



# The Methodist Church



## Circuit Chat

Welcome to May's Circuit Chat! As ever a packed edition and it's so great and inspiring to read of so much going on across the Circuit. It did strike me as I read through how busy things are across the Circuit and that made me think about a 'Quiet Day' I enjoyed recently.

It's something I've done for some time now and probably do a couple a year, recently I've joined these at the Whirlow Spirituality Centre near Sheffield. I'll say at the outset it's not something I find that easy! Being quiet all day isn't my natural style (!) and also I do find it difficult to remain in the moment and not pick up the mobile phone to see what emails I've had and what is happening in the World.

For those who don't know the whole idea of a Quiet Day is nicely summarised on Whirlow's website, that says a Quiet Day is 'Space to be before God; to relax, reflect and pray and so to renew your spiritual resources' - sounds great doesn't it! The day starts with a Communion service and a facilitator then shares a few thoughts and then it's up to you! I usually have something in mind to focus on but you can just go with the flow and use the space and facilities as suits. Whirlow offers books, creative materials and it is set in a lovely area so some people walk/sit in gardens etc.

For the last Quiet Day I joined I wanted to focus on the 2 books of Thessalonians, not sure really why other than it kept cropping up (those God nudges!) and I didn't know much about them. It was useful to read, reflect, pray and just listen to what God had to say. One of the key learning points for me was how Paul encouraged the early Church as they faced some very challenging times, I drew comparisons to issues we have at times across the Circuit but also in my own church. We will all have challenges and difficult times to face but we need to hold onto the encouragement that comes from our Great God.

I hope you enjoy this Circuit Chat! Richard Dearden

It's with a mixture of sadness and excitement that we approach the time when Revd Angela and Deacon Emily leave us. With timings we thought it was best that they wrote these pieces for this newsletter as the next edition will be in the Summer and very close to them moving on. So, please see below articles from both reflecting on the last few years.

Additionally a reminder of the Circuit Farewell Service on Sunday 2nd August 1030am at The Crossing. Come along and take this opportunity to give thanks for Angela and Emily, celebrate their ministry among us and pray for them as they move to new Circuits.

Richard

### **A message from Angela**

Dear Friends,

It seems only five minutes since I arrived among you under the cloud of Covid. Like many ministers who moved circuits during that time—including several I had trained and been ordained alongside—I quickly discovered it was not the easiest moment to begin a new appointment. Getting to know a circuit, its people, and its rhythms was certainly more challenging than usual.

Coming to a rural setting after my first five years in Dagenham, London, was a complete contrast. It was a joy to be close to the countryside and so many open spaces, and a blessing to be nearer to family again, having been born and raised in Mansfield just nineteen miles down the road.

My six years in the circuit have brought both ups and downs. During my sabbatical in 2022, I realised I was struggling with the demands of full-time ministry while also supporting my mum through her third knee replacement and a slower-than-expected recovery, alongside a general decline in her health. Then, as I returned from sabbatical, Phil suffered his first TIA over the August bank holiday. I remain deeply grateful to the Circuit Leadership Team for supporting me in reducing my hours and responsibilities. With hindsight—and especially in light of Phil's cancer diagnosis a year later—I can see God's hand in that decision long before we knew how much it would be needed.

Over these years I have served a number of churches: South Anston, North Anston, Carlton, Dinnington, Woodsetts, Wales Kiveton, and Whitwell. I end my appointment once again with Carlton, North Anston, the Dinnington Pioneer Project and Fellowship, and shared responsibility with Emily at The Crossing. It has been a privilege to walk with churches through significant and sometimes difficult decisions, though at times this has been emotionally demanding.

Being in Trinity Circuit also gave me the joy of conducting my very first wedding—after five years in London without one! Since then I have had the honour of leading weddings at South Anston, North Anston, and Wales Kiveton.

I want to thank all of you who have shown such love and pastoral care to us during our time here. You do not need to be named—you know who you are. You will be missed more than words can say.

