

THE RECORD

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR 2021 - 2022



CHURCH ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

The **Methodist** Church South Fylde Circuit
Making Disciples: Transforming Lives and Communities

Minister: Minister: Revd Louise Makin Tel: (01253) 224232
email: louise.makin@methodist.org.uk

Pastoral Assistant: Judith Smith Tel: 07586 842846
email: jp.smith185@btinternet.com



*Church Road Methodist Church & Centre,
Church Road, St. Annes-on-Sea, FY8 3NQ :
Telephone 01253 729224*

*Web Site www.churchroadmethodist.org
Email: churchroadmethodist@gmail.com*

Church Road Methodist Church Registered Charity No 1134109

COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS,

born to set thy people free,
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art,
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us for ever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thine own eternal Spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all-sufficient merit
raise us to thy glorious throne.

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

A word from Louise.....



Season's Greetings!

It is the middle of November and many of my friends are already boasting of how they have finished their Christmas shopping, either that or they haven't started and will dash out at the last minute.

How do we feel about the whole process, do we love searching out and buying the perfect present, or do we resent the system that seems to insist on us spending huge amounts of money, we can't afford, on things that will only be used once and then stuck in a drawer.

I'm still new here. Coming to a place with fresh eyes I get to see things that those who have been there for a long time don't notice, because they have got used to the ways things are. For me seeing the amount of "stuff" accumulated by churches is an eye-opener. And why do we do this?

Why did we bring it to church and why have we kept it? There are many reasons, we might keep something just in case, or when we have something new at home, the old thing... well it is still working... goes to church because we just can't throw it out but no, we do not need 3 projector screens, or 20 mismatched vases! That's how one church came to have three vacuum cleaners, and only 8 square metres of carpet! Many of us grew up in a time of make do and mend we don't like waste. But when the amount of stuff prevents us from moving and carrying out our mission something has to change.

The early church didn't have buildings and couldn't accumulate junk, the Israelites walked across the desert, I bet they didn't carry stuff "just in case". When Jesus sent out his disciples;

"He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; ⁹ but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics." Mark 6:8-9 (NRSVA)

I don't know if I would mind as much if the stuff donated to church was new or the best, I've ruffled a few feathers by reminding people not to bring their cast offs and leave them at church. My mantra at the moment is "if it wasn't good enough to be in your house, don't bring it to the house of God". William Morris founder of the arts and crafts movement is noted for saying "*Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful.*" And this is just as true for our churches.

We watch programmes on television, reminding us of the damage caused by rampant consumerism; let's not buy into it this Christmas. Why not learn from those people who make new things from old and up-cycle. So how about a challenge to everyone this Christmas - instead of buying new, buy less, look for creative ways to re-purpose old things, support your local charity shops and church Christmas fairs, make gifts, practise re-gifting.

And if you do get something new for Christmas, please don't bring the old version to church!

Remember we have the greatest gift ever given, Immanuel God with us, what more do we need!

Louise

Change to regular pattern of Sunday worship

Please note that **as from December, our regular monthly pattern of Sunday services will change** as follows:

First Sunday in the month: Activ8 will *start* at 9am and be *followed* by breakfast. There will be **no** service at 10:30am, but those wishing to attend a traditional service are encouraged to go to The Drive.

Third Sunday in the month: – This will *not* be 'all age worship', although the Band will continue to provide the music. Children will attend JKids.

These changes will be reviewed in 6 months' time

WORSHIP in DECEMBER

5th

9.00 a.m. Activ8 led by Revd Louise Makin

12th

10.30 a.m. Revd Alan Clark
service includes Holy Communion



CHRISTMAS SERVICES

19th

10.30 a.m. Nativity Service

6.00 p.m. Carol Service
led by Revd Louise Makin

24th

CHRISTMAS EVE
4.00 p.m. Christingle Service
led by Revd Louise Makin



25th

CHRISTMAS DAY
10.00 a.m. Family Service
led by Revd Louise Makin

26th

10.30 a.m. Circuit Service at The Drive
led by Revd Stuart Wild

Monthly Sunday evenings at Church Road

aLive! - Friendship, worship and word in the Community Hub.

