

Connections



*All are
welcome*

Ashbourne Methodist
Circuit

September 2024



Dear Friends,

One of my former ministerial colleagues had only ever lived/studied/worked in a city, so on being re-stationed to a country circuit he suddenly realised that harvest was not an event elsewhere, but a reality that he was now in the midst of. For us in this circuit we have the summer Agricultural show season-locally Leek in July, then in August Manifold Valley, Ashover, Ashbourne and Ipstones- all different but all good experiences.

These shows have a variety of functions. They are a mix of trade publicity, display of craft and livestock, social gatherings, and entertainment. To some (myself included) they are in a positive way opportunities to show off! Showing or exhibiting crafts, flower arranging, vegetables, baking, handiworks and livestock themselves.

The development of Agricultural shows during the nineteenth century was part of the drive to

improve the standard of livestock and agricultural and horticultural practice by public showing. It worked.

Paul writing to the Christians at Ephesus said that as people of Jesus we have been raised up so that 'He might display in the ages to come how immense are the resources of his grace, Ephesians 2v7 NEB).' In other words we are ourselves are part of God's shop window display. Yes we ourselves are part of His harvest, but importantly rather not to show off but to show forth those resources of His grace and not just at our earthly harvest time, but always.

And thank you for allowing me to help cover for Nicola's sabbatical.

David.

Pastoral News

The church services being held at Hilltop Primary School continue to be working well, with one recent Sunday being particularly full to the brim! We are blessed to be able to continue our fellowship there and thanks to all who are making this possible.

It is always a joy to share good news with everyone in the circuit. Several people in our congregations have been celebrating significant birthdays: Eric M, Cathy St, Stephen W, and Doreen W. We hope they all had a good time celebrating. Other good news to share is that Ethan Green, having achieved his A-Levels, is going to study Computer Game Applications

Development at Abertay University in Dundee. Congratulations, Ethan! Soon the GCSE results will be released and we hope that our young people are happy with their grades. Another recent achievement saw Edward Haslam successfully complete a 50 mile run in the hilly Lake District in memory of his Dad, Paul. He is raising money for the CJD charity and sends his thanks to those who sponsored him. We also welcome John and Mary Hellyer, who have recently moved to Ashbourne and have begun to worship with us.

We continue to pray for those we know who are unwell. As I write this we think especially of Anne Wa, who is recovering from surgery this week. Also for Betty D, Chris D, Margaret A, and also Liz S, who is due to have surgery very soon. There are others we know who are going through difficult times health wise, and we keep them all in our prayers.

Many of us will have enjoyed the Ashbourne Show and the Circuit Hospitality tent by the time this magazine is printed, we trust the day is a success and we reach out to many.

I'd also like to take this opportunity of thanking Rev David Lees for his overseeing of pastoral care, during Rev Nicola's sabbatical. And of course welcoming back Nicola, hoping she has had both a fruitful yet refreshing time away.

Wendy Haslam

Link Report

In late July we received a tender for the main contractor for the Link project. Whilst 4 contractors had been invited to tender (reduced from 6 previous expressions of interest) 3 withdrew, so we only have one tender. The tender is higher than the last Pre Tender Estimate prepared by our Quantity Surveyor, which in turn was higher than 2 previous PTEs. This means we have to further review the scope of what we can do and also to fix the budget for the coming Value Engineering and scope negotiations with the contractor.

The LDT have presented a proposed priority order of the scope to be completed and this has been reviewed and a priority order agreed at a Church Council meeting on Tuesday 20th August. Due to the need for maintaining commercial confidentiality this was (exceptionally) a closed meeting. This church council meeting also reviewed the budget which can be allocated to the main contractor which included reviewing the level of borrowing from Methodist Chapel Aid.