Two of us arrived in 2020, but three of us now leave. And I must admit, one thing I will *not* miss is the early-morning dash to get my grandson to Worksop station for the first train at 6.30am so he could reach his apprenticeship in Huthwaite! As the weeks now seem to race by, with downsizing and packing and tying up loose ends, I am mindful that doors are closing and things are gently winding down.

You send me just down the road into a new chapter—one that will allow me to continue serving in circuit ministry while also caring for my mum, and one that will reduce my grandson's daily travel from almost two hours to just forty-five minutes. With three churches and the familiar surroundings of Mansfield and the Sherwood Forest area, I feel excited about the challenges and opportunities ahead. Friends in the Sherwood Forest Circuit are already looking forward to welcoming me back, and it does feel a little like a homecoming after a wide and stretching adventure. After nearly fifty years in one place and then being sent to the city of London, I return with a richer experience of culture, ministry, and God's surprising ways. They may well be in for a surprise.

My tradition of including at least one unfamiliar hymn from *Singing the Faith* began in London and has continued here in Trinity Circuit—so it will certainly continue in my new appointment! My thanks go to the organists across the circuit for their patience, good humour, and willingness to accommodate my choices.

I also hope to broaden my ministry in schools and to be part of the spirituality and wellbeing centre, a circuit project based in one of the churches I will be serving.

Speaking of hymns, *Singing the Faith* 558 has been important to me ever since the sampler booklet was released when I was discerning and candidating for ministry. The chorus reads:

*“O Lord, with your eyes set upon me, Gently smiling, you have spoken my name. All I longed for I have found by the water; At your side I will seek other shores.”*

Once again, God has called me to sail to pastures new. I feel blessed by the stationing process and humbled by the way things have worked out. God’s grace has been so evident in this season.

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

**In Christ’s love, Reverend Angela**

Angela’s Welcome service in her new Circuit will on Monday 1st September 7pm at Trinity Church, Mansfield Woodhouse.

### **A message from Emily**

Dear all,

It’s hard to believe it’s five years since I wrote a greeting message for the Circuit newsletter introducing myself and Lisa, and looking ahead to the times to come. Somehow (I must’ve blinked), already it’s time to say goodbye... and though I’m still in denial about going(!) I do have to put pen to paper.

I remember the greeting article was themed around Gratitude – for the opportunity to minister amongst you, for the prayer and effort put into making my appointment come to fruition, and for getting the manse ready for us. The feeling now, five years on, is absolutely the same – we’re both so grateful, for the times we’ve shared together, for all that you as individuals, as churches and as a circuit have done for me: for getting me through finishing my MA alongside probationer studies, graduating, passing through the many stages of probationer training, and Ordination itself; through times of ill-health and hospital stays, and the day-to-day learning of what it means to be a minister in general and a deacon in particular in this place, for such a time as this.

You've really wintered and summered with us when you stop and quantify it like this!! And you've done it all with grace, a gentleness and pastoral sensitivity that has left us just so grateful, and determined to take the spirit of care and love on to future appointments. I've learned so much from and with you, and it's been such a privilege to be gifted the last five years in your company – you've helped me to grow and develop, and I move forward with hope and confidence thanks to you.

Thank you for embracing us both, for loving us and sharing your faith with us, for supporting and guiding, for praying with us. Thank you for letting me try new things, for sharing the vision, for giving me room and grace to make mistakes, and dust me off and back on my feet again. Thank you for growing with me, and for watering my roots, even as I've tried to water yours.

At my Welcome Service I remember taking on board the words in the chorus of 'I, the Lord of Sea and Sky' which say *"I will hold your people in my heart"* – this continues to be true, I'll carry you with me wherever I go in ministry, and the impact you've made on me doesn't end when I move on.

The new appointment is both exciting and daunting – I'll be in the Sankey Valley Circuit (based in Warrington) in three main areas of ministry: as chaplain to the Methodist primary school in St Helen's, developing online and hybrid worship, and ministering with New Song Community – a church without a building who aim to show the love of God through creative works in the local community. A very different sort of appointment, but the challenge is appealing, although I will miss you all (and belonging to church families) very much.