Monthly service on the fourth Sunday of each month at 6.00 p.m.

WORSHIP in JANUARY

2nd

10.30 a.m. Joint Service at The Drive
led by Revd Louise Makin

9th

10.30 a.m. COVENANT SERVICE
led by Revd Louise Makin

16th

10.30 a.m. Christine Pierce

23rd

10.30 a.m. Revd David Tidswell
6.00 p.m. aLive led by Revd Louise Makin and Judith Smith

30th

10.30 a.m. Local Arrangement

WORSHIP in FEBRUARY

6th

9.00 a.m. Activ8 led by Revd Louise Makin

13th

10.30 a.m. Revd Louise Makin
including Holy Communion

20th

10.30 a.m. Judith Smith

27th

10.30 a.m. David Turner
6.00 p.m. aLive led by Revd Louise Makin and Judith Smith



NOVEMBER

- 7th The death of Sydney Knight
Loving birthday memories of a very dear brother
from Evelyn Grace
Cherished memories of Marjorie and Peter from Gary, Mandy,
Yvonne and the grandchildren
The death of James Maddocks
The death of Margaret Joyce Knight
Fond family memories from Sybil Bleach
- 14th Kay Makepeace in memory of her parents
In loving memory of John and Louise Eadon
from Rachel and Helen
- 21st Treasured birthday memories of Paul,
from Evelyn Grace & Suzanne

DECEMBER

- 6th Loving birthday memories of Marion Holland
- 20th Treasured memories of Claire Berwick
In loving memory of John & Clarice Hughes
from Margaret Wrigley
Loving Birthday memories of a dear husband Arthur, and
of my son, David Milnes, from Myrtle

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

MATTHEW 6: 28-29

If you would like to contribute to the church flowers in memory of someone, please contact Elaine Watts. (tel 01253 722302.)



AUDREY SHAW

*"I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord:
he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:
and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."*



HADLEY KING

Son of Lisa Harper and Matthew King

26 September 2021

Pour out your Holy Spirit that those baptised in water may die to sin, be raised with Christ and be born to new life in the family of your church.

The Lord bless you and take care of you,
May the Lord be kind and gracious to you,
May the Lord look on you with favour and give you peace.

Numbers 6 verses 24-26



TO ALL OUR FRIENDS AT CHURCH ROAD

**Warmest Wishes for
God's Blessing at Christmas**
from

Valerie Ball Sadie Bridge John Christmas (*Sidmouth*)
Stewart & Alison Dow David & Irene Harrison
Jonathan & Catherine Irving
Revd Louise Makin John & Anne Mayes
Catherine Peak Nigel & Sandie Standbridge
Nancy Steele Ann Thompson Elaine Watts
Joan Wild Andrew & Sheila Whitley
Stuart & Margaret Wrigley

Instead of sending Christmas Cards, the above have made
donations to the church funds

May we this Christmas experience the deep truth of
Emmanuel, God with us

Seasonal thanks

Thank you to everyone who has helped to maintain our fellowship and
witness at Church Road throughout the past year with all its challenges.
We look forward to a new year ahead as we continue to support each
other in fellowship in 2022.

A very happy Christmas and peaceful New Year to you all!



Meditation for Advent

Watching and waiting

What do you enjoy watching, fast cars, birds, people?
What about waiting, in queues, for holidays, babies, or
Christmas? I wonder when you began preparing for Christmas? In the
sales last year or perhaps you haven't started yet.

Mary had months to prepare for the birth of Jesus, watching to see how
people responded to her. Other people watching to see if the gossip was
true that Mary was going to have a baby. What would poor Joseph do?
One thing we can see is that God had it all organised, his plans were on
schedule and it seemed to be on a need- to- know basis. He would take
care of those he had chosen for this incredibly special delivery.

God's patience is loving and kind, and over this Advent and Christmas
season we need to be loving and kind to ourselves as well as others. If we
can do that while watching and waiting for the celebrations to begin we
too can celebrate once again the birth of God's son, Jesus.

