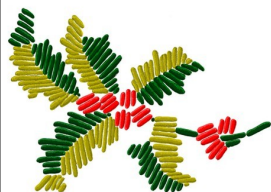
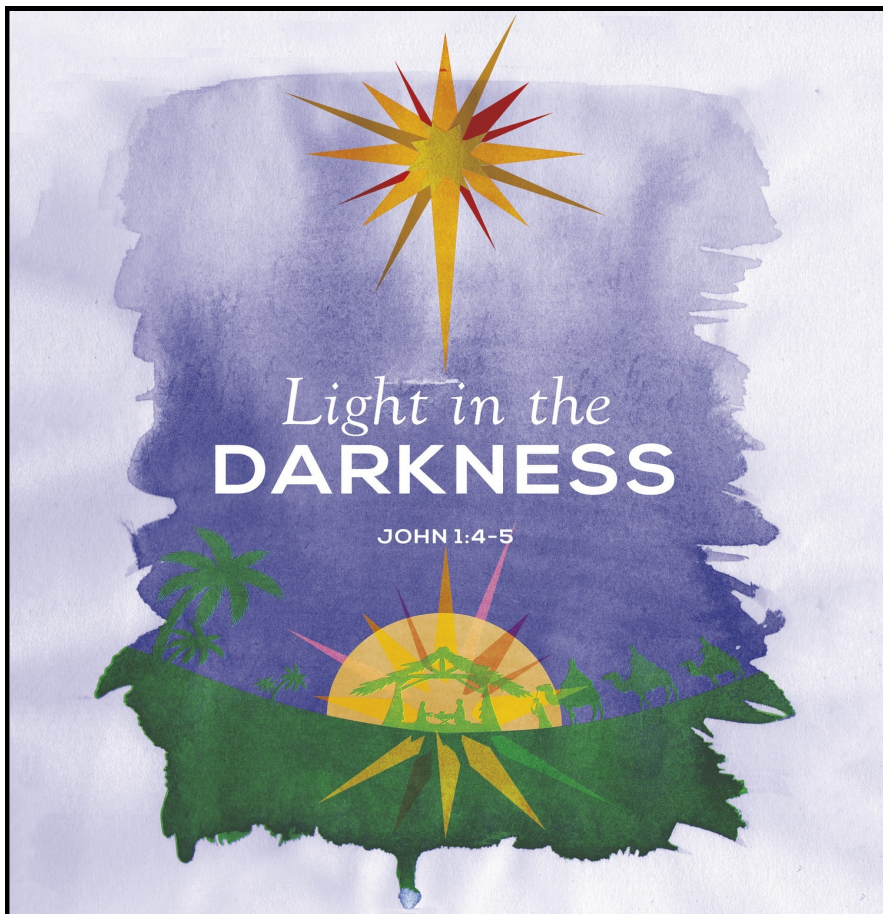


# Connections

*The Magazine of Ashbourne Methodist Circuit*

<http://www.ashbournemethodist.org.uk>



December 2017  
& January 2018

## Letter from the Minister

**The Manse 16 Booth Drive Ashbourne Derbyshire DE6 1SZ  
Tel: 01335 342408 email: tim.morris@methodist.org.uk**

**December 2017**

Dear Friends,

**“What a star!”**

What else, or rather, who else could I write about in this letter than our beloved Sister Merle who died peacefully at home a few weeks ago.

It has been one of the greatest privileges in my ministry to have worked with Merle over the past 10 years. Each of us has a story to tell about her. They will all be different, but will all have common threads to them – warmth, kindness, welcome, gentleness, graciousness, spiritual, holy, prayerful....



Merle was a most gracious and sincere Christian gentle-woman. She offered her life to God completely and wholly. Her words and deeds were ‘all of a piece’, and to be in her presence was to be with someone you knew walked very humbly with God. She didn’t have to say anything, or do anything - you just knew it!

As you read this we shall be in the season of Advent, and the theme of our Advent displays at Ashbourne this year is *Stars of Christmas*. We shall also be celebrating and giving thanks for the long and fruitful life of Sister Merle. The love and light she showed will live on for a very long time in all of us who have been fortunate enough to have shared her story.


No better tribute could be made, than to quote the reading printed in the front of a book of memories and greetings given to Merle on the

occasion of her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday by her friends from Kirk Ireton:

*Your love has given us great joy and encouragement,  
because you, sister, have refreshed the hearts of the saints*  
Philemon 7

Indeed! And as we sang at her Thanksgiving Service: “God be with us till we meet again”. Rest in well earned rest and peace, our gracious friend, Sister Merle.

Your minister and friend,



### **Belonging to the Church**

In the new year I intend to offer Confirmation and Membership classes to our young people. However, there might be adults who have never become members of the Church, or been confirmed and want to consider it. Also there may be those who are members of the Church, who have come from other traditions, or been a Methodist for a long time, but don't know how the Methodist Church works. In other words, what does it mean to be a Christian in the Methodist tradition? So let's have a gathering to look at that.