Our Welcome Service to Sankey Valley is on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September at 10.30am at Prescott & Whiston Methodist Church with lunch afterwards, and all are very welcome to come along. As with Shepherds Avenue, our new manse will be open (Lisa will be ensconced in the garden!), and the kettle will always be on for visitors...

My other favourite worship song 'Have you heard God's voice' comes poignantly to mind, especially the words *"Will you leave a thoughtful imprint?"* My hope and prayer is to depart in this way, leaving a (helpful) thoughtful imprint with you, as each of you have, with me.

With love, Emily and Lisa Hoe-Crook

## **Dinnington Pioneer update**

A few points of interest to share with Circuit friends:

### **\*Afternoon Tea Party\***

On Saturday 22nd March, we hosted a 'Celebration of Mother's' afternoon tea party at Dinnington Methodists. With approximately 40-50 people in attendance, the event was a mix of food, games and lots of fun!

In total, we managed to raise £157.60 for Bluebell Wood Hospice.

### **\*Day Trip Out to Hesley Woods\***

On Saturday 28th March, 12 of us including kids and adults, headed off from Dinnington to Hesley Woods Activity Centre where young people got involved with activities such as abseiling, zip-wire and axe-throwing.

A great day was had by all!

Peter Farmer, Community Pioneer Worker

## **News from Wales Kiveton Methodist**

The first months of 2026 have given plenty of activities to report back on.

The ecumenical bond of our 5 local churches continues to grow, and we held 5 of our annual Lent study group sessions together which averaged 25 people at each one. We have already set 5 more dates starting in May for each church to host a bible study of a subject of their own choosing. We also had 10 of us gathered outside the Co op area in Kiveton on Good Friday holding a large cross to create awareness of the real meaning of Easter. Quite a few of us joined in with the Saturday Mass service at Blessed William Richardson Church on the weekend of Palm Sunday, and some of us took part in the reading of The Passion, which was a wonderful thing to share together. Our next shared worship will be at Thorpe Salvin at the end of May.

Our joint monthly visit to the Ladyfield care home at Kiveton brightens up the residents afternoon where we sing hymns, have readings, faith stories and prayers

and other interactive things to share; it gives each one of us as much pleasure as it does the residents. We had a fun quiz at Harthill Church which was very well attended, and have planned an “Ecumenifest” afternoon in August where we will have a walk together, come back for lunch and play games and include faith in all we do. A third Songs of Praise is being looked at to be held this time at Thorpe Salvin Church later in the year.

Our Soup and Song events were well supported over the colder winter months, and Jan to April averaged 50. Unfortunately there have been some who have passed away and some unable to attend through illness, but we have also welcomed some new people which is lovely.

We now have a core of helpers/volunteers and a local community facility provided flowers for each of them which were presented at the end of our April event.



The local Saxon Golf Society based in Kiveton (who have been charity fundraising for 27 years now), decided to share their fundraising efforts from 2025 with Andy’s Man Club and Soup and Song, and to this end a cheque was presented for £1,200 at one of our services. Janet and Ann can be seen holding the cheque with Paul.

February saw the return of the Retford Ukulele Ensemble, and 13 band members entertained, which included Philip McDonald!



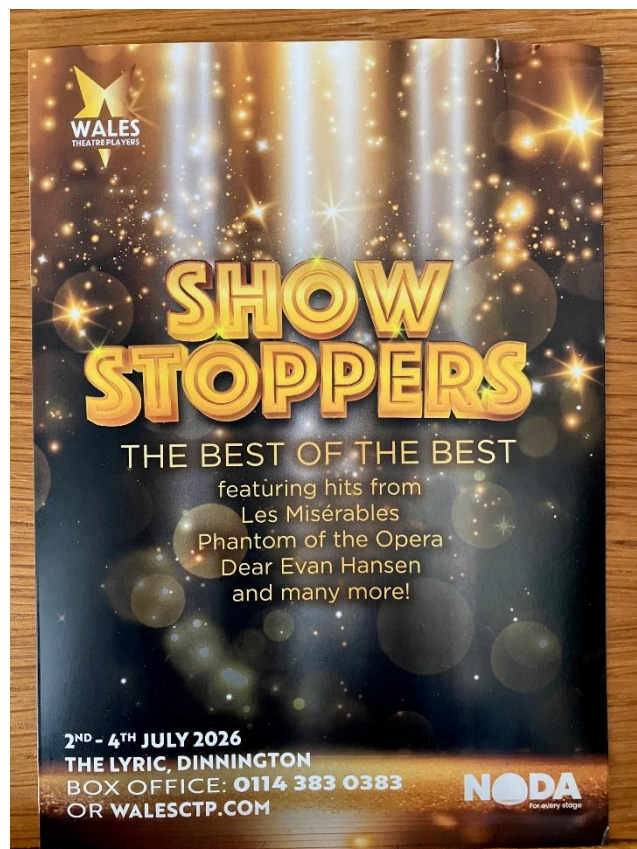
Philip returned to Wales Kiveton in his other role to take our 157th anniversary service, and the balloon is still flying there! Our donation of food and toiletries brought in to the service was gratefully received by a local foodbank which is called New Hope foodbank and church.