Please be reassured, we will anyway have a great development which will transform our buildings and give us new and wonderful ways to serve and be a witness to our community and visitors to our town. The things we will do as planned include:

- the new Link (foyer) building - which is the heart of our project, uniting and giving access for all to all our buildings, providing the place where people meet, providing circulation space, the heart of the community hub
- the transformation of the Worship/Performance space – creating a flexible comfortable space for worship, concerts and events
- Cornerstone – opening up to the new Link to create a lively space where things are happening day in day out, drawing people in
- Gateway – needed to provide quality affordable accommodation in town which is up to today’s standards, continuing our social purpose and providing the income essential for our financial viability

There are also many more things we can afford to do and the details of how we will do these and precisely what we can do has to be developed in the coming negotiations with the tenderer. We know the things which are priorities for all of us (eg Waterside floor, acoustic treatment of Century Hall etc) and these will be included.

The Church Council has issued an agreed statement following their meeting:

“The CC agreed to delegate to the LDT further negotiations with a contractor, authorising the LDT to agree a contract on its behalf within clear cost limits. The

exact extent of the work to be done will depend on the outcome of those further negotiations and it is hoped that a contract will be agreed and awarded by mid-October.”

Fundraising:

We currently have £1,053,028 secured funds plus current committed regular giving and gift aid through to April 2026 of £30k. This is additional to our LUF funds. Over the last two months we have submitted seven grant applications, and more grant organisations are being targeted. We are also writing to local businesses for support. We continue to look for opportunities to raise more funds and appreciate any future giving, interest free loans, or legacy you are able to provide.

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. Tony Walker - Link Development Team Leader, Jonathan Webb – Link Fundraising Team Leader – on behalf of the Link Development Team



A view from Tom Parkinson's bedroom window – very early morning

Are you new(ish) to Ashbourne church?

You are invited to a welcome event for a chance to share a meal, meet other new people, and hear a bit more about Ashbourne Methodist Church's vision.

Thursday 26th September, 6.30-8.00pm

RSVP to Stuart Green 01335 300338 or stuart@birchlodge.uk

Who Cares? An introduction to pastoral care

The Methodist Learning Network has set up 4 training sessions for Pastoral Carers.

Date and time Thu, 7 Nov 2024 19:00 - Thu, 28 Nov 2024 21:00 GMT

Location Online from 7-9pm

In response to Our Calling, Methodist people are to help others to grow and learn as Christians, through mutual support and care. *Who Cares?* is a series of four 2-hour sessions that introduces participants to the possibilities of pastoral care – creating appropriate environments and developing practices that welcome, support and care for others in their role. It draws on insights and underpinning knowledge in the areas below:

Session 1: Introducing Pastoral Care (7/11)

Session 2: Welcome and Hospitality in Pastoral Care - (14/11)

Session 3: Listening and Prayer in Pastoral Practice (21/11)

Session 4: Care in Difficult Times and Self-care in Pastoral Practice (28/11)

Go to the Eventbrite site to register <https://tinyurl.com/Pastoral-Care-training>

The beginning of Methodism in Ashbourne

The preacher, Thomas Hanby was 21 years old, a native of Barnard Castle, Co. Durham, who had very recently received God's call to preach the Gospel, while staying in Leeds.

He writes: "In 1754 Brother Mitchell desired me to come and help them in the Staffordshire Circuit for a few months. I made an excursion into the wilds of Derbyshire, preached at Wootton, near Weaver Hill, the Ford, Snelson, and Ashbourne, where there had been no such a being as a Methodist preacher. I had often found a great desire to preach in that town, but was at a loss how to introduce myself. However, I providentially heard of a serious man, Mr Thomas Thompson, who kept the toll-gate about half a mile from the town. I took Thomas White with me, from Barton Forge. We came to Mr Thompson's, and introduced ourselves in the best manner we could. He informed a few of his neighbours that there was a preacher at his house. Accordingly Mr Hurd's family, Mr Peach's and a few others came in the evening; I suppose as many as they durst invite. I talked to them, and expounded a part of the eighth chapter of the Romans. I found much liberty in my own soul, and the power of God rested upon the people, who were deeply affected. I stayed a few days, preaching morning and evening to as many as the house would hold. Miss Beresford condescended to assemble with us, and the Lord opened her heart, as the heart of Lydia. When I had been preaching Christ as a fountain

opened for sin and uncleanness, she cried out 'O precious gospel! O precious gospel' From that time she continued steadfast growing in grace, till the Lord took her in glorious triumph to Himself.

