

# Newsletter

Published for the Churches of the Bramhall  
and Wythenshawe Methodist Circuit

March 2024

## Dave Warnock writes...

'So we are "in Lent". As a child it was not something that the Churches I was part of made much of. We had pancakes, we decorated a cross, and when I was older we had Lent groups. That was about it. I wonder how much that is connected to my memories of that time (probably with a pair of rose tinted glasses) as one where there was optimism about the future.

Yesterday, we had a review meeting of our Christians Against Poverty Debt Centre. It will be no surprise that Clare and our wonderful volunteers have a brilliant track record in helping people. Yet the reality is that things have got measurably worse for many people. Now, half of the people that CAP help can have their debts resolved but be left with a negative budget. That means, that after the debts are gone, the CAP financial experts cannot find a way to make the budget balance for 50% of the people they help. Take a moment to read that last sentence again. For these people getting back into debt is unavoidable. This is not an optimistic time. The political and public discourse has not caught onto the Methodist Church "Let's End Poverty" campaign for the next general election. Politicians are not being asked searching questions about what they are going to do about ending poverty, instead they continue to talk of tax cuts for the wealthy.

When we raise our eyes to the beauty of God's creation the destruction is still there. 2023 broke records for global temperatures as we globally passed 1.5°C of global warming – the world has failed to meet the Paris agreement goals. The impacts are undeniable from the transformation of the largest freshwater lake in the UK to dramatic weather extremes and an increasing loss of species diversity.

All this means I see Lent differently. A friend who endured years of abuse put it helpfully. She says that she lives her best life when she doesn't try to deny the reality but is instead her full authentic self.

*"Whenever I feel I cannot be my full authentic self (which includes the impact of the abuse on my present life) I feel very unwell. I tell myself that I'm moving on and trying to be free of it. When in actual fact it feels the opposite. When I face it and own it and have it with me, as a friend rather than an enemy then I feel more like me. I feel stronger and in control."*

I have come to feel much the same about Lent. There is something about following the journey to the cross that feels authentic to the times we live in. It is not about living in despair but living authentically in a world that needs the transformation of resurrection, of forgiveness of God's Kingdom coming fully. Lent is a time for me to learn more of living with hope amidst destruction. The hope is not in politicians or that the powerful will stand up for justice and equity. Instead the hope is in God who suffered and died for us. Who has conquered death and whose kingdom of joy, love, life, justice and peace is coming. Yesterday, I also spent time with Steven, someone who uses a wheelchair but is going to be running a Mart (a form of community grocer/pantry) at St Andrew's. One of his passions is to change assumptions about people who use wheelchairs (it includes boxing exercise with a personal trainer - come to St Andrew's on a Friday afternoon to find out more.) This thirst for life, for making a difference, for challenging stereotypes reminds me how powerful authentic living by Christian Disciples, by us can be. Being authentic is going to be different for each of us. God has chosen to make each of us unique, our experiences are all different as are our personalities and gifts. So I would love to learn more of what it is for you to be authentic and to celebrate that.

May our journey towards Easter be marked by being real with ourselves, with God and with our communities and in that may we see more of God's Kingdom.' Dave

# What's been happening in our churches?

There has been a lot of great things happening in the **Wythenshawe churches** over the past few months. Clare Byfield shares some of the heart-warming stories with us...

'On Thursday 21st December, we held a Christmas party at **Lawton Moor** Methodist Church and we were wowed! The church was packed with so many families we started to worry we were going to run out of chairs. The children made Christmas cards, made nativity books and made little clay ornaments to give to their grown ups on Christmas morning. Dave Warnock did a fantastic job with the food and getting everyone fed. One lesson learnt was don't use air drying clay again! It got EVERYWHERE and our poor volunteers ended up scrubbing floors trying to get bits up, again, I apologise to them! It was a brilliant event that everyone said that they enjoyed and I'm sure we made Christmas that little bit more special for the community.



Then, on December 23rd, we did it all again at **St. Andrew's!** This was attended by around 80 people and the place was rocking! We made cards, baubles and had some brilliant games including a reindeer game involving balloons and tights! At this event, we also had a 'secret corner' where parents / carers could come and choose brand new toys for their children and grandchildren to help families where money just wasn't available so they did not have to tell their children that Santa was sick this year. The gratitude and sheer appreciation that came from these families can not be put into words but God was there and I have never felt love like it. I know a lot of our wonderful churches donated items and we can not thank you all enough.



