

Connections



For the fruits of all creation
thanks be to God



Ashbourne Methodist Circuit
Magazine September 2020

Letter from the Minister

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Dear Friends,

“Say a great big thank you”

Harvest will be a little different this year I suspect - our festival of thanksgiving for the harvest will be. Yet the Harvest will still happen! Those who produce our food will still go about their work, using their skill and talents to reap the harvest we are fortunate to share in.



Harvest thanksgiving reminds us of how interconnected we are, how reliant we are, how dependent we are on each other. It also reminds us that “there’s enough for everyone’s need, but not for everyone’s greed”. Some of us may have found our clothes are a bit tighter now. Something to do with how much we consume (comfort eating we tell ourselves!) during this time of pandemic.

Though we can’t be together in large numbers to give thanks for the harvest, it’s still a very important event to celebrate. For as we do, we give out of thankfulness – “thanks...giving”. I hope you will find opportunity to support our Circuit Harvest Festival this year – not just by joining in the worship, but also in making an offering at this particular time. Details are on the next page.

As we approach the season for Harvest Festivals and give thanks for all that God has given us to sustain and make us flourish, let us do so with full, glad and thankful hearts, remembering that “all good gifts around us are sent from heaven above”. As we give thanks for all that we have received, let us be ready to offer much in return.

Your minister and friend,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Morris". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Harvest Gifts



As many of our churches will not be able to support Harvest Festivals this year, I hope that we could still be able to give to help the work of supporting people locally and overseas.

To this end, our morning service (online) on Sunday, 27 September, led by Steve Haines, will be a Harvest Service for the whole Circuit. We have traditionally supported the work of All We Can financially and brought goods for the local Foodbank.

At the moment the Foodbank are not needing any goods donated from Harvest Services, but would welcome financial gifts instead. Please contact Ashbourne Elim Church to make a donation.



Address: Waterside Road, Ashbourne,
Derbyshire DE6 1DG Telephone: 01335 344338
Email: office@ashbourneelim.church



**Methodist
relief and
development**

To support All We Can, we will set up a local donation page on the internet. The address will be advertised in the weekly notices.

If you don't have internet facilities, or are unsure of how to access this, please let me know and we'll make sure you get an All We Can envelope.

Many thanks – Rev Tim Morris



Ashbourne Church Family News

*"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."
Romans 15:13*

Our love and prayers are with the family and friends of Pearl Steeples, who died on 24 July, and with the family of Harold Weston, whose mother died on 7 August.

Congratulations to Peter Carmen and Gloria who married on 5 August and to Liz Mawdsley whose granddaughter, Piper Jay, was born on 24 June.

We welcome Jen and Richard Farmer, Caleb and Elijah to Ashbourne - a return for Jen as she is Ian and Jacqui Marsh's daughter - and to Steve Woodroffe who moves into Ashbourne on 28 August. We are glad that Marion and Richard Shaw are safely back from Spain. I want to record our thanks to Gwenda Alcock who has been a faithful pastoral visitor over the years and still a 'welcomer' when we meet again!

As we pray for each other, let's remember Carole Thorpe, David Franklin, Barbara Hollands, Jenny Waring, Margaret Wright, Cherrie Broadhurst and Sally Wall (at Ashbourne Lodge) and others you know who may not be well, along with those who care in one way or another. There are a number who are waiting for tests and results and you may well know close friends in that situation. Some of us have family members who find themselves in difficult situations. For some, sitting in the garden with a friend has brought purpose to the day and others are now able to enjoy going out a little. There are still those who need that phone call or visit if it is safe to do so. As the weeks roll on and we still cannot visit freely, let's keep up all the ways we have of connecting with one another. I am so grateful for all those who prepare and send out service sheets and allow people to meet on zoom or who record Sunday services.

Congratulations to Beth Peers who has now gained a place at Newnham College, Cambridge to read Natural Sciences. Thomas Haines and Jacob Morris have now received very good GCSE results. Thomas will study Digital T level at Painsley College, Cheadle, while Jacob moves up into the sixth form at QEGS. Along with those mentioned last month, Samuel Morris will return to Chester to study History in his second year. Those moving up to QEGS are, Daniel Alton, Bronwen Flux, William Glossop, Wesley Green, Matthew Jeffery-Walker, and Sara Stosik.

Although there is no prayer in the vestry on a Thursday morning, we are encouraged to take time to pray, not only for our church family matters but for nation and world issues. As a church we need to pray together with prayers of adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication as we listen to world news. As we take time to listen to God, let's also make our requests known, not because God does not know the situation but because we are reminded in scripture, "Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

Currently Ruth Barratt, Chaplain to Businesses in Ashbourne, and Elizabeth Spencer, part of the Chaplaincy team at the Royal Derby Hospital, are not able to work as they did but Ruth Barratt is still chaplain one day per week at a GP Practice in Ilkeston and is slowly getting back to work in Ashbourne.

