Airedale Methodist Circuit
in the Yorkshire West District

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2025

This month's letter is written by Rev. Nel Shallow:

Recently three of us from the Circuit attended the Wholehearted Conference, a national gathering of Methodists with around 300 people attending from across the country, a mix of ages with many lay and volunteer attendees.

After a circuitous route, avoiding a Friday afternoon 90-minute delay on the M6, we arrived at Yarnfield Park in Staffordshire, more of a concrete jungle on the outside than a park but inside a well-appointed conference centre.

The weekend was full! The programme began almost as we arrived on the Friday, with the schedule on Saturday beginning at 8.30am and concluding around 9.45pm. Sunday morning started early too. Our time together was jam packed with sessions, worship, prayers, laughter, workshops, conversations, shared food, Communion, and interviews. So much to process and ponder, I will be revisiting my notes for some time.

However, here are a few highlighted takeaways from the weekend …
*the church is alive and well
*there is a lot of innovative and inspiring ministry and mission happening
*people of all ages are engaged in pioneering projects
*the future of the church is hopeful and visionary
*we need to dare, to take risks, and be very brave
*God is good
*our calling to love and build relationships remains the same
*there are so many wonderful ways to worship

It was so good to be in a place where the bigger picture was clearly visible. The challenges we face within this Circuit are common across the Connexion. We are undoubtedly in a season of profound denominational change which is emotionally and mentally demanding. There is surely much need for tenderness and gentleness as we journey through these unchartered waters. However, we are therefore also in a season of encouraging possibilities, Holy Spirit dreams, new pathways, and hopeful opportunities.

In the topsy-turvy paradox of our faithful discipleship we discover that new beginnings are often disguised as endings.

I was reminded once again, as I thought about summing up my overall experience of attending the Wholehearted Conference, of the challenge to 'discover what God is doing and to then join in.' And I wholeheartedly believe God is calling us to perceive a new thing, and to join in.

'"Do not remember the former things,
Or ponder the things of the past.
"Listen carefully, I am about to do a new thing,
Now it will spring forth;
Will you not be aware of it?'

(Isaiah 43:19 AMP)

We are delighted to announce that Rev. Tracy Birks has successfully completed her period of probation and has been approved for ordination which will take place on Sun 29th June.

The New Place: one year ago today, and now!
Nel's Reflection:

I have chronicled our New Places for New People journey with honesty and thankfulness. Seeking to create a new community and a space for shared spirituality alongside Christian worship within The New Place is both exciting and hugely demanding. We are exhausted and grateful.

A year ago today we simply had a big empty and very cold space, with deckchairs and a heater! And lots of ideas. For me, the starting points were always prayer, reading the Bible, and worship. And these continue to be our ongoing focus. The first photo was taken on an exceptionally cold and wet Sunday afternoon, when a core group of faithful souls met to continue laying down a foundation of faith upon which to build all our tentative plans.

Yesterday our regular Sunday afternoon session was buzzing! Adults were chatting, children played, food was shared, craft was created, and in a cosy corner I sat with three older children slow-stitching in gentle companionable quietness. One regular local lady arrived alone with a mischievous smile on a face having outwitted her family for some alone time with us; about fifteen minutes later her younger daughter and then her husband, carrying their baby, arrived. All of them stayed. One of our older boys calls The New Place his 'second home', this makes my heart sing.

On Saturday a lovely group of us spent the day at The New Place in collective creativity, reflective sharing, and individual space to ponder. A day I could only have imagined as we prayerfully sat in the cold on our very unstable deckchairs.

So much has happened over these past twelve months, both uplifting and disappointing. We continue to learn so much as we navigate this new pathway. We get things right, and we make mistakes. Although to be honest the mistakes are mostly mine! We're a small band of workers and I am deeply grateful for our amazing volunteers; we struck gold with our New Place team! And we prayerfully look forward to our new Pioneer joining us at the end of April, just as we will celebrate our 1st Birthday!

