



Ripon & Lower Dales Methodist Circuit



January 2022

NEWSLETTER-
Issue No 25

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.

Waiting with God

Covenant Sunday

Note From the Editor

This is the first issue of the New Revamped Circuit Herald Newsletter.

I am taking over as the Editor of the Circuit Herald from Gareth and firstly would like to thank him for its creation of this Circuit Newsletter at the beginning of the Covid Pandemic.

I did something similar at Bedale & District Methodist Church encouraged by Dad to start a Church newsletter in the first place. Dad demonstrated his love for God by loving others more than himself; and his love and care for the Church Family in Bedale was so important to him so through the Lockdown's especially he kept telling me we needed to find some way to stay connected and suggested I start a newsletter – Who knew then we would produce 74 issues!

Dad's love, patience, understanding, wisdom, Christian faith, and his amazing sense of humour live on inside me. He has given me gifts that are more precious than anything in this world, and that's why I have volunteered to edit the Herald which will enable us to stay connected with our Circuit Family.

I am grateful to Kathy and Vic our regular contributors of the Bedale Newsletter who have supported me in this decision and am pleased to say they will continue to contribute monthly along with others from the various churches around the Circuit.

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 February's Edition is 21 January 2022.

Thank You – **Amanda Milner (Editor)**

Note From the Superintendent

Happy New Year everyone! I wonder how you are feeling about this new year we enter. Setting off into 2022 whilst still in a pandemic brings a sense of anxious uncertainty and recent years have taught that the world can change overnight.

Notwithstanding all the solemn reality of the world as we know it, we can look to the new year with hope. Furthermore, with the vast needs in the world we need to grasp hold of the hope God gives and invite others to take hold too. We read in Romans chapter five about why we have hope.

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance;⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope.⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

During the beginning of new year's, we traditionally hold covenant services, when we renew our commitment to our covenant relationship with God. It is not a prayer to be prayed lightly, and amongst other things about trusting God with an obedience to live out faith in all circumstances. It is faith lived dependent upon God and not dependant of circumstance. It is the daily pursuit of Christian discipleship as Christ's disciples.

Jesus calls us to follow Him and tells us to *'let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.'* Matthew 5:16 (NIV). With Jesus the true light within us, we can strive to be the children of God who glorify God. But what might this look like?

Over the course of a year, the witness and ministry of the life of the church sees many activities, copious meetings, various expressions of worship through the various acts of worship. We see things beginning and things coming to an end. All in all, we see a plethora of things which hold importance in the claim made on our time, energy, and resolve. In addition to all these things is the ongoing trauma of the pandemic. All this matters, but what matters most is not to losing sight of who we are called to be, followers of Christ, worshipping God with the whole of our lives. Let us hold fast to God who holds us, let us live out the greatest commands of loving God with our all and loving each other. Let this be our benchmark, that we would let our light shine before others, that they may see our good deeds and that we would glorify God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I pray this year will be a happy new year and that we gauge this on how we respond to the love of God made known in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. That we would seek to be Christlike in our response to the needs around us, which includes the effects of the pandemic, the climate crises, alongside the things of life that have always been. Let us by prayer and petition hold our communities before God and let us be the signposts of hope that all people need and have always needed. May the knowledge and love of God, guard your hearts and minds always as we faithfully follow the way, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Rev. Gareth Baron



Happy New Year

In 1992 Her Majesty the Queen referred to the year as an “annus horribilis,” a Latin phrase meaning ‘horrible year’ following the events in her family, and the Windsor Castle fire. For me personally, the events of 2021 were quite unique, as losing my parents 8 weeks apart, and the continuing global pandemic, has been quite horrible, I am sure quite a lot of us can also relate to a ‘horrible year’. Maybe this year the Queen would have extended her Latin words to ‘annus horribilis, populas multum’ (A horrible year for lots of people).