A lovely picture of the last supper now hangs proudly in church which was received from Zelda's Dad, Mervyn Walker who sadly passed away at the end of last year. It is quite poignant as it is Mervyn we owe our thanks to because it was by attending his church in Ayr about 4 years ago where we came across the idea for Soup and Song.



We have had our first meeting with Mark North from Sheffield District, and we are hoping that together we can progress in different ways with our church in the community to build on what we have achieved so far.

The local theatre group Wales Community Theatre Players (WCTP) have been rehearsing regularly in our church for their upcoming performances to be held at the Lyric Theatre in Dinnington from the 2nd to the 4th July, and they are presenting "Showstoppers". This will include such big box office hits like Les Miserables and the Phantom of the Opera plus many many more. If you haven't been to watch them before then I recommend you get your tickets ordered from the details shown here on the photo of their promotional stand. You will not be disappointed, but get your tickets sooner rather than later then you can get more choice of where you want to sit, and keep seats together.



Lastly but certainly not least, we all wish Joy a speedy recovery after her cataract surgery and that it has been a great success once it all settles down

Paul Joynes

## News from Carlton Methodist

### **VALENTINE'S CONCERT WITH AFTERNOON TEA**

Our first event of 2026 was in February when we welcomed back Roger and Denise Marsden (Nostalgia), for a Valentine's themed concert. The room was decorated with bunting and hearts, and during the interval we enjoyed a wonderful afternoon tea.



### **FAMILY FILM AND CRAFT AFTERNOON**

As Winnie-the-Pooh is 100 this year, we chose that as the theme for the film and craft afternoon in February half-term. There were a selection of short films, and a jigsaw to complete of Pooh Bear with a jar of honey and the quote "God's words are sweeter than honey."

## **MOTHERING SUNDAY CELEBRATION & LUNCH**

A mini-fayre with a variety of stalls including books, toys, jigsaws, cakes, and a tombola was held the day before Mothering Sunday. There was also card making available, and a number of people enjoyed fish and chips from Carlton Fish Bar across the road. £127 was raised for BB&GA funds.

## **LENT AND EASTER**

On Ash Wednesday, Fr Barry held the first of a series of Lenten coffee mornings, and also offered the imposition of the ashes for those who wished to participate.

Our friends from North Anston joined us in the afternoon of Good Friday, for a service led by Rev Angela. Afterwards we enjoyed a time of fellowship and refreshments.

Easter Sunday saw some of us share breakfast together, before our worship led by Fr Barry.

Helen Hindmarch



## **BOYS' BRIGADE AND GIRLS' ASSOCIATION (SPRING TERM)**

From Christmas all our Bible stories have been about the life of Jesus, starting with his visits to the temple as a baby and a boy. We covered the baptism and the temptations in the desert and his calling of all the disciples. At Easter we had a video of the Easter story and a Palm Sunday game.

Our craft activities have included:

Malted Milk Houses

Craft on Calling the Disciples

Parachutes

Origami boats

Mother's Day Cards

Toby continues with drumming. Erin has joined the group with Timothy, Andrei, George and Jonathan, and there is a small group of young learners.

