Connections



Ashbourne Methodist Circuit May 2024



Dear Friends

Here we are in the season of Easter, and we are being reminded of the resurrection encounters that the followers of Jesus experienced personally. It is quite difficult for us to understand how overwhelming the resurrection encounters were.

In 2024 we are used to the joy that Easter brings as we celebrate new life. If we try to imagine the experience of the disciples, following the death of their Lord and Master, they were not only grieving the loss of their friend, but they had every reason to be concerned for their own safety and wellbeing. It may be that at this point in life, with the plates we are spinning, we are feeling overwhelmed by emotions just as the followers of Jesus were. The good news is that God understands and just as Jesus appeared to the first followers in their emotional states so Jesus appears alongside us.

At Easter we celebrate the new creation that is resurrection. We celebrate that death has been defeated. The followers who locked themselves in an upper room in their fear didn't know this.

Yet, when Jesus enters their space he comes to bring them new life just as he now won new life for all who would seek to follow his way. What we then discover are followers who are energised, commissioned to go and make disciples and to build the Kingdom of God on earth.

I believe that God longs in Jesus to see us energised, commissioned to go and make disciples and build the Kingdom of God in the places we find ourselves.

My prayer for us all is that we will know the reality of the resurrection in our lives and draw comfort from Jesus if we are feeling overwhelmed and share in the joy of new life.

Blessings

Nicola

Ashbourne Circuit Family News May 2024

I am pleased to be able to share some good news this month. Jen F and David C were accepted into Membership at Ashbourne Methodist Church and we welcome them both officially, even though they have been part of our fellowship for a good while.

As mentioned in the March edition, several members have had special birthdays. Sue F and Elizabeth S both recently celebrated their 70th birthdays. On May 22 we wish John Hancock a very happy 95th birthday. Congratulations also go to Catherine & Stuart who celebrated their Silver Wedding anniversary on 30th April.

Unfortunately, many of our church friends continue to experience health problems at the moment. We continue to pray for Chris D and Anne W as they continue their treatment at home and during their many hospital visits. We also pray for Diana W as she recovers from knee surgery. Not everyone is ready to share their health concerns widely, but please be assured we are praying and thinking of you. As we have often said before please let us know if there are people who are ill and need a visit or prayers. We like to distribute the church flowers on a Monday and need to know who might appreciate them. Elizabeth Spencer, as part of the hospital chaplaincy team, is always happy to visit anyone in Royal Derby Hospital.

We also think of Jonathan and Isabel Hill who are over in the UK from Zimbabwe, we pray that their visit is a positive one.

The month of May is the time of Tissington's well dressing and we support the event by manning the Tissington Chapel between 9-14th May and supporting the cake stall in aid of Christian Aid. We pray for volunteers during this time as they witness to the many visitors.

Wendy Haslam Pastoral Secretary (10.4.2024)

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

Milldale Easter Saturday Walk

As has been our tradition for many years people met at the village of Milldale at 11 a.m. on Holy

Saturday to walk and enjoy the fellowship of time together. This year there was 15 of us.

Incredibly the weather was fine with some glimpses of sunshine, and the area was not over busy.

Following the guidance of Chris and John Dakin who unfortunately could not join us this year we kept to the main Dovedale path, due to the very wet and muddy conditions on the paths around the area.

We walked to the footbridge to Hall Dale, exploring the caves on the way and in the peace of the West side of the river enjoyed our lunch before returning to the village of Milldale where the kiosk was open, and drinks, snacks and ice cream was consumed.

2 p.m. saw the group assemble in the chapel where they were joined by a number of nonwalkers and we thoroughly enjoyed Rev Nicola's most reflective service of hymns (music by Jonathan) and bible readings (read by some of the walkers).

A wonderful way to prepare for the Celebration of our Lord rising from the dead.

Cliff

There was a preacher who fell in the ocean and he couldn't swim. When a boat came by, the captain yelled, "Do you need help, sir?" The preacher calmly said "No, God will save me." A little later, another boat came by and a fisherman asked, "Hey, do you need help?" The preacher replied again, "No God will save me." Eventually the preacher drowned and went to heaven. The preacher asked God, "Why didn't you save me?" God replied, "Fool, I sent you two boats!"

