

# TORRIDGE METHODIST CIRCUIT

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

### July/August 2023 - Issue 138

Welcome to Edition Number 138

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Any comments or items you wish to share, please contact the editor, Dave Watson by e-mail; phone 01237 451437 or to 6 Greenings Road, Buckland Brewer, Bideford, EX39 5LU.

The next edition will be in September 2023

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As well as the Circuit Facebook page – **Torrige Methodist Circuit**, we have a private Facebook Group where we care share thoughts, prayers & other material on **Torrige Methodist Circuit Group**. If you wish to join please push the Join button & I can add you.

Please pray for our Ministers, Rob Blackhall & Andrew Vidamour, for Frank Watson & Sarah Richards and all involved in the varied life of the Circuit; for those connected to the various Chapels & the communities in which they live & work.

#### **CIRCUIT ZOOM SERVICES**

The Circuit Services continue to take place ON VARIOUS Sunday's on Zoom using the Services that are printed in the Circuit Newsletter. The Services are on Sunday Evenings starting at 6.30pm – but the 'doors will be open' at about 6.15pm. The contact/entry details will be send out during the preceding week & the Service can be accessed via a computer/laptop with camera/microphone, I Pad/Phone or using a 'normal' phone. Even if you have a device with camera/microphone & do not wish to be seen – you can join in without the camera on.

If you do not receive an email or want further information – please contact Sarah Richards, Circuit Administrator on 01237 472649 or [sarahrichards185@gmail.com](mailto:sarahrichards185@gmail.com)

#### **FROM REV ROB BLACKHALL – SUPERINTENDENT MINISTER**

**BLACK TORRINGTON** - Sunday 30th JULY 2023 at 3pm

On 10th August Maureen and Peter Ellis celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary. We offer them our congratulations.

They would like to have short service at Hope Chapel, Black Torrington on Sunday 30th July at 3pm; and invite you to join them.

As you know, Peter's mobility has been challenging recently. So, plan B, is that the service could take place at Maureen and Peter's house, Wisteria, Black Torrington. A note and directions will be put up at the Chapel.

However, it is very much Peter and Maureen's wish that the service takes place in the Chapel. You are all very welcome.

## DATES 2023/24

### CIRCUIT MEETING

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September 7.30pm  
 Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2pm  
 Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2pm  
 Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 7.30pm

**PASTORAL MEETINGS**

Sept 25-Oct 6

April 8-19

### CHURCH COUNCILS

Oct 9-20  
 Mar 5-16  
 May 20-25, June 3-7

### LOCAL PREACHERS 7pm

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September  
 Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November  
 Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March  
 Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June

### CIRCUIT SAFEGUARDING 7pm

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September  
 Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March

### WAYS OF WORSHIP (TBC)

### CIRCUIT CONVERSATIONS (Sunday 3-5)

Once a Quarter  
 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct at 3pm at Torrington

### ZOOM SERVICES

2 a month (TBC)

### THY KINGDOM COME

May 9 Ascension Day to  
 May 19 Pentecost, 2024

### BIBLE MONTH

June 2024

### SYNODS

Sat 9<sup>th</sup> Sept Shebbear  
 Sat 27<sup>th</sup> April TBC

### ENCIRCLED IN CARE

#### NORTHAM

Tuesdays 2pm

#### TORRINGTON

Wednesdays 7pm

12th September <i>Connecting Care and Discipleship</i>	13th September
10th October <i>Children, Young People and Pastoral Care</i>	11th October
14th November <i>Across The Generations</i>	15th November
12th December <i>Health, Healing &amp; Well-being</i>	13th December
9th January <i>Mental Health Issues</i>	10th January
6th February <i>Loss and Bereavement</i>	7th February
12th March <i>Domestic Abuse</i>	13th March

### LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

2pm Kendor

Sept 5

April 23

Oct 31

June 4

Jan 23

(July 9)

March 5

### ADVENT STUDY

Wednesday 2pm

Nov 29<sup>th</sup>

Dec 6<sup>th</sup>

Dec 13<sup>th</sup>

Dec 20<sup>th</sup>

### LENT STUDY

Thursdays 2pm

Feb

15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>

March

7<sup>th</sup>, Wed 13<sup>th</sup>, Tues

19<sup>th</sup>

### QUIET MORNING / TIME FOR GOD

Time for Quiet and for  
reading 10-12.30

11-12 Guided Meditation

Wed 6<sup>th</sup> Sept Parkham

Wed 4<sup>th</sup> Oct Bideford

Wed 1<sup>st</sup> Nov Alverdiscott

Wed 6<sup>th</sup> Dec Torrington

Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> Jan Buckland

Thurs 8<sup>th</sup> Feb Langtree

Wed 6<sup>th</sup> March Lake

Thurs 11<sup>th</sup> April Northam

Wed 1<sup>st</sup> May Black Torr

Wed 5<sup>th</sup> June Milton D

HOLY WEEK

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March Palm Sunday

Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March EASTER DAY

### **FROM REVD ANDREW VIDAMOUR**

Dear Friends,

Recently, I went on a few days' retreat in South Devon, and as part of this I took part in a workshop on the Christian use of the Labyrinth. This is an ancient symbol with its roots in classical mythology, and it has been used in the Church over many centuries: one notable Labyrinth is the medieval one in Chartres Cathedral, though this has a different pattern to the classical one. Labyrinths were made partly to cater for people who could not make the long and expensive pilgrimage to (for example) Jerusalem: local venues for this spiritual exercise were much more convenient.

Significantly, a Labyrinth is different to a maze, which is a sort of puzzle in which you can get lost, with some dead ends. By contrast, a Labyrinth has one route to the centre, with the same way in reverse to get out of it. We can see the Biblical echoes of the Labyrinth in, for example, the wanderings of the people of Israel in the wilderness on their way from Egypt to the Promised Land; and also in the journeys of individuals such as Abraham, Jacob, Jesus and Paul.

There is no single way to approach or benefit from a Labyrinth, but one example is to carry a stone to the centre while making confession or offering concerns to God, then putting the stone down in the centre and (hopefully) being more aware of God's mercy in Christ and a greater sense of peace. The journey back to the outer world may then be undertaken with a lighter heart and greater strength and hope to face one's circumstances and responsibilities.

If you cannot access a permanent, full-size Labyrinth, you can obtain a finger labyrinth (in fabric or wood, for instance), in which you can prayerfully and contemplatively trace the path with your hand. Or labyrinths can be created in sand or soil, or out of small objects (e.g. shells). It is also possible to travel a Labyrinth as a group, which I did on retreat, finding a new dimension to it in this way.

However you use a Labyrinth, it can be seen as a multi-faceted image of our life, experience and faith: you cannot get lost in Christ, for example, and you sometimes nearly reach the centre but have to travel further and by a different way to get there – the path of Christian faith is not always straightforward.

There are a number of books on Labyrinths and Christian practice, and you might also consider the Veriditas website.