Other skills covered have included:

Emergency First Aid (CPR, recovery position and some bandaging)

Sewing on buttons

Tying shoelaces



Anne has led a Yoga session and we hope to do some more keep fit.

We had a Pizza Party to celebrate Eben's 7<sup>th</sup> birthday, John's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday and Pooh Bear's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Those who hadn't been to the Family Film Afternoon were able to complete the jigsaw. We finished with a pets night with rabbits, crickets, locusts and a canary. We will be having a walk with all the pet dogs soon.

The annual Easter Monday sponsored walk was mainly for friends of the BBGA but it has raised £140 for BBGA funds. The walk round Langold Lake, led by Corrie and David, was enjoyed by those taking part. This was followed back at the Church & Centre by lunch of hot dogs and/or soup, where others from church and coffee morning joined us.

Eddie Croot

## News from North Anston Methodist

### Community Activities at North Anston

Our first get-together of the year was in February, when we arranged a Pie and Peas lunch followed by a quiz. We were fully booked in no time and even had a waiting list for cancellations. On the day, the pie and peas went down a treat, and the quiz that followed was enjoyed by everybody. A wonderful afternoon of fun, friendship and fellowship.



In March, before our Café Church, we organised a bring-and-share lunch in celebration of Rev. Angela and Phil's 40th Wedding Anniversary. They were surprised on entering the church to find it decorated with balloons and banners, along with a cake we had made for the occasion. It was a very special time shared by all. Also in March, at our monthly activity, we invited Pat McLoughlin to give a talk on the Grand Old

Houses of South Yorkshire. He was very knowledgeable and interesting to listen to, with plenty of humour included. The talk was followed by refreshments and an opportunity to chat and enjoy time catching up with friends.



At our Meet and Make sessions, we have been knitting hats for premature babies. However, in April we decided to make Easter cards for the residents of Woodlands Care Home, where we were due to take a service on Easter Sunday.

It was especially meaningful that our usual monthly visit to Woodlands fell on Easter Sunday afternoon. The residents really enjoyed singing the Easter hymns they know so well and listening to the Easter story. We were also pleased to be joined by several of the residents' relatives. The Easter cards were given out as we left, and we reflected on what a truly special afternoon it had been.



Sue Boyles

## New from Grove St Methodist

### THE GROVE



It has been our tradition at The Grove, for as many years as many of us can remember, to place a cross filled with fresh flowers outside the church as we sing our final hymn on Easter Sunday.

In previous years, we would prepare the cross in advance, adding greenery around the edges ready for people to add flowers as they arrived. This year, however, we embraced a new idea—beginning with a completely bare cross and inviting everyone to play a part in creating it. It was a change to our usual way of doing things, but one that was warmly received.

On Good Friday, a small group of us visited Alan's garden, where he generously offered us as many daffodils and as much greenery as we needed. Alan is a wonderfully skilled gardener, with an extraordinary variety of daffodils in all colours and sizes—each one carefully grown and known by name. We picked thoughtfully at first, not wanting to take too many, but



encouraged by Alan to take what we needed, we gathered a beautiful selection. He was delighted to know that others would be able to share in the beauty of his flowers.

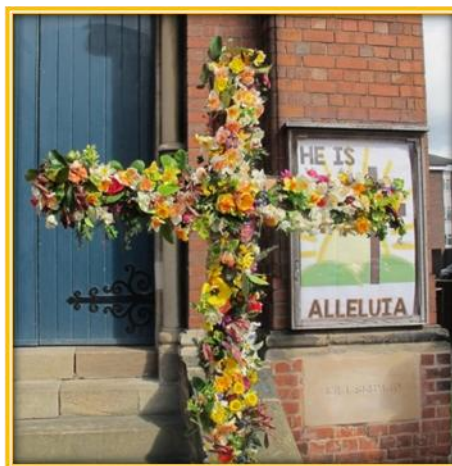
Easter Sunday is always a very special day in the Church calendar—a time of joy and celebration shared with our church family. This year was no exception. The cross was in the vestibule, and as people arrived, they were invited to add a flower. Some were hesitant at first, but most joined in gladly. People took time and care in placing their flowers, and gradually the cross was transformed into a vibrant display. There was conversation, laughter, and a real sense of togetherness as it took shape.



