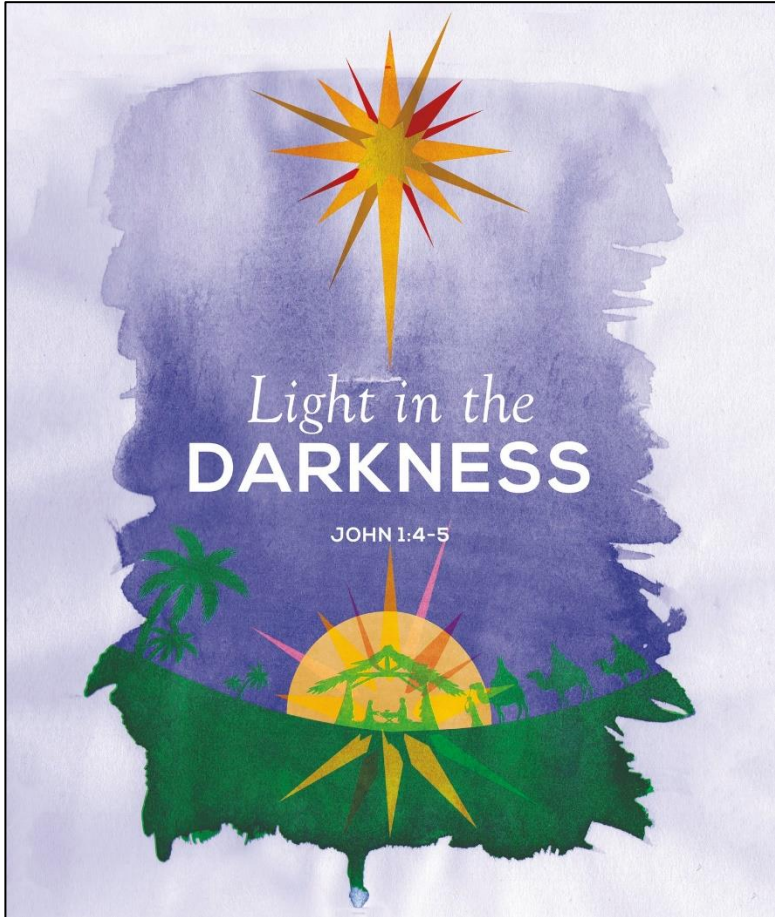


Connections



Ashbourne Methodist Circuit
December 2021 – January 2022

Letter from the Minister

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

Dear Friends,

“Light a candle in the dark”

Our Connections magazine covers the Christmas and New Year period. So on behalf of the Ashbourne Methodist Circuit, may I wish you God’s peace and blessing at this Holy season.

One of the wonderful things about worship around Christmas is the use of candles. A candle brings light, hope, peace, reflection and reassurance to our lives. We light them in times of celebration - as in our baptismal candles - and people may light a candle to remember someone in need, or a life which is remembered. How important the light of a candle has been during the dark days of the pandemic, while we remembered those on the front line of the care system.



So how wonderful it will be to be back in church this Advent and Christmas time. The candles we will use in our worship are about bringing light, hope, peace, reflection and reassurance to us. They will also be lit as we remember the life of Jesus, the one who came as a light, shining in the darkness.

As he is the “light of the world”, so he calls us to be light for the world – like a candle bringing hope, peace and love. Through our words, deeds and actions we can be like a candle to another person. As the Chinese proverb says: “It is better to light a candle, than to curse the darkness”.

This Christmas-time may the light of Christ burn bright upon you, and may you share his light with those in darkness.

Your minister and friend,

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

Ashbourne Circuit Family News

Do continue to keep Paul and Wendy Haslam in your prayers at this very difficult time as Wendy does a lot of the caring for Paul.

We pray for John Hancock and family following the death of Sheila, for Pearl Webster following the death of her sister, Alma Swan following the death of her sister-in-law and the family of Jenny Wareing who died on 21 November.

Continue to remember Carole Thorpe, Barbara and David Hollands, Dennis Foster now at home and Gwen caring, Val Rutledge recovering from a hip replacement and Becky Barnett recovering from surgery. Pray for Ann Overton as her husband is having day treatment at hospital. There are those who would value prayer as they are unwell and some anxiously wait for appointments, test results or procedures.

Congratulations to Emily Dutton who has gained her Masters Degree and will take up employment at Nottingham Hospitals as an Occupational Therapist in November. Betty Douce celebrates her 90th birthday on 13 December and Stan Durose a special birthday on 6 January. Congratulations to Samuel Morris who is 21 on 14 December.

We were pleased that Henny and Theo, grandchildren of Stan and Ruth Durose were baptised at Ashbourne Methodist in October. We support Heidi and Tim in prayer as they bring up their family.

John and Liz Hurfurt have become great grandparents to Layla Mae.

An update on old friends: Jane and Steve Bowley have moved to Scotland, and we wish them well as they settle. We are pleased that, although in need of a knee replacement, Lyn Jones is in less pain. On 23 October, Cecil Broadbent's ashes were buried, together with Heather's, in the family grave at Linthwaite, Yorkshire,

We continue to pray for Tim and Alison, Samuel and Jacob prior to their move in August 2022. The Invitation Committee are still in the process of seeking a new minister for this circuit (see page 5).

There are many who encourage one another in our churches. There is a real need for pastoral visitors, so if you feel you would like to join our team of pastoral visitors then please get in touch with Rev Tim.