Mary and Joseph watched and waited, and travelled to Bethlehem,

*The angels sang, 'Glory, glory,'
and lit up the sky,*

*The shepherds watched and waited,
guided by the star,*

*Let us watch and wait and follow the star
to Christmas.*

*God watched and waited for his son, Jesus
So let us to watch and wait for God's gift
to us – Emmanuel.*



Judith Smith – Methodist Lay Worker

2021 ADVENT COURSE - WATCHING AND WAITING

An Advent course written by the London District Methodist Church

God's story, Your story Every story

The season of Advent is a period of watching and waiting in anticipation of the arrival of Christ. During Advent, we look back and celebrate the incarnation of the Son of God in the world; we also look forward in anticipation of His return at the end of time.

This year, as a Circuit we are offering the opportunity to walk through the season of Advent together, in small groups, engaging with some study material entitled 'Watching and Waiting', produced by the London District in 2020, which encourages us to share in stories; your story and other people's stories, as they become woven into God's story of Advent.

The Circuit is offering various days and times, in the hope that you will be able to join at some point during the week.

Monday afternoon – 2.00-3.00 pm – The Drive
Thursday morning – 11.00 -12 noon - Church Road

Week 1 – w/c 22nd November – The Watchtower: Stay Awake!

Week 2 – w/c 29th November – Listening to the Voice of God

Week 3 – w/c 6th December – John The Baptist

Week 4 – w/c 13th December - Developing a Listening Heart

If you would like to join a study group on Zoom, please contact Deacon Kim - kim.gabbatiss@methodist.org.uk for the Zoom link for sessions taking place on a Monday evening and Andrew Barratt andrcbarratt@aol.com for sessions taking place on a Thursday evening.

We very much look forward to journeying with you and sharing in this special season. In the meantime, if you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Staff Team.

Deacon Kim Gabbatiss on behalf of the Staff Team

01772 635858, or 07769 293763

or Judith Smith tel 07586842846 – jp.smith185@btinternet.com

Christmas Coffee Morning Saturday 4 December

10am -12noon. Come and meet old friends and new.

Coffee and Mince-pies. Bring and Buy Stall (No bric-a-brac please)

If anyone would like to donate mince-pies please leave in the church kitchen by Sunday 28th November.

(Sorry - mince pies must be shop bought, homemade cannot be accepted.)

LANCASHIRE SINGS CHRISTMAS

Come along and join with other local churches and our neighbours for an hour's carol singing in The Vic

Thursday 16 December 2021
from 7.00 p.m to 8.00 p.m.

*Churches Together in Lancashire & Radio Lancashire's
Carol Singing Event across the county*



For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9 v 6



Wesley Cafe and Larder

Wesley's continues to grow both in terms of numbers of volunteers and guests using our services. Jayne McLaren our brilliant cook continues generate and motivate a great team of volunteers in the kitchen and front of house

Recently we had an "unannounced" food hygiene inspection from Fylde Borough Council Environmental Health Department and we were subsequently awarded a coveted 5-star rating. That makes us as good as the very best professional catering outlets in the country and all achieved by volunteers with the professional guidance of Paul Caddy, Jayne and myself.

Food purchases for our menus are co-ordinated by two excellent volunteers to supplement the menus created by Jayne using largely surplus food we collect from Tesco and Fareshare, a national charity which co-ordinates wholesale collection of surplus food from supermarkets and food producers.

We are currently feeding between 40 and 50 people on Tuesdays and Thursdays, offering breakfast and a hot 3 course lunch, all at no charge to our guests but donations are welcome and we now have a great team of front of house volunteers to help and support our guests together with the wonderful kitchen team who produce the food.

Wesley's larder is now a serious food bank operation with queues of people each morning waiting to see what we can offer. Clearly there is a need out there and we are helping meet that need. Thanks to the support of the local Soroptimist's who recently donated £3,000 to our cause we have been able to double our collections from Fairshare and offer more help through this service. We've also been helped by Lytham Rotary club and are extremely grateful for all the help and support we receive. The Trussell Trust foodbank has also recognised us and invited us to become an official introducer allowing us to register people to use their main site at the United Reform Church .

So what next.....?