I left Ashbourne for about a fortnight, to visit my new friends in Snelson etc. -- and returned again. I now found I must preach no more at the toll-gate house: the commissioners of the road had forbidden my friend, Mr Thompson to admit me. But Mr Hurd, a gentleman farmer, by the desire of his family, whose hearts God had touched, suffered me to preach at his house. It was now that a furious mob arose while I was preaching, and beset the house, and sprang in among us like so many lions. I soon perceived that I was the object of their rage. My mind was variously agitated, yet I durst not but cry aloud as long as I could be heard; but at last I was overpowered with noise. Some of my friends, in defending me, were bleeding among the mob, and with difficulty I escaped out of their hands. But as Mr Thompson, Mr Isaac Peach, Mr Hurd's family, Miss Beresford and a few others remained steady, I was constrained to repeat my visits, till the Lord gave us peace. Mr Thompson grew in the knowledge and love of God, till the Lord took him to Himself.

The Methodist Society (ie. the present Ashbourne Church) was formed on Tuesday, 8th April, 1755 when John Wesley visited Ashbourne for the first time. He was on his way from Barton-under-Needwood to Hayfield, and arrived in Ashbourne at 7. 00am. He

tells us in his Journal, 'I preached to a deeply serious congregation. Seventeen or eighteen then desired to join in a society to whom I spoke severally. I was well pleased to find that near half of them knew the pardoning love of God. One of the first I spoke to was Miss Judith Beresford -a sweet but short-lived flower.'

These quotations are from John Wesley's Journal and are part of a letter that Judith Beresford wrote, in October 1756, to John Johnson, one of Wesley's preachers. They show so clearly the faith and motivation of the first generation of Methodists.

"Christmas 1750, I was advised to partake of the Lord's Supper. I knew it was right, but was conscious of my ignorance and unfitness for it. About this time there was a great talk of Methodism, and a cousin of mine was brought to seek the Lord. I went to visit her in January 1751, and told her, before I came away, I knew I was not what I ought to be, and should be glad to be instructed. From this time we carried on a correspondence, and by degrees light broke in upon my heart. In 1753 and 1754 I had great outward afflictions, and at times strong inward conflicts. Towards the end of 1754, I began to feel my hope decline; and for several nights in secret prayer I was in strong agony of spirit. The Lord, while I was upon my knees, stripped off all my fig-leaves. At the same time He showed me the all-sufficiency of Christ Jesus to save sinners, to save me, the chief; and I was enabled to cry out, 'My Lord and my God! I have redemption in Thy blood'. From this happy time I went

on my way rejoicing, though I was at times grievously assaulted, both by the stirrings of my old corruptions, and temptations from the devil.

"In the beginning of the year 1755 we had preaching near Ashbourne. This I had wished for long; and now I was honoured with suffering a little for the name of Christ. At first I was rather ashamed but the Lord strengthened me; and so great a blessing did I find by conversing with these dear people that I feared none of those things which I did or might suffer. My acquaintances were now less fond of my company, and they that looked upon me shook their heads." Her health began to fail very soon after this. Johnson writes, "When she altered for death, she called for her mother and brothers, to each of whom she gave an earnest exhortation. Then she said, 'Now I have no more to do here; I am ready to die. Send to Mr. Wesley, and tell him I am sorry I did not sooner believe the doctrine of perfect holiness. Blessed be God, I now know it to be the truth!' After greatly rejoicing in God for two days more, she said one morning, 'I dreamed last night I heard a voice, Christ will come to-day for His bride. It is for me. He will come for me to-day.' And a few hours after, without one struggle, or sigh, or groan, she sweetly fell asleep. Her eyes were still lifted up to heaven, till her soul was released, with so much ease that I did not know when she drew her last breath." Wesley comments, "So died Judith Beresford, as it were a hundred years old, at the age of four-and-twenty. a sweet, but short lived flower". She was one of our forebears in the faith in

Ashbourne, a young lady of some fortune, who was not ashamed to be associated with the despised Methodists.

