



Summer 2021

# HOPE FROM HOUSE PLANTS AND HABAKKUK!

Dear Friends,

When lockdown began in March 2020, I was charged with a responsibility commensurate with my role as District Chair: I was to take the District Office plants home and care for them. This has been an important ministry in the last year and a half, and one that I believe reflects the wider experience of the Church in these times. You will see three quite different stories portrayed in these plants. The largest of the plants last year developed some large leaves, but no flowers, and those leaves died off in the autumn. This year they grew again and, to my delight, flowered. This was an unexpected wonder but one which has brought me great joy.

The second plant last year had leaves that at first seemed robust and hardy, but these browned and died and I worried for its wellbeing. I cut them away with all the prowess of a clueless gardener, leaving a couple of hearts of green behind. However, over the last year it has slowly regrown and is developing well. It has promise, but I am not sure what shape that promise will take, but I watch and care in anticipation.

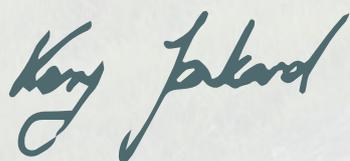
Finally, there is the third plant, or should I say pot. This is my tragedy. It had relatively thin dark green foliage which curled over. It was kind of like a spider plant, but darker and solid in colour. Over the last year and a half, it has lost various shoots of growth and now it is dead with no life coming forward in any way.



I tended all three in the same way but, for reasons I may never know, each has responded differently in lockdown. It won't surprise you to hear me say, this feels like a reflection of how churches are following the last 18 months of the pandemic. For some, this has been an opportunity to do ok last year, to die back, and to come back more wonderfully and surprisingly; to appear as signs of hope and possibility. For others it has been a time of genuinely losing much, but then re-emerging with possibility, but still feeling tender and unsure. For others it has been an end, but that end however is not without possibility. The pot that holds that dead plant has the possibility to host something new. The soil that once gave life has the opportunity to receive a new life, or to be reused in another place.

What I want to say from all of this is that there is possibility in each of them, whether it is currently realised yet or not. I couldn't control what happened to each of these, but for some reason they are where they are now, and it is for me to enjoy what is or discover what might be. I encourage us to look with the same heart and mind at the churches we know, however they are represented in the story of these plants.

Yours in Christ.



Revd Kerry Tankard  
Chair of District

*“O Lord, I have heard of your renown,  
and I stand in awe of your work.  
In our own time revive it;  
in our own time make it known . . .”*

*Habakkuk 3.2*

# ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE



Faced with a climate emergency, the Methodist Conference in 2019 called on the UK to achieve net zero emissions well before 2050. The critical COP26 International Climate Summit is to be held in Glasgow in November of this year. Our nation has the opportunity to provide inspiration for others. The UK must back up targets with clear policies and urgent investment to bring about a zero-carbon future.

Our response must be both individual and as a Church, working to do all we can to tread more lightly on the earth. Genesis 2:15 reminds us that we were placed on earth to maintain and take care of it. As Christians, how well are we doing this?

As a District, we are examining our response to the challenge and aiming to improve our understanding of the challenges of climate change and developing a District-led response. We can all play our part and as a start we have listed a small number of ways that we can be kinder to the planet.

<p><b>Shop little and often</b> - A lot of waste comes from doing big shops, putting two-for-one 'bargains' in the trolley and buying on repeat rather than planning meals.</p>	<p><b>Recycle more</b> - While 90% of us recycle our kitchen waste, we recycle only 40% of our personal care packaging, probably because our recycling bins are in the kitchen.</p>
<p><b>Buy half your food locally</b> - The shorter the food chain, the less waste created before it reaches your kitchen. Aim to buy 50% of food grown within 25 miles of where you live.</p>	<p><b>Opt for green energy suppliers</b> - but just because you're on a green tariff, doesn't mean you should stop worrying about how much energy you use. Switch to LED light bulbs and look at smart heating controls.</p>
<p><b>Minimise packaging</b> - Look for loose fruit and vegetables and take your own containers to shops and markets. Look for bulk unpackaged food shops.</p>	<p><b>Use water wisely</b> - Check your WC; many new syphon toilets eventually leak water, but into the bowl so not as easy to spot.</p>
<p><b>Buy local flowers, or grow your own</b> - About 90% of the flowers sold through UK florists, supermarkets and wholesalers are imported, mainly from the Netherlands, but they are also flown in from countries as far away as Ecuador, Colombia, Kenya and Ethiopia.</p>	<p><b>Let the grass grow</b> - Letting your grass grow longer between cuts not only saves petrol or electricity, and therefore reduces carbon dioxide emissions, but also encourages more wildlife into your garden. Longer grass is more drought-resistant too.</p>

We will be looking at our response in more detail with opportunities for conversation at the September Synod. Doing nothing is not an option, and in the meantime a small working group has been set up to coordinate our District response to this challenging situation.