These are quite worrying times, but not times that are without hope. On one hand we have a new stream of the virus, and this one seems more contagious than ever before, and certainly in the short term it looks like it will impact the way we would choose to live our lives. Yet on the other hand the majority have received two vaccines and have probably received the booster vaccine as I write.

As we mark the start of a new year as Methodists, we are called to renew our covenant relationship with our Lord and Saviour, and whilst the year may have been horrible for lots of people, our covenant relationship reminds us that as Methodists we too are a ‘Populas Multum’ a wide group of people, gathered by God as his disciples on earth in community with each other. Our God offers us all a loving relationship. Together in Covenant we agree to serve each other in faith for another year. It is not so much about a relationship with God, but more about us living within the loving fellowship and relationship that God has already created and offered us through being a member here at Ripon & Lower Dales Circuit and the wider Methodist Church.

The good news is that for us, despite the ‘annus horribilis’ our covenant together means we have not been alone. Some words from Isaiah 43 v18.

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

As Methodists in covenant together we are called to respond to the gospel of God’s love in Christ, to live as disciples through our worship, our learning, our service, and our evangelism together. In 2021 our God was with us – our rock and Anchor. In 2022 our God wants us with him - as he seeks to make new ways through the wilderness and bring water to our barren desert lands.

May 2022 together offer us new hopes and new ways to serve as disciples of our Loving Lord – may we sow widely and faithfully and reap the great rewards he promises.

May Faith, Hope and Love be your treasures in 2022.

God bless, Amanda Milner.



News From Canada

There will be no more quizzes for the moment. I will just let my brain cells reorientate. However, my daughter Jayne, who lives in Canada, has offered to write a diary of their farming life in Ontario, which we thought might be of interest to our readers. This first one is an introduction, then hopefully over the next few months, we will learn more about the ups and downs of farming life over the pond.

Here we go-----

Every Sunday evening, pretty much without fail, Dad and I can be found curled up, cup of tea in hand, putting the world to rights. Him at 6pm, after the News, me at 1pm after lunch. We discuss everything that has gone on in our lives, the happy, the sad, the crazy and the downright bizarre! We make a point however, to try and stay off politics and to always end the conversation on a happy note!

A few weeks ago he started the conversation with, “I’ve got a favour to ask!” “Oh yes” I replied, not unduly concerned. He then went on to explain about the church newsletter and his idea to print the stories about life in Canada. After a discussion with the clan, who all rather liked the idea of possible celebrity status, we agreed it would be fun!

Rhianne and I, who both love fancy, posh stationary, decided it would be the perfect excuse to go shopping for the requisite posh notebook and pen to record our stories. We have a huge bookshop called “Chapters”, handily just up the road. Alongside posh stationary, pens and other accessories for the budding writer, it also has the obligatory coffee shop. After spending a very pleasant hour perusing, we both stood, posh notebook and pen in hand, looked at one another and said,

“So, what are we going to write about?” It was decided that we should introduce ourselves.

We are farmers, who emigrated to Canada in 2008. We live just outside London in Ontario, which is 2 hours southwest of Toronto. Unusually for Canada, where farmers tend to specialize in one enterprise, we have a very mixed operation. We have 1400 acres of crops, consisting of corn (maize in English), soybeans and hay. We fatten cattle, have sheep, 2 pigs (called Doug and Justin), I won't explain their names as it's political, 2 horses and Molly the Border Collie! This operation is run and managed by a team of accomplished family members, The Collinson-Pearson Clan. In short,

Marcus - patriarch, “voice of reason and wisdom”, his words not ours! He is the builder/repair man who also helps out in the cattle and sheep when necessary. He also imparts not always appreciated advice!

Dan - is the main crop and equipment guy. He drives all the major machines like the combine and forage harvester as well as seeing to all the equipment maintenance and repairs. He gets very upset with people who lose tools or don't grease their machines!

