

## The real story of Christmas

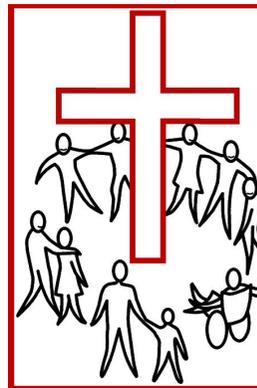
*'All who heard it were amazed.'*

**Luke 2:18 NIV**

To fully appreciate the story of Christmas, you must look at three things:

- 1) Who God called to tell the story. Shepherds! In first-century Palestine they were considered to be the lowest in society. Yet God picked them to tell the greatest story. Perhaps that's because some of us would have debated the story or even denied it. Not them: *'They spread the word'* (v. 17 NIV 2011 Edition). This answers the question, *'Could God use someone like me?'* Yes, you don't need to be a scholar. Just tell people what you've seen and heard, and the change Jesus has made in your life.
- 2) The response of those who heard the story. *'All who heard it were amazed.'* The grace of God is amazing: *'God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation'* (2 Corinthians 5:19 NIV 2011 Edition). The gospel is not good advice, it's good news! Your sin debt is cancelled; your books are reconciled, and now you can have a personal relationship with God by putting your trust in Christ. It doesn't get any better!
- 3) Mary's part in the story. *'Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart'* (Luke 2:19 NIV 2011 Edition). She wanted to understand what God was doing, and how it related to her. And you need to do that too. God doesn't change, but He moves, and you have to stay in step with Him. There were many things Mary didn't understand about God's will, but she accepted and obeyed it. And that's what God is asking of you too.

*A thought for today,  
from the UCB Word for Today, 24 December 2018*



### WELCOME

Please join us for refreshments after our service. Children and young people usually stay in the service for the first 15 minutes after which they go into Young Church. There is no Young Church when there is an All Age service.

### PRAYER

Prayer is available after every Sunday Morning service just behind the pulpit if you would like prayer, or just to talk. If you need a private space just let the prayer team know.

# SUMMERBRIDGE

## METHODIST CHURCH

**'Bringing people and God together through the love of Jesus Christ'**

**Newsletter for  
December 2019 to February 2020**

### Christmas thoughts

As we are poised at the start of the festive season, are you filled with joy and looking forward to a fun-filled celebration of Jesus' birth with friends and family; much needed time away; or even a break from festivities after Christmas and time to read, catch up on TV boxed sets or walk the dog? It is wonderful to have things to look forward to. Those who were awaiting Jesus' birth more than 2000 years ago had been looking for their Messiah and Saviour for many hundreds of years. Fortunately we do not need to wait very long at all! When we have faith in Jesus and have accepted that he died and rose again for us, we know that He lives within us, that he has saved us and will always be with us.

So why do we observe the period of Advent, the four weeks before Christmas? We use this as a period of preparation, when we can do several things -

1. We can reflect on the Christmas story and prepare ourselves to remember and celebrate Jesus' birth, by ensuring that we have been forgiven for all those sins which drag us down and take our focus away from Him.
2. We can spend the Sunday services each week focussing on the central Advent themes of hope, peace, joy and love – acknowledging and thanking God and Jesus for their presence in our lives.
3. We can look forward expectantly to Jesus' return to earth again and make sure we are prepared.

## Christmas thoughts continued

4. We can consider the plight of those who do not look forward expectantly to Christmas because of war, poverty, loneliness, illness or bereavement and consider prayerfully how we can help those people to have a different experience of Christmas this year.

As we spend these last few days preparing for Christmas, may you refrain from rushing toward December 25th. Instead, find the time to prepare and as a result experience the peace that comes with waiting -

*"It will be said on that day, 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.' Isaiah 25:9*

A peaceful Christmas and a joyful New Year to you all.

Rose



**Summerbridge  
Methodist  
Church**

**Every Wednesday  
From 9-11.30am**

**A relaxed place to  
meet over tea, coffee,  
cakes and treats, for everyone from 0-100+.**

Join us for festive goodies every Wednesday in December.  
(Except Christmas Day/New Year's Day).

**Please send items for the next issue to  
Rose Gosling by 15th February.**

**Email them to [rose.gosling@btinternet.com](mailto:rose.gosling@btinternet.com)  
or phone/text 01423 771996 / 07837776506**

## Church Diary of regular activities

### Sunday

9.45 am

**Prayer Meeting in Room 1 at the Church.**

For information phone Roger Gill on 01423 780365.

10.30am

**The Sunday Service**

With creche and young church.

6.30pm

**Into the Bible...**

Talk and discussion on the 1st and 3rd Sunday each month (**From FEBRUARY 2nd**)

6.30pm

**The Night Shift**

Contemplative evening service on the 4th Sunday each month.

### Tuesday

11-3pm

**Monthly Friendship and Fun event (Usually the 2nd Tuesday)**

Coffee, 'thought for the day', lunch and games. In the Annex at the Church. To organise a lift phone Helen Gill on 01423 780365.

### Wednesday

9-11.30am

**The Hub Community Cafe**

7.30pm

**Housegroup at Nidd View in Summerbridge.**

For information phone Roger Gill on 01423 780365.

### Thursday

10.30am

**Bright Sparks Toddler Group in the Church and Annex**

Weekly **term time** group for preschool children and their parents/ carers. For information phone Mabel Ellison on 01765 603523.

7.30pm

**Fortnightly Housegroup** in Pateley Bridge. For dates and venues, call

Julie Hickson on 01423 711319 or Steve Edwards on 01423 712505.