Joyce Odell and Daphne Dyster (21.11.2021)

"Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength" (Isaiah 40:31a)

Reaching out to the community at Hallowe'en

20 people from the Methodist Church supported Ashbourne Churches Together at a

wonderfully successful event to reclaim Hallowe'en.

We called it '*Bright Night of Fun- Halloween but not at you know it*' to reflect our message that Christianity brings light into darkness. There is a long Christian tradition of praying, on the eve of All Saints Day, for those who have passed away. Many people do not realise this is what has sadly become commercialised into the modern 'scary' night and 'Trick or Treat'.

ACT transformed Shrovetide Walk by the Library, on the evening of Sunday 31st October, into a free fun event from 4pm to 7pm for families and young people. We provided traditional activities such as: Tin Can Alley, Bash-a- Rat, Hook a Duck, Bean Bag Toss, What's in the Box?, Basketball target, Photobooths, Cornhole, Ball-in-Bucket, Tic-Tac-Throw, Play Your Cards Right, Face Painting and Lantern making. Children were encouraged to come dressed as Angels, Fairies and Heroes and this meant we had very few in witch costumes!

The event was well publicised with a focus on the new housing estates, but the attendance still exceeded our expectations. We had to adjust our plans on the day to account for the strong winds, but were blessed that the earlier heavy rain stopped. We handed out over 150 Goodie bags to children, containing gifts and some literature about the message of Light, which they were able to take around the games and use to collect lots of prizes. 300 hot dogs were given to the children and parents.



The cost was met by donations and funding from the churches, but ACT was also given free support by Ashcom who lent us the Market gazebos, Derbyshire Rural Chaplaincy for loan of a generator and local businesses who provided the mobile coffee bar and the lighting. The success of the event is testimony to what can be achieved when all four main churches in Ashbourne work together as ACT to reach out to the community with a large family-friendly event.



ACT are now busy preparing for the Lantern Procession and Market Place celebration at Late Night Shopping on Friday 3rd December. We are also holding the successful Drive-In Carols again in Sainsbury's car park, on Sunday 12th December. You can follow the ACT programme at: www.ashbournechurchestogether.org.uk or look for Ashbourne Christians on Facebook.

Ian Marsh, ACT representative

Christmas Past

Many years ago, I was asked to tell the Christmas story to a Mums and Toddlers group.

I was a bit late arriving at the church and hurried to collect the knitted figures which were on display, and which I planned to use. I felt a sense of panic as I realised that Baby Jesus was missing.

Of course, Baby Jesus was not to be put into the display until Christmas Day, and had been kept back by the steward who set up the Nativity scene, but where should I look?

Getting more and more worried, a sudden thought sprang to mind. Someone had said "Baby Jesus is in the Vestry cupboard."

I don't know what the Vestry cupboards are like in most churches, but that one was large and well-filled. As I looked along the shelves, on top of books, under envelopes and amongst the other items, I found Him! - in the Alms plate, where the collection bags containing our gifts were placed during Worship. With a grateful heart, I gave thanks to God.

What a wonderful Gift of Love to the World Jesus was, is, and will always be.

Margaret Heaton

Stationing Update

The Circuit did not receive a match at the first round of Stationing. By the time this magazine is published, the Invitation Committee will have received a list of the presbyters not yet matched and will have submitted a new selection. The second round of stationing begins on 29th November. The invitation committee thanks you all for your prayer support and asks that you will continue praying for the process.

Liz Hurfurt

Does everyone belong in God's 'All'?

The Revd Verity Phillips asks the question



All along God has been 'for all'. Noah knew it so long ago we've lost count; Jesus lived it 2,000 years ago; John Wesley wrote his four 'All's in the 1700s. For one year this gospel truth is highlighted by the Church – and after that? For some, connexional initiatives are irrelevant, as denominations are often irrelevant to non-church-attending Christians.

I have not always considered myself disabled. After my accident, I insisted I was 'in recovery' to stop people treating me as an invalid. I am not 'ill'; not likely to 'get better soon'. I had an accident and now my neurology malfunctions. My brain has done what your mobile phone might do if it was dropped on the floor, but somewhere inside, I am still me.

After the accident, I laughed for months at the bizarre changes. I also cried and felt confused, bewildered and worried. Through physio, I can mostly manage my condition, though some 'little' jobs are like mountains to climb; but I can't control the triggers in my environment. Self-respect is hard, because certain behaviours can't be prevented.

When I saw a book on disability theology called *Unworthy* (with the 'Un' in recessive type), I thought: that's it! The Church calls me 'worthy', but can't explain what they mean, and occasionally because I'm disabled some people react as if I may not be worthy. I understand the theory of 'God for All', but somehow it doesn't fit with my experience. Why not?

Accepting people as they are

Integrating disabled people fully into society is fairly recent; it's unfamiliar for some, even though they are fair-minded. Perhaps you accept whoever, whatever comes your way. Maybe you can accept people once you understand them. A few can never relate to people who are different... which is their own disability. Not all brains work the same, and we are influenced by our experience and education.

I can't do all I want to do – all that my colleagues do. I feel excluded and inadequate not least when the time to be assessed as a minister comes around: how can I belong when I don't pull my weight? And if I push myself, I'll relapse. Either way, it's not fair on others. There are embarrassing trigger moments when my brain functions like a toddler or a teen, and there are times when my 'performance' reveals knowledge and experience. I have no choice but to let God be in charge of each day. I must accept forgiveness, and forgive myself, daily.

