



CIRCUIT NEWS

Lincoln Methodist 17/02 Spring 2021



Inside this issue:

Superintendent's Letter	3
News from our churches	5
Why do we sing in the church?	10
Circuit Live Stream Services	11
Thy Kingdom Come	11
World Day of Prayer	11
Calendar Dates	12
Praying Together	13
Farewell to Rev Dr Helen Hooley	15



Compiling each Circuit News is a big but exciting job. It is really important that we celebrate all the good that is happening in the Circuit and would like feedback on our newsletter. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us; we welcome your thoughts. Please address to info@lincolnmethodist.org.uk

Material for the **Summer 2021** edition of **Circuit News** must be with the Circuit Office by Friday, 14 May 2021. Any material received after this date will not be included in the March edition.

Email: info@lincolnmethodist.org.uk

Address: Lincoln Methodist Circuit Office
Burton Road Methodist Church
175 Burton Road
Lincoln LN1 3LW

Website: www.lincolnmethodist.org.uk

March 2021



Dear friends

I begin with a story.

One evening in a country village, a cottage caught on fire. In a few seconds, the thatched roof and the Timbers were ablaze.

There was no fire engine in the remote place and the villagers stood around helpless. Suddenly a young man who had just arrived on the scene cried out, 'What, can nothing be done to save them? '

When no one responded he jumped through the flames and darted into the house. A moment later he emerged, bearing the child under each arm. He had carefully protected them from the flames by hiding them under his coat; he himself was severely burned.

Parents of the two children died in the fire. There was much sympathy for the two children in the village and several people wanted to adopt them.

When the judge arrived to decide who should adopt the children there were two who petitioned the court. The first was the Squire of the village. He had money, position, and a fine house to offer the children. The second petitioner was the man who had rescued the children from the flames.

When the judge asked him what right he had to ask the court for the children he did not answer with words. Instead, he held up his hands that had been severely burned and scarred in their rescue and let them do his arguing for him.

As we approach Easter, I am ever mindful of the sacrificial love of Christ. Like the man who saved the children, Jesus bore the marks on his body as he freely gave his life for us.

As the hymn 'When I survey the wonderous cross' reminds us.

See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Over the last year during the virus, we have seen many sacrificial acts of love displayed in the lives of many. They also bear the marks of their actions. These moments of self-giving can have huge consequences and long-term effects on many lives. I fear that for many years to come lives will be scared and some will be lost.

But the story of Easter reminds us that there is hope. After the devastation of the cross comes resurrection and New Life. As the church we seek to speak and share this hope with our communities. I have seen this worked out in many ways over the years. May you, as we celebrate God's love for us in the person of Jesus, be blessed and know that 'God Loves You,' and is with you this Easter and beyond.

Alan



News from our Churches

Central Church

As we continue our caring and concerns for each other, despite not being able to meet together, we are blessed by the methods of communication and of the talents many have acquired during lockdown enabling us to share our joys, anxieties and our hopes.



As the lockdown continues we are taking time to appreciate more of God's wonderful creation – aconites, snowdrops and daffodils already showing their beauty. The wonderful trees which provide so many benefits. Beautiful sunrises and magnificent sunsets.

In our ever changing world and of our need to change there is much room for optimism. We can see transformations, renewing of our minds and our sometimes resistance to change.

We ask through our prayers, and those too, of Rev Margaret who week by week guides and encourages us in making the right decisions for our church, it's people, the community and how best we can serve Christ.

Incidentally, Rev Margaret's message today is the story of Noah, which means "Rest". Noah and his family coped with uncertain and difficult times, similar to our today's lockdown. Read in Genesis the story of Noah and how goodness prevailed.

Having removed our Christmas tree and decorations from our church

window Rev Margaret has now decorated the tree with yellow pom-poms, almost 400, made by our church family and many friends who have been eager to help. The display reveals the words –

LIGHT ~ JOY ~ HOPE.

As the days lengthen, giving us "**Light**" they bring "**Joy**" as springtime approaches, and "**Hope**" to the world as we enter the season of Lent into the glory of Easter Day.

Although no longer able at the present time to hold our church services and events, Zoom meetings provide much to ensure church council meetings, the life of the church, and its needs carry on.

Thank you to Carolyn and Val who work hard to open the Food Bank each Thursday, 10:30am – 1:00pm, providing much help to those in need.

Gary produces a fortnightly newsletter giving us opportunities to tell our news and keeping us alert through his quizzes and puzzles. Thank you Gary.

Thank you to all who contributed to the "Shoe Box Appeal". 20,768 were sent to Eastern Europe. An amazing amount considering the many difficulties and uncertainties faced at the start of the appeal. Thank you to everyone.

Remember

"The best of all is God is with us."



