

AROUND THE DALE

The Newsletter of the Calderdale Methodist Circuit

Number 25

July 2021

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In September 2017, Linda and I joined Calderdale Circuit on its journey with God in the churches and communities that make up the Circuit. During the last four years, it has been a journey of change within the churches and the staff. Several churches have lost members who have been active in the life of the church, staff have moved on to new appointments or retired.

The Bible includes many stories of journeys. Abraham, the Israelite Nation, Jonah, the disciples, the two disciples on the way to Emmaus just to mention a few. Each of the journeys involved challenge, change and growth. Some of them knew where they were going, others did not. One thing that is clear in all of this is that somehow, God was involved.

Each of us is on a journey. It started from the moment we were born. Some of us know where we are going, some of us just wander around hoping to find a destination. Linda and I have journeyed alongside you for the past four years and in a short while our paths will separate. During the time we have been together sharing the journey with you we have been challenged, changed, grown, loved and cared for through the numerous things that we

have shared. We hope that you feel the same about the time together too.

Since March 2020, Calderdale Circuit, along with the rest of the country, suddenly hit the brakes and the journey took a new route. When we could no longer worship together in our churches, new ways of connecting to each other and caring for each other began to be set up. Even now, 18 months later, we are still learning how to do these things effectively.



The Pastoral Care system so precious to Methodist Churches, has been the central pillar of keeping us aware of each other's needs and communicating what is happening. It has been vital to those who are not technically minded and only know the term 'zoom' when referring to a camera or binoculars!

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I have been moved on several occasions when I have been told of the little things people have done for others on the long journey in isolation.

Parting on a journey is often hard, the two disciples did not want Jesus to leave having felt their hearts burn with what he shared with them. He stayed a little while longer but when they finally recognised him, he disappeared because he knew that what he had shared with them would stay with them forever.

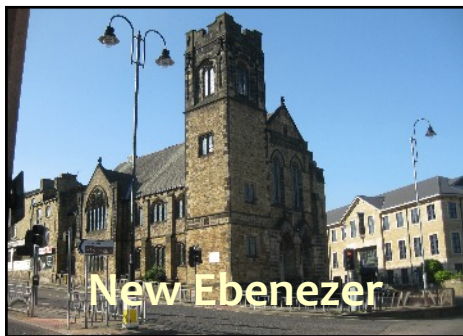


I pray that what Linda and I have shared with you will also stay with you forever and that you will share what we have experienced together to help you grow and reach out to those God brings to you to care for.

May God's blessing be upon you as you continue your journey until we meet again.

Yours in Christ

Rev Terry Keen



In spite of a challenging year for everyone we would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone for supporting New Ebenezer. Over the past year, the facilities at New Ebenezer were able to remain open to continue to provide premises for the Food support Drop in, so that they could distribute food in a time of crisis. Please see our New Ebenezer newsletter about the building improvements and the activities that have taken place over the past year. Please contact Angie Ross newebenezer2019@gmail.com

The latest news is that a new town wide collaborative Youth initiative will be starting very soon in September 2021 at New Ebenezer. The youth group will be called **OFFLOAD** and is working in partnership with the national charity Urban Saints. Urban Saints will be providing training and support. If you require any further information or would like to take part and help in anyway please contact Kanaya walker: hccyouth2021@gmail.com

A letter from Paula Prosser

Dear Friends,

in one sense I cannot believe that I am writing this final letter as I didn't expect to be leaving so soon. When I became the Pastor at Boothtown and Southowram I thought that I would be there until I reach retirement age.

At the end of October one of my sisters was found dead, this was a complete and utter shock. My life changed that day, I realised that life was precious and fragile more than I had ever thought before. I began to reflect about my life, could I carry on giving as much as I had been doing, when it was me who was needing support and comfort at this time.



In January Steve took early retirement and it made me think about it even more especially as he's not well. It hasn't been an easy decision to make, as I love the work I do, but after a lot of prayer and support from family and friends I made the decision to take early retirement.