A race of aliens visits earth one day; they come in peace and surprisingly, they speak English. Obviously all of the heads of government and religious leaders want to speak to the aliens so they set up a meeting with our new visitors. When it's the pope's turn, he asks: "Do you know about our lord and saviour Jesus Christ?" "You mean J.C?", responds the alien. "yeah we know him he's the greatest isn't he? He swings by every year to make sure that we are doing ok". Surprised, the pope follows up with "He visits every year?! It's been over 2 millenia and we're still waiting for his SECOND coming!" The alien sees that the pope has become irate at this fact and starts trying to rationalize "Maybe he likes our chocolate better than yours?" The pope retorts "Chocolates? What are you talking about? What does that have to do with anything?" The alien says "Yea, when he FIRST visited our planet we gave him a huge box of chocolates.

Why? What did you guys do?"

Finding my Faith – David Clark.

My Faith journey started a long time ago with The Church of Scotland and being raised in the largest council housing estate in the country. Kilmarnock was, still is, one of the most deprived areas when, in the early 2010's, the BBC produced a three-part docudrama that was filmed in the street where I had lived as a child – the theme of the docudrama being Drugs, Prostitution and Alcoholism; the BBC had lots to work with and our street provided rich material and they called the programme 'The Scheme' – it was a big hit. Growing up, I could see this misery around me and I resolved to gain an education that would

allow me to make choices and build on my Faith that there must be something better and my local church was a sanctuary where I started to find a few alimmers of Hope. However, my place I had earned at University had to be given up as my parents decided our large family needed more immediate income and I was directed to Massey Ferguson to work "for my board and rent" which gobbled up my entire £4, 7shillings and 8p weekly wages. While this was a setback it palled with what my parents endured through World War II; my father was part of the British Army who helped liberate the Belsen Concentration Camp in 1945; he was a troubled man with an understandable short-fuse temper. This was the early 1970s when my education stalled but I found the famous poem, Desiderata, initially thought to have been "found in Old St Paul's Church, Baltimore in 1692" but really penned in the 1920s but that is another story... Desiderata is also known as "You are a child of the Universe" and together with the William Barclay Daily Study Bible guides I was able to keep a hold of my Faith by remembering we should...

1. ... listen to others, even to the dull and the ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud

and aggressive persons; they are vexatious to the Spirit.

- Nurture strength of Spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.
- ... be at Peace with God, whatever you conceive
 Him to be... in the noisy confusion of life, keep
 Peace in your Soul. With all its sham,
 drudgery, and broken dreams, it is still a
 beautiful world.

You will note Listen, Spirit and Peace features strongly and despite the broken dreams, it **is, still**, a beautiful world and these basic principles sustained my Faith that **He** had other plans for me.

Because, those other plans *He* had for me included having two beautiful daughters who brought Love, Joy and Happiness into my life in measures beyond my dreams and as it says in Psalm 127:3

Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from Him.

My two daughters, Heather and Louise, were a reward from *Him* that just kept on giving and giving and I am thankful my Faith led me in this direction.

However.... My Faith that I should "*Nurture strength of Spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune*" tested me to my limit, sometimes beyond, when my older daughter, Heather, was diagnosed with a Stage 4 Brain Tumour in 2019 and Heather had to undergo urgent brain surgery at Glasgow's NHS Queen Elizabeth hospital.

I believe, my Faith in *Him* and *His* other plans for me led an Egyptian surgeon to Glasgow, who was the only person with the skill to perform the brain surgery, and we were then blessed with another three years of Heather's wonderful Grace, Kindness and Joy and Heather showed us how to live life to the full with her positive attitude. But... with Heather's passing I found my Faith searching for answers to the questions of why

 'Only the good die young' and

'Bad people seem to be thriving'
 I felt *He* was testing my Faith.