### Friday

6.30-8pm

**WHIZZ KIDS! Primary school club in the Church.**

Weekly **term time** group for primary school children. For information phone Sam O'Brien on 07591387157.

6.30-8pm

**Summerbridge Youth Club in the Church Hall and Room 1.**

Weekly **term time** group for ages 11-18. For information phone Lindy Edwards on 01423 712505.

### Saturday

8-8.30am

**Monthly Listening to God prayer in the Annex**

On the 2nd Saturday of each month.

For information phone Joan Wilkinson on 01423 780377.

9-10am

**Prayer meeting in the Annex**

For information phone Roger Gill on 01423 780365.

10.30-12pm **Monthly Perk U Up Coffee Morning in the Church Hall.**

On the last Saturday of each month. For information or to organise a lift phone Roger or Helen Gill on 780365 or Lindy Edwards on 01423 712505.

**“From our hearts in Nepal to yours in the UK.  
Thank you- your generosity has overwhelmed us”**

In the early part of this year we were able to send a gift to Leprosy Mission as part of their Heal Nepal campaign. This was a result of our Lenten Cross appeal and other donations. Our gift added to those sent from across the UK raised a staggering £4.15 million (including match funding from the UK government).

This means that there is now real hope of seeing an end to leprosy in Nepal. Over the next three years, new outreach workers will seek to reach remote communities, diagnosing and healing thousands of hidden cases of Leprosy. This is in addition to being able to better equip Anandaban Hospital where they provide life changing surgery and care for those disabled and stigmatised by this disease.

Your ongoing care and donations mean so much to so many people. Thank you to all those supporting this charity. Although I can't give exact figures at this moment I know we have spent over £300 through the buying of cards and gifts from the catalogues and raised over £150 through the collecting boxes.

If anyone would like to save their loose change in one of our collecting boxes please have a word with Joan Wilkinson.



**Thank you.  
Joan**

Once again thank you very much to everyone in the Dale and those in Ripon who supported this year's Shoebox Appeal. We are delighted to say that 225 boxes were collected on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November and these will be delivered to around the world, to needy children who otherwise might not receive anything for Christmas. A special thank you again to all our knitters who work faithfully throughout the year to produce such beautiful hats, gloves and scarves, also, to everyone who keeps supplying wool which helps to achieve the amount we do. Grateful thanks to Rachael, who once again wrapped most of the boxes.



Also, special thanks to all who gave financially towards transport costs (which cost around £5.00 per box to deliver). Thanks to everyone who supported our plant and produce stalls at Summerbridge and those who keep bringing 'Cash for Clothes' throughout the year – this all goes towards transport costs. This year we were able to send:-

Donations	£490.00
Cash for Clothes	£140.00
Plant and produce sales	<u>£270.00</u>
Total	<u>£900.00</u>

Grateful thanks to everyone who came along to help on the final packing and checking day. Without your help we could not achieve such a wonderful amount of boxes. Each box that is sent brings so much joy to the children, as seen on some of the videos we have viewed. They are often in dire conditions and have lived through horrors that we cannot begin to imagine. To receive something just for them from another part of the world is very special. For some of the children who receive a cuddly toy in their Shoebox, it might be the first time they can cuddle something of their own, bringing comfort to them.

On behalf of Samaritans Purse and all the children who receive these boxes – THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH.

**Sister Janet, Jenny, Mabel and All the Shoebox Team.**



**Fun and Friendship**  
**Christmas special**  
**Tuesday 10th December**  
**11-3pm**

Join us for coffee,  
‘thought for the day’  
light lunch and games,  
in the Annex at  
**Summerbridge Methodist Church**  
To arrange a lift,  
call Helen or Roger  
on 01423 780365



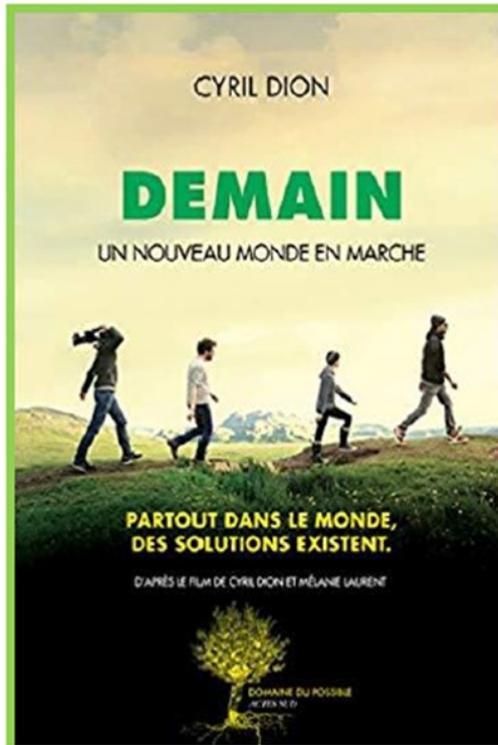
**Open the Book is 20 years old!**

Open the Book was started by a couple of Christians in 1999, after praying about what they perceived as the lack of knowledge about the Bible stories by children in Primary Schools. By 2007 it had been taken under the wing of Scripture Union and had become so large by 2013 that it was taken over by Bible Society.

It now covers thousands of schools and over 250,000 children a week in the UK. The stories, using the ‘Lion’s Storyteller Bible’, have been translated into Welsh and used in many schools in Wales, as well as England. It has also been piloted in Ghana over the past few years .

To celebrate 20 years of Open the book with our local teams, we will be holding a special celebration service on **Sunday 2nd February** at **10.30am**. You are very welcome to join us as we learn more about the work of Open the Book and take the opportunity to pray for those who visit our local schools with the life changing message of the Bible.