I have worked in the Calderdale (previous Halifax) Circuit for 16 years and I have loved my work. I believe it has been the fulfilment of my calling even more so when I became the Lay Pastor at Boothtown and Southowram. In 1994 I went to Cliff College for a year, to see where that would lead me as I felt God calling me to ministry of some kind. It was while at Cliff I met Steve (it was dislike at first sight for both of us) love blossomed in the last few months of been there and we got engaged on the last day of term. Next month we will celebrate our Silver Wedding.

When I first started working in the Circuit our daughter Sarah was nearly 6, she is now married with 2 children of her own. I remember when I first started work, she would often say 'are you eating or drinking today?' Friday's it was lunches at Illingworth Moor and Coffee Morning at Boothtown on a Thursday.

My roles within the Circuit have changed over the years, but up until Covid Friday was still an eating day and Thursday was a drinking day.

Over the years I have worked in Northowram, Boothtown, Illingworth, Southowram, Illingworth, and Mount Zion. I have met, listened, and spoken to many people and walked alongside many in the community who don't come to Church but have needed help and support, showing God's love in
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action. Sitting on a seat outside a supermarket listening to people and them thanking me for listening to them. Going out into the community with Busoasis and sharing together and getting to know people, this led to the first service on Busoasis.

Going into the sheltered housing complex and listening to them say we used to have a service but some weeks there were only three of us, so they decided not to come again, I said I would do a service for them and so Sharon and I started doing services for them along with lots of other things with them.

I have enjoyed working with children over the years, in Toddler Groups, Craft Club, Messy Church going into BB and GB, the Victorian Days at Mt Zion, working in schools as part of the team delivering 'Open the Book' and Sharon and I have done Prayer Spaces with Years 1-6 and the 'Unique Course' with groups of Year 5 & 6 girls.

None of us know when we talk and listen to people what effect that we have on them, we may never hear how our words and actions have helped people, the main thing is that we have been there for them.

I have made many friends over the 16 years, I have worked within different Staff Teams and Leadership Teams, there is one person who has been with me from the start, Stella Christie. I remember going on our

induction course together, and over the years to the Connecting Disciples conferences, Stella was always the driver and knew all the best places to stop for Coffee and cake on the way down.

Those who know me well know that I am hopeless at reading maps and even listening to the Sat Nav, so have got the driver lost on more than one occasion but we have always reached our destination.



As I reflect on the last 16 years, I give thanks for the friendships I have made, for the new things that I have learnt over the years. There have been frustrations but that is normal in any job.

I am looking forward to my retirement and spending more time with Steve, Sarah, and her family. Steve has ideas I will be helping him more at the allotment but I'm not sure about that!! I hope to spend more time doing the hobbies I enjoy and maybe find a new one. Hopefully going on plenty of holidays and visiting more place around the UK some of them may be on the back of Steve's motorbike.

Thank you for your support love and prayers over the years.

Every Blessing

Paula

Revd Dr Martyn Atkins came to Christ Church on Sunday 30th May and led a 2 p.m service. Martyn preached at many



of the online services from Central Hall Westminster in the first lockdown and he inspired us greatly. It

was wonderful to listen to him in person before he travels to the States.

We were delighted to find out last year that we had won the Lower Valley Staying Well award for our activities at Christ

Church. Originally a Celebration Evening has been



planned when all 10 awards would be presented – but, alas, that idea was shelved as lockdown arrived. Instead Staying Well organised for a film maker to visit each low key award ceremony. So a few Friday's ago we set up a small Kurling match with Sheila, Geoff, Carol and John Widdop. John, the

photographer, clicked away as the tightly fought match was played! Then Rachel Swaby, from Staying Well, presented the beautiful award to Cathy. More Clicks!! John took a few 'sound bites' in a conversation with Cathy about our activities and how we think it's so important to serve our community and to show God's love. We look forward to catching a glimpse of ourselves when the film is finished. Thanks to all who support our activities – we hope we'll be up and running again before too long.



Methodist relief and development

This year we are helping the people of Butagaya in Uganda, with the *Change Begins with a Bicycle* campaign. A local partner provides bikes to members of this rural community, enabling them to access places such as schools, health facilities and markets. During Uganda's initial lockdown public transport was banned – including 'boda boda' motorbikes, which many of the community rely on to travel. FABIO, All We Can's local partner, provided regularly sanitised bicycles to more than 1,200 households as part of their emergency response.