Well, here is where Faith gets interesting, we often hear people say "it was meant to happen" or, "it always was part of *His* plan for me" when the Rev. Nicola Briggs dropped a note by our home about 10 days ago to say Ashbourne Methodist Church would be welcoming new members on the 24th March. Nicola kindly came to chat to me about joining Ashbourne Methodist Church and I mentioned I had been searching my Faith for answers to the questions of why 'only the good die young' and 'bad people seem to be thriving' and I owned-up to being the author of the Post-it note on the six weeks of Worship-in-the-Wilderness painting Anne produced and hanging in Century Hall where people were asked to post anything about how they were feeling.

My Post-it note simply said "Searching".

That was me, I put "Searching" there in Week 1.

The Rev. Nicola's explanation to me 'Searching' my Faith was both enlightening and transforming and I had one of those moments when it all made sense; Nicola said it was about "I forgive you" and Nicola told the story of how Gordon Wilson forgave the people who planted the bomb in Enniskillen that killed his daughter (and nearly him as well); this had a profound effect on me as

Through the power of God's spirit in us we are asked to become extraordinarily strong, because it requires great strength of character and great single-minded resolve to be able to forgive...

This was a turning point for me and led me to Luke 6:37

Do not judge... Do not condemn... Forgive...

Nicola also provided the words she would use in the Confirmation prayer that "God offers to strengthen you by his Spirit... Increase in them your gifts of grace and fill them with your Holy Spirit: **the Spirit of wisdom and understanding".**

Today, if you look at the Worship-in-the-Wilderness painting hanging in Century Hall you will find a Post-it note in Week 6 saying...

"Found it.

the Spirit of wisdom and understanding".

That was me, I put it there.

My Faith journey continues with my confirmation into Ashbourne Methodist Church on the 24th March when I felt the love and warmth of the congregation when they shouted out "With God's help we will" supporting my Faith for me to commit to the Christian life of worship and service.

Thank you.

David Clark. March 2024.

Acknowledgements and credits : Parts of this article are quoted from: -The Scheme. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Scheme The Holy Bible, NIV. William Barclay Daily Study Bible Desiderata from the on-line article https://stpaulsbaltimore.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/08/desiderata-pamphlet.pdf On-line article https://www.grangepcc.co.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2020/06/sueletter.pdf describing the events on Remembrance Sunday in Enniskillen. Rev. Nicola Briggs' Ashbourne Methodist Church Confirmation sermon.

THE LINK COMMUNITY HUB PROJECT - Update at 12th April 2024



The Link Community Hub continues to achieve significant milestones and also to tackle significant challenges! Since the last report in the Connections magazine the detailed technical design drawings have been completed by our design team

and a detailed Pre-Tender Estimate has been completed by our Quantity Surveyors. As reported at the last Church Council meeting there have been significant delays in completing these important stages.

In the area of design, meeting some aspects of the requirements of modern standards whilst complying with the heritage requirements in our old listed building have been a challenge. For example ventilation/insulation (thermal efficiency) requirements, fire safety requirements and structural engineering requirements.

These increased design requirements, together with the effects of building cost inflation, some elements of lack of clarity of specification and other factors have led to a pre-tender cost estimate coming in significantly over budget.

So the Link team held a Scoping Worshop on 9th April with all the professional team (architect, structural engineer, mechanical and electrical engineer, quantity surveyor and project manager) to identify ways of getting back into budget - so called Value Engineering. There are many good and effective ideas and we are working through them now. We are also looking at things which we can do ourselves or with local contractors at a lower cost than might be charged by a main contractor.

We have good support from DDDC and from an agency appointed by Government (DLUHC) to support LUF funded community schemes (we are not alone as a LUF funded scheme in having this sort of cost challenge)

Please do not be alarmed – we will definitely have an amazing project!

The Link team will feed back to the Church Council later in April with the latest findings and recommendations and the CC will vote on the recommendations presented.

Our target is to go out to tender for the main contractor during early/mid-May and for the main contractor to start on site late August. Before the main contractor starts there will be preparatory work so we will need to vacate the premises sometime in July. The current cost and other challenges mean that this date is still flexible, so please be patient with us as we work through the challenges.

1Fundraising

We passed a significant milestone recently when we exceeded £1million in fundraising. Thank you so much to everybody for your generosity.