I commend to you this spiritual vehicle and gift.

Andrew Vidamour

### **ITEM ON EDI TRAINING**

Around sixty people from several Circuits gathered at Torrington on 27th June for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Training, led by Bridget Down of the South West Methodist Regional Learning Network.

A keynote Biblical text of Galatians 3: 28-29 was offered as a focus for this theme, making clear the spiritual, pastoral and theological aspects of the topic.

As a public organisation, the Methodist Church must conform to equality legislation, and the following nine legal Protected Characteristics were noted: Age, Sex/Gender, Race, Religion or Belief, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Maternity and Pregnancy, Gender Reassignment, and Marriage and Civil Partnership. There are also other groups of people who may face injustice while not being protected by legislation (e.g. carers, left-handed people), and we need to be aware of these.

In order to be as fair and inclusive as possible, some changes will be needed, in our ways of Church organisation and culture, and in our personal attitudes, with a vigilance which may make us open to seeing necessary changes we had not noticed before (for example, in our use of language in worship).

To this end, the Methodist Church has produced a Personal Responsibility Commitment, a statement which may help us to identify and work towards goals in learning and action on EDI issues.

While recognising all this, I think it is also important to note that EDI is not only a legal and constitutional requirement for the Methodist Church, but it also has pastoral and prophetic elements to it.

How else can we describe the life and ministry of Jesus except as being inclusive and welcoming, full of generous hospitality and care? Women, Samaritans and lepers are but three examples of 'outsider' groups to whom Jesus offered God's mercy and kindness freely and equally.

And, to offer another example, one of John Wesley's key beliefs was that in Arminianism, that God's grace in Christ is for all people, and indeed that 'all can be saved to the uttermost'. So I would commend this EDI training to you, whether or not you strictly have to do it because of an office you hold, as I see it as a means of grace and a hope of glory, rooted in Gospel realities.

Andrew Vidamour

- If you wish to do the EDI course online, can you let Sarah Richards know.

To do the training online please take the following steps:-

1. Go to <https://mcb.theologyx.com/> If you have already used Theology X (probably for the Advanced safeguarding module) use the same username and password to sign into MCBX (the new Methodist online training platform).
2. If you do not have a Theology X account, just go straight to the MCBX and register there to create an account.
3. There you will find the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Module
4. You do not need to do it all at once, but can do as little or as much as your time allows.
5. At the end you will be given a certificate (via email). Please could you let Sarah Richards have a copy of that so we can keep a record.

## **FRANK WATSON – LAY PASTORAL WORKER**

### **Encircled in Care Course**

This Course continues on a regular basis. We will be using the Encircled in Care Course. This course has been around for a number of years, produced by the Methodist Church. Like the

Romans Bible Study we will be offering both an afternoon and evening session once a month covering the same topic, so that as many people can join in as possible. The afternoon session will take place at Northam Methodist Church, starting at 2.00pm and the evening session will take place at Torrington Methodist Church, starting at 7.00pm. The dates of each session are listed below and will be in the Circuit Dates List throughout the year.

The course is 10 sessions long, however it is designed as standalone sessions and therefore gives you the option of attending some or all of the topic sessions. Below is a short description of what is contained within each session.

Session 1: Why We Care			
Session 2: Developing Skills			
Session 3: Prayer in Pastoral Visiting			
Session 4: Connecting Care and Discipleship			
In this session we <b>explore</b> the idea that our Christian caring is part of our discipleship and can be an opportunity to nurture the discipleship of those we care for, and <b>increase</b> confidence in all to talk about issues of faith with those they meet.	Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> September	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> September	Torrington	19:00
Session 5: Children, Young People and Pastoral Care			
In this session we... <b>explore</b> how we offer pastoral care to children and young people, and <b>consider</b> how best to listen to children and young people.	Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> October	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> October	Torrington	19:00
Session 6: Across The Generations			
In this session we... <b>explore</b> the idea that the Christian community is multi-generational, and caring takes place both from younger to older and from older to younger, <b>increase</b> our understanding of issues of spirituality and ageing, and <b>provide</b> information about the challenges of dementia.	Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> November	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> November	Torrington	19:00
Session 7: Health, Healing and Well-being			
In this session we... <b>explore</b> how issues of health and wholeness are part of pastoral ministry, and <b>offer</b> guidelines for the ministry of healing and reconciliation.	Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> December	Torrington	19:00
Session 8: Mental Health Issues			

In this session we... <b>increase</b> our awareness of mental health issues, and <b>consider</b> how churches might support people affected by mental health problems, and their families and friends.	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> January	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> January	Torrington	19:00
<b>Session 9: Loss and Bereavement</b>			
In this session we... <b>increase</b> the confidence of all in working through issues of loss with people, <b>consider</b> how churches might help people 'return' following the loss of a loved one, and <b>explore</b> the stages of grief.	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> February	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> February	Torrington	19:00
<b>Session 10: Domestic Abuse</b>			
In this session we.. <b>recognise</b> that Domestic abuse affects people within the life of the Church as well as in the wider community, <b>reflect</b> on the issues of domestic abuse, and <b>consider</b> what appropriate responses we might make.	Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Northam	14:00
	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	Torrington	19:00

## **TALKING ABOUT CHRISTIAN FAITH**

Just want to give the Circuit heads up about a new series of conversations Frank and I will be leading this September. The discussions are aimed at people on the fringe of our chapels. Maybe people who support our coffee mornings or fundraisers, people we meet through Toddler groups, Sunday Breakfast, Youth groups or Messy Church. Anyone really who is faith aware but maybe not regular church attenders. Personal invitation always works best but towards September we will be issuing posters and advertising on social media. If you know of anyone who might want to come please give Frank or I a ring and we can explain more. The groups will be informal and limited to about 6-8 people.

Here's a flavour of the subjects for discussion....

Week 1 - What does Christian Faith mean today?

Week 2 - Does climate change impact our faith?

Week 3 - Does knowing Jesus really change peoples lives?

Week 4 - What does the word 'Church' signify today?

Week 5 - What does our Christian faith offer to those suffering in our world?

Week 6 - Has this series of conversations impacted you in any way?

More details to follow in the September Newsletter...Rev. Lynne Burgon

## **SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION**

### **Online Training Programme 2023**

Jacqui would like to know if anyone books onto the Foundation Courses & when you have completed it – please let her have sight of your certificate for her records.

Please book via Eventbrite – Follow the online instructions

### **ONLINE: Foundation Module – Creating Safer Space**

This will be run at regular intervals.

To book:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/south-west-region-foundation-module-creating-safer-space-online-registration-367520251967>

**CIRCUIT IN-PERSON FOUNDATION TRAINING**  
**CIRCUIT SAFEGUARDING FOUNDATION TRAINING SESSION** – Dates for this will be announced later so people who need to do the training again as a 'Refresher'

**Advanced Module**

The Advanced course is being delivered Online and Onsite across the region. So if you are just waiting to do the Gathering Signing Off Session please contact Jacqui for details. If you think that you do need to do the Online Advanced Course, please speak to Jacqui, who will confirm whether you need to do this Course.