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This meant that Tapanensi was able to get the health care she needs, reaching the hospital, getting regular check-ups and accessing her vital medication. A bike also saved Kambeda walking 8km to the medical centre when she went into labour.

Good As New

Following the latest Government announcement, we are now looking forward to reopening the Good As New at the beginning of **August**. At the moment we will be only opening on Wednesdays. A small team are meeting on Mondays to get everything ready so Phase 1 is up and running. Now we are looking towards Phase 2, Wednesdays, and willing helpers to serve and chat to our friends who come along to the Good As New.

Do you know that a simple "hello"
can be a sweet one?
I received one recently from my friend
in a mail she sent to me.
Here's what she wrote:

~

The word HELLO means :
H=How are you?
E=Everything all right?
L=Like to hear from you
L=Love to see you soon!
O=Obviously, I miss you...
So, HELLO!

It has made me smile every time
I say hello since then....
So send this message to the people
you care about and say hello to them.

Sama

Jesus looked across the table and asked "So, where have you been these last few months?"

God replied "I've been all round Yorkshire".

Jesus was shocked. "There's been a pandemic for a year and you've been in Yorkshire! What were you doing there?"

God smiled and quietly replied "Working from home, son, working from home".



Did you know?

Did you know that if you insure your home, buildings or combined policy with **Methodist Insurance** you will receive comprehensive cover you can rely on and also they will give you back 20% of your first year's premium to donate to the charity or church of your choice? www.methodistinsurance.co.uk/home or telephone 0345 606 1331 quoting MDL21

Brighouse Central

As summer gets into full swing we look forward to further easing of restrictions and engaging with our church family on a more personal level. Over the past 17 months meetings and small groups have continued to meet virtually as have our church services which have been live-streamed through Facebook. For many of us it has been a learning curve in technology!



The Music Group have given tremendous support to enhancing worship with their contribution to music, both singing and playing every week, and for this we are most grateful.

As our 'in person' worship began again in May we have welcomed some of our worshipping congregation back into the worship centre. Still very strange with social distancing and face

coverings but we are making small, steady steps. I think everyone is so looking forward to having a 'good sing' in true Methodist style. Communion has been held, albeit differently, but this has been quite an emotional experience for many people.

It has been a joy to welcome back some of our young families and young people. Activity packs have been put together to engage the younger ones as they sit together at back of church engaging in their 'bubbles' with their Junior Church Leader. We are looking forward to seeing a display of the activities they have worked on and crafts they have produced. It has been really lovely to hear their excited chatter throughout the service (which we have now reduced to 45 minutes). On Saturday 4th July we look forward to sharing a church family picnic at the rear of Wesley House in the recently renovated garden.



A working group have done a fantastic job in cleaning and tidying paths and gardens around the outside of church,
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including Wesley House, and we now have a lovely space where we can come together, staying in our own family groups but yet being together. Our thanks go to our Children & Families Worker Jodi for the work that has gone in to organising this.



The work of the Food Bank continues to support those who are struggling to cope, supplying them with food parcels and essentials as well as providing a listening ear. Time has been willingly spent in transferring the stock of Food Bank into newly decorated rooms in Wesley House which becomes their new home, giving more space and a contained unit for their work to continue.

Finally, as our Circuit Superintendent Terry and his wife Linda draw their time in the Calderdale circuit to a close we wish Terry and Linda every blessing as Terry takes up a new appointment in a new circuit, not too far away from us. We are very grateful for the service he has given, both to the circuit and to our church in Brighouse.

We also remember in our prayers Rev

Mark and Rev Colin who jointly take on the acting role of Superintendency of the circuit in September.

We wish all our sister churches in Calderdale every blessing. Post Covid is going to be a challenge to us all but united in Christ we move forward in faith.

We hope you all manage to enjoy the remainder of the summer months in whatever you have planned.

Susan Yates
Senior Steward



Every Wednesday from 4.30pm
Reflections with Jodie

Every Friday from 8.30 am
Time for God

find them at
www.facebook.com/brighousecmc/

Highgate

On Sunday June 6th we had the great blessing of being able to join in the service of confirmation and reception of two new members at Highgate, Mr Trevor and Mrs Linda Eastwood. Linda and Trevor have worshipped at Highgate for several years now and have already become part of the family. We are delighted that they feel able to make this commitment.