We have been invited by Fylde Borough Council to provide a Christmas party for the local refugee community and we are also planning a Christmas Day Lunch meal, which we will be providing on a collection service from the Hub. Whilst it won't help with isolation, it will provide a hot meal at no cost to those in need. If you know someone who could benefit from this service, please contact Paul Caddy via email paulcaddy52@gmail.com

Why not call in and see what we do? We are open Monday and Wednesday mornings for preparation and Tuesday and Thursday 9.30am to 1.30pm for food service.

Mike Bennett



Wesley's Larder

Church Road Methodist Church
St Albans Road St Annes FY8 3NQ

Open on Tuesdays and Thursdays
11.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.

A food store where the groceries are free!
Open to everyone no appointment or referrals needed.

Bring your own bag.

Come and see what we have collected each day from:

Tesco, Lidl, FareShare ...

Run by volunteers we are here to help you.

All Covid protocols observed



BUMBLEBEES

Our Bumblebees Baby and Toddler group reopened on Tuesday 14th September. We meet in the church on Tuesday mornings from 9.30am. - 11.30am. during term time.

We have welcomed new members and also parents/carers who had attended previously and already 'knew the ropes'. This was very helpful as our group of leaders contains quite a number of us who are new to the job! The volunteers are a mix of Church members, friends and those who used to attend Bumblebees with little ones and have returned as helpers since their children started school.

The children enjoy a wide range of toys, including slides, a house, carpentry set, prams, dolls, garage, cars and a kitchen corner. There is also an activity table with craft or puzzles and much-needed refreshments are served during the morning to adults and children. We conclude with songs and nursery rhymes before home time.

Most of the little ones who attend the group were born shortly before or during the pandemic. We have been surprised at how well they are coping with this new experience and several of the parents and carers have commented on how much they are benefitting from the opportunity to mix with others.

I would like to thank the team of helpers who turn up each week to run the sessions, plus Judith and Dilys for their patience and support in helping to get the group up and running again after the long Covid break. I am personally very grateful to Church members who have shown so much interest and have offered words of encouragement and practical advice. We are also very pleased to see our Minister, Louise, who pops in regularly to see us and to meet the families.

Lesley Turner





BROWNIES ARE BACK!

The 6th St Annes, Church Road Brownies were thrilled to finally return back to face-to-face meetings early in September 2021. We had closed in March 2020 we closed along with everything else due to the global pandemic. At the time, we had a strong pack of 23 girls with others on a waiting list to join.

Fast forward to September 2021 and our group had just 6 girls remaining. As I write this article we've moved up to 11 members now but we'd love to see new girls join us, so please spread the word.

Since returning we've done lots of friendship activities and just getting back to normal meetings and seeing our Brownie friends again each week. We've made flying unicorns, some chalk firework art, bead craft work, played games with toilet rolls, shared two chocolate birthday cakes, held a Brownie Promise party and represented Girlguiding at the Remembrance Sunday parade.....we have been busy!!

It's great to be back!



Photograph with parental permission

Time Out Update 2021



“Time Out is a faith based fellowship group for secondary school aged young people, encouraging them to explore their faith, what it means to them, how it relates to their daily lives and those of the local and worldwide community in which they live”.

It hardly seems possible, that another 12 months has passed since we last wrote our annual update, yet here we are once more!



At the end of 2020, we were so pleased that our Christmas Reflection was successfully shared during Christmas Services at both The Drive and Church Road and was shared / watched virtually by over 300 people. Thanks so much for all the positive feedback you

shared with the young people, your support is really important in validating them and the contribution they make to life here at Church Road.

The Christmas chocolate appeal was also a huge success with over 90 chocolate gifts being distributed across the local community in the two weeks before Christmas- thank you again for your support in making this possible.



We were thrilled that we managed to hold our Christmas meeting face to face, when we shared the reflection as a group and rose to the challenge of socially distanced games! It was a very special evening at the end of a long 9 months!

We then entered lockdown 3 (!), maintaining contact as a group via email, sharing details of services, national 3Generate activities for their age group

and as appropriate, relevant worship songs to support their personal prayer time.