*Richard Walsh*



Our current cohort of six participants continue to carry out their projects and have shown tremendous resilience and creativity in the face of the pandemic. Their churches have given them great support, and have certainly benefitted from their projects as they have discovered new ways to do and be church during this year of challenge and opportunity. The ONE Opportunity Spring Newsletter gives more details: [www.yorkshirewestmethodist.org.uk/images/Spring\\_2021\\_Newsletter\\_Digital-compressed.pdf](http://www.yorkshirewestmethodist.org.uk/images/Spring_2021_Newsletter_Digital-compressed.pdf)

Although we have missed out on the residential experience so far, we have managed some face-to-face time when allowed, and have used Zoom to keep on track with the Programme content. We are optimistic that our July residential will be able to go ahead, subject to national guidelines.

Revd Rob Drost is our chaplain and, having experienced a gap year after school, as well as working for a national Christian gap year programme, he knows the value of this kind of experience. He says "Life changing" is the right phrase to use. "I am just about to start my 4th year as Chaplain to the ONE Opportunity Programme in the Yorkshire West District - hoping and praying that our young people see and experience joys, happiness, and challenges from God, as I did as a young person."



The programme is open to 16-23 year olds who are connected with a Methodist church and we are now accepting applicants for September 2021. For further information, go to the links below or contact the Coordinator direct.

Nicky Hoyle - Coordinator ONE Opportunity Programme (Yorkshire West)  
 Email: [onecoordinator@ywmethodist.org.uk](mailto:onecoordinator@ywmethodist.org.uk)  
 Tel: 07305 822596

Website: [www.methodist.org.uk/ONEOpportunityYW](http://www.methodist.org.uk/ONEOpportunityYW)  
 Facebook: @oneopportunityyw



# LEEDS METHODIST MISSION

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FLOURISH?

At LMM we have recently done a piece of work about our theology and the theology that lies behind the work we do. This was a series of sessions where we did some reading, learning and creative activities together to explore what a theological understanding of our project was, the culmination of which is a document for us to continue revisiting.

One of the themes that came out of that piece of work was the idea of Flourishing. The conversation started around the work we were doing on wellbeing, but we felt a truly Christian understanding went above and beyond the word wellbeing and extended to the idea of flourishing. Here is an extract from the document:

*“The theological vision of flourishing is God-centred. It is formed in scripture and is where my story, our story and The Story are entwined. It is not about surviving but offers possibilities for thriving. It embraces a wisdom tradition that has been received from God. It is flourishing for humanity and creation and fosters an interdependency between them.”*

We understand flourishing as incorporating the wholeness of human experience, made holy through the incarnation. God that came and dwelt among us, experiencing the fullness of humanity.

So I wonder, as we all discover what life looks like as lockdown rules come to an end:

- What flourishing looks like for each of you? And for your church communities?
- Are there areas that are flourishing and those that aren't?
- How do we bring a sense of the wholeness and flourishing to those we come into contact with?

*Discover LMM's wellbeing resources on their website: [www.leedsmethodistmission.co.uk/wellbeing](http://www.leedsmethodistmission.co.uk/wellbeing)*

**Anna Bland**

**Leeds Methodist Mission Development Worker**

*LMM is a Yorkshire West District project in Leeds city centre which focuses on wellbeing, contemplation and gentler forms of activism.*

*Find out more: [www.leedsmethodistmission.co.uk](http://www.leedsmethodistmission.co.uk)*

*or search for them on social media: **Facebook:** @LeedsMethodistMission & **Twitter:** @LMMinthecity*



# AROUND THE DISTRICT

## HUDDERSFIELD CIRCUIT

### Change Begins with a Bicycle

Here in the Huddersfield Circuit we find ourselves in the midst of our *Change Begins with a Bicycle* project. Launched in January, and inspired by the work of All We Can, we challenged ourselves to consider how we might make a positive difference beyond our immediate communities. It felt important that our activities and events were underpinned by one or more of our key values - education and awareness, action for social justice, working in partnership with others and fundraising. And all of this whilst having fun too!