If you would like to find out more about Open the Book or want to consider joining a team, please speak to **Jenny Robinson** at church, or email her on [jennyrobinson08@gmail.com](mailto:jennyrobinson08@gmail.com).



Showing solutions and telling a feel-good story... is this way to solve the ecological, economic and social crises the world faces. After the journal Nature announced the possible extinction of a part of mankind before the end of the 21st century, Cyril Dion and Mélanie Laurent, together with a team of four people, carried out investigations in ten different countries to figure out what may lead to this disaster and above all how to avoid it.

During their journey, they met pioneers re-inventing agriculture, energy, economy, democracy and education. Joining those concrete and positive actions which are already working, they began to figure out what could be tomorrow's world

**NIDDERDALE CLIMATE+ ENVIRONMENT GROUP**

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>  
December**  
**Summerbridge  
Methodist  
Church**  
**7.30 to 9.30pm**  
**Tea + Coffee 7.15**  
**Free Entry**  
**Donations  
Towards' Costs  
Welcomed**



**'Perk U Up'**  
**Coffee Morning**  
**10.30-12pm**

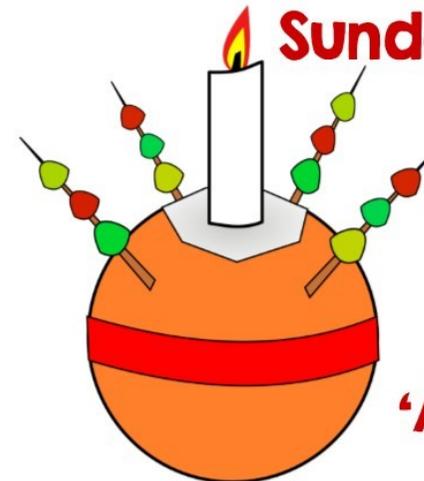
**Saturday 14th Decmber  
(Christmas special)**

**If you need a lift,  
call Helen Gill  
on 780365  
or Lindy Edwards  
on 712505**

**Summerbridge Methodist Church**

**Christingle**

**Sunday 15th December**  
**4.30pm**



**Family friendly fun.**  
**Free refreshments.**  
**Collection for  
'Action for Children'.**

You are invited  
to...

Singalong with  
Rev Mike  
and Julia!



Film show  
for young  
people.

No need to  
RSVP, just  
come along!

Summerbridge Methodist Church

# Carol Service

Sunday 22nd December

10.30am

Free refreshments.  
Collection for the  
charity 'Open Doors'.



## Bright Sparks Christmas Party

Thursday 12th December

10-11.30am

Fun, games, food

All preschool children  
welcome, with parent/carer.

No need to book,  
just come and join us.

### Getting in touch

Minister:	Rev Mike Poole	712332
Treasurer:	Mark Gosling	771996
Senior Steward:	Rose Gosling	771996
Stewards:	Steve Edwards	712505
	Rita Williamson	780577
	Jane Hinchliffe	07740373548
	Julie Hickson	711319

Premises bookings: Freda Ellison 780804

Our website:	summerbridgechurch.org
Twitter:	@SummerbridgeMC
Facebook page:	facebook.com/summerbridgemethodistchurch/
Facebook group:	facebook.com/groups/554348654721087/
Instagram:	instagram.com/summerbridgechurch
Our address:	Main Street Summerbridge North Yorkshire, HG3 4JH



**Summerbridge  
Methodist  
Church**

We are collecting a number of difficult to recycle items and passing them on via local organisations so they can be made into new products. We would love it if you could support us. We need your...

- |                                     |                                     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Plastic Pet food packets            | Chocolate bar and sweet packaging   |
| Toothbrushes and toothpaste tubes   | Pens, markers, highlighters, Tippex |
| Disposable contact lenses and cases | Biscuit, cake and cracker wrappers  |
| Crisp packets                       | Beauty/personal care packaging      |
| Pringle tins                        |                                     |

The Recycling Area is open whenever the Church is open, including Sunday and Wednesday mornings. Pop in and pick up a leaflet from the Church for more information about the items we can collect.



**Ladies Walk  
Friday 17th January**

Meet at Swiss Cottage in Bewerley (Julie's house) at 10am for coffee. We will enjoy a bracing winter walk and lunch.

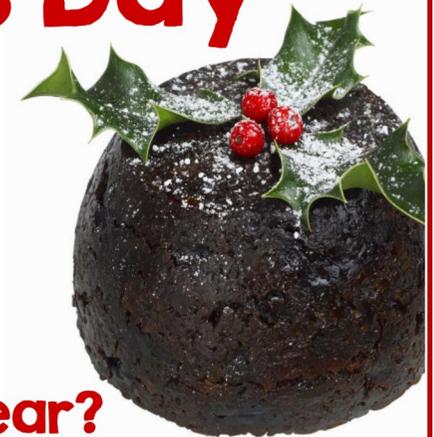
To book, on call Julie on 01423 711319 or email [wjcj.hickson@btinternet.com](mailto:wjcj.hickson@btinternet.com)

**Christmas Day  
Family  
Service  
10am**



**Join us to celebrate Jesus' birth**

**Christmas Day  
Lunch  
1pm**



**On your own this year?  
Why not join us for lunch?  
Book via Lindy Edwards on 712505.**



Just as a reminder we are running two Alpha groups, on a Monday evening and a Thursday morning. The two groups came together for the Away Day at the home of Mark and Rose Gosling (we are so grateful for their hospitality).

We had four leaders, 12 guests and 6 people who were unable to attend for holiday or other commitments. They are looking forward to doing catch up.