We were delighted to gain a new member, taking our numbers up to 12. After consultation with the young people, we resumed meetings, but this time once a month via Zoom. Meetings took a different format than usual, comprised of a short time of reflection followed by social activities with the hope that this would provide support and ongoing connection as a group, whilst remaining acutely aware of their screen and Zoom overload as a result of home schooling.

Then came Easter-egg door stop deliveries for the second year running!

As restrictions lifted stage by stage and risk assessments were completed, we were finally able to re-group face to face, over a young people and parents game of rounders at Fairhaven Lake – *we will leave you to guess which half of the 22 players were the most competitive!* This time together was so important. Standing together as a group to pray at the lakeside at the end of the evening was another red letter day.

We were so pleased to be able to welcome Rev Stephen and Linda to our last meeting of the summer term. We gathered outside the Hub (as restrictions required) with the young people and their parents to present them both with a gift from Time Out and to share prayers with them both in thanks for their support and encouragement during their time at Church Road.



As of September we resumed meetings every three weeks, based in the Hub initially with the hope of returning to gather at our homes from January '22 (covid permitting).

Our first session back focused largely on planning and engaging the young people in different aspects of life at Church Road. Rev Louise came and met the young people and introduced herself and then left the group to discuss their preferences in relation to worship styles, times and formats of services which was fed back via the worship planning group.

It has subsequently been agreed at church council that a young person from Time Out (who has been confirmed as a member of the Methodist Church) will be elected to represent the young people at church council meetings alongside the Time Out leaders. We are delighted that Sophie Hird has agreed to be our first elected member and we thank her for her commitment to this role.

We recruited volunteers to be added to the Sunday morning reading rota, the coffee rota and discussed topics they wished to address and projects they would like to tackle in relation to social justice over the winter / spring term.

Subsequently, we have already tackled or plan to explore topics ranging from the “advantages and disadvantages of social media in worship and evangelism” (*some of this creativity may be developed and shared in the Spring - watch this space!*), Toilet Twinning, Advent Bible Journaling, Christingle Chocolate Orange Appeal, a ten-pin bowling trip, all rounded off by Christingle building and Christmas social!

Springtime, will also see the launch of Junior Alpha with the newer, younger members of the group, with the potential to explore church membership following on from this. A Time Out weekend away in March is planned in lieu of the national 3Generate weekend which, due to exam preparation and ongoing concerns around covid, the group chose not to attend.

2021 has continued to be another year of unprecedented changes and challenges, not least for our young people who have had further upheaval in their schooling, personal and social development through social isolation, bubbles, more home schooling and for some of them, dealing with personal ill health due to covid.

Yet despite all of this they continue to astound us with their optimism, enthusiasm and resilience. Several members successfully gained their GCSE and A levels in the summer and have moved to sixth form college or commenced gap years before university, others follow in their footsteps this summer with the ongoing uncertainty of how they will be assessed. Others are at the beginning of their secondary school journey, having completed their first year at secondary school they now look forward to embracing the wider extra-curricular life of school in the flesh!

We ask for your continued prayers, support and encouragement for these wonderful young people, the projects they are engaging in and the people these support as well as their own ongoing faith journey as active members of the Church Road family.

Sharon Hird and Caroline Livesey
TIME OUT LEADERS



TIME OUT CHRISTINGLE CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Christingle is a joyful celebration that brings families and communities together to share the light of Jesus and spread a message of hope.

This year Time Out ask for your support in sharing this message through the gift of chocolate oranges!

These gifts will be distributed to all those visiting Wesley's Larder along with a Christingle message from all at Church Road and an invitation to join us at our annual Christingle Service at 4pm on Christmas Eve.

In the hope that we may be blessed with an abundance of chocolate oranges, the remainder will be distributed to our local neighbours from the Christingle service as we pass the light.

The chocolate oranges (currently selling for £1 each!) can be brought to the back of the church on Sunday morning or any day of the week, to 35 Blackpool Road Ansdell and left in the labelled boxes.

Thank you in advance for your support.