The Bicycle project seeks to encourage engagement on different levels - individual, church and circuit. Similarly, there are things which are ongoing, whilst others are one-off events/activities. So, what has been achieved so far and what have we to look forward to?

In February 'dedicated' church services, highlighting All We Can's Bicycle project in Butugaya, Uganda, were held across the circuit. In March we enjoyed a successful Zoom Music Concert fundraiser, and produced a special Bicycle edition of 'In Touch', the Circuit magazine - all things bicycle! In April we invited Tim Baker to lead an online event; he shared his experiences of being in Butugaya, the humbling stories of the people he'd met and the potential for the 'simple' bicycle to transform lives. Lots to reflect on...

Individual churches have been making their own contributions to the project. Currently these have included raising funds by baking bicycle biscuits (lots of them!); making crocheted bicycles (who knew that was even possible?!) and crafting cards through recycling (a card for every occasion).

People across the circuit, both young and old, have been submitting their Bicycle stories. An interesting landscape of social history, plus it's amazing what you get to find out about individuals! Revd Tim Francis continues with his weekly cycling video blog; imparting exciting facts and information about Uganda, updates on our project and the work of All We Can whilst on his exercise bike - destination Ugandan High Commission, London. A real success in uniting the circuit has been the quest to journey together to Butugaya (6,500miles) by the end of the project in August - counting the miles cycling and walking. In fact, we've far exceeded our expectations and consequently extended our journey to include round the coastline of Africa.

The BIG fundraiser for our Bicycle project will be the Coast to Coast Cycling challenge in July. The Three Bishops (by name, not vocation!) will be cycling 170 miles following the Way of the Roses, raising money for All We Can! We wish them well on their adventures!

To find out more about the *Change Begins with a Bicycle* project visit the Huddersfield Circuit website: <http://www.huddersfieldmethodists.org.uk/>

**Suzanne Bridges**  
Circuit Children's Work Coordinator



## BRADFORD NORTH CIRCUIT SNIPPETS

**Garden-gatherings** - Meeting within restrictions, Haworth Road have set up garden groups with a twist - the less-able playing host, the more-able travel to them with folding chairs, flasks of tea, and hospitality is shared.

**Debt-counselling** - Northcliffe, Shipley is hosting a new Christians Against Poverty Debt Centre, sponsored by Shipley Christians Together (which includes our Christchurch, Crag Road and Saltaire churches). Our new manager, Thomas Knight, is leading the way into this new work.

**Thanks-giving** - 4th July will see a service of thanksgiving, celebrating the work and witness of Wrose Methodist Church over many years as that work draws to a close. We're waiting and wondering how many people will be allowed to join us, but are confident there will be much laughter and not a few tears.

**Cross-dressing** - Easter weekend saw a number of our churches making a stand by dressing their crosses with beautiful flowers. At Northcliffe passers-by were invited to add a flower, in Baildon the cross formed part of an ecumenical prayer walk and across the circuit flowers spoke of life and crosses declared the news that Christ is risen.

**YouTubing and label-sticking** - throughout the pandemic a worship service has been offered weekly, on paper by post, online by email, and on screen by YouTube, linking us together, and taking the Christian message beyond our buildings into people's homes.

**Litter-picking** - St. Andrew's, Undercliffe have undertaken regular litter-picks on Saturdays around the area, with the idea spreading to their uniformed groups, and even some members using the kit to keep their streets tidy.

On the first day a team of 16 volunteers, assisted by two Ward Councillors, spent a couple of hours picking litter. They collected 104 kg of rubbish, of which 47 kg was recycled. Church steward, Martin Bashforth, had contacted Bradford Council, who loaned all the equipment needed (pickers, bags, gloves and tabards) and collected the rubbish from the church.

Since that first adventure, we have received a Bradford Council 'Cleaner Streets' grant, funding the purchase of our own equipment. The £567 cost was met in full and the church's name is printed on the tabards, letting the community know that the church is serving its neighbours.

We aim to send out a picking party every month or so, hoping our neighbours might appreciate the cleaner streets, be influenced to stop dropping so much litter, and know the church is here for them.