The day began at 10.30am and during the morning two DVD's were shown with teaching on the Holy Spirit and a really interesting discussion followed. We then broke for a lunch prepared by our resident chef, Helen, meat and potato pie and pavlova.

After lunch we had free time for an hour to relax and chat or have a walk in the garden.

We then resumed with the third DVD and at the end of this we invited the Holy Spirit to come upon us. The group leaders then prayed with each individual guest. It was a memorable day for all.

Then in the groups this week following the Away Day we had a wonderful discussion and openness, how people have been helped by Alpha from day one until now with the teaching, opportunity to ask questions and to experience close friendship. We also had a very positive feedback on the Away Day.

The course will finish in three weeks time but prayerful consideration is being given to the possibility of a nurture group for those who would like this.

Finally thank you to those of you who have been praying for us over these last few weeks and to know that you will continue to the end of the course. It has been a great encouragement to us.

**Roger, Freda, Sandra and Stephen.**

our involvement. We hope to return to Greece in February and spend the month there, possibly split between Moria and a centre near Athens called Malakassa.

Closer to home, Reach Beyond runs a centre for refugees in Bradford, providing them with support in what can sometimes be a hostile environment. We hope to start making contacts there as well.

Even closer to home, the Catholic Church in Settle has taken up the challenge to provide targeted support for a specific refugee family in its own community. A group is considering whether the churches could do something similar here in Nidderdale. This is a big commitment, demanding of time and resources, and there are many hurdles that need to be overcome to get it off the ground.

This brings us back to our own Circuit. What can we do? There are many demands on our money, time and prayers. We don't want to diminish our commitment to the work we already support, but this need is growing and is fast becoming one of the defining features of our age. The mass movement of peoples is not going to stop anytime soon. Governments are struggling to catch up. There is no plan.

It is a time for the Church to shine, providing both compassion and practical support to our neighbours in need. Please pray and consider how you could respond.

**Tim O'Brien**



**Who is my neighbour?**

In September of this year, my wife Sam and I spent a short time working as volunteers in the Moria Immigrant Detention Centre on Lesbos. This place is often in the news; for all the wrong reasons. The EU, UN and various charities have condemned conditions there, and the Greek authorities have struggled to provide for the unprecedented number of refugees arriving on this beautiful island; almost 20,000 so far this year alone.

But the refugees don't actually want to go to Lesbos, or at least remain there, it just happens to be at the mouth of a very long funnel that stretches back thousands of miles across the Middle East and even down into Africa. People make arduous journeys from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Syria across Turkey to the shores of the Aegean. They then embark on perilous boat crossings to reach the island. Sadly, not all make it.

When refugees arrive, they are usually helped ashore by local volunteers who deal with any immediate needs they may have. They are tired, seasick, wet and uncertain of their reception. Sooner or later, the authorities turn up, and they are then taken on to Moria. This centre was originally built as a military camp. It was designed to hold a maximum of 3,000 people. The current population has now risen to 16,000.

We were there as part of a team sent by a Christian charity call Reach Beyond. This charity tries to bring the Gospel to communities that are traditionally difficult to reach. The team was involved in food distribution, improving facilities, children's work and supporting the women's centre opposite the camp itself. The work was challenging, sometimes overwhelming, but always rewarding.

As is often the case with such experiences, our time in Moria gave us a new perspective on life; though it is a pity this fades so quickly. Whilst there, we had a clarity of purpose that is often lacking in our day-to-day lives. The immensity of need resolved the uncertainties of existence into a simple choice; to help or not. The possibilities to demonstrate God's love were endless and immediate. Every act could be a prayer.

We have returned from this brief trip, but we don't want this to be the end of



**Harrogate Male Voice Choir**



**Concert**

**Saturday 7th December**

**7.30pm**

**Summerbridge Methodist Church**

**A broad repertoire of music, including a selection of Christmas favourites.**

**Tickets £8 (including buffet supper) from**

**Roger Gill on 01423 780365.**

**All profits will be donated to the charity 'Open Doors'.**

The Choir are sponsored during their 50th anniversary year, by:



## The Reverse Advent Calendar



This advent, instead of the usual giant Christmas card for the congregation to sign, we will be launching our Giant Reverse Advent Calendar. Each day the calendar will include a picture or name of an item of food, and the member of the congregation who opens the door for that day will be invited to bring in that item of food to add to a hamper which will be donated to the Harrogate and District Foodbank after Christmas.

The young people from Young Church will be creating the Calendar, which will be launched during the service on Sunday 1st December. It would be wonderful if you are able to support this cause, to benefit those in our midst who will be struggling to eat this Christmas. Because our hamper will be delivered after Christmas, we will not be including the Christmas treats which appear in the image above.

### Listening prayer - 8am in the Annex

Join us for contemplative music and silent listening prayer, followed by a cuppa!

**Saturday's - 14th December, 11th January, 8th February.**

## Marriage and relationships report continued....

presented to the Synods as provisional resolutions are different from those described in section 5 of the report. However, resolution 10/1 directed that the report be commended for study and prayerful discussion.

Mike Poole will be presenting each church in the Circuit with copies of the report and accompanying study guide, as well as showing a short DVD which looks at the work of the Task Group and illustrates how those who disagree (and who have been asked to be in the same room precisely because they disagree) can listen to each other and to the Holy Spirit with friendship, care and grace.

As we discuss these issues within each of our churches, in order to feedback our views to the Synod representatives, let us bear in mind the words of the Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler, Secretary of the Conference, 'I hope and pray that throughout the Connexion those who study and discuss the report and those who debate and vote on the resolutions will read, listen and respond knowing that it is in love that we are united in God...'