Thank you to all who have helped me complete these articles by giving me information over the months. If you have specific matters you would like to share with someone for prayer, contact Rev Tim, Wendy Haslam, your pastoral visitor or housegroup. Wendy will be taking over this role from 1 September.

Joyce Odell Pastoral Secretary 19.08.2020

“BESIDE STILL WATERS” - a Day of Reflection

How do you replace a cancelled Quiet Day? This was the question we began to think about in early June. We faced a tricky dilemma: how do you have a Quiet Day in lockdown - a time when for many people every day is already quiet?

We decided instead to plan a day of reflection and activity which took into account the fact that for many, quietness is a constant background feature of everyday life. So *Beside Still Waters* was planned for 4th July, with three online meditations, each focussing on a different water-related Gospel reading. Rosemary, Sandra and Fiona each took one on, and Stephanie read a poem for us. We also planned a craft activity of making a Prayer Square. These have been done around the Connection and Clare filmed our own how-to video that incorporated thinking about our particular theme.

Having planned the day for 4th July, we then found out that it was the date of the easing of many lockdown restrictions. However, we need not have worried. Lots of people were still not feeling like going out and about or were shielding. And it was a really dismal wet day, so for those at home it was the perfect moment for an activity that was spread across much of the day.

59 people signed up, received craft packs and either took part on the day or caught up with it when they were able to, via the church's Facebook page. A small group of people sent out the craft packs to participants, and paper copies of talks and activities were provided for those who aren't online.

We were overwhelmed by the numbers of people who took part and told us how much they enjoyed it. At the time of writing we have received 53 completed Prayer Squares from far and wide, beautifully and thoughtfully put together. The words to accompany the squares have often been heartfelt and extremely moving. Helen Flinn will co-ordinate making the squares into banners which can be put in church in due course. They will be a long-lasting record of this time in the life of our church. We also plan to display and use pictures of the squares in other ways - watch this space, as they say! *(In the meantime, see the back cover/page 28)*

We'd like to thank everyone who took part and showed us that so much could be achieved that was prayerful and spirit filled even though we could not meet together in person. Thank you to everyone who provided materials for us to give out and also to those who generously contributed their reflections and craft skills via the videos.

Thank you too to the 'couriers' - you did a great job! And of course, to Helen for her work with the banners. Thanks are also due to Stuart who put together our online content.

If you'd like to watch any of the videos again - or for the first time, maybe! - they are available on both the church and the Craft & Chat Facebook pages.

And, in answer to the question that has been asked more than once, yes, we are planning to do another. Look out for a date in the autumn once the nights are drawing in.

Fiona Green, Sandra Lewer and Clare Sales

Jesus calms the storm

by Rosemary Webb

(one of the meditations used on the Day of Reflection)

Luke chapter 8: verses 22 to 25

One day Jesus said to His disciples, “Let’s go over to the other side of the lake”. So they got into a boat and set out. As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger. The disciples went and woke Him, saying, “Master, Master, we’re going to drown!” He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. “Where is your faith?” he asked His disciples. In fear and amazement they asked one another, “Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him.”

We all face our own individual storms in life – events or situations that make us anxious, worried or afraid. Many of us were facing these storms even before the coronavirus and lockdown situation came upon us. For some people, the lockdown has made these individual storms so much worse.

I know some of you were recently bereaved before lockdown and this situation has only exacerbated your sense of loss. Others of you have become bereaved during lockdown, and that has come with the additional heartbreak of not being able to be with your loved ones when you and they most needed it – to say goodbye in person.

Some of you will have found this time to be a very lonely and isolating time while others will have struggled with being confined with those who make your life miserable or even dangerous.

Many people are facing financial hardship – and for those who were already struggling, this could be the tipping point.

Health issues are the storm for many, many people. Struggling with daily pain or disability – whether physical or mental – can be a terrible burden. It may be that you have to watch a loved one struggle with their health. It is intensely painful to see the impact of this on their lives.

Maybe you are still working but you are finding all the changes and new expectations being placed on you very onerous and stressful.

We have a God who really cares about us and wants us to come to Him with our problems. Also, he knows what it means to suffer. In Mark 14, verses 33 and 34, we read that in the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus

began to be deeply distressed and troubled as he faced his impending humiliating arrest and imminent cruel death. He said “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.”

In my own personal experience, when facing a storm, I have sometimes been slow to turn to God for help. Instead I have stewed in worry and spent sleepless nights trying to sort things out by myself. It’s easy to trust in God when everything is going well – it’s when things are tough that our faith is tested.

I am ashamed to say that often, when faced with a crisis, I am like the disciples in this passage and cry out, “Help, I’m drowning”. My “feelings” tell me the situation is dire and God isn’t hearing me. I can associate with David in Psalm 13 when he is going through a really bad time and he says “How long, O Lord? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? Look on me and answer, O Lord my God”. I wonder how many of us can associate with that.