On Christmas Eve, I was very kindly donated 17 fresh turkeys from Waitrose in Cheadle Hulme. These went (along with some of the toys) to the families that Dave Warnock delivers food trays to week in week out.

On Christmas day, St. Andrews hosted their first Christmas dinner. 33 people turned up and we provided 6 dinners to the Dandelion community for people that they knew had no dinner. They were made up of clients from the council hostel, people who were alone for Christmas, people who could not afford a Christmas dinner and those who just wanted to be warm. Again, everyone who attended were so grateful and kept thanking the team for doing this on Christmas day, one even said "Christmas I usually spend all day thinking I don't want to be here anymore, you have made me feel special and wanted" Everyone left with full bellies and even some leftovers to take.



**CAP** has been very busy still and we are just awaiting the sign-off of our new debt coach, Pam Oakley which is very exciting as we will be able to take on more clients and reach more and more. As we are shortly to be taking on more clients, if you are interested in becoming a befriender (volunteer) please let me know. It basically involves coming along to client visits to help support. You can do as much or as little as you like. Also, the second week of January saw our first debt free client of 2024!



We also now have DNA! This is a youth group initially set up by our friends at the Church of England. They moved into St. Andrews for the winter from William Temple as did their congregation on Sundays. We have had fun and the group is starting to grow. We even went bowling at Parrs Wood and the group loved it! If you know of any youth ages 11 - 18 that would like to join, we meet at St. Andrews every Thursday 4.30pm till 6pm.

Mo's Cabin at **Brownley Green** Methodist Church is so full of bargains and Phemy makes the best brew in the world. The area around the cabin is looking a little tatty at the moment due to weather and I am looking to have a big de-weed and rescue of plants in the next few weeks. If you have green fingers and would like to help, please message me or pop along on a Friday to see me there. Mo's Cabin is open 9.30am to 12pm Tuesdays and Fridays.

A prayer group will be starting the first week of February at **St. Andrew's** each Tuesday 12pm till 1pm. I have had CAP clients asking about prayer and church but when you invite them to church, they feel that it is too big a step for them so a prayer group, where we can spend 30 minutes in prayer, then talk over tea and coffee after may help people interested in a more informal chatty style. If anyone is interested in joining us for prayer then please come along! It's not only for those thinking about faith, it's for everyone so please do join us! Our prayer space is all set up and ready to go.'



Some more good news for St Andrew's café was received in December when we learnt that the café had been awarded a 5\* hygiene rating. We knew that it was selling 5\* toasties, but now we know that everyone's efforts have paid off and we have a 5\* café keeping folk fed. **MANY CONGRATULATIONS** to Dave and the team at St. Andrew's.

Tori Allen, the District's Digital and Communications Officer, recently chatted to Clare Byfield about the destitution crisis hitting Wythenshawe and the work she and her team are doing to support the community. You can find this update [here](#) or by looking up the following link: [www.facebook.com/reel/1054528875604383](https://www.facebook.com/reel/1054528875604383).

Lynne Hodson from **St Mary's** tells us about the wonderful Covenant and Confirmation service they shared with Wilmslow and Styal in January ...

### **St. Mary's 3 Church Covenant and Confirmation Service January 14<sup>th</sup> 2024**

'January 14<sup>th</sup> saw St. Mary's Church full with members from Wilmslow and Styal in addition to our own congregation. The service was led by Ian and included the confirmation of Teki and Belle Chan who had been baptised in a short service earlier. They were welcomed into membership of St. Mary's by the stewards as well as Ian Smart and presented with bible. Ashley, Teki and Nelle's son, played the piano to accompany the singing of "Be still". Chris and Roger Goddard were thanked for the service they have given to Wilmslow church and the Circuit over many years and a presentation was made to them from the Wilmslow church as they prepared to move away to Kent.

After the service 70 people (yes 70) moved to the church hall for lunch provided and prepared by St. Mary's. It was good day when we were fed spiritually and physically, enjoying the fellowship of the three churches together.'