Chris - is our very astute cattleman. He does all the buying and selling of the cattle as well as overseeing the nutrition and vaccination programmes. Unfortunately for him, it means spending a lot of time standing and dealing with muck!

Andrew - is the newest member of the crew and has a passion, which his wife can't understand, for sheep. He is in the process of setting up a small flock of milking sheep, due to start producing in the new year. He is also a qualified HGV driver so drives our 53' truck/lorry.

Rhianne - has spent her entire life, proclaiming to anyone who

would listen that she is not a farmer and does not enjoy farming. Needless to say, she has now married Andrew, is living on the farm, runs the farm office and sees to all the bookkeeping. She still hasn't worked out how it happened! She describes herself as a "sarcastic putter out of fires", in other words a problem solver!

Posie - is our adorable granddaughter, who is 7 going on 17! She is full of energy, loves life and keeps us all entertained.

Then there's me, Jayne, Vic's daughter. I like to think of myself as the glue that works very hard to hold everyone together. So, in a nutshell, that's us. -----

Well, there you are folks. I hope that has whet your appetite ready for the next instalment in February.

NOTE FROM EDITOR – If you think it would be a good idea to write back to Vic's daughter Jayne and Family, please do get in touch with me and perhaps we could arrange for each Circuit Church in turn to write back each month and exchange news!



Kathy's Corner

When the first Lockdown began in March 2020, I was soon climbing the wall. No church services was bad enough, but I also couldn't preach, which definitely stopped me studying my Bible! Having a vulnerable husband, and even more vulnerable mother, proved extremely difficult when government rules said we had to stay at home. I couldn't shop for myself - or offer neighbours help. I felt quite useless. How could I continue to serve God from my home? It didn't seem enough to just phone or email folk. I did continue the weekly check on our Village Hall defibrillator at Leeming (where I'm Chair) – did you know they each need a guardian to check they are always ready for use? But I did feel frustrated.

Then Amanda (our new Herald Editor) suggested a weekly newsletter to send to our church members at Bedale & District, and Kathy's Corner started. My weekly musings of thoughtful reflections, prayers and the odd amusing comment - mainly due to my odd family! Most of it composed by our pond, where Malcolm and I spent much of lockdown, so my own sub-title was Preaching from the Pondsides. It kept me sane – and it was good to watch the wildlife in the garden, enjoying God's creation, but my words seem to have been enjoyed by our church family, so now the Circuit family get my waffle too! (Note to other preachers – Amanda would like to hear from you also!)

At the moment our pond is shutting down for winter, the pump turned off, the lilies died back, and the weed pruned (without nipping the pond liner this time). The fish are not so hungry, but enjoy basking near the surface when it's sunny – where we realise just how many we have, and the neighbouring cats look on longingly! It won't be long, though, before we face winter's icy grip, and I'll be standing, shivering,

and admiring frosty, icy patterns.

Lord, as we enter winter, with it's darker days and longer nights, help us to enjoy the cool crisp colours of this season, as we wait for Spring and brighter days ahead. Amen.

Blessings Kathy Lowrie



News from our “Roving Reporters” from around the Circuit

ADVENT D.I.Y. - On Sunday November 28th in Bishop Monkton Methodist Church a congregation of 29 people gathered to celebrate the start of Advent with a Christingle Service led by Linda Blackburn.

The service began with the lighting of the first Advent candle then, suitably masked up, we sang our hymns and said our prayers of confession followed by the gospel readings.

Then instead of receiving a ready-made Christingle and having the meaning of each part of the Christingle explained we each had to make own Christingle during the explanation of the meaning of the Christingle with various elements brought to our pews.

To each of us a ready prepared orange was brought to represent, and remind us, of wholeness of God’s world. Then a bright red tape to go round the orange as a recognition of the encompassing nature of God’s love for all of us. This was followed by four cocktail sticks, each with a sweet attached, that we positioned evenly round the orange to represent the ‘four corners of the earth’. Finally, a candle was fixed into the top of the orange.