So Jesus asks the disciples “Where is your faith?” This question is certainly relevant to me and I wonder if it is to you too. So - we come to God for help. Does our storm miraculously vanish immediately? Not necessarily, not in my experience – however, I believe we are given the strength to manage the storm. And it has always amazed me how God tailors the help he gives in such a way as to be most relevant to us as individuals.

As a response to praying to God for help in particularly difficult situations at different times, I have received messages of love and support from people who had no idea of the extent of my problem – and these messages have been both appropriate and timely. I have also been overwhelmed by generous and practical support. I have been able to echo David’s words “But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord.”

Recently I read something that I would like to share with you. It went like this: “Spiritual poise comes from living by what I know about God, not by what I feel about Him or myself or my circumstances. Living this way doesn’t stop me being stirred but it does stop me from being shaken”.

Just a reminder of some of the verses from Luke that we have looked at: Luke 8:24 says “He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided and all was calm” and in verse 25, the disciples ask one another in amazement “Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.”

My prayer for you is that whatever storm you are now facing, that you will feel able to ask our loving, compassionate God for His help in bringing calm to your situation.

I would like to finish with these words written by Katharina von Schlegel – they form part of the second verse of a song she wrote:

*Be still, my soul, thy God doth undertake
To guide the future as he has the past
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake
Be still, my soul, the waves and winds still know
His voice who ruled them while he dwelt below.*

Lockdown in Spain

by Marion Shaw



For the past couple of years, Richard and I have travelled to Spain in November in our small VW campervan, via Brittany Ferries from Portsmouth to Santander and return. Their winter weather suits us better than the cold and damp of Ashbourne, particularly our joints.

This year, though our travels took a different turn, one that no one was expecting - the coronavirus. We first realised it was going to affect us on Thursday 12th March when we arrived back at our campsite having been on a lovely bicycle ride. People had been panic buying at the local supermarket. As we were going to go tomorrow, we changed our plans and went along to buy a few essentials but mainly a loaf of bread.

By Saturday 14th March, bars and restaurants were closed at midnight and we were in lockdown. We were not allowed out of the campsite except to shop for essentials, visit either the chemist, the tobacconist or the doctor. Only one person allowed out at any time and masks were compulsory even to walk your dog - no exercising of any kind, beaches closed etc. One person joked that they would rent out their dog to any person who wanted to go a walk outside the campsite.

At the time it was difficult to find out any information about the rules that MUST be obeyed but we all pulled together (socially distanced of course) checking the internet and pooling our information as fines were 600 euros.

On Wednesday 18th March we found out our ferry for Sunday 5th April was cancelled. In some ways this was a relief as we felt very safe where we were, and the authorities are very strict - England seemed to be changing their minds and not strict enough.

It was a very strange time and social media kept us going, as we do not have a television - either when away or at home. We still received the weekly news sheet from the Ashbourne Methodist Church which has always kept us in touch - no more so than when we received the 'service at home' for Sunday 22nd March and the following weeks. A friend at the campsite is a member of the Methodist Church at Chesterfield so she joined us for this service for a couple of weeks until she returned home via Calais.

On Easter Sunday, 12th April, we watched via Facebook and could see people logging in, which made us feel very close to our church family and gave us both great comfort. We were 650 miles away minus the Bay of Biscay, but we didn't worry until our second ferry was cancelled on 9th June - no ferries now until July so we booked for 6th July. Now we are getting concerned as the temperature is well in the 30s and most of our friends are leaving or have already left.

I decided to email the British Consulate and eventually, after 10 days, was offered a freight ferry with Brittany Ferries for Wednesday 24th June which we accepted. We knew that at any time we could have travelled through France another 820 miles to Calais but decided against that option - so there was always a route back to England if necessary.

We were thankful to arrive home safely on the Friday and to quarantine for two weeks. We are grateful to our family, friends and Ashbourne Methodist Church for continued support and virtual services during this exceptional time. Take care everyone and stay safe.

Memories of Pearl Steeples

22 April 1929 – 24 July 2020

We first met Pearl when she and Bill came to live in Ashbourne, which is many years ago. Pearl belonged to the Titterton family; her father was a Methodist Minister.

They all lived at Mappleton, where Pearl went to school, then on to the Grammar School. When she left school, she worked at the Telephone Exchange above the old post office in Compton. Pearl married Bill Steeples, and they lived in Mappleton for a short time and then they moved to the farm at Hognaston.

They went to the chapel there until it closed, then they went to the chapel at Cross of Hands, where she sometimes played the organ. She also played the organ at Tissington, and one Sunday she must have pressed the wrong button because they sang Amazing Grace to the bossa nova - a bit different!

When Bill retired they moved to North Avenue, and that's we really got to know them and became good friends. We shared some lovely times together on holidays and days out. She also looked forward to having coffee on a Saturday morning until she was unable to walk. She enjoyed going to the church lunch and would always have a second helping of pudding.

