



The Methodist Church Stamford Circuit

Registered Charity :1160930



May



"But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in Him. He is like a tree planted by the waters..."

(Jeremiah 17:7-8a)

2021

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The Circuit Newsletter exists to build up fellowship across the Stamford Methodist Circuit. Items for inclusion in the Circuit Newsletter should be: *Inspiring, encouraging of faith and discipleship to promote the growth of church relationships within the Circuit.*

Could you please send any articles for the June Circuit Newsletter to the below address/email address at this time:

Email: *admin2322@gmail.com*

Address: *Rowan Scholtz*

9 Highfield Close, Empingham, Rutland, LE15 8QB

Articles should be sent no later than Tuesday 11th May 2021.

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Stamford Methodist Circuit

THY KINGDOM COME 2021

**We are pleased to offer you resources and opportunities
for prayer and 'Words in time' videos during Thy Kingdom Come 2021**

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. Christians from more than 170 countries and 65 denominations have taken part. Thy Kingdom Come runs between Ascension and Pentecost, and in 2021 will take place from 13-23 May.

Prayer

Each day at 12 noon our prayers will focus on praying for others to come to faith in Jesus. A dedicated and private email account has been set up for you to request prayers. Any prayers will be offered anonymously so please do use this facility to request prayers for those on your heart and mind.

Only the Circuit Ministry Team is able to access the email account:

smctkcprayerrequests@gmail.com

'Words in time' videos

The Online Ministry Team has prepared a series of jargon free, 5 minute videos on the themes for each day of Thy Kingdom Come. They are intended as a focus for us but also to be shared with our non-Christian friends who may find them helpful and inspiring. The themes are:

Thurs 13th May (Ascension Day)	Jesus
Friday 14th	Praise
Saturday 15th	Thanks
Sunday 16th	Sorry
Monday 17th	Offer
Tuesday 18th	Pray (for)
Wednesday 19th	Help
Thursday 20th	Adore
Friday 21st	Celebrate
Saturday 22nd	Silence
Sunday 23rd (Pentecost)	Receive

The videos will be made available on Facebook (please share the videos widely), Online Church and by email as YouTube links (again, please forward them to friends as appropriate.)

Let's pray that the Holy Spirit will bless this period of prayer and sharing as we act to share the faith which inspires and guides us that others may come to believe.

Worship

Our services on 16th and 23rd May will include something of Thy Kingdom Come.

Dear Friends

"Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink..." They may be familiar words, or perhaps with a modern change - not a drop to drink -but they have been in mind strangely over the past couple of weeks as water has been a topic of conversation. They come from the rather lengthy poem, the Rime of the Ancient Mariner by Samuel Taylor Coleridge as he tells the story of an old sailor coming ashore and telling his story to a stranger. The conversations on water have been many and varied, from the very practical need to fill vessels with water because the supply is going to be cut off for a few hours, to there being a flood because the bath taps were left on and forgotten about until the water began to drip through the ceiling downstairs! They have been about the hardness of the ground because we have not had a decent rainfall contrasting with the plentiful but contaminated water filling a cellar.

In Scripture we have some very vivid pictures of water with Noah and the flood, Moses striking the rock to bring water and the parting of the sea, the vision of Ezekiel from streams to pools of water in abundance, a request to a woman for water and the offer of the water of life, healing taking place by a pool, the vision of the river of life, and so it goes on. Many of us could sit together and pull out a favourite passage about water and come up with a different one but at the centre of them all we find that water is life giving, refreshing and renewing.

I wonder where you like to be around water? There is a picture in the Methodist Art Collection which shows a boat on the sea, you see the waves and people in the boat, hanging on to the sides, and in the sea, some looking happy and some less so - where would we put ourselves? For me it would be in the sea, not in a fearful sense but enjoying being surrounded and held by the water - even enjoying the swell of the waves.

There's something in that being surrounded by water that brings a focus on the God who has created all that we see and experience around us, who loves us entirely and surrounds us with love and grace each moment of each day. That might lead us to thinking about Jesus in the boat with the disciples when the storm came and the peace that came as Jesus stilled the winds and the waves confident in the knowledge that we are secure in His care.

Much later on in the poem Coleridge goes on to say, "He prayeth best, who loveth best. All things both great and small; For the dear God who loveth us, He made and loveth all." This was the lesson learnt by the mariner as he told his story, and perhaps the lesson we learn as we consider some of those pictures and stories and think about what they mean to us - may we be soaked inside and out by the water of life...

