Airedale Methodist Circuit
in the Yorkshire West District

# NEWSLETTER JULY 2026

*This month's reflection is from Rev. Clare Stainsby:*

*God who sets us on a journey to discover, dream and grow,*
*Lead us as you led your people in the desert long ago;*
*Journey inward, journey outward, stir the spirit, stretch the mind,*
*Love for God and self and neighbour marks the way that Christ defined.*

This is the last time I will write for the Circuit News, as my tenure as superintendent of Airedale Circuit comes to an end very soon. I cannot deny that I will be ready to step out of this role, and, to use Methodist speak, "sit down" from my responsibilities as both a full-time minister and superintendent. What my sitting down may look like is yet to be discerned, as I embark on this next phase of life, but it will begin with a time of rest. I'm certainly not planning to jump straight into anything else. I won't be moving far away - I hope to be living on the East side of Leeds, with good access to both family and motorways. And I am pretty certain that God hasn't finished with me yet. I'm an ordained minister for life, and I'm sure God has something for me to do, once I've spent some time just being. Right now, life is about tidying up loose ends, and preparing to hand over my responsibilities, as well as continuing to lead and to preach what is laid on my heart until my last day here.

*Exploration brings new insights, changes, choices we must face;*
*Give us wisdom in deciding, mindful always of your grace;*
*Should we stumble, lose our bearings, find it hard to know what's right,*
*We regain our true direction focused on the Jesus light.*

One of the images I have turned to again and again in my life is that of a road, or a footpath, heading off into the distance, with its destination out of sight. Life is like a journey for each of us. We might stay physically in one place, but we are constantly discovering new ideas, possibilities and challenges. For the life of an itinerant Methodist minister, that journey involves new places and new people every few years. When I look back over the journey of my life so far, including my 24 years of ministry, the one constant has been the presence of God. I've had to step into the unknown many times, but I have never been alone. And it's not just God's presence I have been aware of, but also a sense of being loved, and encouraged, and challenged, and even at times a steadying hand showing me a need to wait, and watch, rather than act. Even in the most difficult times I have never felt abandoned.

*End our longing for the old days, grant the vision that we lack –*
*Once we've started on this journey there can be no turning back;*
*Let us travel light, discarding excess baggage from our past,*
*Cherish only what's essential, choosing treasure that will last.*

The journey through life is always about travelling forwards. We can't hang on to the past, or return to it when the future makes us feel anxious. In every step through life, we are ageing and changing and growing, and deepening in our understanding of who we are and who God is. One thing I am very certain of is that I will be continuing to learn about life and about myself and about God until my very last on this earth.

*When we set up camp and settle to avoid love's risk and pain,*
*You disturb complacent comfort, pull the tent pegs up again;*
*Keep us travelling in the knowledge you are always at our side;*
*Give us courage for the journey, Christ our goal and Christ our guide. © Joy Dine*

My time in Airedale has been characterised by change, as we have responded to the changing face of the Methodist church, against the backdrop of the constantly changing world we live in. It has been unsettling for all concerned. I know that, because it's been no easy road for me too, nor for the other leaders of our circuit. I can't promise that everything will now just stay the same here, because the world we exist in is constantly changing. In reality, it always has! And I recognise that God isn't ever going to lead the Church to a place of staying the same, which would inevitably lead to stagnation. God's plan and purpose has always been to bless the people of the Church wherever they are, and through them to bless this world. We exist for God's fruitfulness, here and now, and in the days and years to come.

My prayer for you all is that you will not be afraid of the unknown unwinding road, but that you will all have a real sense of the living God walking alongside, loving, encouraging, challenging, and steadying, as together you continue to build God's kingdom in this lovely part of God's world. May you sense God's blessing upon you, as you worship and serve, and bless the people of Airedale.