OUR NEW CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

Church Fellowship has emerged from Ladies Fellowship, as we would like to open the meetings to anyone who would like to come along and share in our programme of talks, socials and entertainment. We are meeting on the 1st and 3rd

Wednesday of each month at 2-15pm.

On the 3rd of November we enjoyed a very interesting presentation by a member of the Blue Skies Charity, the charity for Blackpool Teaching Hospitals which helps to support the best in patient care and medical research for the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre area. Blue Skies does great work locally, fundraising for Victoria and Clifton Hospitals helping to make a positive difference every single day to patients, their families and friends.

Also in November, we enjoyed a social afternoon and on 1st of December we are being entertained by a pianist, Graham Jackson, with a presentation entitled – “An Evening round the Parlour Piano (subtitled “that brings back some memories”) recalling family musical get-togethers before television took over. On the 15th we shall have a Christmas Service to prepare us for the coming season and all will be made very welcome.

Details of our future events will be in the monthly notices. We look forward to seeing you and helping us to create a meeting with a difference

Blessings, Valerie



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FRIDAY 6 MARCH 2022

This year's service has been prepared by the Christian women of Zimbabwe. It will take place at The Drive Methodist Church on Friday 6 March commencing at 2 pm followed by light refreshments. The theme is “Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk”.

World Day of Prayer is a global, ecumenical movement of informed prayer and prayerful action, organised and led by Christian women who call the faithful together on the first Friday in March each year. A service for everyone.

News from Action for Children



We are only a few weeks away from Christmas! Thank you for your prayers and support throughout 2021. Here are a few updates on our work.



Action for Children at 3Generate

Action for Children collaborated with a Methodist youth worker and youth representatives to provide a Health and Wellbeing Centre at 3Generate. They also ran workshops.

It was an absolute pleasure and staff thoroughly enjoyed the conference. They would like to thank everyone who stopped by to say hello and show their support.



Be a Secret Santa for a vulnerable child

For most of us the festive season is a happy time. But there are children all over the UK who face Christmas without food, warmth or love. Action for Children is doing everything they can to change this – and they need your help right now.

Please be a Secret Santa for a vulnerable child.

Visit iamsanta.org.uk.uk/Methodist to give a virtual gift or dedicate a gift to a loved one. Thank you!



Parenting through the pandemic report

Action for Children has published a report on the experiences of parents during the pandemic. It showed that the pandemic exacerbated the challenges facing parents and that too many struggle to get the support they need.

The charity will use this research to start conversations with government officials and MPs about parenting support. To read the report, visit: <https://bit.ly/Parent-Pandemic>



ACTION FOR CHILDREN BOXES

If you are an AFC box holder, please could you let me have your box to empty and return to you during December, If you aren't back at church I can call and pick it up from you, please give me a ring to arrange collection

Thank you for your continued support.

Shirley Eade. (tel: 01253 789217)

CIRCUIT HOTPOT SOCIAL FOR ACTION FOR CHILDREN

Saturday 29 January 2022 at 4.00 p.m.

Tickets £2

(available nearer the time.)

Look out for more information in the January notices and weekly newsreel.

ANOTHER CHRISTMAS IN ISOLATION!

Chris Jones may have retired as a church steward, but he continues to keep in touch with us and support the church in his prayers. Here, he reflects on the present situation with words of faith and encouragementwith just a few tinges of his trademark humour!

“This prolonged period of living through a deadly pandemic requires the universal virtues of fortitude, equanimity and determination and although most people are managing to persevere as normally as circumstances allow, there are some who are suffering debilitating mental and spiritual difficulties. The Bible talks of God being with us in both the good and difficult times although we may not always be aware of it and I suspect I would have been in such difficulties had I not been strengthened and supported by my faith, described best by Isaiah, who had a word for such a time as this :-

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”
Isaiah 41:10

Coping strategies to get through the days are many and varied and not particularly helpful when some mornings I wake and the only thing I am sure of is my name. But to be thankful that there is another day to meet whatever life presents under the protection of my Creator is a privilege. I am still the right side of the grass and look forward to a brighter future, although to be on the safe side, I have booked a room in the St. Annes Residential Home for the Befuddled & Bewildered.