**Revd Nick Blundell**  
*Superintendent Minister, Bradford North Circuit*

## SKIPTON & GRASSINGTON CIRCUIT

The Windmill Theatre used to claim they never closed. Skipton & Grassington Circuit, like many others, also never closed. Yes, most of our buildings closed but not all. St. Andrew's, Skipton saw a significant increase in the use of the hall as the Skipton Food Bank, already in part of the premises, expanded to cope with the extra demand.

Extra demand was put on everyone to be creative, and throughout the pandemic the circuit has been 'broadcasting' a daily reflection delivered by a growing team of writers. This has brought positive responses from across the country, and from as far away as the Bahamas. The technical whizz kids have also been in demand for our live streamed services; these, together with DVD copies, have often been watched by over 200 people.

# AROUND THE DISTRICT

## SKIPTON & GRASSINGTON CIRCUIT CONTINUED

At Easter almost 100 bags of goodies and worship material were delivered to older members and friends, and this is being followed up with another delivery, the fifth, at Pentecost. These were in addition to the 150 Messy Church bags that were prepared and delivered to toddler group families, baptismal families, families who live in villages or next to the church, grandchildren, Junior Church families, Pre-Schools, Brownies and many others.

Following the re-development of Malham Chapel, we are now looking to develop an accessible, sensory garden at the chapel to be used by residents of the village and the many visitors to Malham. We have undertaken a virtual pilgrimage from Santiago de Compostela to raise some money. Contributions are still very welcome via <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/malhamgarden> Good links have been established with Malham Environmental Group who will be helping with this project.

Outside, our buildings have been well used with worship at Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Sunday and at Pentecost. A Prayer Station was erected to go alongside the large 'HOPE' sign that has created much interest in the town and brought national publicity. Publicity for the 'Trypraying' campaign <https://www.trypraying.org/> has also been erected.

In addition, our eco group has great plans to be linked with Incredible Edible and are installing raised beds that will be used with the Wellness Café.

*John Tomlinson*



## LEEDS SOUTH & WEST CIRCUIT

### **Casting Out Fear**

Good News is so often about rediscovering our sense of purpose when we've been beaten down by events; about listening for God and letting God speak.

Leeds South & West Circuit organised online showings of the BBC's drama "The Passion" during Holy Week. We were invited to engage in a 3D experience of Jesus' last week on earth - we listened, we watched, we 'lived in' the story in a fresh way.

After each daily session, we held guided discussions in Zoom breakout rooms. After one of the sessions, everybody in one group saw the same thing. Every character, apart from Jesus, was in the grip of fear. They were caught up in terror of what they might lose.

There were the priests, Caiaphas and Annas, desperately hanging on to their idea of what was good for the people. Pilate, scared of being shopped to the Emperor, getting a reputation as weak. Even the good people, the disciples, unable to face the loss of either the leader they loved or their fellowship together. Mary, desolate at losing her son. And everyone, in trying so desperately to protect what they knew, what gave them strength and comfort, eventually lost it.

Only Jesus was posing a different question to himself. “What does my Father require of me? What is his will for me, now?” Are you hearing an echo of “Father, if it be your will, let this cup pass”?

In the group, the recognition of fear spoke to us as we identified a need to get past our own worries about life after Covid; to ask ourselves, instead, a “How” question - how to pass on Jesus’ message truly, in this here and this now, so people who are different to us will hear and respond?

Surely, the film showed us, as clearly as any straightforward reading of the Gospels will do, just how serious Jesus is about forgiveness, about love, about serving one another; about healing, about strengthening the weak, the poor and the oppressed. Serious enough, about all these things, to choose the Cross.

The film finishes with Jesus healing Peter and commissioning him. The scriptwriters have translated Jesus’ “Feed my sheep” into words that don’t rely on rural imagery, but they still ring as a powerful command in our ears.

“Tell everyone about forgiveness.”

Forgiveness is, supremely, how love shows itself as Good News. And as John tells us, love does indeed cast out fear - other people’s fear, and our fear of change and the unknown.

May we be people of Good News as we tell others about and endeavour to live out God’s forgiveness.