At this point the lights in the church were dimmed and the candle on a single Christingle was lit from the first advent candle which then passed its light to a second candle and so the light spread across the church in representation of the ‘Love of God’ for the whole of the world.

The service then moved on to prayers for all those in need, whether near or far, before we closed with a hymn and blessing.

We all then gathered for a tea/coffee and biscuits, in need of refreshment after both our spiritual and practical efforts.

Worship in Finghall - At our Church Council meeting this November, we were discussing the future of our churches and a revelation, to me at least, from Reverend Gareth was that our Church buildings when built were not meant to last forever. Thinking about this later, I thought I might find out a bit about the Finghall Churches.

The first known mention of Finghall was in AD 788 when a synod was held at the settlement.

For over a thousand years, Christian worship has taken place at the small 12th century Church of St Andrews which is believed to be on the site of a much earlier Anglo-Saxon medieval village that was deserted when affected by a 16th century water borne plague. The villagers moved to higher ground, the current site of Finghall.

St Andrews, now outside the village still serves for Anglican style worship for the area.

The first Wesleyan Methodist Chapel was built in 1845 by the Jaques family, only a small building that is now a holiday let, yet on two occasions in the early 1860's a hundred people crammed in there to hear a charismatic young speaker called Silvester Whitehead. He was born in Aysgarth in 1841 and continued to serve in the Methodist ministry at home and abroad as a missionary and in 1904/1905 was President of the Methodist conference.

The little Chapel continued to serve Finghall as a Sunday school and was used by groups such as the Boy Scouts and Girl guides until 1940.

The current Methodist Church was built in 1909 and the named stones around the base of the building contain the names of those who donated to pay for the building at the time.

The building has served us well over time and when the inside was renovated and remodelled it became a place of quiet peace.

Though we have lost Church buildings over the years, many are still standing and serving our communities.

When Gareth made his comment, it brought home the fact that the Church is never a building.

The Church is an assembly of believers in Jesus Christ.

The building facilitates the fellowship, worship, and ministry of God.



J.A.M. at West Tanfield and North Stainley - Our small J.A.M.

(Jesus and me) team from West Tanfield, consisting of Gareth, Catherine, Barbara and Liz had a fun packed afternoon recently with the children from St. Nicholas Junior School. We shared this joyous occasion with our friends from St. Nicholas Church in Tanfield and between us kept the children busy with various craft activities, plus the story of the journey to Bethlehem related by Gareth with the children joining in, keeping the adults entertained as well as themselves with their various actions when prompted by Gareth. Normally we repeat the session the following day for the children who attend North Stainley school in their Village Hall but were unable to do so on this occasion due to an outbreak of covid.

J.A.M. has been online throughout the pandemic and this was the first time we have been able to be with the children, following which we received lovely feedback from parents via the school.

J.A.M. is a joint venture between the Methodist Church and C. of E. However, the Methodists are very much in the minority when it comes to “boots on the ground” so this article is also an appeal to anyone reading this who might have some time to spare, even on an occasional basis, to boost the Methodist numbers. Our planning meeting is held in Tanfield’s schoolroom a few weeks before we visit the schools so there is time to get everything organised, and the sessions are 3.30pm-5.00pm always on a Monday and a Tuesday approximately 6 times a year.

Please get in touch with Barbara or Liz if you would like to come and have a fun afternoon sharing the Christian message with some delightful children even if it is only on an occasional basis.

b.greensit@btinternet.com or elizabethelvy@mypostoffice.co.uk

West Tanfield were also delighted to be able to host the school nativity play again this year.

St James and the Methodist Church, Grewelthorpe - Epiphany Party 6th January 2022

On Thursday, January 6th, 2022, at 7pm, we will be holding our Annual Epiphany Party in the Church. Last year this event was run virtually!

This very popular event has been running for 13 years and is the opportunity for Grewelthorpe's musical talent to sparkle, along with clever, funny, or beautiful readings or any other talent that people would like to share.