We are one Body

Reading disability theology has helped me to realise that disability, like race and gender, is not anybody's fault. Our society and theology produce low self-worth through perceptions of what it means to be human. We have become individually accountable for gifts, abilities, spiritual discipline. Yet jointly we are the Body of Christ, and when one suffers we all suffer. When one person is missing or 'excluded', we are all the poorer, not because abilities are missed, but because everyone is part of the Body; it's like taking your teeth out, or wearing a sling.

I've learned that my disability is not my problem, any more than the twin colours of my face. I didn't ask to be as I am. God has seen fit to let me go through what has happened, and see what I make of it. If it's a problem, it's a problem of, not for, the whole Church, the whole Body of Christ, which we can productively wrestle with together. If it's a gift, then it's our gift, not just mine. Can we live with people who are different, even with people who don't behave as expected; does everyone belong in God's 'All', or are there unconscious limits?

Let's not leave those who are 'different' feeling bad when they ask for a recovery room, or for adjustments to settings, or when they explain they can't join in, or they take too much precious time... it's not their need they're addressing, but our need. Your needs, reader, are ours, too – can you dare to let everyone share them? When we glimpse how individualism is incompatible with wholeness we may start to understand what it means to be the Body of Christ. Then we might recognise how 'God is for All' enough to begin to follow God's example in Jesus – with a little help from the Holy Spirit.

From 'the Connexion' magazine Autumn 2021

© Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes

The Revd Verity Phillips is a minister in the Teignbridge Methodist Circuit.

He came for the broken

He came for the broken:

The addict
The abused
Those fighting their demons
Those living with trauma

These words were written by residents of Yeldall Manor (a Christian response to Addiction) and shared as part of their Christmas celebration 2020. Included with permission. www.yeldall.org.uk

He came for the broken:

For those sleeping through a war zone

He came for the broken:

Those living in squats
Crack dens
The man in the broken-down car at the back of Morrisons
For the boy cowering under a bridge, waiting for the cars to pass me, paralysed by fear
Keep holding my breath so no-one can hear.
'Will anyone miss me today?', I wonder;
Under this bridge, waiting to smoke my gear, completely consumed by fear.

He came for the broken:

For the kid hiding up a tree behind the shops
For the middle-aged man sleeping in the cargo hold of a bus
For the alcoholic, chucked out and living in the summer house on an allotment.
I was done with life. I always had a Plan B for coping, but now there was no Plan B.
I was in a rut of blaming others, drinking myself senseless.
I was at my rock bottom.
The only thing to do was to reach out and ask for help...

He came for the broken...

Born to live alongside us,
the outsider,
the foreigner,
the beggar,
the broken.

Born to bring
Forgiveness
Hope
Peace
Love

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14, NIV)

REFLECTIONS

I was in my study when Ann walked in and noticed that my aviation calendar was out of date. I had not switched it to November. So I remedied the calendar immediately, but wondered for a while - why the delay in turning it over - why, when I am usually the one to rotate the calendars in the house? This time, this one, I had not!

Maybe it was that I felt the year advancing too fast, and I wanted a pause for a moment.

Maybe it is at this time of year, when writing this adjacent to Remembrance Sunday, when we remember the sacrifice of those of past wars who fought and died for our freedom, our way of life, and note those names etched into so many memorials, I also remember there is a time coming when, again, I myself take note of some "missing names"!

I refer to a time, where it is, I know, one of cheer, of goodwill, "Peace on Earth, etc, and celebration, Christmas, and, like many will send out cards to family and friends, both at home and abroad.

But - I also dread the cards coming from both home and abroad that has a "missing name" that someone, a husband, a wife, a son, a daughter, a grandparent, has passed away, leaving a void in someone's life, someone's family, and one less name on a card, and someone who I will mourn too.

I have already updated my computer Christmas Card list of those who have passed away this year. I hope I do not have any more to remove from the list, as I feel it is, as said, a time of celebration - but for others, might be one of sadness!

It is, today, I feel, an ever seemingly faster, transient time, in which life seems so flimsy, so limited.

What does one do? Well, as always, in these times I turn to the one who is not flimsy or transient - he who said, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" - our Lord Jesus Christ, and in him do I put my trust, and my life. God bless.

Tom Parkinson



THE LINK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AND FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Tony Walker summarised the situation at the Church Council meeting on the 2nd November 2021 and the key points are highlighted below.

Fundraising, as you are aware, has started and the amount raised to date is tabulated overleaf. Cath Patterson is the new Link Finance Administrator and is finding her way round the processes and figures.

Fundraising Milestones

It is important that we have fundraising milestones to check whether the funds raised are enough for the next stage:

- 19th November 2021 – check if enough funds are pledged to start approaching grant giving organisations;
- 31st January 2022 – further check, if required, whether enough funds pledged to approach grant giving organisations;
- 31st March 2022 – enough funds to start design stage;
- 30th June 2022 – enough funds to go out to tender (further check, if required, whether enough funds to start design stage).

Further milestones to be developed depending on fundraising progress.

Outline Timetable for design, tendering, construction (tbc)

- Detailed design, users' consultation, tendering etc (approximately 9-12 months).
- Construction, fit out etc (approximately 12-14 months).
- Total – approximately 2 years.