North Hykeham



With us all being in lockdown and our church closed for services, it has been wonderful to join with others via Zoom. A huge thank you to Alison and Kathryn for hosting the Zoom meetings after the Sunday service. It would be lovely if more folk would join in.

In the absence of other news, readers may be interested in this tale of woe:

My friend is disabled - I don't know how she copes alone with all her problems. She thought that she would cook herself a nice Christmas meal. Firstly, she opened her packet of stuffing mix the wrong end so most ended upon the floor; she then dropped the pheasant (fortunately able to retrieve it, as it fell on the open oven door). Sadly, she dropped the sprouts and could not pick them up. Her cat enjoyed chasing the green sprouts around the kitchen. She told me she did enjoy her lunch, but spilled the gravy on her beautiful special cloth. I don't think I would be as resigned as she is.

Thought that it is a true tale of woe. She says her cat is still chasing the sprouts around! What a story - and brave independent lady.

Finally, for all of you who would not get by without the comfort and companionship of their furry four-legged friend – here is a picture of



my cat, Suzy, guarding my handbag. She has been wonderful company all through lockdown, as I am sure your own delightful pets have been for you.

God Bless Barbara

Swallowbeck



We are grateful to Mark Thompson and the Circuit team who are livestreaming the Sunday services which some of us are able to join. We have a Bible study Zoom meeting starting every Monday from 8 Feb at 7.15, which several of us are joining. Rev Alan Robson is also starting on Friday, 12 February, 2-3.00p.m. during Lent (except 5 March) "I LOVE THAT FRIDAY FEELING!" An informal time to chat via zoom with one another - interspersed with prayers, poems, thoughts, perhaps every now and then music, culminating in the Good Friday gathering also via zoom. Notices are also circulated via email fortnightly and we are trying to keep in touch with those without internet by telephone. We look forward with hope that we will be able to resume meeting in person from Easter Sunday but in the meantime are thankful for our ability to communicate 'virtually'.

Best wishes
Jackie

Stones Place



All the staff and residents have now received their first Covid 19 vaccination and, although only essential healthcare visitors are entering the home, it is now possible to make enquiries about respite stays or long-term care. One of the present residents came for 3 weeks respite stay and decided to extend the stay to continuing care because she settled in so quickly. That was 3 years ago. Volunteers and visiting preachers on Sunday afternoons are being replaced by Chaplain Geoff conducting 2 services back-to-back in the lounge on Thursdays, as there is not enough space with social distancing for everyone to be present at the same time. As with all residential care settings, Stones Place has put extra cleaning and protective measures in place to try to stop the spread of viruses and residents are keeping in touch with their loved ones by phone or video calls. Please support them with prayer.
Rae Perkins - Circuit MHA secretary

St Giles

We have continued to meet via Zoom, thanks to John Lawson, every morning to share concerns and pray for each other and for others in our church, community and the wider world.



The Community Larder continues to provide free food and household goods to families in need on Wednesday and Friday mornings.

A recent initiative from the retail trade who have offered food etc to be given out free of charge. These are items that would otherwise go to landfill. At the time of writing (Feb 12) this has been running for 5 weeks on Monday evenings and a total of 343 people have benefited.

The Night Light Crisis Café is due to open on February 22 to run weekly on Tuesday evenings. This is to provide a comfortable, welcoming and relaxed environment for people who have mental health issues.

The church is planning to re-open for worship on Easter Sunday. Later in the month, on April 25, we will be saying farewell to our minister Rev Dr Helen Hooley. This will be a Circuit Service held at St.Giles live streamed to the circuit and beyond.

Monks Road

At the moment we keep in touch with each other through our weekly Friday Connection letter, on our website and our Facebook page. Our Young Spirits group also meets online every week, and folk from around the circuit have "dipped" in to those meetings. We are making plans to link up again with our local community when we can be open, restarting our after-school club and Friday coffee drop-in for carers and parents from 9am onwards in term time. We are using A Methodist Way of Life as our Lent online course this year.



What would you say?

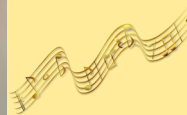


Why do we sing in the Church?

Music in worship goes back to the earliest days of the church. Arrested by the Roman authorities, a group of 'Christians' explained that they met together on a particular day to sing a hymn among themselves 'to the Christ, as to a god'. Saint Augustine wrote that 'the one who sings, prays twice'. Jerome, in the fourth century, wrote: 'Sing to God not with the voice but with the heart.'

Although a man be "kakophonos", to use a common expression, if he have good works, he is a sweet singer before God', and in the same century the Council of Carthage gave us a familiar prayer: 'Take care that what you sing with your mouths you believe in your hearts, and what you believe in your hearts you show forth in your works.' Much later, JS Bach wrote: 'The aim and final reason of all music should be nothing else but the glory of God and the refreshment of spirit.'