Trevor Staniforth

(Rev Trevor Staniforth retired from active ministry to live in Ashbourne and be a very active member of our society)

. The minister came to call the other day. She said at my age I should be thinking of the hereafter. I told her, "Oh, I do it all the time." No matter where I am, in the lounge, upstairs, in the kitchen or out in the garage, I ask myself, "Now, what am I here after?"

John Dyster's fine sermon on Sunday 21st awoke in me the long-ago memory (75 years!) of an equally impressive sermon. At the time, I had only recently begun to realise that Christianity was about much more than the Sunday School and School hymns deemed appropriate for children. My local church in those days was blessed with a splendid preacher, and I had begun to attend regularly. He was 'Mr Robertson', and like my father he had fought in the trenches of WW1.

As I write, I can readily picture myself on several occasions standing in front of the War Memorial in St

Andrews, Fife. I'm scanning the recorded names - (so many tragically) -for two in particular. One is that of a great uncle while the other has absolutely no family connection. The name I'm looking for is R.B.WILSON. From research in more recent years I now know he was 20 years old at the time of his death. End of story? No way! In the remembered sermon, Mr Robertson recounted how one day in April 1917 at the end of his stint on the front line, his replacement was almost immediately mortally wounded - namely R.B. WILSON. That poignant story then led him on to proclaim the Christian message of Christ's sacrifice for us on Calvary - hence the sermon title 'The Man Who Took My Place'. The effect on me was profound and lasting.

Though that young man may well be totally forgotten, the story of his untimely death is somehow entwined with my faith progress. I stand and marvel and remember.

Margaret Hasler

Rise in people fascinated by violence, police warn

Following the horrendous stabbing in Southport on 30th July, there have been riots, not only in Southport but in many other towns and cities. Articles appeared on the BBC news website and I was horrified when I read

their content. As I read them the thought shot into my mind, 'Only God can solve this.'

We are used to hearing of threats from terrorists worldwide, and these threats are growing, according to top police sources in the UK and USA. Radicalisers and the violent groups they support pose a continuing danger.

But counter-terrorism forces are now battling a wide diversity of threats - including from a worrying number of people who don't support an underlying ideology, but are simply drawn to violence. Young people in particular are being attracted to online extremism, and with what has been called "a tsunami of disinformation", it is hard for people to understand what is true and what is not - and that is playing out in the realm of violence.

The UK's head of counter-terrorism policing, Matt Jukes said, "We are seeing people literally flip from searching for neo-Nazi material online to searching for Islamist material." This is a real shift, he says, with people having previously gone from a single ideology, to extremism, and on to violence.

Young people are viewing “dehumanising content”, including extreme pornography - says Mr Jukes - and being asked in online groups “to prove themselves by producing more and more extreme content”. The age profile of those drawn into this extreme environment is coming down – nearly one in five of those arrested as terror suspects in the UK in the past year were under 18.

It’s become a familiar pattern of events: a violent, terrifying attack unfolds, innocent people are killed, and social media is set alight with unfounded - and often incorrect - accusations about the assailant's identity and what the motivation was.

After the Southport attack, local police said the name shared on social media was incorrect. Nevertheless, posts on X (formerly Twitter) sharing the fake name were actively promoted to users and racked up millions of views. There were false claims the attacker was a refugee who arrived in the UK by boat in 2023 and unfounded speculation he is Muslim. Some of these posts were accompanied by Islamophobic and racist hate.

Thrown into the mix are conspiracy theories that ‘elites’ are somehow covering up the truth, including the abuse of British children.

So did these false and unfounded social media posts fan the flames of unrest in Southport?

When BBC Verify analysed the activity on social media it found that there was a clear pattern of influencers driving a message for people to gather for protests, but there was no single organising force at work. Several far right groups were identified as being part of this, but also individuals, including some in other countries, who spotted an opportunity from the Southport tragedy to amplify their own messages on major social media platforms.

There are lots of different factors contributing to the riot, and while this is about a whole lot more than a tidal wave of social media posts, it's yet more evidence of the way the online world can inflame pre-existing tensions in the real world. And that's a world where three little girls have had their lives cut short.