She was a dear friend and will be sadly missed.

God bless, Pearl,

Margaret Grindey and Noreen Allen

Keep in touch by visiting the website for up-to-date news:

www.ashbournemethodist.org.uk

Theme Preach - 'Giving'

'Entering the house where the baby and Mary, his mother, were, they threw themselves down before him, worshipping. Then they opened their presents and gave him gold, frankincense, and myrrh' (Matthew 2:11).

This well-known part of the Christmas story encourages us to reflect on our own giving, not just at Christmas but throughout the year. In our morning services in October, we will be reflecting on the theme of 'Giving' and challenging ourselves to explore what and how we give to God by considering the following themes:

4th October - Generous giving | Acts 2:43-47

What does it mean to be generous in our giving? In this passage we get a glimpse of the early church welcoming new followers, and see how their lives, as individuals and as a community, are shaped by following Jesus. At the heart of their life together is giving 'with glad and generous hearts.'

11th October - Appropriate giving | 2 Corinthians 8:1-15

Paul is writing from Macedonia, sharing news of their generosity, as a way of encouraging the Church in Corinth. Here there is a challenge to be generous in the context of our own wealth, in terms of the money and talents we have: 'the gift is acceptable according to what one has - not according to what one does not have' (v.12).

18th October - Sacrificial giving | Matthew 2:1-12

The journey of the Wise Men is usually lost in the Christmas story but, if we unpack the elements of their travels, we see the challenges they faced in order to give their gifts to the baby Jesus. How willing are we to make sacrifices in our giving to God?

25th October - Responsive giving | Philippians 4:10-20

Paul acknowledges the gifts he has received from the Church in Philippi and reminds them of the way God responds to their giving. They experience a joy in giving, not searching for something in return - which is in contrast to how the Corinthians responded to the challenge to give. Are we joyful givers?

Through these themes, we will be reflecting on our own giving - in particular, of our talents, our money, ourselves and our time.

Tim Morris and Paul Taylor

Methodist Conference 2020

The Conference is the governing body of the Methodist Church and meets annually to discuss matters affecting the life of the church, the nation and the world. The Methodist Council agreed that the Conference could not meet as planned in Telford this year and so it met online: -the Presbyteral Session on 25-26 June, and the Representative Session 27 June–1 July.

Not everything in the original agendas took place this year. The restriction on groups meeting meant that some Synods had not been able to meet and give full consideration to *God in Love Unites Us*, and it was agreed that the debate and voting on the provisional resolutions will be deferred until the 2021 Conference.

This is a summary of some of the matters which were considered:

Induction of the President and Vice-President

The new President is Revd Richard Teal, who was Chair of the Cumbria District for 11 years. The new Vice-President is Carolyn Lawrence, who has a background in primary education and was an educational mission partner in Guyana with the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and Americas.

Inclusive Methodist Church

The Conference voted to bolster and increase the work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) throughout the Connexion, through the development of the Inclusive Methodist Church Strategy.

It called on Methodists to engage, in their own contexts, to confront and challenge all racism and other forms of unjust discrimination. It directed every Circuit to convene a forum for reflection, conversation and planning to ensure that such actions are carried out in each local context.

Oversight and Trusteeship

Changes are necessary in order to ensure the Church can better comply with its obligations as a charity and direct its resources and focus its energies on the mission of the Church. The Conference directed that a proposal is brought to the 2021 Conference to raise the minimum size for a Local Church, and directed all Circuit Meetings to review the number of Church Councils in the Circuit. It encourages Church Councils to work together to determine the best way of working to achieve the minimum number of trustee bodies necessary to fulfil its calling.

Membership

The Methodist Church is Britain's fourth largest Christian denomination, after Anglicans, Roman Catholics and Presbyterians (including Scotland). As of 31 October 2019, the total membership is almost 170,000, and the average weekly attendance is just over 133,000.

Evangelism and Growth Strategy

The Conference voted overwhelmingly to implement a new Church-wide strategy for Evangelism and Growth. *God for All* commits the Church theologically, culturally, and financially to deepen its mission to be a growing, evangelistic, justice-seeking, and inclusive Church.

God for All prioritises helping new people become disciples of Jesus, starting new churches, and raising up new lay and ordained leaders to join God in engaging diverse rural, urban, estate, and suburban communities across Britain. The strategy also focuses significant energy and resources on developing the role of young evangelists, serving communities experiencing marginalisation, expanding the Church's digital presence, and helping Methodists live out their faith in everyday life.

God for All will launch in September with a focused Year of Prayer that will offer the Church's work to God.

Methodist Homes (MHA)

The Methodist Conference received a report from Sam Monaghan, the Chief Executive of MHA. The Conference learned of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on MHA, with more than 430 residents from its care homes, three staff and a number of live-at-home clients having died as a result of the virus. Sam also shared the impact that the pandemic has had emotionally on staff and residents.

