who is part of our past,
part of our present and part of our future.
As we begin this new year,
may we recognise and remember all that has gone before
and look forward to all that will be.
Jesus, our great Redeemer and Saviour,
who journeys into this new year with us,
we come to worship you.
Amen.

O Lord our God, how majestic is your name in all the earth,
you have set your glory above the heavens;
Lord of all eternity, mighty Saviour,
you have given us a time for everything.
We thank you for every season and time under heaven.
You created everything.
You have breathed life into all things.
We worship and adore you.
Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ,
there are times when we have not done as we ought:
a time to embrace, to reach out – but we chose not to;
a time to weep with others – but we chose not to;
a time to laugh with others – but we chose not to;
a time to plant – but we chose not to;
a time to build up – but we chose not to;
a time to remain silent – but we chose not to;
a time to speak up – but we chose not to.
Forgive us, we are sorry.
Help us to recognise the times we need to be present,

and the times we need to act.
Give us the courage to not walk away.
Amen.

Thank you, Lord, that for you it is always time to forgive.
We are confident that you have forgiven us and restored us.
You have made us whole.
You have made all things new.
Amen.

For the times when we are sick:
may we have healing.
For the times when we are isolated:
may we have company.
For the times when we are oppressed:
may we have justice.
For the times when we are exposed:
may we have dignity.
For the times when we are mistreated:
may we have humanity.
For the times when we are ignored:
may we be heard.
For the times when we ignore, or isolate,
or oppress, or expose or mistreat:
may we change.
Amen.

When life is hard, it's time to trust God.
When life is full of joy and fun, it's time to thank God.
When God seems far away, it's time to look for God.
When God is close, it's time to sing to God.
In all our lives it's time to praise God.
Amen.

As Jesus came to the river
to do what God wanted,
the Spirit came upon him
to show that God loved him.

Send us out from here
as your beloved children,
filled with the right attitude
to share your love with all the world.
Amen.



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Prayer Commitment by the Circuit Meeting:

- Pray for the Royal Family as they continue to mourn the loss of a mother, grandmother and great grandmother. We pray for King Charles III that God will enfold him, Christ will uphold him, and the Holy Spirit will guide him in all things.
- Pray for the World Day of Prayer Committee in Taiwan (World Day of Prayer 3 March 2023) as the world begins to look at their service. Pray that they start to feel the wave of prayer coming their way leading up to the Day of Prayer 2023.
- Pray for the Churches of our circuit who have lost their buildings; Melmerby, Finghall and Kirkby Malzeard as they seek to be new ways of being church in their communities.

Newsletter

If you know someone who would like to receive a postal copy of this newsletter, please let Amanda Milner know on 01677 427909 or 07805 623464, email milnera68@gmail.com. OR the Circuit Office.

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Please Check out the Circuit Website for Prayer Space, plus poems and resources from The District:

riponlowerdalesmethodists.org.uk – yorkshiremethodist.org