**Online Advanced is to be booked through your Circuit Safeguarding Officer**, the course is an e:learning exercise through an online platform which delegates progress through at their own speed. On registration, delegates will be given the booking link to sign off your learning journey at the relevant gathered session.

After registering, the Gathered Session date will be given - **note you cannot attend a gathered session until you have completed all of the online modules;**

**NORTHAM METHODIST CHURCH**

## NORTHAM METHODIST CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

Northam Methodist Church, our Anniversary Day,  
How many people have come and gone here...who could say?  
Over the years, much worship and praise has been in this place,  
Where folk have come and met their Lord, face to face.

Our Church has seen much joy, laughter, sorrow, and tears,  
People coming together to share their in-a-most fears.  
Such friendships have been formed within this Holy place,  
And God has showered upon us, all His Love and Grace.

We thank God for our Church of many a long year,  
And for all who have passed through, that YOU hold so dear.  
We pray that future generations, to this Church they find their way,  
And they TOO will feel the LOVE and PEACE that WE feel today.

Maggie Smale



## BUCKLAND BREWER

We continue to Live Stream Services on the Buckland Brewer Methodist Church You-Tube Channel on the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in the Month & the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday if there is one.

The Weekly '**Time Together**' **Toddler Group** continues on Mondays during Term Time at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church** with both Methodist & Anglican volunteers being present. We meet on Monday's from 9.30am to about 12noon, The cost is £1.50 per family & the numbers have been steadily increasing – families do not just come from Buckland but from neighbouring communities – they often come as friendship groups – so if anyone is aware of any Babies & Toddlers, who with their parents, grandparents or carers are looking for a 'chilled out' session of play & chat with tea/coffee/biscuits – just point them in the direction of Buckland Chapel – Dave Watson 07484 223515 or [bucklanddave1953@btinternet.com](mailto:bucklanddave1953@btinternet.com)

This resumes on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September

The **Wednesday Weekly Coffee Morning** also continues at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church** from 10am-12noon – this is for **ALL** but especially for those who have moved into the parish/village since lockdown or anyone who would like to meet others in the community over a mug of tea/coffee with Biscuits & possibly Cake!!



The **Monthly 'Mini Market'**, raising funds for Community Groups in Buckland continues at **Buckland Brewer Methodist Church**. The next one will be on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> August from 10am to 1pm with many items on sale – Tea/Coffee/Biscuits will be available for Chapel Funds.

The **Community Choir**, based in the Chapel is having a couple of months off & return to practice in September.

### EVENTS AT ALVERDISCOTT METHODIST CHAPEL

#### Coffee Morning

On Thursday 1 June we raised £150 for Alverdiscott Chapel funds. On Thursday 6 July all money raised will go to the **After Care Unit at NDDH "Over and Above"**. On 3 August the charity will be the MWiB Buranpur Hospital Appeal. Please do come along between 10am and noon - to support our worthwhile causes.

#### Garden Club

Garden Club meetings are on the last Monday of each month (except Bank Holidays when it will normally be the Monday before) at 2.30pm in the chapel schoolroom. Our next meetings will be on 24 July and 21 August. Everyone is welcome and the cost is just £1.00.

#### Arts and Craft Group

The Arts and Craft Group meets on the second Tuesday of the month. Our next meeting will be on 8 August, in the chapel schoolroom, from 10.00 till 12.00. All are welcome.

**Alverdiscott Methodist Chapel 'Cream Tea and Cake'** on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> August from 2.30pm. until 5.00pm. £5.00 - All proceeds for Chapel Funds. Everyone is Welcome



### TORRINGTON METHODIST CHAPEL

Torrington Methodist Church welcome all to their Coffee Mornings where delicious Bacon Butties are served and where cakes and bric-a-brac are sold. The next Coffee Morning is on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> August from 10am till 12noon.

### NORTHAM AND BIDEFORD BIBLE STUDIES UPDATE

**We will be starting again on Tuesday Afternoons at 2pm  
from September 19<sup>th</sup> 2023**

At the home of Diana Yendall.  
Led by Julia Spencer.

01237 477836 or 01237 425361  
01237 425361

This group is open to all: If YOU would like to join us you would be VERY WELCOME, even if you can only come now and then.

We are very much a discussion group where we all learn from each other.

We will be Studying: The Book of Revelation

Andrew says: *One important distinction: I suggested that Revelation was written for a pre-Christendom Church (i.e. before the Constantinian Settlement around 320 CE), under persecution, and we may consider the Church in Western Europe now to be in a post-Christendom situation, which may be relevant.*

- Dates:
- |           |                  |                          |
|-----------|------------------|--------------------------|
| September | 19 <sup>th</sup> | Bible Study Introduction |
|           | 26 <sup>th</sup> | Bible Study              |
1. The Church in the World Rev 1:9-3:22  
October 3<sup>rd</sup> Bible Study
  2. Suffering for the Church Rev 4: 1- 8:1  
10<sup>th</sup> Frank's Encircled in Care Course  
17<sup>th</sup> Bible Study
  3. Warning for the World Rev 8:2 -11: 18  
24<sup>th</sup> Bible Study
  4. The Drama of History Rev 11:19-15:4  
31<sup>st</sup> Bible Study
  5. Punishment for the World Rev 15:5-16:21  
November 7<sup>th</sup> Bible Study
  6. Babylon the whore Rev 17:1- 19:10  
14<sup>th</sup> Frank's Encircled in Care Course  
21<sup>st</sup> Bible Study
  7. The Drama behind the History Rev 19:11-21:8  
28<sup>th</sup> Bible Study
  8. Jerusalem the Bride Rev 21:9-22:21  
December 5<sup>th</sup> NO Bible Study  
12<sup>th</sup> Frank's Encircled in Care Course  
January 9<sup>th</sup> Frank's Encircled in Care Course

Do we want to start again on 16<sup>th</sup> January or February - depending on the weather?

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> August – LAMMAS-TIDE SERVICE at 3.30pm at Holy Trinity Parish Church, Weare Giffard** – Speaker Revd Colin Smallacombe from FCN (The Farming Community Network) – a Service of Thanksgiving for the first fruits of the Harvest – the Service will be followed by Light refreshments

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> August – AFTERNOON GARDEN STROLL, Teas & cakes with optional Woodland Walk at the Downes Garden** from 2.30pm to 6pm – Dogs on Leads are welcome – No charge but Donations to 'Prostrate Cancer UK' – Entrance is off A386 between Torrington & Bideford – 'What3words' = //inch.revolting.heeding – please contact [sjholly2019@gmail.com](mailto:sjholly2019@gmail.com) to let them know if people are coming – Courtesy of Ian & Sarah Hollingsworth.