Please let me know if you'd be interested.

*Tim Morris*



**TRAIDCRAFT**  
Fighting poverty through trade

***Have a Fairtrade Christmas!***

Food, drinks, Christmas cards, gifts and crafts from Traidcraft's latest range of fairly traded goods will be on sale at The Cornerstone on **Thursday 7th, Friday 8th & Saturday 9th December from 10am to 3pm.** Please come along and have a look.

Catalogues are also available to order from, please ask Clare Sales.

# **Ashbourne Church Family News**

*“Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” Hebrews 10 verse 24*

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and many friends of Sister Merle Wilde as they adjust to the gap in their lives since Sister Merle went to be with her Saviour on 14<sup>th</sup> November after a long and fruitful life. A Thanksgiving Service to celebrate her life will be held on 11<sup>th</sup> December. (*Editor: see tributes elsewhere in this issue*)

As we celebrate Christmas and move into the New Year there will be times of joy but there will be those of us who face Christmas alone or alone for the first time having lost loved ones. Let us just remember each other in our different situations and know that God wants to be in the centre of our lives and give us His peace. There are those of our fellowship who are in residential care and some of you will know them from the time when they were able to join us in worship; Jean Bailey, John Parry and Marjorie Stevenson in Dove House, Betty Little and Doreen Harrison in Ashbourne Lodge, Doris Harrison in Wheathills, Kirk Langley and Nerida Maddock in Long Meadow Care Home, Matlock. Some have few relatives remaining so our prayers and visits are especially appreciated.

We pray for those who remain unwell, those recovering from surgery, others waiting for tests and results including Barbara Hollands, Les Cole, Mary Murphy, Chris Dakin, Maureen Gilbert, Kath Brown, Eric and Marianne Matthews, Jenny Waring and Cherrie Broadhurst as well as those you know personally not mentioned here. Pray for those who have family at a distance and have worries about their wellbeing. If you hear of anyone in our fellowship who is unwell or in difficulty, could you please inform their pastoral visitor or housegroup leader or let me know (unless they have specifically asked you not to)

Congratulations to Heather and Richard on the birth of Hannah Ivy on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, a sister for Lucy and granddaughter for Liz Mawdsley, and to James and Bethan on 8<sup>th</sup> November, a daughter, Iona Evelyn and granddaughter for Ian and Jacqui Marsh.

With all the turmoil in Zimbabwe at this present time we hold in our prayers Jonathan and Isabel Hill, our mission partners in that country. May their children, Stephen and Suzanne, have peace of mind about their parents.

On 14<sup>th</sup> December Ruth, Joy and Christian Mallard will be visiting India for two weeks and will renew friendship with those they made two years ago. (See article '*Return to India*')

Ruth Barratt was commissioned as a retail businesses chaplain for Ashbourne town centre on 26<sup>th</sup> November and is working on behalf of Ashbourne churches together. Ruth needs our prayers as she starts visiting shops from the first week of December to talk to people and get to know them. Chaplaincy fulfils God's mission to all people and offers listening and support to anyone, people with faith or no faith. Chaplains operate as guests in other's space and go with no agenda but to be a reflection of Christ in our town. Jane Bowley needs our prayers too as she goes into schools in the town with the Christmas story.

After worship on a Sunday, there are people available to pray with you or for you. Please ask a steward who knows people willing to do this. Coffee time after the service is a time to get to know some of our new people as well as to catch up with those we know well. The weekly prayer meeting takes place at church at 9.30 am on a Thursday, a good time to pray together for needs of the church and the wider world. If the Lord lays it on your heart to pray with others for His work in our community and Thursday does not suit, just mention it to a steward or to me and alternative options can be considered.

Elizabeth Spencer is part of the Chaplaincy team at the Royal Derby Hospital as a Chaplaincy Visitor and also as a Eucharistic Minister taking Holy Communion round the wards on a Sunday. If anyone would like to receive Holy Communion, prayers or a visit, do let her know on 348482. She is also a visitor at St Oswald's Hospital in Ashbourne. I have her email address if you prefer to use that.

*Joyce Odell, Pastoral Secretary 22.11.2017*

## **Living Amazed**

Teach us to be amazed each day,  
At the wonders you have done.  
Your greatness shows in every way,  
and shapes who we become.

Open our eyes with joy and love,  
to see what's all around.  
To count our blessings from above,  
for gifts that are abound.

Your love enfolds like angel wings,  
that keeps us safe and warm.  
You think of all the smallest things,  
our guard against the storm.

Your love is well beyond all speech,  
that we could ever say.  
And yet it is within our reach,  
for each and every day.

Such special love that you have shown,  
so great beyond compare.  
The greatest love forever known,  
that you are always there.