PLEASE JOIN ME – and no doubt many others around the world – in praying that the Lord will intervene to put a stop to this increasing threat to humanity.

The full articles can be found at:

[Rise in people simply fascinated by violence - warn terror police - BBC News](#)

[Southport attack: Did social media fan the flames of riot? - BBC News](#)

[Violent Southport protests reveal far-right organising tactics - BBC News](#)

P.S. Some good news – the ACE Trust has had a large number of young people taking part in their summer holiday activities this year, and seeing so many young people competing at the Olympics shows us that there are ways of giving youngsters the opportunity to develop interests in life that keep them off the streets and, hopefully, away from the lures of social media to some extent!

(extracts from these articles by kind permission of the BBC,

from BBC News at bbc.co.uk/news)

Lorraine Hawkins

What did Jonah's family say when he told them about what happened before reaching Nineveh? "Hmm, sounds fishy."



Ashbourne Churches Together Fun Day on the recreation ground

What a great day! Families sitting on the grass eating pizza, a longer queue for the face-painting than for the ice cream (and that's saying something!), children running around the field – and then coming to the ACT tent for water, other children coming for the free socks provided by ACT (needed if you wanted to go on one of the SIX inflatables), lots of fun and friendship.

The drizzly morning changed to a lovely sunny, but not too hot, afternoon and the atmosphere was terrific, really relaxed and friendly, which we felt was at least

partly due to Adam, the pastor from Elim, who headed up the team of helpers from all the churches. Of course, the good organisation and hard work of the team may explain why he was so relaxed!

A large number of people asked where they could make a donation, and were shocked to find out that the day was free. "Why?" they asked. "I thought you needed lots of money for your building work!" A great opportunity for evangelism!

Brian and Lorraine

Ashbourne Circuit Church Services

Please check the website for the most current information,
<https://www.ashbournemethodist.org.uk/news>.

Sunday August 25th

Ashbourne 10:30 Lorraine Hawkins

Brailsford 10:45 At All Saints

Kirk Ireton 18:30 Tom Parkinson

Kniveton 11:00 John Dyster

Sunday Sept 1st

Ashbourne	10:30	Rev David Leese	Holy Communion
	16:30	Rev Nicola Briggs	Afternoon Tea Service in St

Oswald's Hall

Brailsford 10:30 Rev Nicola Briggs All Age

Parwich 14:30 Lorraine Hawkins

Sunday Sept 8th

10:00 Muddy Church

Ashbourne 10:30 Tracy Dawson

Brailsford 10:45 At All Saints

Kniveton 14:30 Rev Nicola Briggs Holy Communion

Sunday Sept 15th

Ashbourne 10:30 Robert Sales

18:30 Paul Taylor PRAISE

Brailsford 10:30 Rev David Leese Harvest Festival

Tissington 10:30 Rev Nicola Briggs Holy Communion

Sunday Sept 22nd

Ashbourne 10:30 Tim Dutton

Brailsford 10:45 At All Saints

Kirk Ireton 18:30 Rev Chris Briggs Harvest Festival

Kniveton 11:00 Rev Mark Broadhurst

Sunday Sept 29th

Ashbourne 10:30 Rev Nicola Briggs Harvest Festival

Brailsford 10:45 Ann Parkinson

Changes to normal service are in **bold**

Dates for your diary and your prayers

AUGUST

- | | | |
|----------|-------|---|
| Sat 17th | 9:00 | Ashbourne Show at Osmaston |
| Tue 20th | 19:30 | Ashbourne Church Council (Link) |
| Tue 27th | 19:30 | Welcome service for District Officers |
| Thu 29th | 19:30 | Welcome Service for Rev Nikki Geeson, Melbourne MC, DE73 8EJ |
| Sat 31st | 18:00 | Welcome Service for Rev Tracey Harris, Mickleover MC, DE3 9GH |