### **HISTORIA CHRISTIANA - The origins of the English Bible**

Have you ever wondered how the English Bible developed? Do you know about the Devon connection? **The only Scripture that was legally available in England throughout the Middle Ages was the Latin Vulgate and few people could read Latin outside of the priesthood. If you moved in certain circles, you may also have had access to John Wycliffe's outlawed, handwritten English Bible of 1382,**

In 1532, exiled in Antwerp, William Tyndale published his translation of Genesis, from Hebrew, into English. Tyndale was eventually condemned as a heretic and was martyred. He had also

translated the New Testament into English beforehand.

Miles Coverdale, (1488 – 1569), was an English ecclesiastical reformer, preacher and briefly, (1551–1553) Bishop of Exeter. In 1535, Coverdale produced the first complete printed translation of the Bible into English. He was a reformer like Tyndale and from 1528 to 1535 he spent most of his time, mainly in exile in Antwerp. It is believed that upon arriving there, he rendered considerable assistance to Tyndale. In 1534 King Henry VIII was petitioned that the whole Bible might be translated into English. Consequently, in 1535, Coverdale dedicated his now complete Bible to the King.

In 1537 the Matthew Bible was printed, also in Antwerp, relying heavily on Coverdale's translation and in 1538 Coverdale was sent to Paris by Thomas Cromwell to oversee the printing of the planned "Great Bible". The Pope issued an edict that the English Bibles should all be burned and the presses stopped so the work was moved to London where it was completed. Coverdale's Great Bible was now almost ready for circulation and an injunction called for the use of "one book of the whole Bible " to be placed in every English church.

On 10 June 1549, the Prayer Book Rebellion broke out in Devon and Cornwall. There, Coverdale was directly involved in preaching and attempts at pacification. Coverdale remained in Devon for several more months, helping to pacify the people and doing the work that properly belonged to the Bishop of Exeter. The incumbent, John Vesey, was eighty-six, and was living in his birthplace in Warwickshire. Coverdale would become Bishop of Exeter and this took place on 14 August 1551 when John Vesey was ejected from his see.

In 1553 Mary acceded to the throne and led a Catholic revival. Coverdale was ejected from his see and Vesey, now ninety and still in Warwickshire, was incredibly reinstated as Bishop. Coverdale again went into exile in Europe and whilst in Geneva in 1558 he contributed to the "Geneva Bible". Miles Coverdale made an enormous contribution to the development of the Bible into English. He returned to London and but sadly died in poverty there aged 80

Paul Bate

### **LAKE CHAPEL TODAY - TOMBSTONES AND BANNERS!**

The original Bible Christian chapel built at Shebbear in 1817 still stands as part of the chapel extended in 1841 which is used today by the Methodist church. Next to the chapel is the original school room, and surrounding both these buildings is the graveyard with many of those prominent within the Bible Christian movement buried there. Ted Lott is a mine of information about the Bible Christians and Ted's Tour of the Tombstones has been the highlight of many a visit to Lake from people from as far afield as Australia, and Canada researching their family history.

Behind Lake Chapel is the privately owned Lake Farmhouse where the first meeting of the Bible Christian movement took place.

Within the chapel is a stained glass window rescued from a church in Plymouth during the last war, commemorating the founding of the Bible Christians. And the walls are covered with locally made banners many of which were donated after a Banner Festival.

There are photos of some of the early founders and commemorative stone plaques, and more recent photos and newspaper articles noting the connection between the Bible Christians and the church in such far flung places as Canada, Australia and China.

There is a list of all the Shebbear Circuit Superintendents in the entrance. It is interesting to note that many of the early leaders were women.

A Prayer Room behind the altar is available as a place of peace at any time. It is the only part which remains of the original building. A beautiful banner made by Tracy Dunmore adds beauty to the room, and a prophetic painting by Mike DeLorenzo reminds us of our connection with the ministry of Revd Glorian Bonnette (Glo) from America.

Shebbear College, an independent day and boarding school, founded in 1841 by the Bible Christians as a college for the sons of Bible Christians lies behind the chapel. It is now co-educational. At one time it was a ministerial training college.

Lake Chapel is used for worship by the college, the local congregation, and the circuit. It will soon be getting a facelift to link it with the newly renovated Manse just along the road.



This article originally appeared in the Shebbear Circuit Magazine (MAP) Volume 40 September 2010. It was the 10th Anniversary edition of MAP and the final edition.

### **CONFERENCE BUSINESS DIGEST - A report for local churches about the business of the 2023 Methodist Conference**

The **2023 Methodist Conference**, held at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole: Presbyteral Session 22-23 June; Representative Session 24-29 June. The Conference is the governing body of the Methodist Church and meets annually to discuss matters affecting the life of the Church, the nation and the world.

#### **Induction of the President and Vice-President for 2023/2024**

On Saturday 24 June, the Revd Gill Newton was elected and inducted as President of the Conference, and Deacon Kerry Scarlett as Vice-President. They shared their theme of 'Hidden Treasures' in their addresses to the Conference.

#### **Reception into Full Connexion and Ordination Services**

New presbyters and deacons were ordained on Sunday 25 June 2023. During the Sunday

Worship, thirteen presbyters and four deacons were received into Full Connexion with the Conference, along with ten presbyters by transfer, and one presbyter by reinstatement and transfer when they were presented to the members of the Methodist Conference and to its President and Vice-President.

Having been received into Full Connexion on Sunday morning, presbyters and deacons travelled to nearby Coventry with their families and friends for the afternoon where the diaconal ordinations took place at Coventry Central Hall and the presbyteral ordinations were held at Coventry Cathedral.

### **Oversight and Trusteeship**

Following consultation with the District Synods, the Conference confirmed changes to the Deed of Union which it agreed in 2022, to establish a Connexional Council from 1 September 2024. The Connexional Council will be the trustee body for the Church, and will undertake many of the functions of the present Methodist Council and Strategy and Resources Committee.

Further to the decisions of the 2022 Conference in respect of reducing the size of the Conference from 2024, the Council brought a proposed allocation of seats in order to achieve that reduction. Among other changes, proposals were agreed to abolish the category of Conference-elected representatives and replace it with members of the Connexional Council.

The Conference agreed to the establishment of a new District incorporating the present Cumbria, Lancashire, Liverpool and Bolton and Rochdale Districts, with a continuing consultation taking place in the Manchester and Stockport District concerning this proposal. The new District will come into being on 1 September 2024 and will be called the North West England District.

### **There is Room – Triennial Membership Returns 2019-2022**

Every three years a report is presented to the Conference on the membership returns of the Church. For the years 2020 and 2021 attendances were not recorded due to the lockdown with many societies meeting online for that time. The attendance figures for 2022 (as for 2019) do not include those who shared in online services.

The numbers indicate a 3,000 reduction between 2021 and 2022, more typical of pre-pandemic trends. The extrapolation implies a loss of 10,000 members during the pandemic, representing 15% of our membership, matching the narrative around the Connexion.