Julie led our service & as the organ struck up “Thine Be the Glory,” the completed cross was lifted and carried outside. We continued singing as we went, sharing this joyful witness with our community.

Although the Easter weather—courtesy of Storm Dave—meant the cross may not have remained outside for as long as in previous years, that did not diminish its significance. What truly mattered was the shared experience: choosing and bringing flowers, placing them on the cross, and standing together to proclaim the Easter message.

### **Alleluia—Christ is Risen!**



Di Welchman

### **School Musical at The Grove**

Recently the Elizabethan Academy in Retford returned to The Grove to perform HADESTOWN, a musical which told the story of Eurydice and Orpheus. This is a Greek myth which depicts their descent into the underworld ruled by King Hades and his partner Persephone. The musical was performed for four nights and was greatly enjoyed by families and friends. The singing and dancing was very entertaining and a lot of hard work had taken place to produce such high quality performances.

It was a real joy to see so many young people in our church using our premises in the way we hoped after we completed our extensive alterations.

We hope that they will return with another musical in the future.

### **Becoming a Dementia Friend**

Several sessions were held recently at The Grove Church Retford led by Hazel from The Alzheimer's Society. She explained about the different types of dementia and how they affected the behaviour of those living with the condition. She offered advice on how to help, things to do and things not to do. I had little knowledge of dementia and found the session very helpful. Her explanation of why sufferers remember things from the past but forget recent events was excellent.

She likened it to a wobbly bookcase full of books (memories) the oldest on the bottom shelf and the newer ones on the top shelves. As the bookcase wobbles the most recent memories, the books on the top shelf will fall off whereas the books on the bottom shelves will stay put.

I came away from the session feeling more knowledgeable and having a better understanding of dementia. Here at The Grove we are working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Church.

If you get the opportunity to attend this course I would highly recommend it. Clare Biddle, who arranged our sessions, has contact details if required.

*If you need help call 0333 150 3456*

*Email at [enquiries@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@alzheimers.org.uk)*

*Or visit <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support>*

### **U3A Swing Band**

On Saturday 11th April members and friends of The Grove once again enjoyed a concert by the Worksop and District U3A swing band - Simply Swing. It was an evening of fun with plenty of foot tapping music. They had several singers who entertained us with their own renditions of a variety of songs. They are a very skilled group of musicians and it was a great pleasure spending the evening with them. I look forward to hearing them again in the future.

Barbara Wilson

## NEWS FROM SOUTH ANSTON METHODIST CHURCH



A Pilgrimage to walk and cover Rotherham Borough in prayer throughout March by “Arise Rotherham”, included a stop off at our church on their final day of the four Saturdays in March. Eleven ‘Pilgrims’ spent time in the church to look around, before prayers, led by Rev Julie Coates. They then enjoyed their packed lunch in the Hall with drinks and cakes which we provided. A few of our members came to chat with them, which they all enjoyed. They then said their goodbyes and thanks and carried on to St Leonard’s in Dinnington before the final stop at Roche Abbey. Overall, along the entire route, 180 people covered 3,589km which roughly equates flying to Cairo!



The Route covered in March 2026

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### Easter at South Anston – From Lent to Easter Sunday



### Easter Eggs Collected by Vikki Oak for The Salvation Army Easter Appeal



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### **FORTHCOMING EVENTS AT SOUTH ANSTON**

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May – Coffee Morning in aid of Christian Aid 9.30am-11.30am

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June – U3A Simply Swing Band Concert @ 7pm (Tickets available shortly)

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June – Fashion Show @ 7pm

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July – Anston Male Voice Choir Concert in aid of The Alzheimer’s Society @ 7pm

*Everyone is more than welcome at all our events*

Anne Duffy

**Thank you once again to everyone who has  
contributed to this edition of our Circuit Chat Newsletter.**

**The aim is to produce quarterly Circuit Chats, could you please send  
any articles for the next edition to.....**

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**by....31 July 2026**



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