We also welcomed back two of Highgate's founder members, Dorothy and Philip Young, who are returning to Highgate after a time of worship and service at Salem, where Philip has been organist.

June 6th was also the last Sunday that Peter and Kathleen Melling would worship as members at Highgate (although we hope they may be able to return as visitors in the future). Kathleen and Peter have moved to Humberston near Cleethorpes. We shall miss them very much.

Kathleen has been our Worship committee convenor and under her guidance we have benefited from

themed preaching in Lent and Advent and have had our special preachers for Harvest Festival and Church Anniversary booked over a year in advance. Kath has also been a Pastoral Visitor- this as well as her uplifting preaching for us and in the circuit.

Peter and his guide dog have been regular members of the congregation and it was a great blessing and an answer to prayer to see Peter well enough to come to worship after his recent critical illness.

During worship Rutter's 'The Lord Bless You and Keep You' was played and a series of photos of Peter and Kathleen was displayed on the screen.

Add to all this, the fact that this would be Linda and Terry's last but one service with us. -the last will be July 4th, and you will understand this was quite an emotional morning.

The gospel was from Mark chapter 3, the passage where Jesus mother and brother's come looking for him and Jesus says that those who do his will are his mother, brother and sisters. In his sermon Terry reminded us that when we belong to the Christian church we are part of the wider church family and when we move we just go from one part of the church family to another. Where ever we are we are in the care of our Heavenly Father.

It was so uplifting to be able to take part in the service of confirmation and
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reception into membership, and to have this chance to re-affirm our faith along with those who are becoming members.

'Do you turn away from evil and all that denies God?'

'Do you turn to God, trusting in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and in the Holy Spirit as Helper and Guide?'

These are questions put to those becoming member, who answer 'By the grace of God I do'

The congregation then promise to maintain the church's life of worship and service so the new members can grow in grace and in the love of God and of his son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Linda and Trevor were presented with a parallel The Message and NIV Bible and a holding cross each.

The service concluded with Holy Communion.

Goodbye

By the time this goes to print we shall have said goodbye to Linda and Terry at Highgate, although Terry will still be in the District. We have been inspired and helped on our way by Terry's preaching in church and on zoom. He is the first minister we have had for many years who has regularly led a Bible Study for us in the church vestibule and this has been much appreciated. We have learned a bit about Terry and Linda's life as we shared fellowship on Tuesday afternoons at Tuesday

Fellowship. We shall miss them and offer them our prayers for God's blessing as they move on to what we hope will be a quieter life.

Some other news.

For several years now a community group called High Five has held many of its classes at Highgate. At about the time of the first lockdown the High Five committee regrettably decided that due to lack of committee members they would no longer be able to function as they had been doing, so sent closure notices to all their members.



However several of the group tutors were still keen to be able to run their classes when restrictions allow, so after consultation with ex committee members, Highgate has taken over the oversight of the groups. Letters have been sent to past members of High Five asking if they would still be interested in joining classes and so far there has been a positive response.

Plans are under way now to open classes when we are able ranging from gentle exercise to Scottish Dancing and a singing group. All attending the newly named Highgate High Fivers will receive notification of events and worship at Highgate. We believe God has given us this opportunity to offer a service to our community and we are pleased to be used in this way.

Linda and Trevor

St Andrew's

Summer 2021 is here and since the 'Pandemic Rules and Regulations' have been eased a little, each Tuesday afternoon St Andrew's have held an open air get together in the Church garden where friends have been able to meet to chat together, play games (of the sit-down nature) or have just enjoyed being in the company of others.

Our Church Services are up and running and have been well attended and we thank all involved in the smooth running of these socially distanced services from the visiting preachers to our Covid friendly officers... all are waiting patiently to raise the roof once we can sing again and make that 'Joyful noise unto the Lord'. What a time of celebration that will be.



Our Services continue to be Zoomed each Sunday and all those who have not gone back to Church yet are more than grateful to those who make this possible despite the Internet link not being good in the Skircoat Green area and which often causes quite a headache for our techie folk.