Faith and Order matters

The Conference noted the Faith and Order Committee's work in the area of theology of online life, particularly in the present context. It directed the Faith and Order Committee to produce guidance on how appropriate participation in services of Holy Communion by those attending online might be encouraged and to bring a report and recommendations regarding 'online communion' to the 2021 Conference.

Further information about these and other issues may be found at: www.methodist.org.uk/conference_2020

A big thank you to Kniveton Methodist Chapel

for the generous donation that has supported the Gambia Horse and Donkey Trust.

This is Mary the donkey and her cart. She will be in the charge of a lady called Ida Bah, and will be the official village donkey and used to transport people to the nearest clinic - a donkey ambulance. The donkey will help many people in the Gambia.



Thank you for your support.

Kniveton School

(for further information about the charity, see www.gambiahorseanddonkey.org.uk)

High Sheriff's Peak Pilgrimage

I am planning to walk the Peak Pilgrimage route from Ilam to Eyam, along with friends and colleagues. The 39 miles of the walk will be completed over four separate days during September, visiting the churches and chapels along the route and passing through some beautiful and spectacular Derbyshire and Staffordshire scenery .

The walk will be a fundraiser for ACE Youth Trust, which works with hard to reach, disadvantaged and vulnerable young people aged 11 to 19 in the Ashbourne and Derbyshire Dales area and aims to help them grow as individuals and improve their quality of life.

I would be very pleased if you would support me by donating to ACE Youth Trust using this link: <https://gf.me/u/ygmhy>. I am also happy to receive cheques payable to ACE Youth Trust

If anyone is interested in joining me for one or more days on the walk please contact Helen on office@derbyshirehighsheriff.co.uk for more information.(the dates are Sept 2nd,9th,13th and 19th)

Tony Walker

Mission Matters

www.phakamisa.org



Phakamisa is one of our mission partners, working in Pinetown, near Durban, S. Africa. Our local contact person is Anne Wills, so do get in touch with her if you have any queries. This is a letter from the Members of the UK Trust about the sad loss of Thokozani (Phakamisa Director).

Richard Odell, World Mission Secretary richard@richardodell.co.uk

Dear Friends, as some of you will have already heard, Thokozani Poswa, the Director of Phakamisa sadly died in July after contracting Covid 19.

She had been Director since November 2013. Those of you who were able to meet her during her trips to the UK will remember her infectious enthusiasm for Phakamisa and her wish to spread the love of God to all she met. She was so grateful to the supporters in this country and wanted to share the work of the project as widely as possible. So much so, that she willingly travelled to the UK despite never having flown or even been outside of South Africa before her first trip to the UK. She didn't however enjoy, or get used to, the lower temperatures in this country!

Please hold the whole Phakamisa family in your prayers at this time as they plan the way forward. Two staff members have also lost close members of their families and four of the 'Gogos' (grandmothers) have died in the last month. The work continues in these challenging conditions. Gogos and students are unable to go to the Phakamisa premises but continue to be supported. Remember that many live in homes without basic facilities and have to collect water from a communal tap, especially difficult at a time when frequent hand washing is paramount. We will be holding a service of thanksgiving for the life of Thokozani at Christ Church, Long Eaton. Given the restrictions at the moment we have set a provisional date of Saturday April 24th, 2021. More details will be circulated nearer the time.

If you would like to make a donation in memory of Thokozani you can do this by: sending a cheque made payable to 'Phakamisa' to the UK Treasurer, Rachel Foulds, 59 Winston Drive, Skegness, Lincolnshire, PE25 2RE; by bank transfer, account number 06004775 sortcode 80-02-24; or via the PayPal link on our website. Thank you for your continued support of the Phakamisa UK Trust. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful servants (Psalm 116 v.15).*

Thokozani Poswa

by Anne Wills

It was with great sadness we learned of the death of Thokozani in South Africa in July, due to Covid19. Her funeral was held the same week and some of us were able to share in that service via the internet, a very moving gathering of family and Phakamisa staff.

Thokozani joined Phakamisa in 2013, the successor to Gwenda Howieson who had been the backbone of Phakamisa from its beginning more than 20 years ago.

Born in Natal province of South Africa to a Christian family, Thokozani was one of seven siblings.

She graduated from University in Natal with a degree in Social Work and had held several senior positions in social care, prior to her taking up the directorship of Phakamisa. Full of enthusiasm and great communication skills, she provided the learning, caring and feeding programs that are at the heart of Phakamisa.

Thokozani visited UK on two occasions 2017 (her first visit ever out of South Africa) and again last year. She was well received in the south and north of England, as well as in Derby and Ashbourne; also in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Thokozani was widowed some years ago and brought up her three children as a single mum. Her third child recently graduated from university.