Meanwhile, **Wilmslow** Methodist Church came up with a new and exciting way to share the Christmas story with children. Emma Coe tells us about their Christmas Escape Room Experience...

### **Christmas Escape Room Experience 2023**

'How do you tell the Christmas story in a new and exciting way? Early in 2023 when contemplating how to tell the Christmas story to children in a new way, I suddenly thought about telling the story by problem solving, along the lines of an Escape Room. It meant that instead of doing a fairly straight forward telling of the story, as is usually done for Infants, the story could be investigated in a bit more detail for slightly older children i.e. those of Junior age and above. The idea percolated for a long time and a visit to a local Escape Room helped to crystallise some ideas.

The basic premise would be the children would be taken on a journey back in time - about 2000 years to the Roman Empire and the time of Jesus' birth. This involved them watching a video with various famous historical events (taken from the Primary School Curriculum) going back to the time of Herod and Caesar Augustus. The children knew that had to use their powers of observation and listen for clues in all that they were told. Their other senses might be involved at some points too! They would then go through 3 rooms and find the answer to 3 different Christmas puzzles. Smaller groups went round as a whole and school classes were split into 3 groups, that went through the rooms in a circuit.



Each room had a different theme (Roman, Angel and Star rooms) and a puzzle to solve, that would lead them to the combination of padlocked chests containing a jigsaw puzzle piece. Each room had a different style of padlock to unlock.

The 3 room puzzles were: Where was Jesus born and why? Who visited Mary and what was the message they brought? Who visited Jesus from afar and how did they know where to go? Once the 3 puzzles had been solved and 3 different jigsaw pieces had been collected, the children all joined together and they were given a 4<sup>th</sup> jigsaw piece. This completed the jigsaw puzzle with a Christmas message on it. Refreshments were served and the children made a pipe cleaner angel tree decoration. The children also received a party bag with a Christmas colouring craft and an invite to the Christingle on Christmas Eve. Also in the bag was a golden chocolate coin, to complete the gifts from the Wise Men, as in the Star Room they had the opportunity to smell Frankincense and Myrrh.



Approximately 140 children took part in the Escape Room Experience, including some local primary schools, Cubs and Scouts groups, a Guide group and children from the church family and wider community. Positive feedback was received from all the groups that visited. Our Craft and Chatter group helped with the decorations for the rooms and also with the serving of the refreshments. We were also very grateful to the church members who volunteered throughout the course of the week.



The Escape Room Experience was made possible by a legacy from a beloved church member. The ideas and kit will be used by another church in the Circuit this Christmas and we hope to develop the idea for other Christian festivals.'

We hear the latest news on **Heald Green Methodist Church** from Marjorie Wilson...



'Remembrance Sunday worship was attended by the Scouts and led by Charles. He did a quiz on the origins of Remembrance, and talked of the cost of war on refugees and infrastructure. The Scouts went on after our service to take part in the service at the local War Memorial

In Autumn, the Rainbows held a sleepover at Abney in Cheadle, the first night away for most of the girls, including a camp fire, climbing trees and a nature walk to the waterfall. The Brownies visited Heald Green community apiary, to try out bee-keeper suits and hold the frames of cells covered in busy bees! We are re-opening our Guide unit from January with 2 new volunteers, which means that our girls can continue their Guiding once they finish Brownies.

£706 was obtained from the League of Light lanterns for Action for Children.

The TLO held an afternoon Christmas Concert on Saturday, 2nd December, in a packed church, which was greatly enjoyed by young and old. Monies raised go to develop the orchestra and help local charities.

Susan Turner arranged for carols singing at Smithy Croft on 14th December. Several church members supported residents in singing carols round the apartments which was much appreciated. On Saturday, 16th December Charles attended a Jasmine Peace Group Muslim/Christian meeting and meal at church to discuss the situation in Gaza. A further day long meeting was held on Saturday, 3rd February entitled 'A Prayer for Peace in the Holy Land'.



A well attended, candle lit Community Carol service was led by Charles, at 6pm on 17th December followed by mince pies and mulled wine (non alcoholic)!

The Prisoners of Conscience appeal was again brought to our attention by Susan Turner. About 15 messages in all were sent to people in 8 countries covering the

USA, South Africa, Poland, Myanmar, Australia, Kryz Republic, United Arab Emirates and Eswatini ( previously Swaziland). This last was to the widow of a Methodist man, a lawyer, who was shot in his own home because he had spoken against the present very harsh regime.