PRESENT AND.....PROPOSED



Fundraising Status as at 20th November 2021:	£
Income as at March 2021	225,442
Individual giving total including actual, pledges and associated Gift Aid	306,537
Fundraising Events	325
Loans - Members/Chapel Aid	100,000
Sale of land for housing (TBC)	187,000
Grant organisations (not started yet)	0
Local funding (not started yet)	0
Sub-total	<hr/> 819,304
Less expenditure to date	<hr/> 140,000
	679,304
From Circuit – sale of Hulland chapel	70 000
GRAND TOTAL TO DATE	<hr/> 749,304 <hr/>

We will be seeking significant grant funding from a number of organisations over the next year and from the Methodist Circuit and Connexion. Grant funding organisations will require evidence of how much we have raised internally at the time of application.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

We will keep you informed of the fundraising progress monthly through Connections, the notice sheet, and on the Link Project displays in the Church. Please contact the following people if you require any further clarification or have a question about how to contribute financially to the Link project.

Jonathan Webb – Leader, Fundraising Team

Landline: 01335 360308 Mobile: 07967 040531

Email: jonwebb.webb@gmail.com

Tony Walker - Leader, Link Development Team

Landline: 01335 343910 Mobile: 07375 528050

Email: tonywalker.walker@gmail.com

Our thanks go to all those who have already committed to giving and are providing on-going support. Thank you to you all for your consideration and prayers.

*Tony Walker - Link Development Team Leader
Jonathan Webb – Link Fundraising Team Leader*

Church Council update

The Church Council have held three meetings since the Annual Church Meeting on May 11th 2021:

- June 8th - Spring Meeting (delayed) - the council met via Zoom. Reports heard, accounts approved, annual returns prepared. The meeting recognised all the efforts that the various teams were making to think creatively during the lockdowns and restricted access to the church buildings.
- July 13th – Extra-ordinary meeting - the Council met via Zoom to hear the proposal for the new Sunday Morning worship structure. A trial period of three months was agreed.
- November 2nd – Autumn meeting - reports heard:

Music – the choir and band have kept in touch and have played together virtually. Recordings have been shared; virtual songs of praise have been delivered. There is a plan for a Christmas choir.

Worship – virtual services and you-tube streaming has helped when access to the building was limited. The new Sunday structure is under review and feedback has been asked for.

Children & Young People – a growth area with much work done during the pandemic: Powersource and Kids @ Cornerstone have been replaced by Welly Club, Muddy Church, Take Out Church 10 to 10 (an on-line meeting of young people). Mustard has continued via Zoom. Open the Book is beginning again.

Learning & Caring – Brian Hawkins retired as Leadership Steward and this position is currently vacant. Some house groups found the online environment challenging and closed during the pandemic; some have not restarted. The Community Workshop (formerly known as The Shed) still seeks a lead to move forwards.

Pastoral – Wendy Haslam replaced Joyce Odell as Pastoral Secretary but is currently being supported by Joyce Odell. It was recognised at the recent meeting that there are some in the church who are currently with no visitor, and without contact or support.

Outreach – much work has been done in the area of children and young people. **Craft & Chat** – continued to meet weekly via Zoom and telephone and now back on the premises since 2nd October: the current challenge is to knit green squares for a Christmas tree. **Cornerstone** – reopened but is currently struggling to find sufficient volunteers to keep it open at the planned times. **Gateway Centre** – Helen Walker retired from her role as Manager and Anne Wareing has taken over; prior to re-opening, a team of volunteers went in and painted and cleaned in readiness for arrivals. **Luncheon Club** – looking to restart in the new year with a new name, new focus and new leadership. **JMA** - has now finished and Ruth Mallard was thanked for her service over the years.

Ashbourne Churches Together – the recent ‘Bright Night of Fun’ (see page 4) was recognised as a great success with 300 free hotdog sausages handed out and many points of contact made with our Ashbourne Town and community.

ICT & Communications – a big step up through live streaming and new equipment. **Publicity** – Facebook and Twitter pages have been updated and developed; the website has been revamped and the church is embracing many new areas of on-line access.

Stewards – we are currently needing at least six more stewards: four Worship Stewards and two Leadership Stewards. We also need Sunday morning welcomers (see page ???).

Link – we have achieved Planning Permission and are now progressing with fund raising. Cath Patterson has been appointed as Link Treasurer.

Resources – Ian Marsh’s considerable contribution to the maintenance of the building and meeting all legal requirements has been recognised. The team has also worked extremely hard to meet Covid requirements and to remain open and compliant with government guidelines and Methodist Church requirements. Paul Haslam has stepped down as Treasurer and been replaced by Tricia Barclay.

Appointments – Tricia Barclay: Treasurer, Cath Patterson: Link Treasurer, Anne Wareing: Gateway Manager, Helen Walker: House Group Co-ordinator, Anne Wareing: Worship Steward, Anne Wareing: Luncheon Club co-ordinator, Gateway Marketing Manager: Alan Paterson.

God in Love Unites Us – the Church will be entering into a consultation with its members concerning the issue of Same Sex Marriage. We will be following the formal consultation process that was established by the Methodist Conference.

The Leadership Team is authorised to act on behalf of the Church Council. During the Pandemic, certain key decisions had to be made without a council meeting taking place and these decisions have been logged and later ratified by the council.

Rachel Murt, Church Council Secretary

SHEILA HANCOCK

I knew Mrs Hancock had been ill for a while, but it was with a great deal of sadness, on one of my pastoral call days I rang Mr Hancock and found out that she had passed away. I was sad for Mr Hancock and his family, and, also, sad for me - in that I had not had long to get to know Mrs Hancock.

I willingly accepted Mr & Mrs Hancock on my Pastoral List when they came here, and immediately made myself known to them when I met them at Ashbourne Church for the first time.

Once they had settled in I arranged a visit, and we had a lovely time of fellowship together. I managed a number of visits, sadly before Covid and all the rules and regulations curtailed visiting at home.