Due to the coronavirus, Phakamisa has been closed to the learning programmes, which cater for so many learning teachers and child-minder courses, thereby supporting more than 16,000 young orphaned children living in the Pinetown area with their grandmothers and other relatives. Even though Phakamisa is closed, the staff are doing their best to support all concerned.



We wish to convey our loving condolences to Thokozani's large family. Also our prayers for Phakamisa as a whole: the staff, some of whom have lost close members of their family, and the childminders (Gogos) who live with their grandchildren in very basic settlements with no running water, toilets etc. They all are supporting each other as best as they can under very difficult circumstances. Please remember them all in your prayers. If you were able to give a donation it would be so helpful. Details are in this issue of the Connections magazine.

Anne Wills

Circuit Weekend Away

In the last issue of the Connections we said we would be starting the booking process for the Weekend Away in September. However, after careful consideration, we have decided to defer the weekend to March 2022 which we can do with no penalties. The current situation is very uncertain, and we did not want to ask you to make a difficult decision about this at a time when you may have other more important decisions to make.

Our new booking at The Hayes, Swanwick is for Friday 18th March to Sunday 20th March 2022. Nigel Pimlott is still able to be our leader. We therefore hope to be able to begin taking bookings this time next year.

The Circuit Leadership Team

An opportunity to learn?

Would you like to learn basic website skills or how to edit video while helping the church?

We have a small team of people who can edit videos for church and who maintain the Circuit website. Perhaps you might like to learn some of the skills we've learned, and be an extra pair of hands to help with some of the techie stuff that happens in the church?

You could learn:

- How to create a simple video, including photos and video, with titles and background music (ideal for holiday photos!)
- How to use a Content Management System to maintain a website, including amending web pages, uploading documents and updating a calendar.

If you're interested, please contact Stuart Green on 01335 300338.



Introducing the Leadership Team

As you may be aware, at Ashbourne Methodist Church we have two types of Stewards: Leadership Stewards, and Worship Stewards. The Leadership Stewards make up the Leadership Team and seek to coordinate and lead the various parts of church life, with the Church Council ultimately governing church matters.

The Worship Stewards look after the smooth running of church services, including all aspects on the day, and liaising with those involved in leading the services, beforehand.

What the Leadership Team does

Since March, whilst it has not been possible to physically meet, the Leadership Team have met regularly on Zoom. We have been active in working with and supporting others in church, and particularly in relation to the church's online activities, in providing services and other activities for people to share in. We coordinated with the Resources Team in arranging for the safe opening of the church for private prayer. We are also active in seeking to meet together for services when this will be safely possible.

The members of the Leadership Team are each responsible for a particular area of church life, and below are the different roles in the Leadership Team, and the current members:

Worship - Robert Sales

Robert attends and liaises with the Worship Development Team. He is also responsible for the Worship Stewards. Robert chairs the Leadership Meetings and is currently Ashbourne's Senior Steward.

Learning and Caring – Brian Hawkins

Brian works with the Learning and Caring Team in encouraging these activities in the church, and also encouraging both individual and corporate prayer. He works with the Pastoral Secretary and Pastoral Team in providing care and support to all those connected to our church. Brian also shares and coordinates with the House Group leaders.

Outreach – Becky Dutton

Becky attends and liaises with the Outreach Team in seeking to share God's love and the opportunity to know God, with those around us, and particularly those who come into contact with the church through its many activities, including the Cornerstone Coffee Shop, Kids@Cornerstone, Craft and Chat etc.

Resources – Jeff Ffoulkes

Jeff works with the Resources Team who look after the church's various resources, such as the various buildings, the employees, and our finances.

Older People – Helen Barker

This is a relatively new role where Helen seeks to: establish a group to develop regular and occasional activities which are accessible to older people; encourage a culture of enablement within the Church Family; and support existing activities that are intended for older people.

Young People – Sandra Lewer

Sandra works with all the young people's groups and their leaders, and activities for young people. These include Powersource, Messy Church, Mustard, Kids @ Cornerstone, and the recent online activities.

Plan for Growth – Stuart Green

Following on from the previous Mission Action Plan, the "Plan for Growth" was recently agreed by the Church Council to encourage and direct growth of the church in different areas. Stuart is responsible for encouraging different groups in the church to play their part in the Plan for Growth, and to monitor progress made.

Link Project – Tony Walker

Tony leads the Link Project Team in our extensive building project. Tony helps coordination between the Link Project and Leadership Team to ensure the building plans are in line with the church's ministry, and that the Link Project Team have the required support and input (*see page 24*).

The Leadership Team also includes our Minister **Rev Tim Morris**, and our Family Worker **Jane Bowley**, to provide a happy and hardworking team.

Robert Sales

Other Appointments

Details of other Church and Circuit appointments are shown in the Circuit Directory and Prayer Diary which was published earlier this year.