*Vince Gilbert*

*St. Andrew’s Methodist Church, Pudsey*

## **LWPHomes & Leaders of Worship and Preachers’ Trust in the Leeds & West Yorkshire Area *enabling the best for worship and the best in time of need***

Dear Friends,

In our circuit, the Sunday after Easter has often been designated as Local Preachers’ Sunday, giving us the opportunity to reflect and celebrate, as part of our worship, that in normal circumstances, 2 out of 3 services are conducted by our Local Preachers, and assisted by our Worship Leaders. They feel called by God to undertake the rigorous training, and then preach in our churches on a voluntary basis. This occasion gives us the opportunity to celebrate their sacrifice of time and energy to uphold the spiritual life of our people, alongside our employed clergy.

The Leaders of Worship and Preachers’ Trust is our Methodist charity which supports all who lead worship through helping financially when a need arises, and enabling our preachers to give of their best by supporting their preaching, providing resources for further study, and scholarships which enable often younger people to be able to study at a theological college for Mission and the Ministry.

The LWPHomes provide accommodation in three retirement homes where love and respect for each person is the highest priority. Often our residents truly love their carers, a feeling which is reciprocated. Each home is a Beacon of Excellence. We have had many of our Leeds preachers go there to be able to live their lives to the full, freed from the worry of keeping going on their own. One 100-year-old told me that she felt God was with her in her room.

In gratitude for the enrichment of our Church Life which each one offers, please pray for us and consider if you can support our excellent work financially. I will send on any donations I receive. My address is in the District Directory or you can send a cheque directly to either:

LWPHomes, Westerley, 1 Winton Avenue, Westcliff on Sea, Essex, SS0 7QU

or

LWPT, Unit 14, Orbital 25 Business Park, Dwight Road, Watford, Herts, WD18 9DA

Thank you so much for your care and support.



*John Witt*  
*Local Advocate & Coordinator*

# MEET THE PEOPLE



**Name:** Revd David Goodall

**Role Title:** Missional Communities Enabler

**What does your role involve?:**

The role is a new post which has two parts to it. One part is supporting churches and circuits in the District to develop their mission and discipleship through the Methodist Way of Life and the development of Missional Communities. The other part is being a member of the team at Leeds Methodist Mission where I'll be seeking to develop a new Christian Community in the City Centre. Both parts of the role are rooted in the belief that as Christians we are called to be intentional about our mission and discipleship. I believe when we are intentional we see the Kingdom of God flourish amongst us.

**How can you be contacted?:**

I can be contacted by phone/text/WhatsApp on 07854 308513, by email on [communities@ywmethodist.org.uk](mailto:communities@ywmethodist.org.uk) or by post at 2 West Parade, Leeds, LS16 5AZ.

**Which church do you attend?:**

That's a really good question! Having just moved to Leeds my family and I are trying different churches to help us find a new church home.

**Tell us a bit about yourself:**

I'm married to Tara and we have a son, Jethro, who is at school. I've been in full time ministry since 2004 and a presbyter since 2009. We've just moved from Hexham in Northumberland where I served as minister of Hexham Trinity Methodist Church. Over the last few years I've had a growing interest in developing Christian Communities, new monasticism and the Methodist Way of Life. Our move to Yorkshire West was an unexpected but very exciting call from God and we're looking forward to seeing what God has in store for us all in the coming months and years.

**Tell us something that few people know about you:**

Over the last few years I've rediscovered my love of Lego! I'm currently building my farewell gift, from the Tynedale Circuit, the Lego Rollercoaster which has over 4000 pieces!

## SPECIAL DAYS

**13th June**  
Methodist Homes Sunday

**14th - 20th June**  
Refugee Week

**20th June**  
Sanctuary Sunday

**24th - 25th June**  
Methodist Conference  
(Presbyteral Session)

**26th June - 1st July**  
Methodist Conference  
(Representative Session)

**27th June**  
Methodist Conference Sunday

**11th July**  
Action for Children Sunday  
Sea Sunday

**18th July**  
Rural Mission Sunday

Items for inclusion in the Autumn 2021 issue of the District Newsletter should reach us by 12 noon on 15th August 2021

  
The **Methodist Church**  
Yorkshire West District



**District Office, Touchstone,  
4 Easby Road, Bradford, BD7 1QX**



**[admin@ywmethodist.org.uk](mailto:admin@ywmethodist.org.uk)**

**[www.yorkshirewestmethodist.org.uk](http://www.yorkshirewestmethodist.org.uk)**



**@YWMMethodist**