May all our praises daily be,  
for everything you do.  
And may we all our whole life see,  
the love that's always You.

*Contributed by Cliff Lewer (described as a poem from a friend)*

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### **Christmas Quote -**

Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect. - Anon



## *20 years of Shoe Boxes – a personal reflection*

In 1997 Michael and I moved to Ashbourne to start a B & B and, later, a conference centre. We brought with us the, then, new idea of packing a shoe box with small gifts for children in countries experiencing trauma due to war, famine, and/or disease. It had just been taken on by Samaritan's Purse from the original founders, who had seen for themselves the terrible plight of abandoned children in orphanages in Romania.

Coming to a new church, we wondered if anyone would like to join us in making up a box, so I advertised in the magazine. That first year we had 3 boxes, and were helped by Marianne and Eric Mathews. The next year we had more boxes, and I also mooted the idea of knitting teddy bears to go into the boxes. Soon this became something of a cottage industry. Marianne made a 'bed' to display the teddies. In addition the people in church have knitted hundreds of scarves, hats and mittens.

The number of boxes grew rapidly, with more and more people wanting to join in the fun. They were taken to *Yeoman's* store, and then on to the main warehouse in Chesterfield. The first Derby warehouse I went to help at was on the first floor of an empty building in Full Street. The boxes were slid down to the ground floor on fire station rescue boards to save carrying them down the stairs. The next building I helped at was in the area now occupied by *Intu*, which was just being developed as Westfield. There was no heating or lighting, and no toilets, (but fortunately there was the shopping centre nearby with public facilities!), it was just an empty shell. It was very basic, but fun. As it was a very cold winter we all wore arctic clothing. The building was serviced by a generator, chained outside to the nearest lamp. It mostly worked, but after dark (we often worked till late) it was often a case of did we have lighting or heating if we were running out of fuel! Fortunately, there was a light on the car park, just outside the window, so we usually chose heat. The premises used these days are a definite improvement, but maybe not so much fun.

In the 20 years that Ashbourne Circuit has been taking part in the project we have collected hundreds, if not thousands, of boxes, and have raised a lot of money to help with the enormous cost of shipping the boxes. It is impossible to assess the impact these simple gifts has on the children receiving them. It is probably matched by the pleasure of those who pack a box. It is great fun. Until this year we also checked and sealed the boxes locally in Century Hall before they were sent to the warehouse, but this year, due to new and stringent regulations, this is being done centrally, which is sad, because that, too, was a very enjoyable part of the whole project which brought together many people to help and get to know each other better. We never ran short of helpers.

From such a very small beginning, our local participation has expanded enormously, with many other churches, clubs, schools, and organisations taking part. The Ashbourne contribution to the overall total in the Derby area is 10%, a splendid achievement. **Thank you to everyone who has taken part over the years**, in so many ways. The sight of all the colourful boxes at the annual blessing service is a treat. I am delighted that a new group has now taken over the running of the project in Ashbourne, and trust that it will continue for many years. If you want to know more, or would like to help, contact Chris Dakin, Sheila Cook, Margaret Heaton, or Brenda Micklethwaite, or even me!! **Betty Hadley**. *Ashbourne District Co-ordinator for Operation Christmas Child.*

### **How does God help you in your life?**

We would like to be able to share more examples of how God is working through the people of our Church. Would you be willing to share a story with us? This could be by speaking about a recent event during a service, or by writing it down for the magazine. It would be great to learn more about what God is doing in your lives now, or it could be a life changing event from many years ago.

The Worship Coordination team would like to create a list of people who either have a story in mind that they'd like to tell, or who are willing to be asked to share a recent experience during a worship service at fairly short notice. If you would like to be on this list please speak to Catherine Green ([catherine@greenofashbourne.plus.com](mailto:catherine@greenofashbourne.plus.com) or 300338).





## ***Two tributes to Sister Merle Wilde***

**"MERLE."** I feel that I have been privileged to know two "Saints" in my lifetime, (although I know the two I name would deny vehemently that they were "Saints")

One was Mrs Lowe, wife of George, and mother of John and Maurice Lowe, from Beresford Dale. The other was Merle Wilde.

Merle was a wonderful person, I started to know about her when I came to this area in the mid 1970's when I was courting Ann. After Ann and I married, and we set up home here, and later in my life I got to know Merle a whole lot more.

I learned that she was related to Jessica, Ann's mother, and often spent time at Harlow Farm. Merle would always call in for tea, if she had been preaching at Stanton, sometimes she would come for lunch if she had been preaching at Mayfield.

What comes to mind was whenever she came in the farm house, upon greeting Geoffrey and Jessica, she would always say "Can I do anything for you Jessica"?

In recollecting her life in these days that followed her death I thought that those words, "*Can I do anything for you*"?, were representative of Merle's way in more ways than just helping a lifelong friend prepare for a meal.