I am further encouraged by my favourite quotation from the Bible :-

“I know in whom I have put my trust, and I am persuaded that He can keep safe until that Day what He has entrusted to me.” *2 Timothy 1:12*

Unsurprisingly, these most appropriate thoughts come from Paul, who knew a thing or two about trials and tribulations. I make no comparison: whatever difficulties I am experiencing, I have not been starved, shipwrecked, imprisoned, flogged or beaten.

Not yet anyway. Although I know where my wife keeps her cudgel.

Christmas is just a few weeks away and once again may be somewhat different to what we would have hoped for. I do not regard the potential shortage of some foods as of any great importance - I sincerely hope there is a severe shortage of sprouts - but owing to continuing isolation, I will be saddened to be unable to welcome close family members to spend precious time together.

Nevertheless, I feel blessed compared with the many who will not experience anything like peace, goodwill, warmth or company. Life may become extremely difficult as winter progresses and some will experience poverty, the inability to feed families, pay bills and fall onto debt. But there is another poverty just as painful, the poverty of feeling lonely, unconsidered, disregarded, where no-one cares.

To feel unloved must be the most desperate feeling in the world. My thoughts over this Christmas period will be guided less by holly, ivy, baubles, wrapping paper and crackers and more by the wish that commerce and consumption be accompanied by love and kindness.

"It is in consequence of our knowing God loves us," said John Wesley, *"that we love him and love our neighbour as ourselves."*

With every blessing for Christmas and the New Year,
Chris

*Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love divine ;
Love was born at Christmas,
star and angels gave the sign.*

*Worship we the Godhead,
Love incarnate, Love divine ;
worship we our Jesus :
but wherewith for sacred sign ?*

*Love shall be our token,
love be yours and love be mine,
love to God and all the world,
love for plea and gift and sign.*

Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830–1894)

REFUGEE CRISIS

Sadly, as we approach Christmas, our attention has once again been drawn to the plight of refugees making hazardous journeys across the English Channel, seeking asylum in the UK. Although our national press is focussed on the numbers of refugees trying to reach the UK, many more are seeking asylum in other European countries, notably France and Germany. These are people who have been forced from their homes by conflict, persecution, disasters such as floods and drought, and extreme poverty. The impact of climate change risks creating more movements in the future, as many places become less habitable as a result of rising temperatures.



As Christians, we recognise that we all have a common identity in God. We have a key role to play in conversations with our families and friends to encourage a human response to this issue and in praying for co-operation between nations to agree ways of managing this crisis, now and in the future.

- **Let us pray for refugees**
.....remembering those making perilous journeys, fleeing from conflict and persecution. Pray particularly for children travelling in extremely dangerous conditions.
- **Pray for communities and organisations helping refugees**
.....for support for organisations, churches and communities who are working tirelessly to care for refugees. Pray they would be given wisdom and energy as they respond to families and children in great need.
- **Pray for the governments involved**
.....for wisdom for all those in authority who make decisions that impact upon refugees. Pray for leaders to tackle the root causes of the refugee crisis.
- **Pray that countries in crisis would know greater stability and tolerance of minorities**
.....in Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia, Nigeria, Libya and other affected nations from where people are fleeing.

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

Matthew 25:35-36

SCARGILL HOUSE

My week as a 'working friend'



Those of you with good memories may remember a previous article from me in The Record (early 2020) about my weekend retreat at Scargill House – a Christian Community and 'Conference Centre' in the lovely Wharfedale.

After that fulfilling experience I applied to be a 'Working Friend' during the summer hols, when they run events for families (with a view to using my experience of children's work and Holiday Bible Clubs). Then along came Covid.... and all such events were cancelled for many months.

So I was quite surprised when my friend told me a few months ago that my reference had been taken up. Then I was offered some dates to go on a 'taster event' to see how being a Working Friend suited them and me.

So early October saw me packing up for a midweek visit, without any clear idea of what awaited me (exciting!).

It turned out I was to be working 'front of house' in support of the caretaker couple (also Working Friends). This meant serving tea, coffee and biscuits/cakes morning and afternoon, setting tables for the meals and clearing away afterwards. Not difficult tasks, but quite busy, and complicated slightly by some sensible Covid rules still in place.