Charles led our well attended Covenant service on 7th January 2024.

On 21st January we celebrated the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity with a pulpit exchange. The Rev. Jacob Devadason, Vicar of St. Catherine's Parish Church preached strongly from a psalm of David about God being a strong tower of strength and salvation.

After much work by Nigel Neary, our boundary fence has been restored to its correct position. Developments at the side of church are being considered, such as planting bulbs, hopefully with help from the Uniformed Organisations.'

We hear about some of the Christmas events at **Bramhall Methodist Church...**



### **Messy Christmas - 10th December**

'Messy Christmas was a joyful event. The families really enjoyed the craft ideas, decorating baubles, making crackers and wreaths. The children spent time arranging a wooden nativity scene. It wasn't until it was packed away that we found Mary still in the box . Thank goodness an angel stood in for her! One parent took time to email the office to say how much they had enjoyed the afternoon.

### **Christmas Baby Chat with seedlings—15th December**

There were 16 children, who were told the story, 'Father Christmas Needs a Wee'! We sang R'udolf the Red Nosed Reindeer, with musical accompaniment, made a reindeer, with a red nose obviously and decorated paper chains. The children went home with Christmas activity books, a chocolate Santa and invitations to Christmas Messy Church and Christingle. This paid off—it was lovely to see some new families at the Christingle Service.



### **Christingle - 24th December**

The welcome area was packed for Christingle this year with regulars, first time attendees, families from Messy Church and Seedlings creating 60 Christingles. As the Christingles were finished, families moved into church. There were quite a few adults with no children who had come to re-live memories of years gone by, showing that this is not just a service for children. The lights were dimmed, and the Christingles were lit. A truly joyful event. Sarah led the interactive celebration with the children accompanying the carols with musical instruments. There was even an appearance from our very own human Christingle.

### **Tribe - Epiphany Party - 7th January**

Due to the time restrictions of Bitesize church and the nativity, Tribe missed out on a Christmas party. So, we decided to celebrate Epiphany in style. We kicked off with pass the parcel and prizes of frankincense, myrrh and gold chocolate coins. Next was a suitably themed quiz, the obligatory snowball game and then, the highlight of the morning - a chocolate fountain with all the trimmings (at 10.30am!) We have a small but lovely bunch of teens and we would welcome visitors anytime.'



We also heard about a Churches Together Carols in the park in **Cheadle Hulme...**

Churches Together gathered for Carols in the Park in a muddy Oak Meadow and collected cash and food donations for Chelwood Foodbank Plus - Fighting SK Poverty. They collected four trolleys-worth of donations in the precinct as part of Cheadle Hulme Market.

# Getting to know each other.

## **Jo Smith, the new Pastoral Worker at Bramhall Methodist Church, writes ...**

'Hello, I'm Jo Smith and I started working as the Pastoral Worker at Bramhall Methodist Church in January 2024. I have been a member at Bramhall for over 20 years and have been involved with junior church for most of that time.



I am married to Jon, and we have 2 children, Chris (26) and Faye (23) who live at home with us. I also have a stepdaughter, Cassie (34), who lives in St Helens with her partner, Gaz. They had their first baby on 30 January, so as you can imagine, we are very excited at being new grandparents. My hobbies include walking, running, cycling and swimming. I am also the secretary and a poolside helper for Stockport Sharks Swimming Club for people with Disabilities, which is based at Hazel Grove. We encourage our members to bring along their families and carers and are always ready to welcome new members and helpers.

Before this year, I had worked in education for over 30 years. Firstly, as a teacher and subsequently as a teaching assistant. My new role as pastoral worker is a complete contrast and I am very much enjoying the challenge of learning many new skills, new names and what being around church during the daytime, is all about. My plan is to make contact with all church members at BMC over the coming months and help those on the fringes feel loved and welcomed. I would love to see those who use our church buildings feel drawn to seek God and love Jesus.'

### **??? Q&A ???**

**Where were you born?** Basildon, Essex

**Are you a morning person or a night owl?** Definitely morning.

**Tea or Coffee?** Decaf tea

**What is your dream for the church?** A people and place that is open to meeting the needs of the community that have no experience of Christianity. A congregation that is prepared to go out rather than wait for people to come in. My dream is to be brave enough to be part of that.