Many people have said and written much about the place of music in church in their own age. They link music and singing to the Christian life, to the raising of the spirit and the inspiration to go out and spread the good news in words and actions. They say things about belief and singing, about who God is, about why we sing in praise and prayer, and how all peoples are enabled to bring their own particular songs and culture to the worship. But from where you are, what do you say?



Circuit Live Stream Services

You can watch the circuit service on <https://live.lincolnmethoist.org.uk/>

If there is an issue watching on a mobile device, e.g. phone or tablet, then you can watch direct on our YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuX2h5FJRkrj01OshS94AzA>

When on YouTube, why not SUBSCRIBE to our channel and then you will get notifications when we are live! You can also catch up on all our other services.

Thy Kingdom Come 2021: 13 to 23 May

The global, ecumenical prayer movement, Thy Kingdom Come, is now in its sixth year. Keep an eye [on their website](#) for news about plans and resources for this year, which will include an 11-part, family-friendly programme and a prayer journal written by the new Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell.



[Explore Thy Kingdom Come...](#)

This mailing is from Churches Together in England and is sent once a month.

Subscribe and see the archive: www.cte.org.uk/news

To unsubscribe or to submit stories and news for consideration, email: website@cte.org.uk

A Word version is available to cut and paste articles for further distribution: www.cte.org.uk/news

World Day of Prayer: Friday 5 March

Women of the Republic of Vanuatu (located in the South Pacific Ocean) have prepared this year's service. People of all ages are called to 'Build on a strong foundation' and live in unity, love and peace in the context of ethnic and cultural diversity.

[Resources are available to download...](#)

[2021 WDP Free Resources to download](#) | [World Day Of Prayer \(wwdp.org.uk\)](http://World Day Of Prayer (wwdp.org.uk))

Calendar Dates—March to May 2021

Monday	Mar 01, 2021	St. David's Day
Monday	Mar 08, 2021	Commonwealth Day
Sunday	Mar 14, 2021	Mothering Sunday
Wednesday	Mar 17, 2021	St. Patrick's Day
Friday	Mar 19, 2021	Red Nose Day
Sunday	Mar 21, 2021	Census Day
Sunday	Mar 28, 2021	Palm Sunday
Sunday	Mar 28, 2021	<i>British Summer Time - Clocks go forward 1 hour at 1:00am</i>
Thursday	Apr 01, 2021	Maundy (Holy) Thursday
Friday	Apr 02, 2021	Good Friday
Sunday	Apr 04, 2021	Easter
Monday	Apr 05, 2021	Easter Monday
Wednesday	Apr 07, 2021	World Health Day
Wednesday	Apr 21, 2021	Birthday of Queen Elizabeth II
Thursday	Apr 22, 2021	Earth Day - Theme: "Restore Our Earth."
Friday	Apr 23, 2021	St. George's Day
Sunday	Apr 25, 2021	London Marathon
Thursday	Apr 29, 2021	International Dance Day
Monday	May 03, 2021	Early Spring Bank Holiday
Saturday	May 08, 2021	World Red Cross/Red Crescent Day
Sunday - Saturday	May 09 -15, 2021	Christian Aid Week
Thursday	May 13, 2021	Ascension of Jesus
Thursday - Sunday	May 13 - 23, 2021	Thy Kingdom Come
Sunday	May 23, 2021	Pentecost
Sunday	May 30, 2021	Trinity Sunday
Monday	May 31, 2021	Spring Bank Holiday
Wednesday	Jun 02, 2021	Coronation Day
Thursday	Jun 03, 2021	Corpus Christi

PRAYING TOGETHER

MARCH TO MAY 2021

1 Pray for the nations of the world, particularly our leaders and those in government responsible for making hard decisions.

2 Pray for peace, wisdom and understanding and a deep commitment to serve all.

3 Pray for all care workers who attend to our vulnerable people, whether that be in hospital or care/nursing homes. Help them to bring hope to their charges.

4 Pray for shop workers and all in the retail trade, who work tirelessly to ensure that we have access to food and clothing.

5 Pray for all delivery drivers and others in the haulage industry who have continued to ensure that essential goods have reached their destination in timely manner.

6 Pray for all the 'forgotten' people who work in the food chain—laboratory assistants, office workers, bankers, etc. Without these, our food would not be transported from farm to shop.

7 Pray for people who love the land and care for it well, making farming sustainable for future generations.

8 Pray for crop growers and livestock breeders, taking risks to grow food for a hungry world.

9 Pray for the Christian denominations of the world, that their leaders may lead us forward in a Christ-like way and help to forge peaceful links with other religions.