Clare



And, following on from Clare's words,
to both Clare and Nel, we say
Au revoir, Auf wiedersehen, Tchuss, Ciao, See ya, Bye!
But most importantly, THANKS…

Thank you for the wisdom, the joy, the spiritual scaffolding, the prayer-filled leadership, the creativity, the music, the kindness, the support, the inspiration, the friendship, the theological reflections, the encouragement and challenge, the empathy and the laughter.
For being with us in the dark, and celebrating with us in the light.

You are both incredible women of God and our prayers go with you as you head on – to the East and to the North! As Nel would say, "Love galore"

Here's a mini visual reminder of the loving, abundant, joyful personalities we have come to know and love...

























# WHAT'S ON IN JULY?

**Retirement Service for Rev. Clare Stainsby**
2pm, 19th July 2026
Silsden Methodist Church

Oxenhope Methodist Chapel
Invites you all to afternoon Tea
Tuesday 21st July 2- 4pm
In Memory of Mavis







We are asking for small donations towards the cost of the food. Thank you



## Lino Printing Workshop!

At The New Place
**Wednesday 1st July, 7pm - 8pm**
**&**
**Friday 3rd July, 1pm - 2pm**

- Aimed at beginners, but all welcome!
- All materials provided.
- Over 18's only.

**Free!**

Methodist Women in Britain
Yorkshire West District

**Spend an Hour with**
**Revd Kerry Tankard**
**Chair of District....**
**a talk, followed by afternoon tea**
**Wednesday 8 July 2026 at 2pm**
**Guiseley Methodist Church**
**Orchard Way, Guiseley LS20 9EP**
**For catering purposes please contact Jean Delaney by 1 July if you plan to attend.**
**Email: jn.delaney@btopenworld.com**

**THE COBBYDALE SINGERS**
***FINAL***
**CELEBRATION CONCERT**
**Sunday 5th July 2026 at 2pm**
**SILSDEN METHODIST CHURCH**
with their guests
**AIREDALE MALE VOICE CHOIR**
and soloists
**JAMES BLAMIRE & TOM PRATT**
**Admission Free**
**Donations to**
**Motor Neurone Disease Association appreciated**



# COFFEE MORNING

**SILSDEN METHODIST CHURCH**
**10:00–12:00**
**JULY 25TH.**

COME AND HELP ME RAISE VITAL FUNDS FOR
CHALLENGE MINISTRIES UK

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):

**Sunday 1pm:**
Picnic Worship, first Sunday @ St Peter's Methodist Church, Cross Hills
Picnic Worship, third Sunday @ Lees Methodist Church

**Sunday 2pm:**
Sanctuary: reflective gathering with prayer spaces, second Sunday @ The New Place

**Sunday 2.30pm:**
Praise Service, first Sunday @ Lees Methodist Church
Worship and Fellowship, third Sunday @ Bingley Methodist Church

**Sunday 3pm:**
Riddlesden Worship and Fellowship, third Sunday @ St Mary's Hall, Riddlesden

**Sunday 6pm:**
Praise Service, fourth Sunday @ Silsden Methodist Church

**Monday 7pm:**
Prayer gathering, first Monday @ Silsden Methodist Church

**Tuesday 3.30pm:**
Messy Church (term time) second Tuesday @ Silsden Methodist Church
Messy Church (term time) second Tuesday, 3.45pm @ Bingley Methodist Church

**Wednesday 9.30am:**
9.30am Prayer, 9.45am Communion
second Wednesday @ Cullingworth Methodist Church

**Wednesday 10am:**
Prayer Service, every Wednesday (followed by coffee)
Weekday Communion Service, first Wednesday
both @ St Peter's Methodist Church, Cross Hills

**Wednesday 5pm:**
Way of Life meal and reflective gathering, fourth Wednesday @ The New Place

**Thursday 6.30pm:**
Fellowship Group, first Friday @ Steeton Methodist Church

**Thursday 7pm:**
Prayer and Praise, first Thursday @ Steeton Methodist Church

**Friday 10.30am:**
'Born in Song', every Friday @ Silsden Methodist Church