**What is your favourite book or verse in the Bible?** Esther 4: 9-14 Even though Esther was scared, she did as Mordecai asked and risked her life to save her people. Verse 14 '...for such a time as this' helps to push me out of my comfort zone when I would rather bury my head and push action to one side.

**Where are some of the places you have lived?** Essex, Suffolk, Surrey, Nottingham, Birmingham and closer to home, High Lane, Disley, Davenport, Hazel Grove and now Poynton.

**What is something you've never done that you'd like to try?** Walk the length of Hadrian's Wall (in the summer...)



# An Update on the Circuit Audit

## **What is this Circuit Audit and why are they taking a service at my church?**

In the Summer of 2024, we have some big decisions to make. Dave Warnock will be moving on, and Sarah is making decisions about her future. The Circuit will almost certainly be dropping to three Presbyters from 2025, and therefore, we need to understand our options for the future. To make these choices, and following a presentation to the Circuit Meeting, we have appointed TCC (Transforming Churches and Communities) to undertake a full audit of the entire Circuit and come up with recommendations and options for the future.



Because we want everyone to have an opportunity to feed in comments, and every voice to be heard, TCC will be leading worship in every society in the Circuit and asking for your thoughts. To quote their proposal to us, they will be asking three questions:

**What is the missional context of each Society?**

**Does the church have the governance and structures in place to achieve this mission?**

**How can we use our resources to advance mission as a Circuit?**

They then added:

*All churches should start with Mission! If you already have a mission focused church, the questions are: What does that Mission look like? What are the activities to achieve the Mission (and do they work), and when did you last review your Mission?*

*For those churches that do not have a fully focused and achievable Mission Plan and associated Action Plan, developing one should be seen as a priority. TCC has and is supporting a number of churches in identifying the characteristics of their Mission; this is through a facilitated process led by one of our experienced consultants. The depth of any review undertaken is determined by the capacity and timescales of the church.*

*TCC would normally work with a small group of Church leaders to collate and review the current information available and identify any gaps. Then analyse and prioritise that information to produce a series of actions to address any major issues identified. Following this, a Your Church service would be held to survey the feelings and thoughts of all church members.*

Finally, they added;

*Once the individual Societies have been reviewed, this work is to be collated into a Circuit Review, which will also consider manses and lay workers.*

This work will also build on some work that has been undertaken by the existing presbyters, which has been shared with the Leadership Team and with TCC. Contained within that document are a number of concepts:

*The centralisation of the administration functions of the different church families*

*The appointment of a General Manager to oversee the administrative side of the churches*

*The focussing of the presbyters on the Pastoral needs of the church members and mission amongst the communities that they are focussed upon.*

*The establishment of a number of Multi-site churches across the Circuit to reduce the number of Church Councils and to enable the better sharing of resources.*

The model they proposed is a model that schools have adopted through the academisation process, and it would appear to fit well with the new District structures as we understand them. It also allows each of the Circuit projects to have a freedom that they do not have at present, and each of these can then be managed in a manner that is most appropriate to it. It also allows each of these to link into the Connexional Priorities directly, such as New Places for New People.

However, this is one idea amongst many, and may not be the best one, or the one that members prefer, this is why we need external expertise to guide us.

I hope this makes sense of all that is happening and will enable you to support this process by attending these acts of worship and by holding this in prayer.

If you have any further questions, then please contact any member of the CLT or myself as Superintendent.

God Bless,

Ian

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### **A Prayer by John Birch**

*Spirit of Truth*

*who reveals to us the things of God*

*we praise your name.*

*Spirit of Wisdom*

*who inspires the words we ought to speak*

*we praise your name.*

*Spirit of Power*

*who grants the courage we need to act*

*we praise your name.*

*Spirit of Love*

*who knows our nature and loves us still*

*we praise your name.*



©John Birch at [www.faithandworship.com](http://www.faithandworship.com)

# Prayer in our Circuit

Heather Coward describes a new ecumenical prayer group that is forming...