In addition to the excellent entertainment, we also offer a wonderful supper and a glass or two of wine. What is more, there is no charge! (we do ask for donations). Please do mark the 6th of January in your 2022 diary or calendar. It would be great to see you.

Sawley Methodist Chapel – Sawley Chapel can be seen set opposite the Village green. Services begin at two, a time that Farmers all can do. At the door, stewards meeting all who come with friendly greeting. One thing about the folk at Sawley – you could not say that they sing poorly. To every hymn they lend their voice, and at the organ there is Joyce. She ably leads us in the singing, Praises to the Lord we're bringing. Whether Gift Day or the Harvest, baking at Sawley is just our best. So come, our members may be small, but we shall welcome one and all.



Bedale & District Methodist Church – November saw the launch of our Young Peoples work “Lego Jouneys” - what an amazing first session when 29 young people along with their families met in our Church. After making our own name badges, we talked about the Name which is above all names JESUS – “Immanuel” – God with us, and then found some creative ways to make Jesus’ plaques. Worship time with prayers and modern hymns, then homemade cookies and chat. What a wonderful way to build new relationships. What an amazing second Session we had too... Discovering and Exploring the Nativity Story, then building the Nativity Tableau in Lego.

Storm Arwen tried it’s best to put a dampener on the Bedale Christmas Festival but didn’t manage it at our Church! We had such a great time, we served bacon butties, hot drinks, and seasonal treats, whilst children enjoyed doing Christmas Crafts which led to the singing of “We Three Kings” A family challenge of Candy Cane Hoopla was a must before a visit into the main Church to see and hear about the Christmas Story and to have a photo taken in front of our Stable.



High Ellington Chapel - As my first piece for the magazine I will give a brief outline of our mission in Ellington.

We are a friendly country chapel located on the fringe of the circuit; our building is small as is our membership, but we make up with heart. We face the same challenges all small chapels face as regards to funds and resources and often think we are undervalued but in recent years that has not been the case when it comes to special services, we can fill our little chapel. The highlight of the year is Harvest Festival, this year we welcomed Kathleen and David Wood on the Sunday and even though it was with some trepidation surrounding Covid we had a house full (all masked) and still managed to sing some harvest songs with gusto. We continued with a harvest supper in Fearby Village Hall where we had the whole congregation plus some extras to enjoy food (something Ellington does very well) and fellowship, it's always a good to catch up with friends to join us as well as extended church family. Our celebrations continued mid-week with a service but this year we finally got to hear Thornton Watlass choir, who we booked 2 years ago, led by my old RE teacher (I left school in 1990 it was a very enjoyable evening and another full house and again we served food after. Our next big event is the carol service that we are planning now but when you read this will be all over for another year.



Snape - We had a lovely Village Carol Service, entitled “Through the eyes of a child” Children from Sunshine Corner Club and connections with chapel were recorded giving their answers to questions, such as, what happened in the stable, what gifts would you give Jesus today, and what is the best thing about Christmas etc, these were interspersed with biblical readings and the community choir and music group. It was a lovely evening, all able to take part, while also taking restrictions to make everything careful with Covid. Thankfully we have some clever people in church when it comes to technology.

In the New Year we are having a month of themed preach and studies, where we can focus more closely together on part of the bible.

After the upset of the last few months, we continue to search God’s guidance for us all during this coming year. We really appreciate our weekly prayer meetings.

God’s richest blessings to you all during this coming year.

Masham - Chapel decided to have a spur of the moment Jumble Sale.

We had some really nice things donated, and we thought we would do well. At the end of the day, we were all a bit sad that the takings were not as good as we had expected, but it didn’t stop there.

Over the next few days donation after donation trickled in. Some

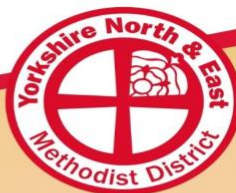
things were even taken to try on **ebay** and sold well.