The decline in membership and attendance is not unexpected nor unique to Methodism. The faithfulness of God and God's people in the current reality is seen in pockets of growth in churches and circuits and in experimentation with Methodist people and churches taking missional risks.

### **Online Church**

The Conference recognised the close relation of the questions of online celebrations of Holy Communion and predominantly online churches and, subject to the outcome of the connexional period of discernment in respect of online communion, affirmed in principle the possibility of predominantly online churches.

### **Action for Children**

A report from the charity Action for Children, part of the Methodist family, thanked the Methodist people for their on-going support. Particular mention was made of their involvement in the online action to challenge the gap between the benefit uplift and inflation. In the year 2021/2022, Methodists raised £644,000 for Action for Children.

### **Budget**

Planned reductions in the District Assessment mean there will be less funding for the Connexional Team and therefore a reduction in the work that the Team can undertake. Transitional funding was agreed to support the Connexional Team whilst a transformation plan is developed. The impact of inflation will continue to be passed through to the District Assessment.

### **Pension Schemes**

This report updated the Conference on pension issues including the estimated funding position and a report from the task group established by the Council to look at the future of the Methodist Ministers' Pension Scheme. The improvement in the funding position has arisen due to the unprecedented and unexpected economic turmoil of the last year.

### **A justice-seeking Church: the report of the Walking with Micah project**

Walking with Micah has been a two-year project helping the Methodist Church to explore what it means to be a justice-seeking Church. It draws on Methodist history, theology, current concerns and practice, and recommends a framework of principles for justice which underpin our understanding of God's justice and what it means to seek justice. The report recognised how much is being done in churches to tackle injustice and recommends a two-year programme to embed these principles, priorities and practices in order to support and encourage this work. The Conference commended the report for prayerful study and action throughout the Connexion.

### **3Generate 2022 – Methodist Children and Youth Assembly**

This report highlighted the success of last year's 3Generate event that was bigger than ever before with 1200 children and young people, 456 group leaders, and 252 volunteers joining together. The Conference received the report, which called upon all Methodists actively to engage in conversation with children and young people about faith and life

### **Reconciliation and Mediation Team and Positive Working Together**

The Conference agreed to roll out a scheme to help resolve disputes in church communities across the Church following a successful pilot project. The Conference adopted the recommendation for the five year programme, in partnership with Place for Hope, to offer an integrated approach in support of Positive Working Together and extending the Reconciliation and Mediation Team as a Connexion-wide programme.

### **A Methodist Way of Life**

The Conference approved A Methodist Way of Life ([methodist.org.uk/our-faith/a-methodist-way-of-life](http://methodist.org.uk/our-faith/a-methodist-way-of-life)) and in workshops engaged with experiences and ideas of how this model of structured discipleship can help people to grow in faith and confidence.

### **Memorials**

Memorials are messages from Circuit Meetings and District Synods to the Conference. They play a vital part in enabling the Conference to hear and to respond to concerns from across the Connexion. This year, the Conference considered and replied to 23 memorials on topics including district probationers' committees and probationers' retreats, email provision for ministers, Israel Palestine, the Annual Affirmations, EDI training, annual returns and statistics, locally resident members, funding of a stipend during a minister's long term absence.

### **President and Vice-President designated for 2024/2025**

The Conference designated the Revd Helen D Cameron to be President and Mrs Carolyn Godfrey

to be Vice President of the Conference 2024/2025.

### **Appointments**

The Conference made a number of appointments and reappointments, including: Dudley Coates as Chair of the Conference Business Committee for the Conferences of 2024, 2025 and 2026. Anne Bolton as Connexional Treasurer for the connexional year 2023/2024. Alethea Siow as Chair of the Resourcing Committee from 1 September 2023. Jenny Jackson as Chair of the Stationing Committee from 1 September 2023.

The Revd Dr Marcus Torchon as Chair for the Bristol District from 1 September 2024; the Revd Angela Long as Chair for the Lincolnshire District from 1 September 2023; the Revd Andrew Fyall as Chair for the Nottingham and Derby District from 1 September 2023; the Revd Sonia Hicks as Chair for the Northampton District from 1 September 2024.

The Conference also appointed the Revd Dr Daniel Haylett and the Revd Loraine Mellor as Chairs of both the Plymouth and Exeter and Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Districts for one year from 1 September 2023.

The Methodist Conference will meet in Leeds from 27 June-3 July 2024

### **The following is the Plan for July, August, September, October & November**

HC= Holy Communion	PC= At Parish Church
MC= Methodist Church	C& F= Coffee and Fellowship
Café= Café Worship	SB=Sunday Breakfast
T = Transport	

### **Post codes of Chapels**

Alverdiscott – EX31 3PT	Bideford (High Street) – EX39 2AN
Black Torrington – EX21 5QF	Buckland Brewer – EX39 5LP
Langtree – EX38 8NF	Littleham – EX39 5HW
Milton Damerel – EX22 7DJ	Northam – EX39 1BS
Parkham – EX39 5PG	Shebbear – EX21 5SJ
Sheepwash – EX21 5NA	Torrington – EX38 8AL

### **Lectionary Readings for July**

2 July 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Genesis 22: 1-14; Psalm 13; Romans 6: 12-23; Matthew 10: 40-42

9 July 14th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Genesis 24: 34-38, 42-49, 58-67; Psalm 45: 10-17; or Canticle: Song of Solomon 2: 8-13; Romans 7: 15-25a; Matthew 11: 16-19, 25-30

16 July 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Genesis 25: 19-34; Psalm 119: 105-112; Romans 8: 1-11; Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23

23 July 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Genesis 28: 10-19a; Psalm 139: 1-12, 23-24; Romans 8: 12-25; Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43

30 July 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Genesis 29: 15-28; Psalm 105: 1-11, 45b; or Psalm 128; Romans 8: 26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

### Lectionary Readings for August

6 Aug 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Genesis 32: 22-31; Psalm 17: 1-7, 15; Romans 9: 1-5; Matthew 14: 13-21  
 13 Aug 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Genesis 37: 1-4, 12-28; Psalm 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b; Romans 10: 5-15; Matthew 14: 22-33  
 20 Aug 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Genesis 45: 1-15; Psalm 133; Romans 11: 1-2a, 29-32; Matthew 15: (10-20) 21-28  
 27 Aug 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Exodus 1:8 – 2:10; Psalm 124; Romans 12:1-8; Matthew 16:13-20

### Lectionary Readings for September

3 Sept – 22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Exodus 3:1-15; Psalm 105:1-6,23-26,45c; Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28  
 10 Sept – 23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 149; Romans 13:8-14; Matthew 18:15-20  
 17 Sep – 24<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Exodus 14:19-31; Psalm 114; Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35  
 24 Sept – 25<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Exodus 16:2-15; Psalm 105:1-6,37-45; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16