The current position of the Methodist Church around same sex relationships, is as stated on the Methodist Church website...

*'Within our Church there is a spectrum of views on human sexuality. The current Methodist Standing Orders state our belief, "that marriage is a gift of God and that it is God's intention that a marriage should be a life-long union in body, mind and spirit of one man and one woman." At the same time we have since 1993 explicitly recognised, affirmed and celebrated the participation and ministry of lesbians and gay men, and been committed to a pilgrimage of faith to combat discrimination and give dignity and worth to people whatever their sexuality. The Conference in 2014 confirmed that there was no reason why Methodists may not enter legally formed same sex marriage (e.g. civil marriage or marriage in another denomination) or form a civil partnership.'* These marriages cannot at present take place in a Methodist Church.

The Methodist Church has not fully reflected on the theology of marriage and relationships since 1992 although work has been carried out by several Task Groups since then. The Marriage and Relationships Task Group set up in 2014 identified the need for an update and to revisit the 'definition' of marriage and the current Task Group (set up in 2016) have been looking at this. The 2018 Conference directed that, instead of a statement, the Task Group should bring a report on these matters which could include any proposed changes to Standing Orders, were the definition of marriage to change.

The Marriage and Relationships Task Group presented a report to the 2019 Conference with recommendations about various issues to do with relationships in general and marriage in particular. Those recommendations will be submitted to the wider Church for consultation during 2019-2020, with a final decision being made at the July 2020 Conference.

The report was discussed extensively at Conference and amendments were made to some of the resolutions which were presented by the Task Group, and therefore some of the resolutions which are now

# Fun and Friendship

**Tuesday 10th December**  
**Tuesday 14th January**  
**Tuesday 11th February**  
**11am-3pm**

Join us for coffee,  
'thought for the day', light lunch  
and games, in the annex at  
**Summerbridge Church**

For more information, or to organise a  
lift, phone Helen on 01423 780365



# 'Perk U Up' Coffee Morning

**Saturday 14th December**  
**Saturday 25th January**  
**Saturday 29th February**  
**10.30-12pm**

Join us for coffee, tea,  
cakes and sausage rolls.

If you need a lift,  
call Helen Gill on 780365  
or Lindy Edwards on 712505.





I can hardly believe that after all the planning Flourish has been and gone! I thought it would be good to have a *final flourish*, as it were, and give you all a taste of what it was like to meet together with over a thousand fellow Methodists from across the district!

Twelve of us from the Pateley Bridge circuit were at Flourish for the weekend and we were joined by three others for the Saturday. I invited people to share their thoughts.

**Chris and Dawn Thompson** are not huge event goers, but being quite new to the Methodist church, they wanted to go to Flourish. They were not disappointed. They found the atmosphere to be amazing. Despite some of it seeming a bit loud to their ageing ears (1), much of the worship was awesome and profoundly moving, as were the talks they attended. They thought that the teaching they heard was biblically sound, but also practical as we seek to work it out in our lives with love and compassion. On the Friday evening, the way the gospel was so poignantly put across through stand-up comedy of all things, was amazing and deeply moving(2). All in all they felt that Leslie and his team did a brilliant job organising Flourish, and they do hope similar events are planned for the following years.

1. Their words, not mine!

2. Check out Paul Kerensa online for yourself. He had us in stitches. Ask one of us if you want to know how the shark got its name!

## YOUR HELP IS STILL VITAL

Thank you everyone who has given clothes to the Church in the Dale Refugee Support scheme over the past year. 9 car loads of clothes have gone to the Wakefield Initial Accommodation Centre since September 2018, but large numbers of desperately poor asylum seekers still arrive each week. They come from many countries, including Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Eritrea, and more recently Rohingya from Bangladesh. They all have one thing in common – they are victims of some form of persecution – war, ethnicity or religion. None are coming because they want to, but they are desperate for sanctuary and in need of our love and help.



Often arriving with just the clothes they are wearing, and after long arduous journeys from their home countries. Many have left families and friends behind, hoping they will be re-united at some point in the future. Some are family groups, many youngsters on their own.



Although all clothing is welcome, as a priority we need men's clothes and with the arrival of colder weather this is becoming ever more urgent. **Can you help** with good quality jogging trousers, shirts, fleeces and jerseys, jackets and especially shoes. New under-wear and socks are also welcomed.

Boxes for donations are in the main churches in Pateley Bridge -St Cuthbert's and Methodist, Glasshouses Methodist, Summerbridge Methodist, Holy Trinity Dacre, Christ Church Darley and Darley Methodist.

Thank you for your love for our neighbours, God Bless. Peter Wright.

# Men's Breakfast

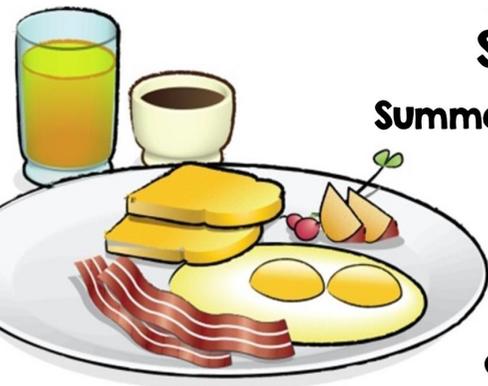
**Saturday 7th December**

**Saturday 11th January**

**Saturday 1st February**

**Summerbridge Methodist Church**

**8.30am**



**Hot or cold breakfast (£4)  
including vegetarian  
options, talk and discussion**

# the night shift

**6.30pm**

**worship  
talk  
prayer  
cake!**

**Sunday 28th January  
Steve Edwards**

**Sunday 23rd February  
Stephen Hesselden**

**Robert and Jane Hinchliffe** also loved the sense of Christian community. They found Leslie Newton to be inspiring, encouraging and warm-hearted and what he shared, to be relevant - all in all, a great host for the Flourish event. It was wonderful for them to be able to put faces to some of those who run the Methodist church both locally and nationally. The speakers were exceptional and they learnt and were encouraged, so much. Jane had cause to encourage someone else who was struggling whilst they were attending the event (out of the country), and some of the teachings shared, were what this other person needed to hear too. It felt amazing to be part of such a large congregation and to worship Jesus with beautiful music, fellowship, singing and like-minded Christians.

