

Dear friends,



We have news to share and prayers to ask of you...

First to the news. A probationer presbyter, Revd Mo Onyett, has been stationed with us to begin her ministry in September 2022. Mo will no doubt be invited by Wesley to introduce herself to you in the coming months; for now it is enough to say that she will serve Farsley, St Andrew's Pudsey, St John's and St Mark's, and we are very excited to anticipate welcoming her to the team and supporting her as she grows into her new role. Probationer ministers usually serve 2 years in Circuit before they are ordained, with some time set aside for continued study alongside the work of ministry in local churches. The churches a probationer will serve are set at the time of their appointment, and cannot be changed before their ordination.

We have not, however, been matched in stationing with an ordained presbyter to join the team. This means that an anticipated reduction of one member of staff will happen in September 2022, a year earlier than we expected. Your Circuit Leadership Team are working on proposals to bring to Circuit Meeting for pastoral charges from September, and we look forward to sharing these with you as soon as we are able. This does mean that we anticipate change of some kind in most areas of the circuit. We would ask that you are patient with us for the next few weeks while we do this work – we know that some churches will be feeling particularly vulnerable at this time. Please do be assured that no church will be left without a minister in pastoral charge.

And so to the prayers. Please do pray for Mo in her last few months of college-based training, and for her and her family as they anticipate the move to Leeds. Please pray for the leadership team as we reflect on the best ways to work together effectively in the coming few years. Please also bring before God the circumstances of your local church and community. The challenge of change is not unique to this circuit – and so our wider prayer must be for wisdom to understand what it means to be the people of God called Methodists for this time and place.

We share again on the reverse of this letter the prayer written first for the people of West Leeds Community Church on their 'journey', but which is finding a wider resonance as so many of us are contemplating new ways forward...

Peace, Jo

Holy God

as we seek your way forward within our churches,

we recognise our apprehension,

even as we detect opportunity;

Help us to keep our eyes focussed on you.

We entrust our hopes and our fears to you.

Remind us that you are God

of the past, the present and the future;

we pray for this time of journeying ...

**J**oin us together as one body in Christ;

**O**pen our eyes to capture your vision;

**U**nburden us of all that distorts your voice;

**R**eassure us of your Spirit's presence and power;

**N**udge us gently forward that we might trust in you.

**E**mpower us to be the Church you long us to be, for

**Y**ours is the kingdom, the power and the glory.

**Amen**