There may be so much more happening than a year ago but this is still just the beginning! We still have so many more ideas and plans! So we will keep on praying, reading the Bible, and worshipping together.

God is good.
Dreams come true.
Onwards!

Think community organising rally meets Methodist band meeting meets Holy Spirit revival!

The Wholehearted Conference sold out its 250 places in just a few days. We don't want anyone to miss out on the energy, so we're running a holy experiment in the seasons after the Wholehearted Conference.

Wholehearted monthly aims to digitally connect up diverse leaders doing mission across the Connexion in different ways and contexts for inspiration, equipping and networking for the sake of transformation in the world God loves.

Together we'll open to the Holy Spirit, learn from a different renowned guest speaker each month, and break into groups for wisdom-sharing and equipping for mission with others who share our particular focus.

We're praying, learning, and acting in commitment to being, by God's grace, a growing, inclusive, evangelistic, and justice-seeking Church!

The next two speakers:

Rowan Williams is a theologian, poet and former Archbishop of Canterbury, and is author of fifty books on literature, politics, and being Christian. (Tuesday 8 April, 7-9pm)

Chine McDonald is a writer, broadcaster and author, and is Director of Theos, the religion and society think tank. (Tuesday 13 May, 7-9pm)

Click HERE to book: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/wholehearted-monthly-tickets-1082365166349?aff=evangelismgrowth

WHAT'S ON IN APRIL?

Message from Tim Sharp:

Hopefully you have heard about Craven Church's *Try Praying* initiative, which was the idea of Martin Cant, and you have been given a small booklet to use for a week and then....pass it on to someone else.

At the Craven Church service at Eastburn on Sunday 23rd March (10.45 a.m.) Rev'd Clare asked us to share our experiences (verbally or in writing for someone else to read out) of using the booklet and any feedback from passing it on.

If you would like more info or a booklet, please speak to a steward. There's a website too:

https://www.trypraying.org/

A short introductory video to accompany this message:

https://vimeo.com/912533124

THE ELDWICK CHURCH

SATURDAY 5TH APRIL

COFFEE MORNING
10AM-12PM

EASTER TOMBOLA, CAKES, RAFFLE, REGIFTING AND GARDENING STALLS



The Children's Society

ENTRY BY DONATION





Please keep this page!
If information needs to be updated, a new version will be sent out in a future

Opportunities to pray and worship together (outside of Sunday Mornings):

@ Steeton Methodist Church
Prayer and Praise on the first Thursday of the month, 7pm to 8pm

@ Silsden Methodist Church
Prayer gathering, first Monday in the month, 7pm

@ St Peter's Methodist Church, Cross Hills
Weekday Communion Service, first Wednesday in the month, 10am
Prayer Service, St Peter's Cross Hills every Wednesday, 10am
(followed by coffee at 10.30am)

@ Silsden Methodist Church
Praise Service, fourth Sunday in the month, 6pm

@ Bingley Methodist Church
Communion, second Monday in the month, 1pm

@ The New Place
Methodist Way of Life Quiet Reflection, fourth Wednesday each month, 6pm
Evening Cafe Service, third Sunday each month, 5pm

@ Lees Methodist Church
Café Worship, third Sunday in the month, 1pm

@ Cullingworth Methodist Church
second Wednesday in the month
9.30am Prayer
9.45am Communion

@ Silsden Methodist Church
'Born in Song', every Friday, 10.30-11am

Messy Church

2nd Tuesday of the month:
Bingley Messy Church
3.45-5.30pm
Silsden Messy Church
3:30 – 5:30pm

3rd Saturday of the month:
The Eldwick Church
Saturday Church
1-2.30pm
(bring a packed lunch and eat together 12-1pm)

Saturday Church
THE ELDWICK CHURCH

'Messy Church logo © Bible Reading Fellowship 2021. See messychurch.org.uk'



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