It is now essential to estimate what funds we will have available to pay bills in the latter part of 2025.A detailed analysis was prepared and discussed in the Link meetings. Details will be presented at the Church Council meeting and updated to church members. Key points included

- We have achieved over £1 million secured funds towards our match funding target of £1.4 million; over half the contribution has been generously given by church members and friends;
- Methodist organisations and grant givers have also been very generous, giving us £452k (Circuit, District, TMCP, Rank, Benefact Trust)
- Getting grants from others has been more challenging with £12k received to date. 27 grant enquiries and applications have either been declined or we have had no reply;
- we continue to target priority grant organisations.

We thank you for your continued support and prayers during this critical time. The situation is continually evolving and we will continue to keep you informed. Do contact one of the Link Team members if you would like more information.

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

Reflections on Communications

You may not know, but we have a telecommunications mast on the land of our farm.

It's about half a mile down the track from the main A52 to Stanton lane.

Every so often we get notice that they want to come and service the mast, and require access, which, with enough notice, we give them. One of the problems is, that every time they want to service it, it is, often as not, a different company that comes.

We have, numerous times, to numerous teams, told them where the mast is, and needs 4×4 capable vehicles to get to it, but they usually turn up with a Transit or Escort sized front wheel drive vehicle. So, a lot of the time, especially in the winter, they have to walk!

Years ago, we gave access to a group for the day, and when night fell, we locked the main gate at the top of the hill, which we always keep locked, as there was no one in sight, no men, no van's, nothing!

But it seemed there were still people working, and, when done, came to the gate and found it locked!

Now, remember, this is a

telecommunications company! Did they get on the phone and call us to unlock the gates, as they had all our details, land line, mobile etc! No! Did they walk down the hill to knock on our door, No!

Much to our annoyance, they cut the chain that secured the lock on the gate! Which resulted in a lot of paperwork, electronic and actual paper to get things sorted with them at the time. It occurred to me, that in a world of, what I might call multi ways of communication, land line, mobile, social media, e mail's etc, we still, in some aspects of our lives, "connect" with people. Or if we do, think that because we are "on line" someone else must be too! Once I was told on a Sunday morning, at church, that I had a "day off" as my afternoon service had been cancelled!

"Didn't you get the e mail I was asked,"? "No, because I did not have it on that morning", I replied. "Or from about noon on the Saturday"! "Oh" was the answer, and, I asked, that, in future, that someone would pick up a phone and "contact" me, to ensure I had, "Got the message"!

I must point out here that the church involved did ring and apologise for the error in not contacting me direct! I am not a "Techno Weeny" or a "Computer Geek! My mobile phone is a tool, nothing more, not a way of life, I do not and never will subscribe to social media, it's not 100% essential for me. Once I have done with the mobile or the computer, they are off, unless needed for an emergency.

Especially the computer, I am not one to sit poised fingers hovering over the keyboard waiting for the next e mail. At one time, I didn't like the idea of a laptop, but now I do, but once done, it is shut down and re packed in its bag and out of sight.

While the modern "communications" devices are useful, (where would we have been without them in the Pandemic is a case in point,) I prefer to communicate, to meet, at meetings, in my role as Member of the Methodist Church, a Local Preacher, and Pastoral Visitor, and of the later, if someone doesn't want an actual visit, that is completely satisfactory for some a phone call will do. If they change their minds, want a visit all they need to do is ask, and I am happy to oblige. It is, for me, always the ones I visit, choice!

Yes, I know it's a completely different world when our Lord lived on and in our world, but I was thinking while composing this article in the time of the run up to Easter, and all that entailed, when, as it says in scripture "Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem"! I wondered exactly how many "miles" did our Lord rack up in his ministry years.

Let's face it, he and his parents did some "mileage" themselves. Nazareth to Bethlehem, Bethlehem to Jerusalem, Jerusalem to Egypt, Egypt to Nazareth. Jesus too moved some distance, to see people, to meet people, and for them to see him, the Gentile, the Jew, the Roman, the clean, the unclean, the man, the woman, the child.

And, I am sure Jesus still moves in the world today, through and in us, through our hands, feet, faith and personality, in church and in the world we "live" in, whatever "role" we take on may be either face to face, or if necessary – electronically

God Bless. Tom.