**Jane** also led one of the workshops on the Saturday afternoon. She was helped by **Barbara Macnish**, who came along for Saturday afternoon and evening. She felt humbled by the comments of the participants and how the Holy Spirit had spoken to them through the writing and painting process that she led them through. Some seemed astonished as to what 'came out' into their artwork and said that the practice was something they definitely wanted to explore more. It was a beautiful experience and the atmosphere was calm, loving and brimming with Jesus! A truly remarkable afternoon.

**Robert** joined the workshop led by **Mike Poole**. The Lectio Musica session was well received by participants. They reflected on the John 15 text (the true Vine) which Revd Leslie Newton chose for the Sunday morning address. Lyrical and musical contributions helped craft a strong chorus, which was later recorded for the District website (3). **Robert** has since developed the song further.

**Mike and Julia** both felt truly encouraged and uplifted to see the Spa Hall filled with enthusiastic, spirit filled Methodists from around the District.

**Derek and Denise Barnes** also thought the District did a good job to plan and deliver such a good event bringing churches of the District together. They thought all the main speakers were excellent with clarity and good Bible teaching. They enjoyed hearing Lou Fellingham during the evening celebration but especially the mix of styles during the late night session.

3. Check out the video <https://www.yorkshiremethodist.org/flourish/#recordings> and on the Church Facebook page.

**Janet Dinsdale** loved this too. She writes that if she had shut her eyes she could have thought that she was at any loud rock concert venue except that all of Lou's songs have a Christian message. Lou Fellingham was also one of the highlights of Flourish for **Barbara**. Another highlight for her was praying with a woman in the women's toilets for healing for her leg (she felt it go warm and tingly and it felt different). Ministry knows no bounds!

**Peter Hayward** also found it uplifting to worship in a large gathering. He enjoyed the music group from Burniston Methodist Church and the Celtic worship (Roy Searle and the Northumbria Community) on Sunday morning was very different - in a good way! He thought there were elements we could sometimes use ourselves that would enrich our worship. **Janet** also found the worship led by the Northumbria Community to be very thought-provoking. She thought that from the first gathering for worship on the Friday evening to the closing celebration on the Sunday morning there was a great time of worship, fellowship and excellent preaching.

**Lindy and Steve Edwards** came for the Saturday and really enjoyed Flourish. They felt that there were some excellent sessions in both the morning and the afternoon and it was well worth the effort. **Lindy** really enjoyed Elaine Lindridge's sessions on mission particularly with regard to a growth plan or end of life plan for each church and also the JPIT session on poverty. She would recommend going for just the one day for a future event if people struggle to fit in a whole weekend.

**Peter** also 'enjoyed' Elaine's seminar, somewhat uncomfortably titled: "Why your church needs a growth or end-of-life plan". Apart for the fact that Conference 2017 encouraged every Church Council to address this annually, she gave lots of good reasons why we need to plan our future, and questions to ponder when thinking about it, such as: "Are we spending our resources - not just money - in ways that are consistent with our beliefs and values?" "What is our future here - short and long-term?" Elaine commented: 'We underestimate what we can do in three years, but overestimate what we can do in a week!'

Thy word is  
a **lamp** unto my feet



and a **light** Psalms 119:105  
unto my path

Starting  
2nd Feb.

*Summerbridge Church*  
*6:30 p.m.*  
*every 1st and 3rd Sunday*

"Exploring God's Word together"

# Lamp:light

Whether you have been a Christian for years, or whether you're just dipping your toe in for the first time, we'd probably all agree that

the Bible should in some way be relevant to our faith. But are there bits of the Bible that you find really difficult – maybe just a single phrase, maybe even a whole book or letter?

Are there bits that seem too controversial, too out-of-date, too complicated, too unbelievable, or – frankly – just too boring or pointless? Are there bits that you always steer clear of and bits that you've noticed preachers on a Sunday never seem to go near?

If you find yourself saying 'yes' to any of that (and I suspect that's most of us, if we're honest) then how about we do something about it?

I'm passionate about finding out what God is really like and what his will is for my life. And I know that the Bible is key to finding out. After all, Psalm 119 reminds us: "Thy Word is lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

So I'd love to find a space where we can spend a bit more time getting to the bottom of some of these 'difficult bits' – a space where we can let the Word shine a light on our path.

I'd love us to be explorers together, to be able to safely ask those awkward questions, and to go wherever God, through his Word, wants to take us.

So we're introducing something that we've called "Lamp:light" (from the psalmist's words) to give us time and space to do just that.

If you're up for an adventure, why not grab your Bible (there are Bibles in church if you're without) and join us at Summerbridge Church at 6:30 on alternate Sunday evenings. We'll be starting Lamp:light on the 2nd of February 2020 (a date for your new diary!) and then on the first and third Sunday each month.

Let's explore God's Word together – I'm looking forward to it!