Her work in Kenya, Bristol and Notting Hill, that we read in her autobiography of her missionary days, were of Merle, doing things, for her Lord, and for His people, wherever they were, abroad, or in this country or around her home.

In this area, not many a day went past that I did not see her off in her car, to help a friend, to do the assembly at a school, to take a service, preach the gospel, lead a bible study, and be somewhere for someone that she knew needed her to be there. For nothing was too much for Merle to do, for her Lord, in the work she had been given and that also

included making time for a visit to her own family, who were very much in her heart, and helped on the farm and help them personally whenever she could.

While writing this article, I thought that's maybe why Merle had, at 96, such a long and fruitful life, that she prayed earnestly to her Lord, to be given the time to fulfil all she could for Her Lord Jesus!

I was saddened when she took ill and cried when I saw what the stroke had done to her, yet she grasped my hand and smiled as best she could that smile that was always part of her, as she held my hand in hers and pressed it to her cheek as I said " Shall we pray together?". Merle managed to say "Yes" and we did. Later, alone, I prayed, as I knew many did, that she would be released from her pain, and wondered why Merle held on so long!

But then I realised, and mentioned to folk that asked, the same thought that I had. It was that great heart and spirit, that the Lord had given her which took her from, Kniveton to Kenya and back again and all points in between, plus the work of the Lord she did in our own area, would just not let go!

It was if Merle still thought that the Lord Jesus still had something that he wanted her to do and she would wait awhile for His call! As a line in her book says, quoting J.H Newman, "*I loved to chose and see my path, but now Thou, lead me on!*"! Yes, Merle was still waiting to be led! Well, He, the Lord, has led her on now, to the Crown that surely awaits her. I will miss her, deeply, but, I give thanks for Merle's life and the joy to have known her and call her my friend!

**Tom Parkinson. Pastoral Visitor**

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### **From Elizabeth Spencer**

I have known Merle for many, many years, which developed into a very close friendship. Merle visited myself and my late mother at home and when my mother was in hospital fighting cancer, Merle was there alongside praying and comforting and so it was only right that Merle took part in my mother's funeral service.

Many years later when I became part of the Chaplaincy team at the Royal Derby Hospital, it was Merle who gave me a reference. She told me how important it was to love and care for people in hospital and for the lonely and I would be the perfect person for this.

Merle would phone me or leave me a message saying someone she knew or someone from church was in hospital and would I visit and pray for them. Then there were times when I drove Merle to hospital as she never liked driving round the big island outside. Taking me to visit people with her, our friendship developed and I saw from Merle's eyes and her ways the love and care she had for people.

Every time at hospital, be it visiting or Merle having treatment we would finish off by going into the chapel in the Faith Centre and praying together, then go into the office for tea and biscuits and a chat with the Chaplains and others. They all knew Merle and loved her. I remember a time not so long ago when Merle asked me to go with her for an appointment; During the discussion with a doctor he said to Merle 'you are retired' to which Merle answered 'no'. So he thinking she had not heard him correctly repeated it. Again Merle said 'no' and went on to tell him she still preached, drove, cooked for herself and then about her life in Kenya. It went very quiet as he could not believe what he was hearing.

Every time I visited Merle at her home I found her welcoming and she gave me an insight into her life and her family. Many times we would have tea and a slice of malt loaf together and catch up on recent events. During these visits we never parted without prayer for family, friends and events with Merle always finishing with a prayer for me and for my work at the hospital.

While Merle was in hospital I visited two or three times a week and always arranged bedside holy communion for her on a Sunday, many times taking this to her as Eucharistic Minister.

Towards the end of Merle's life at home I visited every day and at her bedside I held her hand, prayed for her, read the Bible to her and talked of old times. I was there for Merle and her family just as Merle had been there for me. It has been an honour and a privilege to have known Merle and to have had her in my life. I miss Merle – a great lady and my dear friend. Till we meet again, God bless.



## **MISSION**

## **MATTERS**

### **Report on a visit to Patna Diocese, North India on behalf of Ashbourne's Patna Partnership in September 2017**

Thanks to Anna & Martyn Davis of Hulland for their report: Our 3-week visit was based at the Patna Diocesan Headquarters in Bhagalpur from where we made visits to Taljhari, Barharwa and Hiranpur. Throughout our visit we were accompanied by our teenage granddaughter Emily who had been wanting to visit India for many years having spent time with Bishop and Lily Marandih's daughter Preety when she visited England in 2008.

#### **Bhagalpur Church:**

A noticeable feature of India in September was the heat and humidity level which took some accommodating. However, the reason for the visit being in September was at the invitation of Bishop Philip Marandih to attend a Diocesan Celebration on 15<sup>th</sup> September for his 21 years consecration as Bishop, and then the wedding of his second son Praveen on 18<sup>th</sup> September. Unfortunately the wedding had to be postponed until November due to the bride's mother's illness and an operation, so we were unable to attend that celebration.