### Lectionary Readings for October

1 Oct – 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 78:1-4,12-16; Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32  
 8 Oct – 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Exodus 20:1-4,7-9,12-20; Psalm 19; Philippians 3:4b-14; Matthew 21:33-46  
 15 Oct – 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Exodus 32:1-14; Psalm 106:1-6,19-23; Philippians 4:1-9; Matthew 22:1-14  
 22 Oct – 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Exodus 33:12-23; Psalm 99: I Thessalonians 1:1-10; Matthew 22:15-22  
 29 Oct – 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Deuteronomy 34:1-12; Psalm 90:1-6,13-17; I Thessalonians 2:1-8; Matthew 22:34-46

### Lectionary Readings for November

5 Nov – 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Joshua 3:7-17; Psalm 107:1-7,33-37; 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13; Matthew 23:1-12  
 12 Nov – 32<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Joshua 24:1-3a,14-25; Psalm 78:1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13  
 12 Nov – Remembrance Sunday  
 Isaiah 25:1-9 or Isaiah 52:7-12 or Micah 4:1-8; Psalm 9:9-20 or Psalm 46; Romans 8:31-35,37-39  
 or Revelations 22:1-5; Matthew 5:1-12 or Matthew 5:43-38 or John 15:9-17  
 19 Nov – 33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123; 1Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30  
 26 Nov – Sunday before Advent  
 Ezekiel 34:11-16,20-24; Psalm 95:1-7a or Psalm 100: Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46

	<b>Jul 2</b>	<b>Jul 9</b>	<b>Jul 16</b>	<b>Jul 23</b>	<b>Jul 30</b>
	<b>Ord 13</b>	<b>Ord 14</b>	<b>Ord 15</b>	<b>Ord 16</b>	<b>Ord 17</b>
<b>Circuit Zoom @6.30pm</b>	<b>Bible Study</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Vidamour</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Bideford 10.30am</b>	<b>Ley HC</b>	<b>Bate CA</b>	<b>Harris</b>	<b>Booth</b>	<b>A Biggs @URC @11am</b>



Northam 10.30am	Blackhall CA	Vidamour HC Messy Church 4pm	Spencer T Fellowship 4pm	F Watson	Vidamour HC
		SHEBBEAR	METHODIST	CHURCH	
Black Torrington Friday 3pm	X	Blackhall on 7 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Vidamour HC On 21 <sup>st</sup> Jul	@Lake	X
Langtree 11am	Withall	@Parish Church	Bate	@Lake	Blackhall HC
Milton Damerel 11am	X	D Watson	Cafe	@Lake	X
Shebbear 10.30am	C&F	Dawe	United @Parish Church	Withall United	X
Sheepwash 11am	X	@Parish Church	@Baptist Church	@Lake	X
	TORRINGTON	WITH	ALVERDISCOTT	METHODIST	CHURCH
Alverdiscott 11am	Potter HC	X	Booth	X	@Parish Church
Torrington 10.30am	Spencer T	Blackhall HC	Price	Harris	F Watson
	WEST	TORRIDGE	METHODIST	CHURCH	
Alwington	X	X	X	X	X
Buckland Brewer 10am (PC)  10am (MC)	? HC @Parish Church @9.30am	Blackhall Fete Service @Parish Church @4pm?	?	Price	D Watson
Littleham 10.30am	X	F Watson	X	Vidamour & Cockfield Parish Church at 11am	X
Parkham 11am	Vidamour	SB 10am @Parish Church	Vidamour HC	? HC @Parish Church	Informal Worship @Parish Church

	Aug 6	Aug 13	Aug 20	Aug 27
	Ord 18	Ord 19	Ord 20	Ord 21
Circuit Zoom @6.30pm	X	X	Blackhall	X

<b>Bideford 10.30am</b>	<b>Vidamour</b>	<b>Spencer T</b>	<b>F Watson</b>	<b>Vidamour HC</b>
<b>Northam 10.30am</b>	<b>Harris</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Withall</b>	<b>Burgon</b>
		<b>SHEBBEAR</b>	<b>Fellowship 4pm METHODIST</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>
<b>Black Torrington Friday 3pm</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>F Watson on 11<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	<b>Vidamour On 25<sup>th</sup> Aug</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Langtree 11am</b>	<b>LA</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>Dawe</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Milton Damerel 11am</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Ley HC</b>	<b>Cafe</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Shebbear 10.30am</b>	<b>C&amp;F</b>	<b>Bate</b>	<b>United @Parish Church</b>	<b>Booth HC United</b>
<b>Sheepwash 11am</b>	<b>Blackhall HC</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>@Baptist Church</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
	<b>TORRINGTON</b>	<b>WITH</b>	<b>ALVERDISCOTT</b>	<b>METHODIST CHURCH</b>
<b>Alverdiscott 11am</b>	<b>Spencer T</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Blackhall HC</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Torrington 10.30am</b>	<b>Burd</b>	<b>Booth HC</b>	<b>A Biggs</b>	<b>Blackhall</b>
	<b>WEST</b>	<b>TORRIDGE</b>	<b>METHODIST</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>
<b>Alwington</b>	<b>D Watson @Parish Church</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Buckland Brewer 10am (PC)  10am (MC)</b>	<b>? HC @Parish Church @9.30am</b>	<b>F Watson</b>	<b>?</b>	<b>Bate</b>
<b>Littleham 10.30am</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Potter HC</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Harris</b>
<b>Parkham 11am</b>	<b>Withall</b>	<b>SB 10am @Parish Church</b>	<b>Ley</b>	<b>? HC @Parish Church</b>

	<b>Sept 3</b>	<b>Sept 10</b>	<b>Sept 17</b>	<b>Sept 24</b>
	<b>Ord 22</b>	<b>Ord 23 Education</b>	<b>Ord 24</b>	<b>Ord 25</b>
<b>At Home Worship</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Vidamour Zoom 6.30pm</b>	<b>Buckland Live Stream 10am</b>	<b>Buckland Live Stream 10am</b>