Every blessing
Ruth

Pray without Ceasing May 2021



Suggestions for each day of the month. A few spaces have been left for your own concerns.

1. For people with Birthdays or Anniversaries this month
2. Andy & Helen, Hannah & Matthew
3. Ketton Chapel
4. Oakham Church
5. Rev Ruth Charlesworth
6. Ryhall Chapel
7. Thurlby Chapel
8. For poorer countries to receive vaccinations
9. Rev William Booker
10. Those who would usually use our premises on Mondays
11. Those who would usually use our premises on Tuesdays
12. Those who would usually use our premises on Wednesdays
13. Uppingham Church
14. Barn Hill Church
15. Rev Bekkie Wright Probationer Minister
16. Bourne Chapel
17. For the further lifting of Covid restrictions
18. Phil Jones Circuit Mission Enabler
19. **
20. Those who would usually use our premises on Thursdays
21. Those who would usually use our premises on Fridays
22. Those who would usually use our premises on Saturday
23. For those of our chapels returning to worship
24. Deepings Church
25. Empingham Chapel
26. Sarah Lamb - Children and Families Worker
27. Our Supernumerary Ministers & Local Preachers
28. Luke Denley - Youth Outreach Worker
29. **
30. Circuit Administrator Rowan
31. Circuit Officers

Any suggestions or requests please let Nina Rawlins know on 01780 753649 or email ninarawlins@yahoo.co.uk

Future Ministry

Following a positive vote at the Nottingham & Derby District Synod, I have been appointed to a new role in senior leadership of the Nottingham & Derby District.

Beginning in September 2022, I will be the Deputy Chair of the District for 80% of my time and will serve as the senior leader in the District under the oversight and in partnership with a Senior Chair in the region. The remaining 20% of my appointment will be in a circuit in the Nottingham & Derby District.

I feel humbled and thrilled to have been invited to take up this role of senior leadership.

Thank you so much for your wonderful support, love and care over these past 12 years. It has been, and continues to be, a privilege to minister among you. You can be assured of my full commitment to ministry here as I continue to serve as your Superintendent Minister.

Please remember the Circuit Invitations Committee in your prayers as they begin the process of discerning new leadership for the Stamford Circuit from September 2022.

Helen, Hannah, Matthew and I would be grateful for your prayers too as we prepare for a new phase of life and ministry in the years ahead.

Andy Fyall



UK charity fighting global poverty - Christian Aid

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 10th TO 16th MAY 2021

WWW.Christianaid.org.uk



Pause for thought: Without prejudice

Rising behind a fog of cloud and mist,
The sun made its regular daily journey,
Commuting from the lands beyond the Eastern sky
To bless us with daily energy and warmth.

Clearing the gloom, dispersing the fog,
To reveal the azure beauty of God's canopy,
Its heat kissing all below;

bringing an assurance that, today,
Once again, as every day,
Life goes on.

No matter what comes,
Joy or sorrow,
Pleasure or pain,
The warmth of the sun
Will touch us all
Without prejudice –

Just as God's Spirit and God's love
Meets all God's people,
Of all creeds and races,
Without prejudice.

Give us grace, dear Lord,
To help others to recognise
your ever-present gentle touch
and life changing presence.

Andy Fyall, April 2021

Vaccine Petition

A handful of countries have pre-ordered enough COVID-19 vaccine doses to vaccinate their entire populations - **almost three times over** - leaving little or none for low-income countries.

Right now, over 60% of the world's population live in countries that won't see widespread vaccine coverage **until 2022 or even later**, allowing the virus to continue to mutate and thrive. We all desperately want to get back to some kind of normal life, but ultimately vaccine nationalism will prolong the pandemic and drag down the global economy for everyone. It is a self-defeating strategy.

Sign our petition telling governments to urgently share their surplus doses as soon as possible with the countries being left behind. If the vaccine isn't everywhere, this pandemic isn't going anywhere.

[Share COVID-19 Vaccines to End the Pandemic Everywhere | ONE](#)

MWiB 'Together With Hope On The Way'

What does freedom mean to you? It might be as simple as being able to choose for yourself what time go get up in a morning or not being held behind bars! The experiences of this past year and lockdown might have changed something of our thinking, but even in these times many of us have still been able to go out for a walk or on essential errands. This year's MWiB conference explored the issues of modern slavery under the theme of 'Together with hope on the way' and Sister Imelda Poole as keynote speaker gave everyone much to reflect upon as she shared some of her work in educating young people in Albania about people trafficking and modern slavery, and challenged us to reflect on ways in which we can respond.