## SK9 PRAYER WATCH

'While on holiday in India, I felt the Lord was saying I had to start an ecumenical prayer group to pray for revival in Wilmslow. The following day I prayed about the prayer group and it became very clear that the name of the group was to be SK9 PRAYER WATCH.

During the last 12 months I have been privileged to hear 2 prophecies saying "the Lord is going to do great things in Wilmslow". I believe that God wants all our Churches to work together, sharing our strengths and prayers to enable revival within SK9. God needs our prayers that doors and ways may be opened for Him to work. As Christians we all believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So what better way than to begin by uniting in prayer?

### Pointers For Prayer:

- Pray for God to bestow spiritual hunger to His people and draw them into fervent intercession. Phil 2. 1- 2
- Pray that God will bring loving unity in our churches and a deep harmony between our churches. John 13. 34 – 35
- Pray for God to fill His people with a passion to see people saved. Pray for people by name.
- Pray Matt 28.19
- As churches struggle for leaders, pray that God will call people into ministry, mission and Christian service. Matt 9. 37
- Pray for a mighty move of conviction and salvation upon communities and people of cultural influence. (eg. sports personalities, pop stars, film stars) 1 Timothy 2. 1-2
- Prayer for revival based on Habakkuk's prayer in Chapter 3



*Heavenly Father we come before you today acknowledging your character and sovereignty over all things. We ask that you would reveal yourself to us and to our community, SK9, that we may know you more deeply and seek your face with all our hearts. We cry out to you for revival and a fresh outpouring of your Spirit in our lives and community. We ask that you bring about a deep awakening of your glory and power in the hearts of our people so thy seek your grace and turn to Christ, and that You would transform our lives and our Churches. We remember how you have worked in the past and we pray that you will do it again here in SK9. We trust in your power and deliverance even in the midst of difficult circumstances, and we rejoice in your salvation and the hope we have in you.*

*We ask that you would use us to bring about your kingdom here on earth and that you would bring about a great harvest of new worshippers and believers.*

*We ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen*

### Jesus' Prayer John 17. 20-21

"My prayer is not for them (His disciples) alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe you have sent me."

Please support us as we pray for the people and churches in SK9 and pray for your own communities that God will 'bring about a great harvest of new worshippers and believers' where you are.'



# Circuit news & dates for your diary.

## Bramhall Lent+ Discussion Groups

Join us for our Lent+ discussion groups to think about the ways in which we could be a more intentionally justice seeking church, Wednesdays, 7.30pm-9pm in the Fellowship Room:

28 <sup>th</sup> February	Tackling inequality & poverty: seeking life in all its fullness
6 <sup>th</sup> March	Enabling a flourishing environment: right relationship between people, planet & God
27 <sup>th</sup> March	Seeking justice for refugees: one people, one world
3 <sup>rd</sup> April	Opposing discrimination: all are made in the image of God
17 <sup>th</sup> April	Pursuing peace: seeking justice and reconciliation

Entitled 'Lent+' as some sessions are during Lent, others afterwards! Please join us for all, some, or just one of the above. For more information, please speak to Sarah.



### Notices from the Circuit Office.

- **Circuit Office Contact Details:** My regular work days are Mon, Wed, Thurs and Fri and you can usually find me in the Circuit Office between 9:00am and 2:30pm on a Monday and in the Wilmslow Church Office on a Wednesday morning. Otherwise, you can always reach me at the Circuit Office email address: [bwcircuit@gmail.com](mailto:bwcircuit@gmail.com).
- You can find more Circuit news and photos on **Facebook** by 'Liking' the Circuit page entitled 'Bramhall & Wythenshawe Methodist Circuit'.

**Please note:** If you include your personal contact details in an article then it will be assumed that you are giving consent for these to be included in the paper copy of the magazine, which will be in the public



# News from the District & Connexion

## Update on the North West England District—Dave James

I hope that you are aware that it is planned that the Manchester & Stockport District, of which we are part, will become part of the new North West England District with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September this year. This is being done to make the work of the District more efficient and so that more help can be offered to the circuits and churches with their work.

Here are some bullet points that will help you know what is planned to change and, perhaps more importantly, what won't be changing.



### Churches

There will be no change to the local churches. The allocation of ministers to churches will remain the same unless the Circuit decides otherwise. Rev. Alistair Jones will still be coming to the Circuit in September.