10 Pray for rural and regional networks, sharing information to overcome loneliness and isolation for those on the land.

11 Pray for strategists, planners, policy makers and advisors, offering new ways to grow food and care for the land in changing times.

12 Pray for seasonable weather, good growth and good yields, so that there may be abundant harvests to feed hungry people.

13 Pray for safe work practices and healthy habits for all farmers, so that people and communities may flourish and be strong.

14 Pray for health and happiness in the home life of all farmers, and for families to work together with love, respect and harmony.

15 Pray for wise financial planning, land care and asset management, so that farmers may be confident about the future of their farms.

16 Pray for good communication between country and city, so that we may understand each other's worlds and encourage one another.

17 Pray for our Superintendent, Rev Alan Swann, as he shepherds our Circuit forward into the future.

18 Pray for strong and growing initiative and energy in country towns, so that farmers may share in life-giving communities.

19 Pray for those in despair in hard times, that they may be helped and supported by caring services and friends.

20 Pray for Christians who gather for worship, study and prayer, that their faith may create and sustain community.

21 Pray for those in the emergency services. When they are called out, let the traffic part before them; keep them safe from harm under the shadow of your protecting wings. May their hands be your hands of healing and comfort so that they are able to help all those to whom they are called.

22 Pray for ourselves, that we may put our trust and faith in God alone: that our faith and trust does not waiver as we face each day anew.

23 Pray for our families, loved ones and friends that God will safeguard us and make provisions for all of our needs; always guiding our actions and protecting us.

24 Pray that our Lord guides our heart with love; our mind with truth; our actions with faith and our soul with hope. Let us trust Him completely.

25 Pray for all our Ministers, Lay Preachers, Worship Leaders as they assist Rev Alan Swann in his task of ministering to the many members of our Circuit.

26 Pray for our children and young people as they come to terms with the disruption in their education; give them hope for the future.

27 Pray for teachers as they strive to ensure that their pupils become wise and compassionate citizens of this world, despite all obstacles in their way.

28 Pray for our community at this difficult time, that we might recover and rebuild our confidence; give us strength as we meet the challenges ahead.

29 Pray for administrators, that they have clarity of mind, unity of spirit, strength of will, a heart of wisdom and the gift of your truth-bearing Spirit, so that they might be enabled to make decisions that lead to the flourishing and wellbeing of the whole community.

30 Pray that Jesus is with us as we meet; guides us as we talk; stays with us as we plan; opens our ears as we listen and opens our eyes to your vision.

31 Father God, meet us here, in this place, and overwhelm us with your holy presence. Precious Holy Spirit, intercede on our behalf and speak the words that need to be spoken and carry them to the Lord's ears.



Farewell to Rev Dr Helen Hooley

2021 is going to be a year of change - and particularly for the Hooley household, as we move to the other side of the country in August. I have been invited (subject to conference) to the South West Cumbria United Area - a circuit that is jointly administered by the Methodist Church and the URC. It covers an area of south-west Cumbria, from Barrow in Furness to Millom, with 9 churches. I will take up a post as superintendant, with one other minister in the circuit. I have to admit, I'm quite looking forward to seeing some hills... David starts a new job with Furness College in March, so he will be going ahead of me!

I have had a lovely time in Lincoln, and as I look back, seen a lot of change in the Methodist Church; from coming to Lincoln North circuit, and seeing two circuits join together, a number of colleagues move on to pastures new, and new colleagues arrive to continue the ministry. Some church buildings have closed, but new ministries started, including cafe church at Ingham, the GodPod bus moving to new ownership, and the Eden team growing community engagement on the St Giles estate. I have worked alongside some wonderful capable, and godly people, and I thank you all for your support and the prayer and commitment to the Kingdom of God in this community.

Taking a sabbatical from May-July 2021 seemed like a sensible idea 2 years ago, when 3 of the ministers agreed not to overlap when we were away! I was planning my last Advent / Christmas and Lent / Easter series with churches - but Covid had other ideas, and now it seems you will be praying and planning for a future beyond lockdown without me. My plans are, er, uncertain - conferences and travel are

not clear, but I am hoping to be able to meet up with friends I've not seen for years. I'm intending to study Artificial Intelligence and Ethics - which I now find is a university course in its own right - those of you who followed the A level and GCSE results last summer may recognise how algorithms can disadvantage some people, through no fault of their own. How this can be remedied, and how the Bible's picture of counting the hairs on our heads, and to love our neighbour as ourselves speaks into the issues, so that each person is valued, is something I'm hoping to explore. I'm intending to write something, maybe as a blog, so I will have something to share at the end of the process.

My prayer for you all is:

I beg you to **1** lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, **2** with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, **3** making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. **4** There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, **5** one Lord, one faith, one baptism, **6** one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:1-6.

Grace and peace, Helen.