Eventually we discovered that the final takings matched and covered the latest repair bill we had for the Chapel roof.

EXACTLY. We couldn’t believe it and didn’t think it was a coincidence.

LESSON: Don’t give up and despair too early - wait for the right time.

Thursday evenings weekly
Zoom and Facebook
6:30 pm



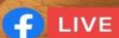
Praying Together Online

Weekly evening prayers facilitated by the district



REVIVE US, LORD, AGAIN

Starting 6th January 2022
Available on Zoom and Facebook
(with facility to watch back later)



The **Methodist** Church 

**A PRAYER GATHERING FOCUSING ON SEEKING
GOD'S RENEWAL FOR OUR LIVES, CHURCH, AND WORLD**

Starting on 6th January, at 6.30pm!

A few weeks ago District Chair, Leslie Newton, suggested we begin a regular online District prayer gathering. It was encouraging to receive much positive feedback. So, from Thursday 6th January, we'll be hosting a weekly online time of prayer – focussing on seeking God's renewal for our lives, church, and world. We'll begin at 6.30pm for about 45 minutes.

Prayer Page

Incarnate God, after yesterday's joy and celebration,
we may feel drunk on the treasures you have given us.
Today we breathe, and ask: while we were so busy celebrating...
What did we miss? What did we fail to see or hear?
What did we fail to feel and sense?
In the time we have together today, Lord,
show us the treasure we may have missed.

Amen.

As church bells rang Christmas in;
as organ notes echoed from within sacred walls;
as guitar chords searched for joining voices –
we raised our eyes to the heavens.
Now, in the dawning of a new day,
we see your wisdom and your love,
your teaching and your care.
Paternal God, we raise our voices once again,
and lift our eyes above yesterday's shuffled lists.
Instead of sparkling Christmas lights,
the flaming Spirit's fire we seek.
As shepherds and wise men bowed before the manger,
so we bow before you now, in deepest adoration.

Amen.

As Christmas turkey gets used up and fridges surrender their
scraps, as letters to ancient aunts are written with our thanks,
as dustbin sacks burst their seams and cupboards heave with
excess, so, God incarnate, gift for each one of us,
our failings and our faltering steps we now confess,
and seek a peaceful tidy mind to see afresh the gifts we have,
and how we can offer what you call us to give of ourselves, to
others. **Amen.**

We pray

for those who, like Mary and Joseph, have suffered the trauma of their child going missing –

Lord, comfort, and reunite them.

For those whose sons have been taken to be child soldiers in places of conflict –

Lord, comfort, and reunite them.

For those whose daughters have been taken and abused in places of brutality –

Lord, comfort, and reunite them.

For those who have become separated when they have fled from places of danger –

Lord, comfort, and reunite them.

For those who do not know where their children are –

**Lord, comfort, and reunite them,
for love's sake.**

Amen.

Praise to you, Lord God, for the care of Jesus' parents.

Praise to you, Lord God, for his family and friends.

Praise to you, Lord God, for the nurturing and teaching he was given.

Praise to you, Lord God, for your unending, enduring guidance.

Praise to you, Lord God, for calling us to be your people.

Praise to you, Lord God, that we are people of faith.

Praise to you, Lord God, for the names we read and the faces we see and the lives we share.

Praise to you, Lord God, for ever and for ever.

Amen.

Wise and loving God,
you have used prophets and teachers, young and old,
to teach us more about you.
Help us never to stop learning,
and to grow in wisdom, as Jesus did, every day.

Amen

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Prayer Commitment by the Circuit Meeting:

- Please pray for Victims of abuse throughout the World
- Pray for those Churches in the Ripon & Lower Dales Circuit as they hold pastoral conversations on whether to make their buildings available for Same Sex Marriage.
- Pray for all those leading our Circuit and Churches, that it will be in line with God's will, as we come out of the Pandemic.



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

Content is updated weekly

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