<b>Bideford 10.30am</b>	<b>@Torrington</b>	<b>Vidamour HC</b>	<b>Blackhall Harvest</b>	<b>St Mary's 9.30am</b>
<b>Northam 10.30am</b>	<b>@ Torrington</b>	<b>Harris  Messy Church 4pm</b>	<b>Vidamour HC  Fellowship 4pm</b>	<b>Hall-Tomkin</b>
		<b>SHEBBEAR</b>	<b>METHODIST</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>
<b>Black Torrington Friday 3pm</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>F Watson HC on 8<sup>th</sup> Sept</b>	<b>Blackhall Harvest on 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Langtree 11am</b>	<b>@Torrington</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>Ley - Harvest</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Milton Damerel 11am</b>	<b>@Torrington</b>	<b>F Watson AAW</b>	<b>Cafe</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Shebbear 10.30am</b>	<b>@Torrington</b>	<b>C&amp;F</b>	<b>United @Parish Church</b>	<b>Blackhall Harvest United</b>
<b>Sheepwash 11am</b>	<b>@Torrington</b>	<b>@Baptist Church</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>Village</b>
	<b>TORRINGTON</b>	<b>WITH</b>	<b>ALVERDISCOTT</b>	<b>METHODIST CHURCH</b>
<b>Alverdiscott 11am</b>	<b>@Torrington</b>	<b>Withall</b>	<b>Bate</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Torrington 10.30am</b>	<b>LP Circuit Service HC</b>	<b>J Hill Harvest</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>F Watson</b>
	<b>WEST</b>	<b>TORRIDGE</b>	<b>METHODIST</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>
<b>Alwington</b>	<b>@ Torrington</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Buckland Brewer 10am (PC)  10am (MC)  10.30am</b>	<b>HC @Parish Church @9.30am   @Torrington</b>	<b>Blackhall</b>	<b>Anglican</b>	<b>Blackhall Harvest 3pm</b>
<b>Littleham 10.30am</b>	<b>@Torrington</b>	<b>Potter</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Vidamour HC</b>
<b>Parkham 11am</b>	<b>@Torrington</b>	<b>SB 10am @Parish Church</b>	<b>Vidamour Harvest 4pm</b>	<b>HC @Parish Church</b>

	<b>Oct 1</b>	<b>Oct 8</b>	<b>Oct 15</b>	<b>Oct 22</b>	<b>Oct 29</b>
	<b>Ord 26</b>	<b>Ord 27</b>	<b>Ord 28</b>	<b>Ord 29</b>	<b>Ord 30</b>

At Home Worship	X	Potter Zoom 6.30pm	Buckland Live Stream 10am	Buckland Live Stream 10am	X
Bideford 10.30am	D Watson	Macbeth	Vidamour HC	Harris	Spencer 11am at URC
Northam 10.30am	Booth Harvest	Spencer T Messy Church 4pm	Bate Fellowship 4pm Vidamour	Burgon HC	Price
		SHEBBEAR	METHODIST	CHURCH	
Black Torrington Friday 3pm	X	Vidamour on 6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	D Watson on 20 <sup>th</sup> Oct	@Lake	X
Langtree 11am	Bate	@Parish Church Harvest	Blackhall HC	@Lake	LA
Milton Damerel 11am	X	Blackhall Harvest	Cafe	@Lake	X
Shebbear 10.30am	US @Parish Church Harvest	C&F	United @Parish Church	Ley United	X
Sheepwash 11am	Harris Harvest	@Baptist Church	@Parish Church	Village	X
	TORRINGTON	WITH	ALVERDISCOTT	METHODIST CHURCH	
Alverdiscott 11am	Blackhall Harvest	X	Hill HC	X	United @Parish Church
Torrington 10.30am	C Biggs	Harding	Hall-Tomkin	Blackhall HC 3pm Cons	Booth
	WEST	TORRIDGE	METHODIST	CHURCH	
Alwington	Vidamour @Parish Church	X	X	X	
Buckland Brewer 10am (PC) 10am (MC)	HC @Parish Church @9.30am	Price	Anglican	Booth	D Watson/LA
Littleham 10.30am	X	Vidamour Harvest United	X	Withall	X
Parkham 11am	Harvest @Parish Church	SB	@Parish Church	HC @Parish Church	Alternative Worship

	Nov 5	Nov 12	Nov 19	Nov 26
	Ord 31	Ord 32 Remembrance	Ord 33 Safeguarding	Sunday before Advent
At Home Worship	X	Blackhall Zoom 6.30pm	Buckland Live Stream 10am	Buckland Live Stream 10am

<b>Bideford 10.30am</b>	<b>Ley</b>	<b>Booth</b>	<b>Burgon HC</b>	<b>Vidamour</b>
<b>Northam 10.30am</b>	<b>Potter</b>	<b>Parish Church 10am</b> <b>Messy Church 4pm</b>	<b>Vidamour HC</b>	<b>Withall</b>
		<b>SHEBBEAR</b>	<b>METHODIST</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>
<b>Black Torrington Friday 3pm</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Blackhall HC on 10<sup>th</sup> Nov</b>	<b>Vidamour on 24<sup>th</sup> Nov</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Langtree 11am</b>	<b>Hall-Tomkin</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>Blackhall HC</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Milton Damerel 11am</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>D Watson AAW</b>	<b>Cafe</b>	<b>@Lake</b>
<b>Shebbear 10.30am</b>	<b>C&amp;F</b>	<b>Parish Church Remembrance</b>	<b>United @Parish Church</b>	<b>Hill United</b>
<b>Sheepwash 11am</b>	<b>Withall</b>	<b>@Baptist Church</b>	<b>@Parish Church</b>	<b>Village</b>
	<b>TORRINGTON</b>	<b>WITH</b>	<b>ALVERDISCOTT</b>	<b>METHODIST CHURCH</b>
<b>Alverdiscott 11am</b>	<b>Blackhall HC</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Potter</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Torrington 10.30am</b>	<b>Harris</b>	<b>Blackhall Remembrance</b>	<b>Macbeth HC</b>	<b>F Watson &amp; Sheriff</b>
	<b>WEST</b>	<b>TORRIDGE</b>	<b>METHODIST</b>	<b>CHURCH</b>
<b>Alwington</b>	<b>@ Torrington</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Buckland Brewer 10am (PC)</b>  <b>10am (MC)</b>	<b>HC @Parish Church @9.30am</b>	<b>Anglican at 10.45am @Chapel</b>	<b>Anglican</b>	<b>Blackhall HC</b>
<b>Littleham 10.30am</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>United @Parish Church</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Harris HC</b>
<b>Parkham 11am</b>	<b>SB</b>	<b>United @Parish Church</b>	<b>Spencer T</b>	<b>HC @Parish Church</b>

### **Activities, Events and Meetings - August 2023**

Tue 01

Wed 02 Coffee Morning

10:00-12:00

Buckland Brewer

Thu 03	Coffee Morning	10:30-12:00	Shebbear Village Hall
Fri 04	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Alverdiscott
Sat 05	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 06			
Mon 07			
Tue 08			
Wed 09	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 10			
Fri 11			
Sat 12	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 13			
Mon 14			
Tue 15			
Wed 16	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 17	Coffee Morning	10:30-12:00	Shebbear Village Hall
Fri 18			
Sat 19	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 20	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Torrington
	Cream Tea and Cake	14:30-17:00	Alverdiscott
	Afternoon Tea	14:30-18:00	The Downes, EX39 5LB
	Sunday Fellowship	16:00	Northam
Mon 21			
Tue 22			
Wed 23	International Day for Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition		
Thu 24	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Fri 25			
Sat 26	Coffee Morning	10:00-11:15	Northam
Sun 27	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Bideford
Mon 28	Summer Bank Holiday		
Tue 29			
Wed 30	Coffee Morning	10:00-12:00	Buckland Brewer
Thu 31			

**NEW PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE METHODIST CONFERENCE ELECTED FOR 2024/25**

The Methodist Conference has elected the Revd Helen Cameron to serve as President and Mrs Carolyn Godfrey to serve as Vice-President, starting their year of office when the Representative Session of the Methodist Conference in Leeds in June 2024.