Peter Hayward

The choice of seminars on offer on Saturday afternoon was truly impressive. **Janet** chose **Julia's** scavenger hunt and soon found herself in parts of Scarborough she had never been to previously! She joined forces with a group of young people and their leader and another lady and they all had a great time looking for clues. Then Janet tried litter picking. Scarborough sea front and beach were actually quite clean but there were small pieces of plastic and broken down bits of polystyrene which were difficult to pick up. The gulls were trying to eat them, thinking they were food. A reminder of the need to be mindful of how we treat our planet, which God has given to us.

**Peter** also went along to **Stephen Hesselden's** seminar which introduced the ministry of "Christian Vision for Men", whose aim is to encourage men into the Christian faith and to become an active part of their local church. The seminar was well attended (by men!) so the message will be spreading around the district.

I spent Saturday afternoon doing something I love – singing! I attended the choir workshop led by Matt Beckingham and his band. It was great fun as well as being encouraging and uplifting. I too very much enjoyed the whole event. It's good to see that there still is life in Methodism!

I love listening to good Bible exposition. Leslie Newton reminded us from Colossians that Jesus is in control, even when it looks as if everything is falling apart. Ashley Cooper from Cliff College spoke about about Paul and Silas in prison - they saw prayer and worship as a first resort and as a result "got more of God" and "flourished as missional disciples!" Ashley reminded us not to conform but to be transformed (4) and exhorted us "For God's sake stand out!" "If the church doesn't speak about Jesus, who will!" Elaine Lindridge challenged us all to see every encounter as an opportunity to join in with the mission of God. We are all carriers of the Good News.

David Wilkinson from St John's College, Durham spoke about Paul in Athens from Acts 17. He reminded us that we are not called to be successful but faithful. Mission starts with the heart. "A passion for the truth becomes compassion for people." We need to present the message in a relevant and

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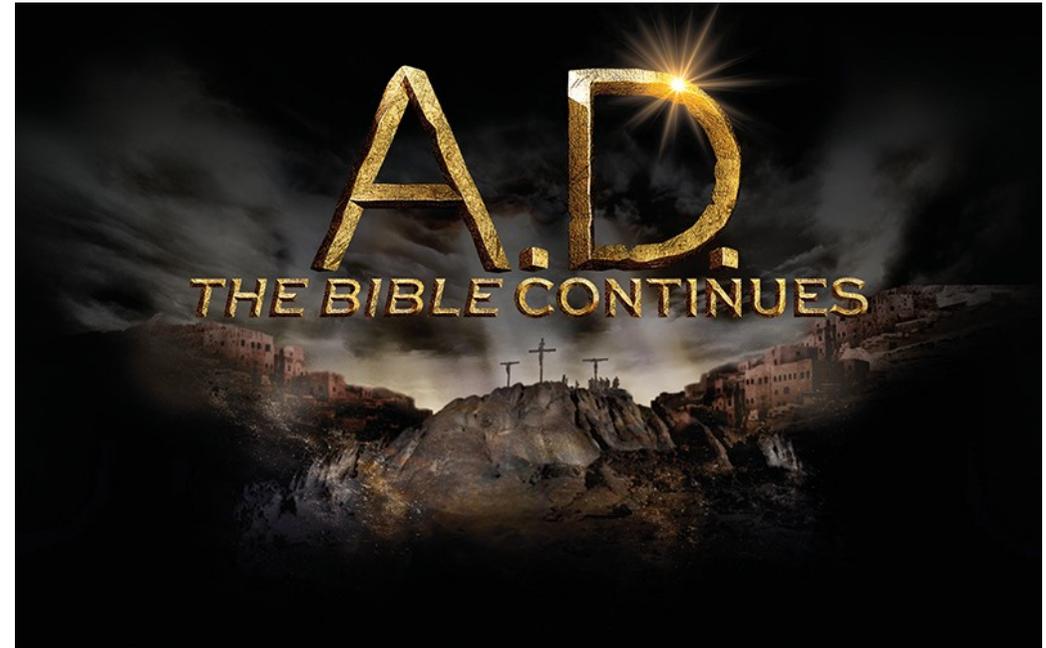
4. See Romans 12 v 1-2

respectful manner convinced that no person is beyond the love of God. I was very challenged by his statement: "God gives us opportunities to speak about our faith as much as we want them." (5)

I'm going to let **Janet** have the last word. "Flourish had been billed as a weekend of inspiration, celebration, worship and fellowship: for me, that was just what it was!" **Sandra**



5. Check out the district website for more information on the event and to listen to some of the talks: <https://www.yorkshiremethodist.org/flourish/>



The 12 part 2015 TV miniseries 'AD' tells the story of the events following Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, events described in the first ten chapters of Acts.

There will be an opportunity to watch the series on four evenings over four weeks, during January, on Tuesday nights at Knowle House in Birstwith, as part of a weekly men's film and pizza night. The evenings will be held on the 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th January, from 6.45pm. To book, call Mark Gosling on **01423 771996** or email **gosling1@btinternet.com**

Episodes to be shown each evening include:

- 7th January 'The tomb is open', 'The body is gone', 'The Spirit arrives'.
- 14th January 'The wrath', 'The first martyr', 'The Persecution'.
- 21st January 'The visit', 'The Road to Damascus', 'Saul's return'.
- 28th January 'Brother's in arms', 'Rise up', 'The Abomination'.

There will be an opportunity for a short discussion at the end of each evening.