### Circuits

The Circuit remains unchanged (apart from getting a new number). Ian will remain as our Superintendent.

Those are the main areas that are remaining unchanged, so what is changing?

### District

We become part of the North West England District. The nominated chair of the District is Rev. Dr James Tebbutt, who is currently chair of the Cumbria District. He will be supported, at the top level, by 2 District Secretaries. These 2 posts are being recruited at present with interviews taking place later in February.

There will be 3 hubs, each headed up by the Chair or one of the District Secretaries. Between them they will control the work of the District. The 3 hubs are:

- Mission & Leadership (led by the District Chair)
- Administration & Compliance (led by a District Secretary)
- Ministry & Vocations (led by a District Secretary)



### Mission areas

Each circuit will be allocated to a mission area, of which there will be 4. To begin with, the mission areas are being arranged geographically but that may change in the future as their work develops (for instance, a grouping of rural circuits across the district)

The mission areas are designed to help the circuits and churches within them work together on their mission.

Each mission area will be led by a Mission Area lead who will be a presbyter, probably working 50% as that and 50% in a circuit.

Our Circuit is provisionally allocated to the Greater Manchester plus Mission Area.

There is a lot of work going on at present to develop the Mission areas. I will hopefully be able to tell you more later in the year.

### Synod

There will be 1 synod for the district. Each circuit will still elect representatives to the synod.'

### Important dates

As we move from the Manchester & Stockport District to the North West England District, there are two events planned to celebrate this.

- **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July.** Celebration of the Manchester & Stockport District and a farewell to our chair, Rev. Dr Andrew Lunn as he retires. (Venue not yet decided)
- **Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August.** Opening celebration of the North West England District, led by the President of Conference. (Venue. Victoria Hall Bolton)



### Questions

If you have any questions about any of this, please contact me.

Dave James [dhjames51@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dhjames51@yahoo.co.uk) 0161 485 3390

A poster for 'The Equip Series' by the North West England Methodist District. The title 'THE EQUIP SERIES' is in large, bold, black letters. To the right is a graphic of a person with arms raised, surrounded by icons for a clock, a laptop, a document, and a person. Below the title is a red rounded rectangle with the date '12.03.2024' and the time '7.30PM-8.30PM'. To the right of this is the text 'MONTHLY ONLINE EVENTS', 'HOSTED ON ZOOM', and 'ARRIVE FROM 7.20PM FOR A 7.30PM START'. Below this is a paragraph of text: 'Come along to this information evening and be equipped as we move towards the launch of the North West England District. The evening will include:'. This is followed by a bulleted list: '• Devotions', '• Space to be equipped spiritually', '• An update from James Tebbutt, our new District Chair (subject to Methodist Conference)', '• An update from each sub group, to increase our knowledge and understanding of how the new district will look and feel', and '• Q and A session'. Below the list is another paragraph: 'These events will take place once a month at varying times, to ensure all are able to participate if you would like to.' At the bottom is a red box with the text 'IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, PLEASE EMAIL NWEDCOMMUNICATION@OUTLOOK.COM.'

## MWiB Spring Gathering

Saturday, 2nd March, 10.30 a.m. – 3.15 p.m.  
(Coffee served from 10.00 a.m.)



**Methodist Central Hall** Oldham Street, Manchester M1 1JQ  
(Contact [Liz @ lizstuartlp@aol.com](mailto:lizstuartlp@aol.com) for directions)

**Speaker and Choir from Women Asylum Seekers Together (WAST)**



*Please bring your own lunch – drinks provided*



## Bible Month Training Day: Genesis

10AM - 3PM / SAT 16 March



Genesis is the starting point for all Christian theology and explores many of the foundational questions of life and faith: Who is God? How does God interact with the world? How is that world meant to be? What does it mean to be human? What does it look like to be God's people?

Join us for a day exploring this book, and get equipped for helping your church discover its many treasures.

**BOOK NOW** : [BM24-Training.eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/BM24-Training)

## Easter Offering 2024 : “Let Justice Roll”

*“But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!”*  
*Amos 5:24, NIV*

Methodist Women in Britain, as a justice-seeking charity, has chosen the theme ‘Let Justice Roll’ for this year’s Easter Offering Service. This **Easter Offering 2024** service tells stories of people standing for justice, persisting in the face of setbacks and taking up the challenge anew as circumstances change.