Here are some recent changes:

Ashbourne

Pastoral Committee Secretary: Wendy Haslam

Weekly Notice-sheet: David Heaton, Clare Sales, Eric Williams

Circuit

Circuit Stewards: John Barker, Elizabeth Hurfurt,
Ken McKeown, Gareth Rutledge

Circuit Treasurer:

We are in the process of looking for a new Circuit Treasurer to replace John Micklthwaite. We thank John for the thorough work he has done over his term of office. John is available to talk with people who may feel this is a role they could undertake. If you have the skills and ability to take up this important role within the Circuit please contact me.

Rev Tim Morris

Green Box - Milk Bottles!

Maybe an unusual topic for the Green Box, but it addresses two issues of concern.

We have just started receiving deliveries of milk from Alkington Dairy in glass bottles. And very good it is too!

We feel this is not only another step in reducing the use of plastic, but is also supporting our farmers. We know that most supermarket milk comes from British farms, but the farmers are not paid a fair price for it (about 27p per litre). The supermarkets seem to see milk as a 'lost leader' for some reason, though if they all upped the price I'm sure it would still sell!

Buying our milk in this new (old!) way comes at a price. We now pay £1.35 for a litre (Sainsbury's 80p) and 73p for 500ml (55p), including delivery. But we feel it is worth it in our efforts to try and make a difference to our world, albeit in a small way.

Pat Fielding

Christmas cards & gifts from The Leprosy Mission



The Leprosy Mission has a lovely range of Christmas cards, Advent calendars, gifts and Christian books available. By buying from TLM, you are supporting leprosy-affected people around the world.

You might think of leprosy as being a disease of Biblical times, but it still exists in many parts of the world. There are more than 200,000 new cases a year. Although it is curable, millions of people worldwide are living with the effects of the disease, from physical disability to mental health problems, poverty and discrimination. I saw the impact myself when I visited Bangladesh, and particularly the long-term effects of leprosy on people's lives.

Any items ordered via me come with free delivery and a commission which goes to Ashbourne's Link Development Project.

You can view the product range online at www.tlmtrading.com, or I can send you a catalogue – either PDF or paper version.

Stuart Green (01335 300338)



Tharshika (pictured on the front cover of the catalogue) was only 12 years old when she was diagnosed with leprosy in Sri Lanka.

Read on to learn her story...

Tharshika's story

"Many times my heart has been broken. Today my life is full and happy"

Being only a child, Tharshika didn't understand the importance of taking her medication (MDT) regularly, so she neglected to do so. This meant that the leprosy bacteria weren't killed off before she developed foot drop, meaning she now has a disability which prevents her from walking properly or carrying heavy items.

Her disability changed her life, and she says, "Many times my heart has been broken." Her friends became very aware that she was different, she was unable to join in some school activities, and people in her community discriminated against her. She lost confidence and gave up her dream of becoming a lawyer.

Thanks to your generosity, The Leprosy Mission (TLM) helped her through the 'Catch them young' programme. We arranged for her to have surgery for her foot drop in India. We also helped her father to earn money to support his family by giving him fishing equipment, and the whole family have benefitted from the well that we built.

While in the care of TLM, Tharshika came to know Jesus and became a Christian. She then decided to use her own experience of leprosy to devote herself to caring for children affected by the disease. She now works for our partner organisation KKM (TLM and KKM work together to reduce stigma, enable livelihoods, provide safe water, teach self-care and self-sufficiency).

Without the treatment provided by TLM, she wouldn't have been able to receive surgery and she wouldn't be able to work today. As Tharshika says, 'I would have no life.'

Tharshika is very grateful to you, TLM supporters, because her life has been transformed. She says, "Today my life is full and happy. I pray that Jesus would bless the supporters of TLM. I hope they continue to support the work so that more children can be reached before it's too late".



The Link Development – Update

August 2020



Progress of Building Plans

Since our last report in November 2019 we have been progressing the various items required for us to submit a 2nd planning application to Derbyshire Dales District Council (DDDC), which we are hopeful to submit within the next month. It has been a slow process to resolve the various issues and the current status of issues is given below.

DDDC replied to our 2nd Pre-App in early December 2019 and their reply contained a number of points of concern and conflict versus our considerable previous correspondence and consultation, which was frustrating, but anyway we have to be objective and progress the situation as it is. The main points and their current status are:

- Request for the rear of the Link building roof to be transparent (replace the clerestory with sloping glass) and a number of small design issues. Revised designs have been drawn up and these are now agreed by the DDDC planners and also by the Methodist Church Conservation Officer, so we believe these issues are closed.
- In DDDC planners view we had not justified the removal of Chapel House (a building within the curtilage of Grade 2 listed buildings) and they did not like the design and size of the housing in the plans we had submitted. After consultation with Planning Consultants, AJA (our architects) and further consultation with DDDC planners and being realistic about the advice which we have received, we are retaining Chapel House and AJA have submitted further housing designs to DDDC. The gap between us and the planners has reduced considerably and we think the end is in sight, but these plans are still the subject of discussion and it is the resolution of these items that we need in order to submit our next planning application.