SEPTEMBER

- | | | |
|----------|-------|--|
| Sun 1st | 16:00 | Welcome Service for Rev Naomi Sparey, Radcliffe MC, NG12 2AG |
| Fri 6th | 10:00 | Circuit Leadership Team meeting |
| Wed 11th | 19:15 | Ashbourne Pastoral Committee |
| Sat 21st | 10:00 | District Gathering, Littleover MC |
| Tue 24th | 19:30 | Local Preachers & Worship Leaders meeting |

OCTOBER

- | | | |
|---------|-------|----------------------------------|
| Tue 1st | 19:30 | Circuit Meeting at Tissington MC |
| Wed 2nd | | Brailsford Ploughing Match |

- Sun 6th 11:15 United Harvest Festival at St Mary's Church, Tissington for Anglicans and Methodists from Parwich and Tissington
- Thu, 10th 19:00 Evening with Paul Field, West Bridgford Methodist Church, NG2 7PQ
- Sun 13th 10:45 Harvest on the Farm, Culland Hall
- Tue 22nd 19:30 Ashbourne Church Council

Concert by Paul Field

Paul Field has worked as a professional Songwriter, Composer, Producer and Performer since 1976. He is giving a concert at West Bridgford Methodist Church, Nottingham NG2 7PQ on the 10th October starting at 7pm.

If you would like to attend, contact Carole Thorpe on 346535 or circuitadmin@ashbournemethodist.org.uk for more details. Transport can be arranged.

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When someone needed a boat made, what did the people in town say? "We Noah guy."

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Deadline for the October edition of Connections will be Saturday 14th September – email to clifflewer@aol.com

A District Gathering (during which we will attend to the business of the Synod)

The District Gathering on Saturday 21st September will begin at 10:00am at Littleover Methodist Church. The theme is "The land of Jesus birth – challenges for mission and ministry" and anyone who wishes can attend. We will be joined by the Rev'd David Hardman, Methodist Liaison Officer 'in' Jerusalem' as well as Deacon Angleena Kaiser, the previous Jerusalem Methodist Liaison Officer.

The subject is pertinent to every Methodist member and adherent, whether a member of the Synod or not (as will be the Climate Crisis theme on 5th April 2025 and any theme we choose to focus on going forward.) There will be a particular time during our gathering when we will 'attend to the business of the synod', those who are not members of the synod are welcome to listen in whilst not voting!

For more details contact Carole Thorpe on 346535 or circuitadmin@ashbournemethodist.org.uk. Transport can be arranged.

A little boy walked down the beach, and as he did, he spied a matronly woman sitting under a beach umbrella on the sand. He walked up to her and asked, "Are you a Christian?" "Yes." "Do you read your Bible every day?" She nodded her head, "Yes." "Do you pray often?" the boy asked next, and again she answered, "Yes." With that he asked his final question. "Will you hold my spending money while I go swimming?"

Ashbourne Show 2024

As we have done for several years, Ashbourne Methodist Circuit had a marquee at the show set up as a welcome resting/meeting/chatting point with free tea, coffee or squash on hand.

What a fantastic day our fabulous circuit team had! Our 38 volunteers prepared, transported equipment, shopped, set up, kept the boiler going, made drinks, poured, served, cleared, welcomed, chatted, prayed, smiled, packed up and put everything away. From a look at the approx. number of cups and biscuits used, I think we served 700 drinks!

Why do we do it? Because we want to provide a WELCOME SPACE, share generous hospitality, listen, pray, and be a central part of our community.

Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way, you were a vital part of the day.

Next year's show is on Saturday 16th August. My list is open for helpers!

Jane



Ashbourne Show

Children's prayers
written in lollipop
shapes and
posted



Welcome and a
smile with a cup
of tea. Service
from 9 a.m. to
5.30 p.m.



Mollie, Sienna and Lottie (Starkie) with their flowers grown with a little help from Grandad.



Grown by Enid Stubbs

Sunflower Seeds

Many will remember Tim Dutton preaching at Easter 2024 when he distributed Sunflower Seeds

The theme was the impossible made possible. We had 3 Fs: forgiveness (black pipe cleaners), friendship (smiley face stickers) and fantastic hope (sunflower seeds).

Two of our members have sent in photographs of the fantastic hope – Sunflowers grown from the seeds distributed.