You can order your printed **Let Justice Roll** resources, including your collection envelopes, via the [Methodist Publishing website](#). In 2023, collections from Easter Offering services raised over £190,000, thanks to the generosity of Methodists. We thank Methodist Women in Britain for running this appeal, and you for making a difference by contributing to God’s mission in this way.

# Preaching Plan March - May 2024

2024	March							April					May				
	Date	3rd	10th	17th	24th	29th	31st	7th	14th	21st	28th	5th	12th	19th	26th		
Sunday Lectionary Year B		Lent 3	Lent 4	Lent 5	Palm Sunday	Good Friday	Easter Sunday	Easter 1	Easter 2	Easter 3	Easter 4	Easter 5	Easter 6	Easter 7	Pentecost		
Special Sundays			Mothers' Sunday											Christian Aid Week beginnings		Aldersgate Sunday	
Bramhall (live-streamed)	Parkin	TCC service	Langton	A Clowes	10.45am CT	Parkin HC	Parkin HC	Bartindale	D Clowes HC	D Clowes	Parkin HC	Nevin	LA	Parkin HC	P James	Allaby	
Centrepoint (live-streamed)	Nevin	Warnock	Castledine	Parkin		D James	A Clowes	A Clowes	Langton	Langton	Parkin HC	Parkin HC	Castledine	D Clowes	LA	Parkin HC	
Brownley Green	Parkin HC						Warnock	Warnock	Warnock	Tu'ihalama-ka		TCC service	Smart	Warnock HC	Langton	Warnock	
Cheadle Hulme (live-streamed)	Warnock HC	Warnock	Harding	Warnock	12 noon US at Civic	Warnock HC	D Clowes HC	Parkin HC	Warnock	Castledine	LA	Parkin HC	Gunn	Bartindale	Smart US	Aldersgate	
Christ Church	Sarbutts	P James	Parkin HC	TCC service	3.30pm Parkin	D Clowes HC			Allaby							Parkin	
Heald Green	Ream	Nevin HC	TCC service	Nevin	10am Nevin	Nevin HC	Nevin HC	Harding									
Lawton Moor	Warnock / Byfield AA HC	TCC service	Bartindale	Warnock	12 noon US at Civic	Warnock HC	Warnock HC	Warnock / Byfield AA	LA	Warnock	Warnock	Gunn	Warnock / Byfield AA	Warnock HC	Harding	Warnock	
St Andrew's	Harding	McDonnell	Warnock HC	McDonnell	12 noon US Civic & WT	6:30am at WT	TCC service	TCC service	Warnock HC	McDonnell	McDonnell HC	McDonnell	LA	McDonnell	Warnock HC	McDonnell	
St Mary's, Handforth	Tu'ihalama-ka	Smart HC	Richards	Allaby	11am US at Wilmslow	Smart AA HC	LA	LA	Smart HC US	Allaby	Warnock	Warnock	Tait	Smart HC	10.30am US at Wilmslow	Richards	
Styal	Smart HC	Allaby	Gunn	Ream	11am at US Wilmslow	Richards HC	Tu'ihalama-ka		10.45am US at St Mary's	Richards	Bartindale	Bartindale	Smart HC	D James	10.30am US at Wilmslow	D Clowes	
Trinity Cheadle	Langton RISE	Tait	Shaw	Smart	9.30am Smart	Allaby HC	Tait HC		Harding	TCC service	Smart HC RISE	Smart HC RISE	LA	Tait	A Clowes RISE	10.30am US at Cheadle Hulme	
Wilmslow (live-streamed)	Smart HC					Smart HC											
KEY		LA	D Clowes	Smart P	P James	11am Smart US URC	New HC	Nevin	10.45am US at St Mary's	Smart HC Pre-school service	Allaby	D James	D James	Martin	Smart US Pentecost Praise	Ream	Smart BSwC

AA-All Age; BSwC-Bible Study with Cake; CT-Churches Together; HC-Holy Communion; LA-Local Arrangement; P-Parade; TCC service-Transforming Churches and Communities service; US-United Service; WT-William Temple Church.  
 (Shaded areas indicate no service)