In our 1st planning application, the Environment Agency (EA) had objected to the location of the housing near to the Henmore Brook and also been concerned about the flood defence by the brook. After a long consultation, where we have employed environmental consultants BWB to support AJA, we believe we have a solution acceptable to the EA and think this item is closed. Ian needs special mention for his hard work and perseverance to get this in principle agreement from the EA.

Now we are in the final stages of getting all the documents and plans ready to submit our 2nd planning application. We are updating our previous documents, such as: Statement of Need, Viability Statement, Statement of Significance/Heritage Statement, Sequential Test, Tree Survey and possibly others. We have also engaged planning consultants, Planning Design Partners of Derby, who have good experience of working with DDDC who have prepared a Planning Statement to support our application (essentially justifying what they call “harm to a heritage asset” because of the development’s community benefits and enabling of ongoing use). We think this is a useful addition to our portfolio of documents!

We are continuing to persevere, and we will keep going until we get planning permission. We do have the support of others in the community, such as our Ashbourne Town Council, and we will lobby others to support us.

Other Matters

It seems a long time ago now (it was before Coronavirus), we had some great fundraising events with our pre-Christmas concerts: Chameleon Choir, St Agnes Fountain and the Ashbourne Town Band. With the delay in getting planning permission and Coronavirus countermeasures we are taking a break from fundraising activities at the moment. When we have planning permission we will resume fundraising, probably starting with asking for giving and pledges from our church and circuit members, and then expanding to approaching grant funding organisations and members of the wider community.

We have established a company, Ashbourne Methodist Church Developments Ltd, with four of the Link Development Team as its directors, which enables us to manage financial matters such as VAT reclaim, which can be a substantial amount of money for projects like ours.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers.

The Link Development Team: John Barker, Peter Flinn, Catherine Green, Paul Haslam, Ian Marsh, Tim Morris, Tony Walker, Jonathan Webb



Ashbourne Circuit Church Services

Due to the Covid-19 virus, services in our chapels are suspended at the moment, but we continue to meet and worship in other ways.

There is an online Worship at Home service at 10:30 each Sunday on www.facebook.com/ashbournemethodist or via the Circuit website www.ashbournemethodist.org.uk

These services remain on the website for some weeks and can also be viewed later.

On the second Sunday each month, we can share in Songs of Praise. A sheet with web links is available on the Circuit website.

On the fourth Sunday each month, there is a service on Zoom. Details are in the weekly notice sheet and on the Circuit website.

Sunday September 6th

Worship at Home	10:30	Tom Parkinson/ Rebecca Byass	MHA Sunday
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Sunday September 13th

Worship at Home	10:30	Rev David Leese	
	18:30	Songs of Praise	Service sheet

Sunday September 20th

Worship at Home	10:30	Ruth Barratt	
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Sunday September 27th

Worship at Home	10:30	Steve Haines	Harvest Festival
	18:30	Diana Whitmill	Zoom service

Sunday October 4th

Worship at Home	10:30	Paul Taylor	Theme Preach 1 (see page 12)
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Dates for your diary and your prayers

Some church meetings are taking place on social media while others have been cancelled.

SEPTEMBER

Tue 8th 19:30 Local Preachers meeting
Sat 12th 10:00 District Synod
Tue 29th 19:30 Ashbourne Churches Together

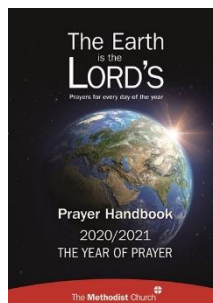
OCTOBER

Tue 6th 14:00 Joint Church Council
Tue 13th 19:30 Circuit Meeting

Methodist Prayer Handbook 2020-21

Carole Thorpe has a few spare copies of the Methodist Prayer Handbook "The Earth is the LORD's"
If you would like one, please contact her on 346535, cethorpe@hotmail.com or at 12 Cavendish Drive, Ashbourne DE6 1SR. The cost is £4.15.

This resource will help you with your prayer life.



From the editors

Thank you to all those who have contributed to this bumper issue.

We welcome contributions from all our readers. If you have an idea but are not sure whether it is suitable, we will be happy to discuss it with you. We also welcome photos for the magazine.

Please send us items for the next edition: **October 2020**

We are unable to include items which are copyright unless permission is obtained from the copyright-holder.

Last date for contributions: **Wednesday 16th September**

Publication date: **Sunday 27th September**

If possible, please e-mail your items to us at dysters@tiscali.co.uk
If this is not convenient, please contact us on 01335 344086

Daphne and John Dyster

Overleaf: some of the Prayer Squares from the Day of Reflection (see page 6)