During the Celebration Service the Bishop expressed in English his thanks and appreciation of the support of the Ashbourne Patna Partnership, and it was good that we could be there as representatives. Afterwards we greeted many pastors from the diocese, recognising in particular Francis, Manoj, Daniel and Rev Toppo. Sadly we saw no more of Manoj during the remainder of our visit but we did see more of Francis who invited us for a meal when we were able to meet his wife and son. It also gave Francis an opportunity to explain to us the work that he is doing supporting very small Christian communities in villages in the northern part of the diocese, a very orthodox Hindu region. It appears to be challenging work.

**Bhagalpur Schools:**

We were able to make several visits to Christ Church Diocesan School, where the Bishop's daughter Preety is now the Principal, and spend some time in each of the classes. The presence of Emily was the cause of much curiosity and interest particularly with the older students. Our activities in the school included teaching a new song for assembly, visiting each class for a question and answer session, and being invited as guests to football and kabbadi contests and to present awards. As it was the start of the Hindu Festival of Durga Puja a rangooli competition was set up with each class making their own picture design on the floor outside their classroom. As honoured guests we were asked to judge and present awards. The standard of artwork and design was most impressive.

**Taljhari and Barharwa:**

In Taljhari we were taken to St John's School but most of the students were away because of the Hindu festival so we could not see the school functioning. Bishop Philip informed us there are now over 300 students. Whilst in Taljhari Emily had a taste of traditional Santali culture by being dressed in the local costume and participating in tribal dancing with friends and family. The Bishop joined in with his mouth organ.

**Hiranpur, St Luke's Hospital:**

We managed to negotiate a visit to stay with Doctors Elisabeth and Shubhro at St Luke's Hospital and were pleased to see that the hospital now has a solar powered generator which was formally inaugurated and blessed by Bishop Marandih in June 2016. Efforts to provide a reliable water supply have some complications needing to be addressed. A laboratory is being set up for routine medical tests to be carried out on site and a refurbished house was nearing completion for a doctor to take up residence imminently. The establishment of a reliable power and water supply is an essential pre-requisite for getting the hospital officially registered.

*Some of you will have met Rev. Abhir Adhikari, from Calcutta, who visited Ashbourne in November. We have also had recent visits from Bishop Philip, Rev Francis, Rev Manoj and Rev Daniel.*

***Richard Odell, World Mission Secretary***

## **Return to India**

*We have asked the Mallards to give us some details of their visit. They thank you for all your interest and support.*

*Ruth writes;*

“Joy, Ruth (2nd visit for us two) and Christian (1st visit and he will celebrate his 15th birthday here) - visit to India - depart from Birmingham for Delhi on the evening of 14th Dec (straight after school). Arrive in Delhi 15th (16-19th – independent travel by train – Agra, Varanasi, Kolkata) Arrive Kolkata early morning 20th Dec. We are there to work voluntarily at the Bishop’s invitation. We are staying in the city and providing a daily children’s programme for the orphan children and young people at the Arunima Hospice (where Joy and I went in Oct 2015). We also hope to visit some CRS (Cathedral Relief Service) projects and to meet up with other folk who we met on our 2015 visit – mainly with connections to the Cathedral and CRS. Joy has stayed in touch with young people from the Cathedral and School community (where we stayed last time) via social media. We return home on 31st Dec. Please pray for health, stamina, good relationships, security for us and our belongings, good travel and smooth arrangements as far as possible! “

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## **PHAKAMISA PROJECT**

It is very encouraging to tell you that since 2009 to date £2572.00 of Phakamisa beadwork has been sold – much of this at Ashbourne Methodist Church but also at other places, events and to individuals.

We still have some stock but will not be doing regular beadwork stalls now. If you would like any for your own use or at an event we are very happy to provide the items.

The Pinetown Methodist project in South Africa continues to help and support many needy children and adults and the beadwork sales have provided valuable income to some of the most marginalised and poor people who also care for many other vulnerable individuals. Anne Wills will be able to tell us more very soon after her visit to the project.

Once again a very big thank you to everyone who supports Phakamisa.

*Ruth Mallard 27/10/17*

## **Ashbourne Methodist Church's Leadership team**

There have recently been a couple of small changes to the leadership team which we wanted to tell you about.

The leadership team's role is to act on the decisions and policies of the Church Council, to share the vision of the church and seek to involve others in the realisation of that vision. We pray for the work of our Church and the team meets regularly to review progress and plan future work.

The team includes five Leadership Stewards. Each of the stewards exercises oversight over a specific range of the church's life and activity. This involves attending meetings relating to that area of responsibility as necessary. If you ever have any questions, talking to one of the Leadership Stewards is a good place to start! There are pictures on the back page of this issue of *Connections*, and also on a poster in the entrance to church.