Rev Nicola's Sabbatical

From Friday 3rd May until Friday 30th August Rev Nicola will be on Sabbatical. During this period cover has been put in place to ensure that ministry across the Circuit and churches continues.

If you have any questions during the Sabbatical period, please contact the following:

For pastoral and preaching matters:

Rev David Leese, <u>david.leese@hotmail.com</u> or 01335 344198

For administrative queries:

Carole Thorpe <u>circuitadmin@ashbournemethodist.org.uk</u> or 01335 346535

or Jacqui Marsh (Circuit Steward), jacq.marsh@gmail.com or 01335 345210.

General sabbatical queries:

Gareth Rutledge (Circuit Steward) gareth rut@lineone.net or 01335 418519 The manse answerphone will have all these numbers listed as alternative contacts. Please do not leave Circuit or Church related messages during the sabbatical period.

Revd Andy Fyall, Chair of the Nottingham and Derby District, and Revd Stuart Bell, Superintendent Minister of the Derby Circuit will be available to support the Circuit Leadership Team Meetings, Circuit Meetings, Church Councils planned at Ashbourne and any urgent matters should they arise.

Carole Thorpe will be holding a diary for Rev Nicola for September to December 2024, in conjunction with Chris Briggs. Please liaise with Carole in the first instance.

Rev Nicola will be focusing on funeral and preaching ministry during her sabbatical and will more than likely be seen in and around the Ashbourne Circuit at various points. Please be mindful that Circuit and Church matters should not be discussed with Nicola so that she can benefit as much as possible from the opportunities a Sabbatical brings to refresh ministry. At the same time Nicola has requested that people do not cross the road to avoid her! A newlywed couple lay in bed one morning husband says: "How about you go brew us some coffee?" Wife: "That's your job." Husband: "Says who?" Wife : "The bible, it's on just about every page." Husband: "The bible don't say anything about brewing coffee." Wife (Holding her Bible flipping pages): "See every page Hebrews, Hebrews, Hebrews."

First Prayer of the Day

Lord, we ask you to bless this new day ahead. Bless all our thoughts and the steps we tread. Bless all our actions and the people we meet. Bless our conversations, that they be swee.t

May our minds be in tune, to the needs all around. And our hearts be receptive to our inner sound. Let our aim for this day, to bring joy and a smail. To help somebody feel, their life is worthwhile.

Amen

(Taken from 'Preaching in Verse' by Derek Marshall)





Peak Wesley Way - now open for bookings

The Peak Wesley Way is a pilgrimage within the beauty of the Peak Park. It begins at Matlock Station and over the 6 days you will walk about 50 miles to Edale. Groups of 2-6 friends or family can shelter overnight in Methodist chapels along the route.

Please visit https://peakwesleyway.com/, or follow on Facebook or Instagram.



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Your Circuit Needs YOU!

We are looking for a Circuit Safeguarding Officer who can:

 Support and advise the circuit superintendent and the circuit stewards regarding safeguarding matters.

- With the support of the circuit superintendent, prompt recording and reporting of any safeguarding concerns of which they are made aware. This will include appropriate referral to statutory agencies and DSOs, as required by Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance.
- Promote the safety and well-being of all children and vulnerable adults within the circuit.
- Present a report to each circuit meeting about safeguarding events (noting the need for confidentiality regarding specific cases).
- Provide regular updates to the circuit leadership team and attend CLT meetings as necessary.
- Liaise with church safeguarding officers to offer guidance and check they are complying with Methodist Church Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidance.
- Work with the superintendent minister and the DSO regarding safeguarding concerns.

- Attend and participate at safeguarding training, district safeguarding events and meetings.
- Support the circuit superintendent with the annual review of the circuit safeguarding policy and sending a copy to the DSO.
- Advising all churches in the circuit of the requirement to adopt a safer recruitment policy and to carry out required procedures when appointing staff or volunteers.
- Assisting the DSO with setting up Monitoring and Support Groups for those subject to safeguarding contracts and reminding the chairs of groups when reviews are due.