Once that was brought in I rang them, (as I did all on my list on a one a day basis, unless illness, or problems for any on my list, meant more frequent calls).

Their friendliness on a visit was also apparent on each call I made, and I was appraised of all the news of family and friends.

One of the latest I made was full of the joyous news of a recent holiday Claire, their daughter, had arranged, which included a visit to Catterick, where Mr Hancock, I was told, did his National Service.

Then there was a visit from their Italian son in law, who had finally managed to come and see them after the Covid rules were relaxed. On conclusion, Mrs Hancock (and Mr), always thanked me for my call.

I didn't know Mrs Hancock long, but, in the time I did, I found a lovely woman, friendly, loving and kind, and yet, short as those times were, I will treasure them and all my memories that I have of her.

Tom Parkinson, Pastoral Visitor

CHRISTMAS CONCERT ST AGNES FOUNTAIN

Tuesday 21 December at 7.30pm
at Ashbourne Methodist Church



St Agnes Fountain have been touring their wonderful, nightly Christmas concerts in December around the country since the millennium to delighted audiences in churches, community halls, theatres and arts centres. They perform in a wide variety of musical styles and their programmes of carols and Christmas songs appeal to a wide range of musical tastes. www.stagnesfountain.co.uk

The quartet, including its founder David Hughes, performed a memorable and much appreciated concert at AMC in December 2019. David was unwell later in that tour and subsequently retired. The current trio played two numbers together during the exclusive AMC online While & Matthews concert in December 2020. Those of you who still have their 2020 e-mail with the weblink can remind yourselves as the whole concert is still available on (private) YouTube.

Chris Leslie is a multi-instrumentalist and singer-songwriter, primarily known for his work with the top folk group, Fairport Convention. Chris has provided music for a number of Radio Four plays and classic serials and his fiddle playing has been heard on several TV series. He plays: fiddle, mandolin, tenor guitar, bouzouki, ukulele, banjo, oud, whistle and native American flute. www.fairportconvention.com www.chrislesliemusic.co.uk

Chris While: vocals, guitar, bodhran, darbuka and percussion,
and Julie Matthews: vocals, piano, guitar, accordion and gazouki have been nominated ten times in the BBC Radio 2 Folk music awards in the 'best song, best duo, best live act' categories and winning best duo in 2009. Their songs are covered by many revered singers the world over. They have been a duo for 27 years. A specially moving song 'Embrace' performed by their 'Collective' with fellow musicians in 2020 in aid of MIND is available on YouTube and Spotify. www.whileandmatthews.com

See many videos at: www.youtube.com

TICKETS £20 from: John Barker
01335 300728 / 12345jfbarker@gmail.com

ONLINE: www.livetickets.org (£21.25 incl. booking fee)

Advent

Pale winter comes creeping
As wood-smoke fingers frost-cold air
And a last leaf-blizzard
Silently blurs the horizon.

A crow heaves against the wind
Seed heads rattle dry;
Starlings bubble up and lift
On the outward breath of the land.

And we are the people
Who wait in this winter-grip;
Who long for remaking and renewal
Who falter and who follow,
Who believe the words of prophets:
He will come.



From the East

No camels or courtiers
Just sore dusty feet
And bags that carry what they can
Whilst begging for food.

No jewel-bright robes,
Just homespun cloth
And woven blankets
To warm these travellers.

No thrones or sceptres
Just a traveller's staff
Worn smooth in the hand
From the many-monthed journey.

No emperors or kings
Just seers and mystics
Who feel this earthquake of the soul
And follow it to Bethlehem of Judea.



Fiona Green

MISSION MATTERS: Phakamisa

As many of you know, Phakamisa was created more than 25 years ago by the Methodist Church in Pinetown, near Durban, South Africa. Primarily to provide preschool education for the under five year olds in Pinetown and surrounding villages. As well, it was to provide nursery schoolteacher education for women, and some men, able to teach these little ones; and gave the opportunity of employment to a large group of the community.

And a third reason for such a project was AIDS! So many people in the late 80s, early nineties were infected with HIV, many young fathers were dying of this yet unknown disease, leaving a wife and several young children completely bereft with no means of survival. And many wives also died of AIDS. Such tragedy. And so, in South Africa, it fell to the grandmas, Gogos, to step in and keep the family together. And so Phakamisa, seeing the problem, was able to teach childminding skills to these elderly ladies and also teach them other skills, such as beadwork, dress making and cooking so that these ladies could bear the burden of caring for their children and earn a small living from their handwork to buy food and clothing for their families.

Zethu Kuzwayo (pictured), the newly appointed director of Phakamisa, following the sad death of Thokozani from Covid-19 last year, gave some up to date news to the trust meeting via Zoom in October which I share with you regarding Phakamisa at this present time.



In the midst of this Covid-19 pandemic, the need for food has been the priority, and a budget was secured through fundraising at Pinetown Methodist Church to provide porridge for the Wandering School children. This initiative was started in May this year and ensures that the children are fed every day. In spite of the effects of Covid and localised looting and unrest, the supply of food has been maintained and is well supported.

As a reaction to the local unrest, training of teachers and grannies has been taking place in two areas, just outside of Pinetown, training teachers towards their graduation, as well as child minders' training. Another off site course is currently under consideration to start later this year or early next year.

Security is a major concern with regard to acts of vandalism to their vehicle which is vital for the delivery of porridge and for travel to the out of town training venues. A secure space at the nearby John Wesley School in Pinetown is used for parking the vehicle.