- Our Minister, Rev Tim Morris.
- Jane Bowley, our Family Outreach Worker, who now provides a link with our work with children and youth.
- Robert Sales, Leadership Steward for Worship, who also chairs the meetings.
- Becky Dutton, Leadership Steward for Outreach.
- Jennie Ferry, Leadership Steward for Older People. This is a change for Jennie and a new role which recognises the importance of our work with older people. Jennie will be a link between the different activities and will also be involved in developing this area of our work.
- Brian Hawkins, Leadership Steward for Learning & Caring.
- Helen Barker, Leadership Steward. Helen is responsible for updating the Mission Action Plan, encouraging more social events and will also provide a connection to the Link Development fundraising group.
- Paul Haslam, Church Treasurer. Paul also provides a connection to the Resources Team and the Link Development Team.
- Stuart Green, Publicity Officer.

Our church continues to develop its mission and ministry in Ashbourne, and the Leadership Team are there to support that development through prayer and in practical ways.

If you have any questions, please talk to any member of the team.

## *Let Jesus Show!*

The nativity scene with all its characters was in place, as the children (representing angels), gathered around the manger. They sang: 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will among men'. Suddenly a small girl on the edge of the crowd, who couldn't see what was going on, shouted out, 'Let Jesus show!'

At Christmas time, we want to let Jesus show, in our churches, communities and lives. We have an amazing message to share: 'in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord' (Luke 2:10). It was to the shepherds, apart from his parents, that Jesus was first showed.

The filthy, hardworking shepherds, living in the fields with their flock of dirty animals, were unlikely candidates for this honour. By the nature of their work, they had the status of migrant workers. Yet this underlines for us that the good news of Christmas is for everyone, irrespective of social standing, background, race or gender.

No doubt these simple shepherds would have had no idea of what the names given to Jesus fully meant (ie Saviour, Messiah and Lord). All they needed to know, and all we need to know, is that God has done something unique in coming to earth as a human being. This is good news of great joy for everybody!

After worshipping the child, the shepherds returned to their normal routine. However, they would never be the same again! Even though their work and social standing were unchanged, they had a message to share and let Jesus show. Although we don't normally see angels, we have the same good news to share! When Christmas is over and we're back to our normal routines, how will we let Jesus show in our lives?

*Paul Hardingham*



**ALL  
WE  
CAN**

Methodist  
relief and  
development

## *Rohingya Refugee Crisis Appeal*

“*All We Can*”, the Methodist Church in Britain’s relief and development agency, is calling for support for this urgent appeal for refugees displaced by the recent violence in Myanmar.

Over the past few months, more than half a million people have fled violence in Myanmar’s Rakhine State. The majority of those fleeing are Rohingya women and children.

“*All We Can*” is calling for generous support for this urgent appeal to assist those seeking refuge in Bangladesh. People are in desperate need of water, food, shelter and access to medical care.

Since violence flared up in Myanmar in late August, an estimated 519,000 Rohingya have sought shelter and safety in Bangladesh. Many are currently living in temporary, unsanitary structures constructed out of plastic sheeting and bamboo in informal camps and settlements.

Refugees are arriving in Bangladesh exhausted and traumatized, and camps and local host communities are struggling to respond to the scale of this disaster.

Food insecurity is one of the primary areas of concern, while providing health care, access to safe water and mitigating the threat of disease is critical. Heavy rains in recent days have made an already precarious situation worse for refugees trying to seek shelter in sub-standard housing and makeshift camps. *All We Can*’s partner is responding to this emergency and is calling for urgent funds to help reach people suffering because of this crisis.

Many bring with them accounts of brutality and report having seen and suffered atrocities that have left them traumatised. Meeting the needs of these refugees who have suffered so much is critical.

To donate, visit [www.allwecan.org/rohingya](http://www.allwecan.org/rohingya)

## *Would you like to write a prayer for the next Methodist Prayer Handbook?*

The theme for next year's Methodist Prayer Handbook will be 'a world transformed by God's love', inspired by the One Mission Statement of the Methodist Church in Britain.

The theme runs like this: through Christ, in the power of the Spirit, we share God's mission, both to renew the created order and to transform lives, communities and nations. Christians and their neighbours are not only subjects of change but agents of change. Individually and collectively we are both challenged and changed by God's transforming love. The gospel of resurrection celebrates the way all things change shape, bringing to birth a new people and a new society and, on a cosmic scale, all things returning to the perfection of God from whom they took their origins.

Would you like to contribute a prayer along these lines? The editor also welcomes prayers for the general pages at the front of the Handbook on the following themes: the integrity of creation, the comforting presence of God, justice, adoration and thanksgiving, confession, times of life and times of day.

Prayers should not exceed 120 words or 12 lines. Shorter prayers and prayers for specific themes or countries are more likely to be used.