Perhaps when we think of slavery our minds are taken back to thinking about the abolition of slavery and find it hard to imagine in rural Lincolnshire and Rutland that these are issues that affect us. How wrong we would be! Many of us will be aware of the many campaigns in recent years of campaigns around modern slavery - the sex trade, car washes, land workers... They have been highlighted on TV soaps, and in the last couple of years some high profile court cases as those who have held people in slavery have been convicted of their crimes.

I found myself reflecting on a story shared with me a little while ago of a man who for 25 years waved from the fields in which he worked to those who passed by along the road. Those who passed by thought of him as a very friendly man, who always acknowledged them as they took their exercise or drove into the towns nearby, and would often look out for him in order to wave and smile back. The day came when the man wasn't there in the field to wave and some began to wonder why. Eventually the harsh reality of what had happened became known. This man had waved to them every day for 25 years in a bid to get someone to stop and talk to him so that he could share his story and get some help. He was a victim of slavery, held against his will and used day after day to work the land, with little in return, not even what we might term as 'decent' accommodation. In Micah we find the words - 'what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?' (6:8) There are so many more stories similar to that of the man in the field, and if we are serious about living out the words of Micah, then we need to be alert to see and hear the stories in order to help.



**Methodist Women
in Britain**

For women, for justice, for Christ

MWiB 'Together With Hope On The Way'

We might also imagine that people trafficking happens when people are brought here in lorries or on boats and intercepted by criminal gangs along the way, holding on to passports and demanding money to cover the costs of the journey. That is certainly some of the story, but only a part. It became clear in a much more local case recently that people had been 'rescued' from living on the streets only to find that their 'rescuers' were now their 'masters', where promises of a job and a roof over their head had turned out to be a barn and long hours working at the demand of others. How often do we think about children who run away from home? One shocking fact shared was that in the UK over 100,000 children (average age 12-14) run away from home each year and 70% are not reported missing. They are often found around railway stations and within about 20 minutes approached by those who will take them and use them.....

Worship and Bible study further encouraged us to reflect on what it means to be together, to have hope and the way that we follow. In thinking about what we might hope for my mind goes to thinking about all human life being created by God in God's image, and the hope that as disciples of Jesus we may have His compassion for others in such a way that the value and worth of each and every one can be valued and celebrated. This comes about with faith and trust, and in relationship with God and with others as we follow the example of Jesus who tells us He is the way the truth and the life.

These are just a few simple reflections on the weekend, much of which will be available on the MWiB Youtube channel soon and the links will go on our Circuit website. In the meantime perhaps you'd like to look at www.trafficanalysis.org, www.hopeforjustice.org, www.railwaychildren.org and www.theclewerinitiative to discover more of the work that is being done in the UK and worldwide in these areas to inform prayer and perhaps challenge some action!

Contributed by Ruth Charlesworth

**Together,
with Hope
on the Way**



FREEDOM

‘... the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.’

Romans 8: 21

Lord,
As I listen to the sounds of birdsong,
Feel the breeze on my face,
And see the awesome majesty of your creation all around,
It is as if times stands still
And yesterday and today converge
In the here and now.

That sweet sound
Borne on the air
Is as timeless as eternity,
As fresh now as on the day
Of its creation.

And then she flies,
Ascending the heights above,
Moving on,
Free from the ties of earth.

What ties hold me, Lord?
What past injuries and failures
Chain me down?
What is there within
Which begs to be unlocked?

O Lord,
What weary praise
Can I offer to you today?

I praise you for time to think,
A brief pause to recall Your love for me.

I praise you for time to wait
And receive a fresh inspiration
Of Your Spirit.
I praise you for a moment to unload
Past problems, present pain
And future fears.

Free me, Lord,
To sing Your praise,
To lift Your load
Instead of mine.

Free me, Lord,
To be, to just **be** –
And in simply being
Let me sense Your enfolding
That I may be bound again
To **Your** freedom.

Andy Fyall, On Froggatt Edge, 13.2.06

**Marriage and Relationships Report to Conference
June 2021**

Areas for Concern?

Saturday 5th June 10:00 till 11:30

Venue or zoom – to be confirmed shortly

Are you concerned about the Conference vote in June?
Do you foresee possible outcomes or “fallout” as a result?
How should the church – and you as an individual – respond?
Perhaps you have unanswered questions.
This meeting aims to be a focus for these concerns, feelings and questions,
shared in a spirit of openness.