I was housed in a single bedroom in the 'Working Friends' part of the house, allocated my own bathroom (thanks to Covid!) and able to eat – simple but yummy food - and socialise with all the others – Community Members and 'guests'.



Scargill had not then re-opened fully, and the residential event was a mid-ministry retreat and 'stock-take' for ordained ministers. Honestly, I have never seen so many vicars together in one place before – it made me wonder who was left to run the Church of England that week! It was a very specialist event (led by a retired Bishop and a Baptist Minister), and my duties meant I was not able to attend as many input sessions as I would have liked. I was able to attend talks on Christian Mindfulness and Resilience, both useful, and several

worship events. I also joined in with a film night when we watched 'Marvellous' – which it was!



One evening a Deanery Meeting was hosted for a (female) Bishop from Yorkshire, and a terminally ill lady was brought for a day visit by her family. They enjoyed the peaceful atmosphere and scenery so much they ended up staying 3 nights, using a couple of the en-suite disabled rooms!

I even managed to get out for a few strolls – the fine weather happily coinciding with my free time. Though my trip to some stepping stones on a day when much rain had fallen was not a 100% success as the turbulent water had covered the rocks!

It was a good faith-affirming week, and I will return again – when I can find the time!

Janette Farley



**SHOPPING ON-LINE FOR CHRISTMAS?
PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUPPORT US THROUGH**



Whenever you buy anything online - from your weekly shop to your annual holiday - you could be collecting free donations for Church Road Methodist Church, with over 3,000 shops and sites on board ready to make a donation. It won't cost you a penny extra!

Go to <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/churchrdmethodist/>

Start the New Year with a renewed commitment

Covenant Sunday

10.30 a.m. 9 January 2022

led by Revd Louise Makin

"I am no longer my own but yours"

Lancashire District Interim Chair 2022-2024



As you may be aware, Revd Paul Davis retires from active ministry in summer 2022, and from his role as the Chair of District. As all Districts are currently undergoing regional reviews, a process to appoint an Interim Chair has been underway since May 2021. The following statement will be presented to Conference.

The Lancashire District Synod (under SO 423) brings the name of the Revd Philip J Gough for nomination to the Conference as interim Chair of the Lancashire District for two years from September 2022. Mr Gough is Superintendent of the Chorley and Leyland Circuit and currently serves as Deputy Chair; he brings detailed knowledge of the District, its mission plan and its strengths and weaknesses, along with an understanding of the character, needs and potential of the wider North West region which equips him well to play a leading role in the changes that are envisaged over the period of this interim appointment. He is a team builder and a team player with a passion for the Gospel and an ability to instil enthusiasm and confidence in others. The Synod was unanimous in its recommendation.



CHURCH DIARY

WESLEY'S CAFÉ: Every TUESDAY and THURSDAY 10.00am to 1.30pm. Contact Mike Bennett

BUMBLEBEES: Every TUESDAY in term-time, 9.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. for 0-4's with parents and carers. Contact Lesley Turner

MOVEMENT TO MUSIC: Every WEDNESDAY 9.15am to 10.15am and 10.45am to 11.45am. Contact Monica Bissett

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP: First and third WEDNESDAY at 2.15 p.m. Contact Valerie Ball or Elaine Watts

TIME OUT at 7.00 p.m. every THIRD SUNDAY of each month. An informal faith based group for young people 12+. Contact Caroline Livesey or Sharon Hird

ACTIV8 INFORMAL STYLE WORSHIP on the first SUNDAY of each month. at 9.00a.m. followed by breakfast together

aLIVE at 6.30 p.m. every FOURTH SUNDAY of each month. Explore God's word through discussion amongst friends and discover new Christian music styles.

KEEPING UP TO DATE

For up-to-date information about services and church activities, please follow our monthly news sheet which will be distributed by email. If you do not receive a copy in this way, please let the Church Office know and we will send you one. You can also follow us on our website and Facebook.

www.churchroadmethodist.org

Remember you are never alone. We are never more than a phone call or email away.