When submitting prayers, please give your postal address (so that you can be sent a complimentary copy if your prayer is used), your full name and how you would like to be described (e.g. Jane Jones, local preacher, Townton).

The deadline for submission is **12 January 2018**. Prayers should be emailed to [prayerhandbook@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:prayerhandbook@methodistchurch.org.uk) in the body of an email, not as an attachment. For full details please visit <http://methodist.org.uk/prayerhandbook>.

## Lent Readings Booklet 2018

Each Lent many of us have Lent readings for daily devotions. In 2018 we're hoping to have our own booklet of readings with reflections from members of chapels in the Circuit.

Our aim is to ask individuals or even groups to reflect on one of forty short readings (we'll allocate readings) and to write just two or three paragraphs with thoughts inspired by the reading. And if you'd like to add a line or two of prayer then that would be lovely.

Scripture isn't just for 'other people' to think and write about – it's ours too! This is a chance for us to hear one another's voices and to explore the breadth of faith and insight that we have between us. If you'd like to take part please contact Fiona Green, Stuart Green or Wendy Haslam.

### CIRCUIT WEEKEND AWAY 2018

Don't forget the Circuit weekend away planned for **September 21st to 23rd**. Full details of the weekend and how to book will be out in January!

If anyone is interested in joining the weekend planning team please talk to Helen Walker, Elizabeth Hurfurt or Rev Tim.



*This edition of "CONNECTIONS" covers December 2017 and January 2018. Here are prayers for the end of one year and the beginning of another, by Daphne Kitching. They are offered in the hope that you may find it helpful to make them your own.*

### ***Prayer at Christmas***

Father of all good gifts,

Thank you for the greatest gift of all – your precious Son, Jesus. Thank you that He chose to live with us so that all who trust Him will one day live with you in peace and wholeness.

Help us Father, this Christmas, to keep you at the centre of our celebrations and, in the midst of all the busy-ness and rush, to know your presence and the peace that only you can give. And Lord, may we reflect your love to those who don't yet know that you are real and alive and able to help, whatever their situation. In Jesus' name, *Amen*.

### ***Prayer for the New Year***

Lord of the Years,

At the start of this New Year we ask for your presence, protection and guidance for every minute of every day of every month ahead.

Thank you that we do not go into this New Year alone. Thank you for loving us so much that you gave us Jesus to lead us to you.

May we commit ourselves afresh to serve you, to love you and to share your love with those who don't yet know you.

May we make a difference for your Kingdom in 2018.

In Jesus name. *Amen*

### **From the Editor**

Friends,

As we come to the end of one year and look forward to the next I would like to thank you for your contributions and say I hope you will keep them coming next year. I know that personal stories and experiences of your faith journey are valued often more than material from other sources. Please think about making at least one contribution of this sort next year. The *February* edition will be published on **Sunday 28th January**, with a copy deadline of **17th January**. May the joy and peace of Christmas be yours. *Arthur Watts*

## *Ashbourne Circuit Church Services*

### *Sunday December 10th*

Ashbourne	9:15am	Café Style
	10:30am	Rev Tim Morris
	18:30pm	Peter Dawson
Brailsford	10:30am	Diana Whitmill
Hulland	14:30pm	Rev Tim Morris/ John Dyster
Kirk Ireton	18:30pm	Rev Tim Morris
Kniveton		@ Hulland
Parwich		<b>No service</b>

### *Advent 2*

in Century Hall  
Communion

Carol Service

Carol Service

### *Sunday December 17th*

Ashbourne	10:30am	Tim Dutton
	18:30pm	Rev Tim Morris
Brailsford	<b>10:45am</b>	
Hulland		No service
Kniveton	<b>18:30pm</b>	Tom Parkinson
Parwich	<b>18:00pm</b>	Rev Carolyn McDonald /Ruth Barratt
Tissington	<b>16:00pm</b>	Rev Tim Morris

### *Advent 3*

Carol Service

**United Carol Service @ Parish**

Carol Service

**United Carol Service @ Parish**

Carol Service

### *Thursday December 21st*

Brailsford	18:00pm	Rev Tim Morris
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Carol Service

### *Sunday December 24th*

Ashbourne	10:30am	Powersource
	6:30pm	No service
	<b>23:30pm</b>	Rev Tim Morris
Brailsford	10:30am	Ann Parkinson
Milldale	16:00pm	Rev Tim Morris

### *Christmas Eve*

Christmas Eve Communion

Christmas Eve service

### *Monday December 25th*

Ashbourne	10:00am	Rev Tim Morris
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### *Christmas Day*

All Age, Circuit Service

### *Sunday December 31st*

Ashbourne	10:30am	Ruth Barratt
	6:30pm	No service

All Age, Circuit Service

### *Sunday January 7th 2018*

Ashbourne	10:30am	Rev Tim Morris	Covenant, communion
	6:30pm	Ann Parkinson	
Brailsford	10:30am	Fiona Green/ Rev Colin Johnson	United Service @ Methodist Covenant, communion