The **Revd Helen Cameron** is currently the Chair of the Northampton District and the Nottingham and Derby District, Moderator of the Free Churches Group and President of Churches Together in England. Helen represented the FCG at the funeral of Her Majesty the Queen, reading prayers during the service and was also present at the Coronation of King Charles.

She has served as Assistant Secretary of the Conference and was the Director of Methodist Formation at the Queens Foundation. Helen enjoyed circuit appointments in the Birmingham South-West and the Elmdon circuits and is committed to the enabling, resourcing and flourishing of lay and ordained ministry. She has served in an Anglican/Methodist LEP, in industrial and rural mission, in areas of significant deprivation and in the joy of growing churches.

Helen has worked extensively with survivors of sexual abuse and co-wrote the study guide Reflect and Respond with members of the Methodist Survivors Advisory Group.

Originally from Yorkshire, Helen is Chair of one of the largest Methodist Districts in the British Connexion which includes 260 churches and covers a geographical area from the Cotswolds to the Fens and from East Midlands Airport nearly as far south as Heathrow. Helen is an honorary Ecumenical Canon of Peterborough Cathedral.

Helen is married to Iain, a retired GP, and has three adult children. Helen enjoys novels, poetry, gardening and theatre.

**Mrs Carolyn Godfrey** is the District Safeguarding Officer covering both the Darlington and Newcastle Districts and a local preacher. She has a background in pastoral care and child protection within the education system helping to support children with additional needs and families facing complex issues. Carolyn has a Master of Education degree which focused on social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Carolyn knows some of the challenges and benefits of neurodiversity because of her own dyslexia. She is particularly interested in how other neurodiverse people can be included within worship and all aspects of church life. Her experience in her safeguarding role, education and lifelong engagement with the Methodist church have given her a drive to understand and challenge the use and misuse of power.

Carolyn grew up in rural South Lincolnshire, is married to a Methodist presbyter and has lived in several circuits and districts around the Connexion. To unwind she likes to be creative, especially with crochet. She loves to spend time with her husband, her two grown up daughters and her grandson.

### **HOLY GROUND BY TIM BAKER.**

What constitutes holy ground? Is all ground holy, or is some more holy than others? This poem unpacks the sacredness of the dirt under our feet – what questions does it unlock for you?

#### **Holy Ground**

The soil crumbles in between my fingers,  
But there lingers a sense of the deep,  
The creep of roots out of sight,  
Crawlies that live below the light,  
And the sleep of a million million layers pressing  
Ever downward.

I press my fingers into the dirt,  
And the little stones and thorns and spikes hurt  
A little bit, but no where near as much as I feel alive,  
I thrive in the grittiness where everything thrives  
And trees survive  
In the hive of creatures and creepers and clay.

The soil is washing away and breaking down,  
While we build another city, extend another town,  
But it is here, with my hands lost in sandy loam  
That we are closest to home,  
Closest to the God who shaped us,  
Like I'm shaping this mound  
And waiting to be found  
By the Spirit who moves over this ground,  
The bit of compost in my back yard,  
Where suddenly feeling connected doesn't feel so hard  
And I take off my shoes for a moment,  
Because the bush isn't burning,  
But there's a glimpse of glory in the bird-sound  
And I think I'm standing on holy ground.

You might like to spend a few minutes today thinking about the earth around you – in your garden, in plant pots, in a nearby park. If you get chance, you could put your fingers into the soil, feel the grit between your fingers, and pray.

Tim Baker is a local preacher in the Aire and Calder Circuit and the Churches & Volunteers Officer (North) for All We Can. He is husband to Hannah and recently became a father, of the lovely Martha Grace. Tim is passionate about a range of social justice issues and a firm believer that the church has a role to play in challenging injustice and building a better world. Tim is the Editor of The Vine – fully scripted local arrangement services produced by Twelve Baskets, a member of Methodist Council and a regular contributor to worship in his home church, Methley Methodist.

This article was recently included on the Theology Everywhere Website. Every Monday, a short article is posted which brings some theology to bear on an issue or topic. This offers some theological reflection people can read quickly to start their week, ponder on and contribute to as the week goes on. It is a way of flexing and using our theological muscles to keep them fit, as well as an opportunity for those contributing to offer new ways of thinking about a topic or looking at an issue theologically perhaps for the first time.

The Theology Everywhere website is made available by the Methodist Church as one of the actions being taken to create a learning church. Contributors are from varied backgrounds; many



but not all are Methodist. The views expressed are the responsibility of the authors and do not represent the position of the Methodist Church.

### **A JUSTICE-SEEKING CHURCH**

The Methodist Conference, has overwhelmingly voted to recommit the Methodist Church to being a Justice-seeking Church.

The report received by the Conference hopes to encourage more Methodists in acting for justice, along with their local communities, and to focus efforts on contributing to change in key areas including poverty, refugees, the environment, discrimination and peace.

The report is the result of a two year process of conversation and listening. This involved looking at how Methodists have worked for justice throughout their history and what is being done now, as well as hearing people's experiences of injustice. The report involved churches, young people, communities and schools – sharing their visions of what a just world looks like.

The report explains why Methodists do justice and how that is born out of a belief in God. The report identifies the shared principles which underpin beliefs about what God's justice is, and what that means in terms of seeking justice. These principles will help the Church decide together how to respond to new challenges.

Everyone is created in God's image, that has consequences for decisions we make about how people are treated

God desires the flourishing of all creation, that will shape our decisions about human impact upon the environment

In the world as it is at the moment the poorest always lose out, we believe God has particular regard for them and for those who are marginalised in society and so should we

Christians won't always agree about the means, but we hope that these principles will help us to be clearer on what is important

With so many pressing issues of concern in the world, the report identified five key priorities for Methodists to focus their activities around - poverty, refugees, climate, discrimination and peace.

The report acknowledged that Methodists and others are already active in working for justice in these areas by helping to meet needs, campaigning for change and working alongside communities.

The report's author, Rachel Lampard, commented, "Having these priority areas will help us to focus our efforts together to achieve change by sharing expertise, communicating, and working with others to make a difference.

"Acting justly is already at the heart of what it is to be a Methodist who tries to follow Jesus, as we see through the actions of so many churches in their communities.

"I hope that this report will make a difference by having an impact on the people who increasingly see they are called to lives of justice rooted in God. Our churches are already acting together to tackle poverty and climate change, to support refugees, to end discrimination and for peace and reconciliation – this report will encourage and strengthen that action. I hope that, together with all our communities, we will see the impact as we work together for a world that is more just and where everyone experiences life in all its fullness."