**GOD IN LOVE
UNITES US**

For more details, contact Ron Curtis (curtisrs145@btinternet.com) or Phil Jones (pdvjones@hotmail.com)

What this meeting is:

- A chance to share openly thoughts and concerns about the Conference vote and its results “on the ground” within church life and Christian experience.

What this meeting is not:

- Further debate on the report itself or seeking to influence Conference outcomes.

Please come and share if this area matters to you.

Sensing God Through The Poets: John Clare

John Clare was born in Helpston in 1793 and except for four visits to London, never travelled more than a few miles from this village. He died in Northampton in 1864 and was known as “The Northamptonshire Peasant Poet, ”being one of the leading Romantic poets through his lyrical, pastoral poems. He suffered severe mental health problems in later life but continued to write. John Clare claimed he was “much wanting” on religious matters, his mind full of doubts at times, but was brought back to the knowledge of God’s presence as he worked on the land and wandered in the countryside.

Stray Walks

*How pleasant are the fields to roam and think
Whole Sabbaths through unnoticed and alone
Beside the little mole hill skirted brink
Of the small brook that skips oer many a stone
Or green woodside where many a squatting oak
Far oer grass screeds their white stained branches hang
Forming in pleasant close happy sea
To nestle in while small birds chirp and sing
And the loud blackbird will its mate provoke
More louder yet its chorus to repeat
How pleasant is it thus to think and roam
The many paths scarce knowing which to choose
All full of pleasant scenes – then wander home
And oer the beautys we have met to muse.*

Clare writes of his experience of God as a mother, giving him solace and caring for him in his times of need:-

“ I feel a beautiful providence ever about me as my attendant deity.. she casts her mantle about me when I am in trouble to shield me from it...she attends me like a nurse when I am in sickness puts her gentle hand under my head to lift it out of pains way and lays it easy by laying hope for my pillow...she attends to my every weakness when I am doubting like a friend and keeps me then offering them up to my service...she places herself in the shadow that I may enjoy the sunshine and when my faith is sinking into despondency she opens her mind as a teacher to show me truth and give me wisdom...”

Beryl Teasdale

Living The Questions

It is a while since Living the Questions was last reported so this is a brief update on what has been going on.

The main news is that we have been able to continue through lockdown by zoom, with participation of about twenty people. We started in the Autumn with a series of new videos about the practical effect of Christian faith on the every day lives of ordinary people- a farmer, two Belfast ice hockey supporters from different sectors in the City, and a gay man, were featured amongst the others.

These have been followed by a series of talks by Canon Mark Oakley- "Faith- the Art of Unease" videoed at a public conference in Birmingham 2019. The first of these included thoughts on the hiddenness of God, the second considered the influence of poetry on Christian thinking, and the most recent asked if, in a world of fake news and under-privilege, we champion what is right.

A new feature is that we now have intermediate zoom meetings led by members on the subject of their own choosing. So far these have been about the generation of Active Hope in some overseas communities, and encouragement of civic pride in the small Lancashire town of Todmorden.

For those unfamiliar with its history, Living the Questions was set up 13 years ago, following a Circuit study day, to give forum for those who query traditional expressions in the understanding of their journeys of Faith. The pandemic has thrown up even more questions of faith and practice, not least the role of the Church in national life, and your contributions would be welcome.

Harry Baker

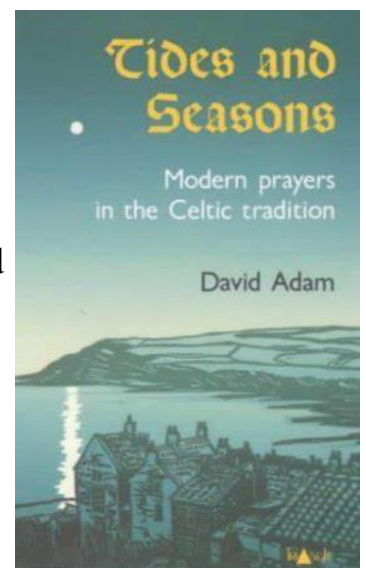
Book Suggestion

'Tides and Seasons' by David Adam

I love Celtic Christian Spirituality and the prayers and liturgies which come from that background.

I have had this little book for many years and the prayers by David Adam are rich and have a real sense of the everyday about them. Sometimes quoted in Online Evening Prayers, you may find this collection helpful in your daily prayer life.