### *Sunday January 14th*

Ashbourne	9:15am	Café style	in Century Hall
	10:30am	Rev Tim Morris	
	18:30pm	Lorraine Hawkins	
Brailsford	10:30am	Rev Mark Broadhurst	
Hulland		No service	
Kniveton	14:30pm	Rev Tim Morris	Covenant, Communion
Parwich	14:30pm	Ann Parkinson	

### *Sunday January 21st*

### *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*

Ashbourne	10:30am	Robert Sales/ Matt Broad	Pulpit Swap
	18:30pm	Praise	in Century Hall
Brailsford	10:30am	Sue Leese	All Age
Hulland	14:30pm	Rev Phil Michell/ Rev Tim Morris	<b>United Service @ Parish</b> Covenant, Communion
Kirk Ireton	18:30pm	Rev David Leese/ Rev Kara Werner	United Service at Methodist
Tissington	10:30am	Fiona Green	

### *Sunday January 28th*

Ashbourne	10:30am	John Dyster	
	19:00pm		ACT United Service @ Elim
Brailsford	10:30am	Rev Tim Morris	
Hulland		No service	
Kniveton	11:00am	Diana Whitmill	
Parwich	14:30pm	Rev Tim Morris	Covenant, Communion

### *Sunday February 4th*

Ashbourne	10:30am	Rev Chris Briggs	Communion
	18:30pm	Diana Whitmill	
Brailsford	10:30am	Rev Mark Broadhurst	United Service at Methodist
Hulland		No service	

NB Items in **bold** are different to the norm.

### **ASHBOURNE CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

Sun	6:30pm	Mustard (Youth Fellowship)
Mon	10:00am	Housegroup: weekly <i>Contact - David Heaton (343418)</i>
	2:00pm	Craft and Chat in The Cornerstone <i>Contact - Clare Sales (342321)</i>
	7:30pm	Housegroup: weekly <i>Contact - Helen Walker (343910)</i>
Tues	9:00am	kids@cornerstone <i>Contact - Clare Sales (342321)</i>
	10:00am	Housegroup: weekly <i>Contact - John &amp; Elizabeth Hurfurt (342859)</i>
	12:30pm	Luncheon Club: last Tuesday in month, Century Hall <i>Contact - John &amp; Elizabeth Hurfurt (342859)</i>
Wed	9:30am	Walk and Talk Group: 1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesday Amble & Ramble (easier walking): 2nd & 4th Weds <i>Contacts - Chris and John Dakin (345280)</i>
	7:30pm	Housegroup: fortnightly <i>Contact - Eric and Jenny Williams 346155)</i>
Thurs	7:30pm	Housegroup: weekly <i>Contact - Jeff Ffoulkes (300443)</i>
Thurs, Fri, Sat	10:00am	The Cornerstone Coffee Shop <i>Contact - Pat Fielding (345695)</i>

### **BRAILSFORD CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

Tues	9:30am	Coffee Shop: weekly
Wed	12:30pm	Luncheon Club: monthly, 2nd Wednesday

### **HULLAND CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

Tues	7:30pm	Bible Study: monthly, 2nd Tuesday
Thurs	2:15pm	Women's Fellowship: monthly, 1st Thursday

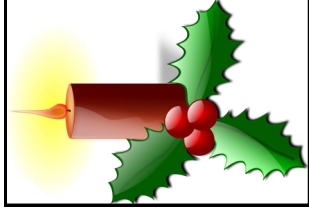
### **KIRK IRETON CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

Wed	7:30pm	Fellowship: monthly, 3rd Wednesday
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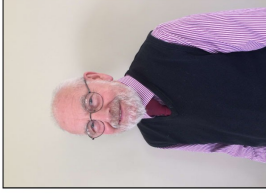
### **CIRCUIT STAFF**

Rev Tim Morris  
16 Booth Drive,  
Ashbourne DE6 1SZ  
Tel: 01335 342408  
E-mail: revtimmorris@aol.com

# Who's who on the Church Leadership Team?



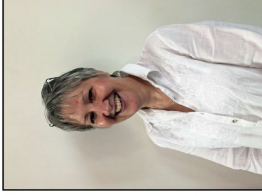
Helen Barker  
Leadership Steward –  
Church Action Plan



Brian Hawkins  
Leadership Steward - Learning & Caring



Stuart Green  
Publicity Officer



Jane Bowley  
Family Outreach Worker



Jennie Ferry  
Leadership Steward – Older People



Paul Haslam  
Church Treasurer



Rev Tim Morris  
Minister



Becky Dutton  
Leadership Steward - Outreach



Robert Sales  
Leadership Steward - Worship