Both Beadwork and Sewing groups are working on new projects, and enthusiastically taken up by the Gogos, enabling them to continue to make a living to feed their families.

Zethu shared that the very difficult times they are living through have taught them all of their need to appreciate their lives and pray for God's protection; and thank him for his continued provision and support. She also expressed gratitude that all at Phakamisa have been able to retain their jobs.

Life is tough for those in rural South Africa. It was tough before Covid, but so much more so now. Yet they are facing difficulties with a positive attitude and an increasingly deepening faith in the God who saves.

More information from the website: [Phakamisa – South African Aids](#)

Anne Wills

Circuit Weekend Away

When - Friday 18th March – Sunday 20th March 2022

Where - The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick

Leader - Nigel Pimlott (Learning and Development Officer for the District)

This will be our fourth visit to the Hayes Conference Centre. It offers excellent en-suite bedrooms and other facilities, some of which have been updated since our last visit. It is set in beautiful grounds and gardens and is surrounded by peaceful countryside.

In 2018 the Rev. Anne Brown asked us to imagine the future as God's family. Nigel Pimlott is asking us to think about realising God's future when we haven't been there before.

The last 18+ months have been challenging, not only for us as individuals, but also for the Church community. The weekend away gives us the opportunity to join together in fellowship again. We hope that it might give an opportunity to get to know people who have joined our Circuit since our last weekend away.

Early booking, before 22nd December, would be appreciated.

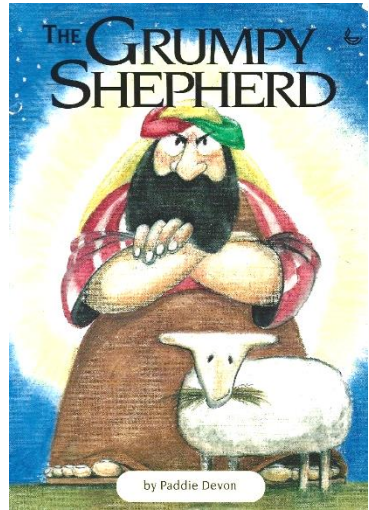
Liz Hurfurt

Advent Displays

Christmas 2021

The title for the Church Displays this year is taken from a book written by Paddie Devon who has kindly given us permission to use the book, as it is out of print and she holds the copyright.

It is planned that the Foyer and the Church will be filled with displays produced by a range of talented members and friends of our Church. This year it will be enhanced by a Christmas Tree produced by Craft and Chat group.



The reception year children in the local schools, plus children from the pre-school groups, have been invited to come along for an hour on various dates to listen to the story as they view the displays, enjoy a drink and a biscuit in the Century Hall and take with them a bag of Take Out Church items for the Christmas Period. Well over 150 children are expected.

It is interesting that the Christmas 2016 displays will this year be on show at the Rivergreen Hub of the Nottingham and Derby Methodist District in Clifton, Nottingham.

A huge thank you is given to all the many people who have contributed to enable this year's displays to be placed in church and to enable so many people to learn of the Christmas Story in this way.

Sandra Lewer

Service in Milldale - Christmas Eve 4 p.m.

Following the cancellation of this service last year, it is intended that this year the service will be held and, depending on the weather and the numbers, it will either be an open air service by the river or possibly in the chapel. It could be spectacular to have candlelight and carols by the river!!

Sandra Lewer

Afghanistan Refugee Support

Further to the article in November Connections (page 15) two meetings have been held on 2 and 16 November, for those interested in supporting this project, to seek a way forward.

If you want further details it is not too late to register your interest on: ashbournerefugeeteam@yahoo.com On behalf of Sarah Denny and team.

Green Box - The Future COP26

One of my strongest memories of the COP26 Digital Global Rally which I attended, is the testimonies from countries around the world as to how severely Climate Change is already affecting them.

And it brought home to me most forcefully that we are but a part of God's earth, and a part that has largely alienated itself from caring for what surrounds us.

Over the last ten years I have written under the Green Box heading about all kinds of topics, from gingerbread, fish and electricity to compost and plastic bags!

Now we are at a tipping point and, as David Attenborough says, 'What happens next is up to every one of us.'

Yes, we must all fight for the future; even though it seems but a small contribution it does matter, and if we do not, it is a reality that there may be no future, certainly not as we know it, for our children and grandchildren.

"At all times there is need for courage and a stout heart. It is more common to take refuge in despair and to seek the security of the familiar and the seemingly safe; it takes bravery to accept vulnerability and apparent failure." (Cardinal Basil Hume)

I do believe we can make a difference, not only by our individual actions, but also by talking about it to others, and encouraging and helping each other to change our habits.

'The climate crisis is a huge and pressing issue. But revival always starts small and starts within. It begins with persistent prayer. If we want to see movement on this issue we have to pray, and then roll up our sleeves and take part in restoring God's beautiful earth.' (Tearfund)

Pat Fielding



at Glasgow COP26

On Monday 8th November, we attended online a meeting in Glasgow Cathedral, organised by Christian Aid, and addressed by Dr Rowan Williams, outgoing chair of Christian Aid, amongst others.

It also featured:

- Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, Chief Executive of Christian Aid,
- The Kingdom Choir,
- Robert Beckford, Director of the Institute of Climate and Social Justice, University of Winchester
- John Bell, hymn writer and member of the Iona Community

It was billed as 'a night of music, prayer and inspiration at Glasgow Cathedral'. This was a very fair description. The message which came through was twofold: first, that 'now is the time' - if we do not act now, it will be too late; second, the emphasis on 'climate justice' - the realisation that climate change disproportionately affects people in those countries which are already disadvantaged in many other ways.