Once again knitting needles have been



working hard with folks doing 'traffic light knitting' for the special care baby unit at Calderdale Royal Hospital plus lots of baby clothes for premature babies and smoothie' knitting for Age UK, everyone has been so generous with their love and work for others in our local community.



The Church Development Team have been quietly working very hard all through the Covid Pandemic and things progress slowly and surely as we continue to work towards the reality against the dream of a new Church building on our present Church site on Huddersfield Road. We continue to trust the Lord to help us achieve our hope for the fulfilment of our plans.

We have continued to display our Candles of Hope picture in the Church

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window and Stella, Leah and Patricia have battled against rain, snow, wind and very noisy traffic on a Sunday evening as they have delivered our weekly ‘Light out into the Community Liturgy’ each week and we thank them for doing this on behalf of the St Andrew’s Church family.



Fund raising has continued on a much smaller scale during these past months through Quizzes, a socially distanced Plant Stall with another taking place soon and we are praying for fine weather and lots of witness from an alive church planning for a future to share the Good News with those of our local community. We are very grateful for the opportunities we have to do this.

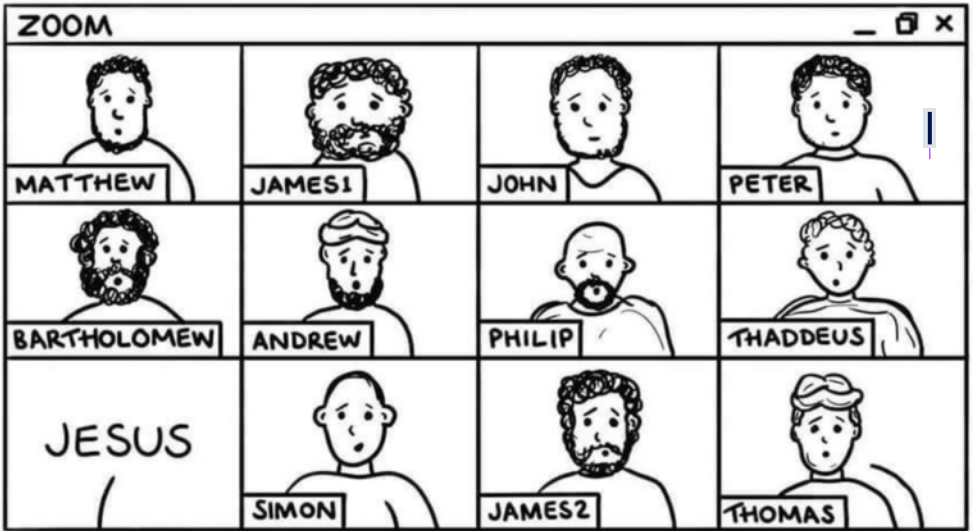
We are pleased to say that our Monday morning Toddler Group has recently reopened with Covid friendly rules and we look forward to being able to open up more of our Groups to our folks before much longer.



Sadly it is almost time for us to say ‘Goodbye and thank you’ to the Revd Terry and Mrs Linda Keen as they move away from Halifax to take up a new role in another part of the Yorkshire West District. We will miss them both and thank them for the wonderful contribution they have made to the life and work at St Andrew’s and in the Calderdale Circuit over the past four years – we will remember them with love and pray they will find happiness and fulfilment in their next appointment.

We wait with baited breath and some trepidation to see if Covid related rules and behaviours will be finally relaxed but we continue to thank the loving Lord for making the last eighteen months bearable and thank Him for the love and many kindnesses that we have received from our Church Family friends during this time and look forward to putting into practice what we have learned over this time.

Praise the LORD!



HEY.

HOW ON EARTH IS HE IN THE MEETING?

UNLESS HE TURNS ON HIS CAMERA, I WILL NOT BELIEVE IT

Tim Waking

Be assured the **Methodist** people are praying for the **world** at this time



The **Methodist Church** 
www.methodist.org.uk

Circuit Website

www.calderdalemethodistcircuit.org.uk



It is hoped that Issue No. 26 of this News-letter will come out soon. The Circuit Office is currently closed but material can still be sent to office@calderdalemethodists.org.uk Please send items as soon as you have them available

Around the Dale

The Newsletter of the Calderdale Circuit of the Methodist Church