You will be supported in this work by the Superintendent Minister (Nicola Briggs), the Circuit Administrator (Carole Thorpe), the Foundation Module trainers (Cathy Stubbs, Paul Taylor, and Nicola Briggs), the DBS verifiers (David Leese and Nicola Briggs).

As we move to a On Church Circuit, we anticipate this role having a team approach with those named above and others. This role could we held by one person or shared between two as has happened until December 2023.

If you would like to discuss whether God is calling you to consider this role please talk (before 3rd May) to Rev Nicola or at anytime with John Barker, Circuit Steward, and former Circuit Safeguarding Officer).

METHODIST HOMES.

Firstly, my thanks to all the churches, chapels, and individuals that contributed to a total of £927.70p for MHA in the 2023/2024 financial year. I am so grateful for your "giving" especially knowing how much is given to the various charities that we support in the Ashbourne Circuit. Secondly, I would like to "help" those that donate in that I know many post their donations to me. Knowing how expensive stamps are nowadays, may I ask those that donate, if they attend Ashbourne, to place their envelope in the church pigeon holes under "P". Let me know, by phone, e mail or text, and I will collect next time I am about town, which is either Monday for my weekly swim, or Thursday when I do whatever shopping I need.

Otherwise, if not attending Ashbourne, do give me a call and I will come and pick up your donation.

I will also come and pick up donations if necessary, as and when Ashbourne closes for all "The Link" work that will restrict access. All you need to do is give me a call, and we can arrange a time for a pick up.

Finally, I would like you to note in your diaries, that Methodist Homes Sunday is set this year for Sunday July 14th. The preacher will be Rev James Francis, Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality for MHA.

I am hoping for a blessed time of worship and celebration of the work of MHA.

Once again thank you all for your support for MHA, as congregations and individuals,

Tom Parkinson.

Ashbourne Circuit MHA Representative

Ashbourne Circuit Church Services

Please check the website for the most current information,

https://www.ashbournemethodist.org.uk/news.

Sunday April	21st		
	10:00	Muddy Church	
Ashbourne	10:30	Rev Nicola Briggs	
	18:30	Rev Nicola Briggs	PRAISE, Communion
Brailsford	10:30	Tom Parkinson	
Tissington	10:30	Rev David Leese	Communion
Sunday April	28th		
Ashbourne	10:30	Tim Dutton	
Brailsford	10:45	At All Saints	
Kirk Ireton	18:30	Rev Nicola Briggs	Songs of Praise

Kniveton						
Sunday May						
Ashbourne						
Brailsford						
Parwich						
Thursday May 9th						
Tissington						
Sunday May 12th						
Ashbourne						
Brailsford						
Kniveton						
Ashbourne						
Brailsford						
Tissington						
Changes to no						
Tissington Sunday May Ashbourne Brailsford Kniveton Sunday May Ashbourne Brailsford Tissington						

Dates for your diary and your prayers

APRIL

Tue 23rd Wed24th Sat 27th Tue 30th	10:00 19:30 10:00 19:30	Circuit Leadership Team meeting Ashbourne Annual Church meeting District Synod at Littleover Methodist Church Ashbourne Church Council		
	19.30			
MAY		Christianity Month Plant and seed swap at Ashbourne		
Sat 4th		Church		
Sat 4th	9:30	Bayeux Revisited at Brailsford Parish Church Bayeux Revisited at Brailsford Parish Church		
Mon 5th	13:00			
Thu 9th	11:00	Tissington Well Dressing service		
Fri 24th - Mon 27th		Cliff College Festival		
JUNE				
Wed 5th Wed 12th	19:00	Summer Service at Milldale Chapel Local Preachers & Worship Leaders zoom		
	19:30			
Tue 18th	19:30	Ashbourne Church Council		
JULY Wed 17th	19:30	Circuit Meeting at Brailsford		

Thank you for those people who have contributed this month, please keep items flowing in, interesting things you have read, reports on our own Church/Circuit events.

Deadline for the June edition is May 17th to <u>clifflewer@aol.com</u> or post/text or in person.



Maundy Thursday Morning – We made It!!



Walking Group in Milldale on Holy Saturday