A recording of the event is still available on the Christian Aid website and is well worth watching:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/news/big-moment-events-yccn-relay>

The editors



"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." *Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)*

Would you like to pray with local Christians? We are meeting on the first Wednesday of each month to pray for an hour together, though you can stay as long or little as you like. Please let others in your church community know.

Next meeting: Wed 1st December, noon until 1pm, at St John's Church, Buxton Road. Parking on Auction Close or in the council car park.

Ashbourne Church Vacancies Bulletin

We thank God for everyone who gives their time in many different ways, especially those to faithfully pray for our church, and also those who help in practical ways to help us fulfil our mission.

If you're interested in finding out more about any of the following roles, please chat with the named contact – with no obligation or pressure. We can share a job description with you & tell you more about what's involved. We are committed to Safer Recruitment for all of our roles.

Worship Stewards

We are looking for people who can help to make sure everything runs smoothly at our services as several of our stewards are no longer able to help. The role involves talking to the preacher before the service, and getting things ready on the day. For more info, speak to Robert Sales (342321).

Greeters

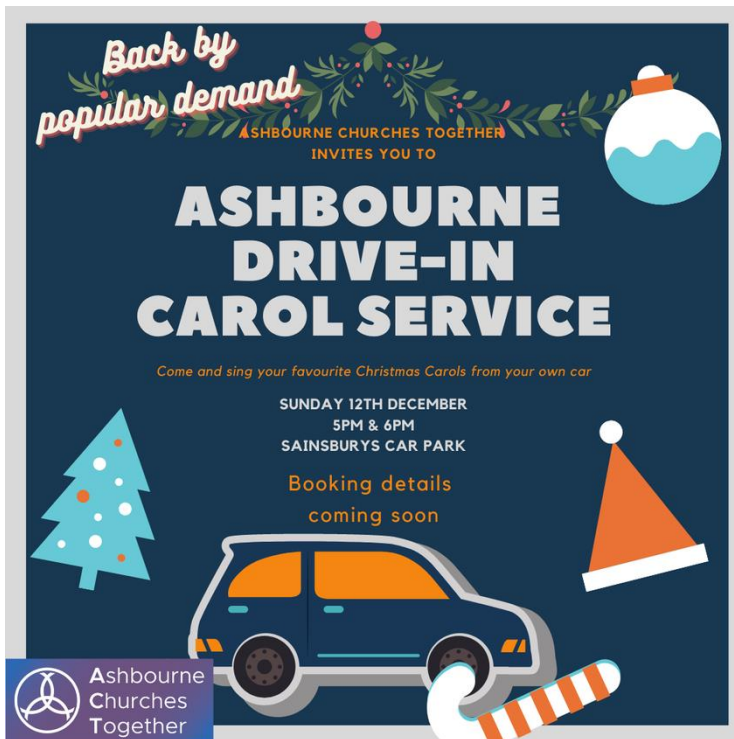
We have lots of friendly people in our church – could you be one of the people who greets people as they arrive for worship on a Sunday and makes them feel welcome? Robert Sales can give you more info.

Welly Club

Welly Club is our group for pre-school children which meets every Tuesday. We have activities for the children to enjoy, as well as a storytime and songs. If you would be interested in helping, please talk to Stuart Green (300338) or Clare Sales (342321).

Leadership Stewards

We are currently looking for Leadership Stewards for Resources and for Learning & Caring. You would help to guide the church's overall mission, as part of Ashbourne's Leadership Team, and support the work in specific areas. Please talk to Robert Sales for more info.



A Word in Time Bible study

'A Word in Time' is a free online daily Bible reading tool, based on the daily lectionary readings included in The Methodist Prayer Handbook.

[A Word in Time Bible study \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)

Each week, the notes are written by different people, including Methodist ministers and lay people who are active in the Methodist Church. These often include past Presidents and other well-known personalities. In addition, readers are invited to add their own comments on the day's passages.

On 23rd October, the set passage was Mark Ch 3 v.13 -19a: the appointing of the apostles. A comment was offered on the passage by the Rev Andy Fyall, who has been designated Deputy Chair of the Nottingham and Derby Methodist District from September 2022. His comment, which I thought very apt, was that "a church should be inwardly caring in order to be outwardly sharing".

Daphne Dyster

Ashbourne Circuit Church Services

Services have restarted in our churches in a Covid-19 secure way, but the pattern of services may have changed. Please check the website, www.ashbournemethodist.org.uk/news or the weekly notice sheet for the most current information.

December Services:

Sunday December 5th

Ashbourne	10:30	Robert Sales
Brailsford	10:30	John Dyster
Parwich	14:30	Peter Dawson

Advent 2

United Service

Sunday December 12th

Ashbourne	10:30	Fiona Green/ Revd Tim Morris
		ACT Drive-In Carol Service (see page 23)
Kirk Ireton	18:30	Diana Whitmill
Kniveton	18:30	Tom Parkinson

Advent 3

Communion

Carol Service

Carol Service

Sunday December 19th

Ashbourne	10:30	Paul Taylor
	18:30	Revd Tim Morris
Brailsford	10:30	Revd Tim Morris
Parwich	10:00	Ann Parkinson
Tissington	16:00	Revd Tim Morris