**Saturday  
7th December**  
**Mowbray Community  
Church,  
Westmoreland Street  
Harrogate HG1 5AT**



**10.00 am-12.00 noon**  
**Continental breakfast from 9.30 am**

**Dr Elaine Storkey**

*Former Director of  
London Institute for Contemporary Christianity*

**'Gender and Justice'**

*Dr Elaine Storkey is a philosopher, sociologist, and theologian, broadcaster and writer. Her presidency of Tearfund spanned 17 years and influenced her book, 'Scars Across Humanity: Understanding and Overcoming Violence Against Women'.*

£8 includes breakfast (Students £5, Under 18 free)  
Season Ticket £25 (all 4 lectures and seminars)  
No advance booking required

**ALL WELCOME**  
[www.hstm.org.uk](http://www.hstm.org.uk)

This lecture is at Mowbray Community Church. There is ample free disc parking in the streets near the Church

**Men's film and pizza nights**  
**Knowle House, Birstwith**

To book, call **Mark Gosling** on **01423 771996**  
or email [gosling1@btinternet.com](mailto:gosling1@btinternet.com)

Limited seating at each event—so please book early.

**Thursday 16th January 6.45pm**

**The Keeper (15)**

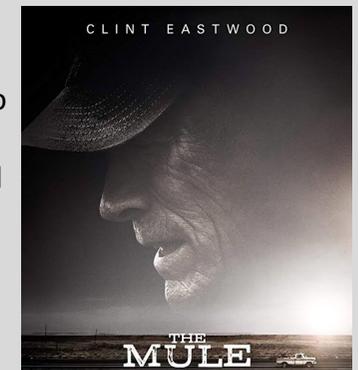
Biographical sporting drama set in post-war Britain and based on the life of German goalkeeper Bert Trautmann, starring David Kross and Freya Mavor.



**Thursday 20th February 6.45pm**

**The Mule (15)**

Clint Eastwood stars as Earl Stone, a man who is ninety-years-old, broke, alone, and facing foreclosure of his business when he is offered a job that simply requires him to drive. Easy enough, but, unbeknownst to Earl, he's just signed on as a drug courier for a Mexican cartel.



**We are now collecting...**  
**your unwanted black plastic for recycling**  
**via Hotel Chocolat.**

**Please leave items in the labelled box at Church.**  
**Thank you for diverting something else from landfill!**

## Zambia Christian Aid trip by Peter Wright

11 days in a hot climate – seems like bliss in the depth of an English winter, and in so many ways my too short time in Zambia was bliss. However I was there to see the work of Christian Aid and their partners in the country and much of what we saw was a moving experience, showing how hardships affect the poorest around the world.

We visited 5 different projects, focusing on Gender Based Violence (GBV), Small Scale Silica Mining, Making Agriculture Business, Displaced Communities, and Industry / Communities relationships.

The GBV project is part of a larger operation run by the Catholic Church, who operate 5 (currently) One Stop Centres to support women and girls who are being abused in one way or another. The workload faced at the Centre is enormous, with the whole range of human relationships being encountered by the staff. We met with several women who had volunteered to come in to the centre to tell us their stories, which were both moving and worrying in equal degrees, how can we move so far apart in our relations with a spouse?

At the Silica Mining project, we saw how a caring, Christian organisation can bring justice to a conflict between poorer women who are doing the mining, and middlemen out to maximise their profits. By introducing fairness in the dealings, the prospects for the women, who have no other means of supporting their families, have dramatically improved. This is not the end of the story though as better H&S equipment, a sanitation block and better equipment will enhance the strenuous working lives of the women.

The Making Agriculture Business project is showing small scale farmers how they can improve yields and profits by changing the ways and the timings of their operations. Currently they plant when the rainy season starts, and harvest once crops ripen. However this means that the seasonal nature of the system results in oversupply and rock bottom prices. By improving irrigation and soil quality, and by storing surplus crops, coupled with more diversity of planting, farmers can take produce to market over a longer period, so keeping prices higher, thus being able to maximise profits.

The most troubling of the projects we visited was the Displaced Community project, where a foreign owned coal mining operation was displacing a community from their traditional lands. The mining methods employed were

## Zambian trip continued

damaging housing and polluting water supplies, and compensation paid either failed to materialise, or was pitifully low, and inadequate to allow the community to re-locate to a better area. Jobs were more often taken by foreign workers, so employment opportunities were by-passing the locals. Violence had been inflicted by both sides, and the government was not giving any support to its citizens. It was hoped a visit by a UK based charity would raise the profile of the problem and could be used to encourage international lawyers to take up the case. We left feeling fired up and determined to see if we could bring some justice for the community in their fight.

Finally we went to an opencast coal mine where it appeared the company (again foreign owned) was doing the right thing by the locals. Good quality housing was being provided where displacement was unavoidable, infrastructure improvements were being made, schools and health centres were supported, and locals were given management and engineering jobs along with good quality training to allow them to move up the organisation.

At the end of our visit we went to Victoria Falls, which was rather a let down as the falls were at a very low ebb, following the failure of the rains last year, and this being the end of the dry season. What we saw emphasised just how climate change is having an impact on the poorest areas of our world. A recent Christian Aid report puts Zambia at 9<sup>th</sup> position for food insecurity due to climate change, and what we saw certainly did nothing to question this. During our time there we saw many wildfires, burning freely in the remote countryside. The land was extremely dry and vegetation lacked green in many areas (except where wealthy residents or hotel chains could afford the luxury of watering).

But overall the whole experience was a wonderful and illuminating insight into how your support of Christian Aid is giving hope and a brighter future for so many of our neighbours, who without this would be unable to lift themselves out of the dire circumstances which they find themselves in. Circumstances which increasingly are being created by the excesses of the lifestyles we in the developed world are enjoying.

**Peter Wright**