Rev'd Andy Fyall, April 2021



Please PRAY for:

Bourne

We pray for the Queen and the Royal Family grieving the loss of the Duke of Edinburgh. We pray for all others throughout the world who grieve for lost loved ones.

As the number of deaths from the Covid pandemic continues to decrease we look forward with great anticipation to the re-opening of our churches, fellowship and the beginnings of a return to normality.

Deepings

Father God, as we ask for your inspiration to guide us as we can now look forward to opening our church. The future is foretold only by statistics and official reports so we are inclined to respond as individuals to the influences that are presented to us, many in number, some are vague and some difficult to trust. As Christians we depend on the one unchanging source of wisdom and ask to be equipped with knowledge and whatever else we need to approach the weeks and months ahead. and how we reach for the "new normal". Above all, may we discern your guidance and follow the path you have determined for us, long before "lockdown" become common currency.

Empingham

We pray for our members as we prepare to re-open for services on 23rd May, Pentecost Sunday. We pray for guidance, courage and strength as we move forward together. Help us Lord to share our faith and bring others to you.

Ketton

We give thanks for the fellowship at Ketton and all the support we give one another.

We have opened for private prayers on Friday afternoons, please pray for this outreach. And are looking forward to reopening for services at the end of June when everyone feels comfortable to attend once again.

We pray for all those suffering any health problems at this most difficult time for the health services

We thank God for the life of Alison Crosby, which whilst beset with ill health, her faith didn't waver. Her funeral took place on April 27th.

Oakham

Lord we are so thankful to be worshipping together again in our lovely church and for the prayers from around the Circuit wishing us well. We are grateful for all the safety measures that have been put into place, for the advice and support from Bekkie and the encouragement from willing volunteers as we move forward. We ask your blessing on the times ahead as we seek to welcome old and new friends into our church family. Amen.



Please PRAY for:

Stamford

Give thanks:

For the opportunity for fellowship in our church once more.

For the life of Alison Crosby whose service of thanksgiving was held at Barn Hill on 27th April. Alison was a member at Ketton Methodist Church but also attended Stamford regularly.

For the scientists who have developed the vaccines that many have received recently and the medics and numerous volunteers who have made their delivery such a success.

Please pray:

For friends and relatives in and around Stamford and in Northern Ireland who are undergoing treatment for serious illnesses.

For people of all ages who have lost friends and family members through the pandemic and those suffering with their mental health.

Uppingham

We are pleased to report that Uppingham Methodist Church has re-opened with all the social distancing requirements in place and we have enjoyed several wonderful times of worship - as well as those on our own on-line services.

Thank you Lord for standing with us and encouraging us throughout the pandemic and now for renewed fellowship.

We praise You in this new journey.

Circuit

Give thanks for smiles and signs of friendship

Pray for the needy, the vulnerable and those struggling with mental health at this time and all who are supporting them

Pray for churches beginning to offer face to face worship again as the restrictions continue.

General

Give thanks for vaccinators and their teams

Pray for justice and hope in a world of tension

Submitting articles for the newsletter

We are delighted that some of our readers are inspired to submit book reviews, poems and articles to be included in the newsletter. When doing so, please make sure that you add your name to any item so that folk can follow up if they want to know more.

For published items, please ensure you have the permission of the author and add their name as author of any work.

**Please send all entries for the June newsletter no later than
Tuesday 11th May 2021, including Prayers for the Prayer page from
Church Stewards (anything sent after this date will not be included)**

Thank you

STAMFORD METHODIST CHURCH

Mission Projects Group

invites you to a

Virtual Auction of Promises



We aim to raise money to provide wells for clean water for some of the villages close to the Nixon Memorial Hospital in Sierra Leone. This will improve their health and reduce the frequency of water-related illnesses at the hospital. The initial cost will be around £4,000



This can be your way of supporting the hospital and nearby communities.

HOW CAN YOU HELP ?

Can you bake a cake ? Drive someone to the airport ? Mow somebody's lawn ?
Provide train tickets for a special journey ? Do someone's shopping ?
Knit someone a jumper ? Do some gardening ? Something else ???

We would like to receive your promises by **May 20th**. These will be put in the June newsletter when we hope people will bid generously for each item.

Winning bids will be published in the July newsletter

Send your offers to : auctionofpromises.stamford@gmail.com

All our friends in Sierra Leone say a big 'Thank You'

James 2:17 "faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action is dead"