Advent 4

Carol Service

United Service

Carol Service

Friday December 24th

Milldale	16:00	Revd Tim Morris
Ashbourne	23:30	Revd Tim Morris

Christmas Eve

see page 19

Christmas Communion

Saturday December 25th

Ashbourne	10:00	Revd Tim Morris
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Christmas Day

Circuit Service

Sunday December 26th

Ashbourne	10:30	Lorraine Hawkins
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Circuit Service

Changes to normal service are in bold

January Services:

Sunday January 2nd

Ashbourne	10:30	Revd Tim Morris	Covenant
Brailsford	10:30	Revd David Leese	United Service Covenant
Parwich	14:30	Revd Tim Morris	Covenant

Sunday January 9th

Ashbourne	10:30	Tim Dutton	
Kniveton	14:30	Revd Tim Morris	Covenant

Sunday January 16th

Ashbourne	10:30	Peter Dawson	
Brailsford		@ Anglican Church	United Service
Parwich	10:00	C of E	United Service
Tissington	10:30	Paul Taylor	

Sunday January 23rd

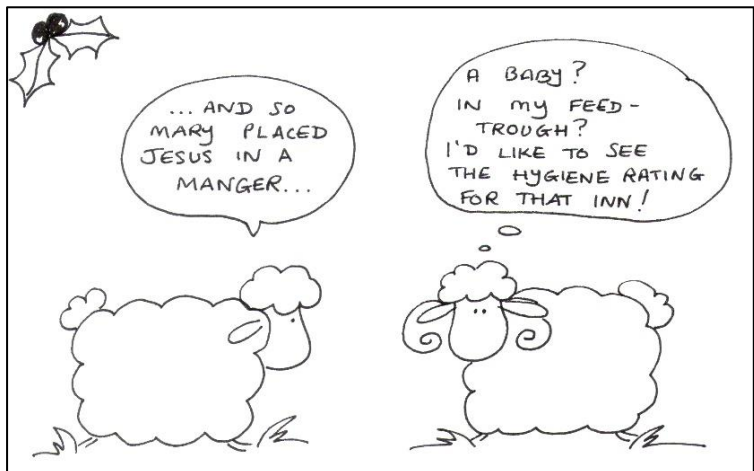
Ashbourne	10:30	Pulpit Swap/ Lorraine Hawkins	Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
Kirk Ireton	18:30	Revd Tim Morris	
Kniveton	11:00	Ann Parkinson	

Sunday January 30th

Ashbourne	10:30	Allan Shaw/ Revd Tim Morris	
	18:30	ACT @ St Oswalds	United Service

One Small Flock

Fiona
Green



Dates for your diary and your prayers

Some church meetings are resuming while others are still taking place on social media.

November

Tue 30th 19:30 Local Preachers Meeting

December

Wed 1st 12:00 ACT Prayers United (see page 21)
Thu 2nd 10:30 District Women's Conference at Swanwick
Fri 3rd 18:00 Ashbourne Late Night Shopping
Sun 12th ACT Drive In Carol Service @ Sainsburys
tba Brailsford Carol Service
Tue 21st 19:00 St Agnes Fountain Concert (see page 15)
Fri 24th 16:00 Milldale Christmas Service (see page 19)
Fri 24th 23:30 Christmas Eve Communion Service
Sat 25th 10:00 Christmas Day Service

January

Tue 11th 9:30 Gateway Meeting
Wed 12th 19:30 Ashbourne Housegroup Leaders meeting
Thu 13th 19:30 Ashbourne Churches Together meeting
Tue 18th Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins
Sun 30th 18:30 ACT United Service for WPCU at St Oswald's

March

Fri 18th – Sun 20th Circuit Weekend Away at Swanwick
Sat 26th 10:00 District Synod

April

Tue 26th 19:30 Circuit Meeting

Travellers' tales

On 6th November, we enjoyed seeing and hearing about Richard Odell's round the world trip and Lorraine and Brian Hawkins' trip to the USA.

On 4th December at 7.00pm, Robert and Clare Sales will tell us about the Northern Lights, and Tony and Helen Walker about Canada. This will be on Zoom and a link will be issued with the notices. Do join us. All the presentations, including those of last winter, have been fascinating.

Derbyshire Farmers Carol Service

2.30pm Sunday December 2021

at Bakewell Livestock Market (free parking)

Derbyshire poet Philip Holland

Youlgrave Silver Band

Revd Alan Greggs (Lead Rural Chaplain)

Circuit Directory 2022 – last chance

A new directory will be produced in the New Year which is for internal use within Ashbourne Methodist Circuit only. Copies should not be left in public places and should be destroyed when a new one is published.

All the families in the directory were originally asked if they wanted their details printed and signed a form to give their permission. Now, due to the data protection rule changes, there is a need to check if everyone is still happy for their details to appear. You may have any of the following removed from the directory: a) name, b) address, c) phone number(s), d) email address, e) pastoral responsibility.

Have you spotted a mistake in the previous version? Do your details need to be changed? Please contact Carole Thorpe at 12 Cavendish Drive, Ashbourne DE6 1SR, cethorpe@hotmail.com or 346535 if you wish to make any amendments.

Anyone who is new to the church will be contacted by Carole to complete a form with their details.

From the editors

Many thanks to everyone who's contributed to this bumper issue.

The next edition: **February 2022**

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

Publication date: **Sunday 30th January**

We rely on the contributions we receive! Please send us your articles, thoughts and photos.

We can't include items which are copyright unless permission is obtained from the copyright-holder.

If possible, please e-mail your items to us at dysters@tiscali.co.uk

If this is difficult, please ring us on 01335 344086.

Daphne and John Dyster

