



FOCUS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2026



Sunset by Ian Temple

The **Methodist** Church 

WELCOME TO WESLEY CHAPEL

Our Sunday Morning Worship is at 10.30am, see p3 for details of our services

Circuit Morning Prayer Live, Monday to Friday, 8am on Facebook. This is available for watching again after the live broadcast
<https://www.facebook.com/NiddValley/>

All links (and much more) can be accessed via our website
<https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk> or if you need more information leave a message:
<https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/contact>

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The deadline for November/December Focus is September/October Focus is 21 October. Please send any notices, news, articles, photographs to Judith Yeats: 07733 064697 judithyeats0@gmail.com.

Focus is also on the website.

<https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/our-focus>

WESLEY IN SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 10.30am. Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Revd. Peter Whitakker.

THURSDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2pm. Wesley Fellowship. Resurrection Bites with Roger Elliot.

SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

From 10am. 4 Churches Together Walk. See page 8 for details.

6pm. Wesley Sunday Share via Zoom. (Link will be sent out or contact Les or Judith)..

SATURDAY 19 SEPTEMBER. Heritage Open Day. See page 10 for details.

SUNDAY 20 SEPTEMBER. 10.30am. Morning Worship. Harvest Festival. Led by Sue Whalley. Followed by Heritage Open Day, until 4pm.

SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 10.30am. Morning Worship. Local Arrangement.

TUESDAYS. 10.30am to 1pm. Wesley Wheelie Welcome Café. Come and join us for a tea or coffee, and a chat. Cuppa soup, sausage rolls and toasted teacakes served at 12 noon.

Please note: Sunday Share will now take place once a month on the second Sunday of the month.

More dates for your diary

SUNDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 3pm at Trinity. Circuit Service to celebrate the restructuring of the Circuit. Come along and support your Circuit.

WESLEY IN OCTOBER

SUNDAY 4 OCTOBER 10.30am. Morning Worship with Holy Communion led by Revd. Ben Clowes. Chapel Anniversary.

MONDAY 5 OCTOBER. 1pm. Lunchtime Recital Season begins. Leonore Piano Trio. Music by Haydn and Brahms. See p20 for more details.

THURSDAY 8 OCTOBER 2pm. Wesley Fellowship. The Frankfurt Group. Harrogate's Festival of Music in 1929. Andrew Hitchen introduces us to the music of more composers.

SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER

10.30am. Morning Worship. Memorial Service led by Rev. Angie Hoare.
6pm. Wesley Sunday Share via Zoom. (Link will be sent out or contact Les or Judith)..

SUNDAY 18 OCTOBER. 10.30am. Morning Worship led by Gayle Bryon. Wesley Fellowship Service.

SUNDAY 25 OCTOBER 10.30am. Morning Worship. Local Arrangement.

TUESDAYS. 10.30am to 1pm. Wesley Wheelie Welcome Café. Come and join us for a tea or coffee, and a chat. Cuppa soup, sausage rolls and toasted teacakes served at 12 noon.

ALSO FOR YOUR DIARIES:

08 November. Remembrance Sunday. Local Arrangement.

13 December. Local Arrangement with Very Revd. Paul Hooper

27 December. Joint service at Wesley with our 4 Churches Together: Trinity, Harlow Hill and Pannal.

MESSAGE FROM OUR (NEW) MINISTER



Dear friends

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us” (Hebrews 12:1)

There's a famous urban legend that at the outbreak of World War II the BBC shut down mid-broadcast of a Mickey Mouse cartoon, recommencing broadcast in 1946 beginning with the same frame of the cartoon after the announcer said, 'As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted'. This is one of those times when the reality is a little different. The last pre-war broadcast actually ended with a trade demonstration film returning on 7th June 1946 with the words of the continuity announcer, Jasmine Bligh, saying 'Good afternoon, everybody. How are you? Do you remember me?'.

Well writing this letter feels a little like 'Hello everybody. How are you? Do you remember me?'. It was in September 2020 that I handed over the reins looking after the good folk of Wesley Chapel to Rev Lesley Taylor and I've even found a copy of my last Focus letter, written in August 2020, talking about the end of an era. I remember well being part of my final Zoom Coffee Morning with you all and suddenly finding Jenny Goodwin at my door with a card and a lovely gift of a book.

Six years later and Wesley is back under my pastoral oversight once again and I have tried to keep up to date being given digital and physical copies of *Focus* regularly by Les and Judith and I've seen quite a lot of you in between, but it will be really wonderful to be your minister once again. I have always found the fellowship at Wesley Chapel to be so special; the care that you showed each other, particularly during the pandemic, was an example I have shared regularly with how churches should care for each other.

So what has changed? Well we're all six years older! The circuit has reduced the number of presbyters by two. There were five of us back in

2020 and now we are three. When I looked after Wesley back in 2019-2020 I did so alongside Trevor and Ann. Now it will be just me but I know the team at Wesley really well and I'm so looking forward to all we have in store with God on this journey together. I've used one of my favourite verses from the Bible at the top of this letter as I truly believe that we are called, for such a time as this, to run this race together, cheered on by all those who have gone before us, the great cloud of witnesses.

I'm genuinely excited about being back at Wesley although that means that Les will have to get the board of Ministers of Wesley updated again. In many ways I never actually fully left as I have been Chair of Trustees of Wesley Centre throughout my time in the Nidd Valley Circuit. I do believe this is one of those times when we need to turn to God and allow him to lead us on this journey together and, please, whilst I will have three other churches do not feel that I am ever too busy to be bothered if you need to talk to me. I may not get to Wesley as much as some of your former Ministers, because we are down to three presbyters in the circuit, I do want to have time if you need me.

I will see many of you in person at Wesley in the coming months and here's to all that God has for us on this journey.

Yours in Christ
Ben

Welcome back to Wesley Ben.

I took a nostalgic look at some photographs from our lockdown coffee mornings. If you want to do the same, go to the website and have a look for yourselves. There are lots of smiley faces and friends who are no longer with us. Happy times in a difficult period of our lives.

<https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/virtual-tuesday-coffee>.

PS. I heard on the grapevine that the ministers' board has been updated.

Judith

WESLEY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME 2026 SEASON

Our meetings are on the second Thursday of the month and start at 2pm.

12 March. Welcome back with St. Peter's handbell ringers.

9 April. Stained glass windows at St. Peter's. Meeting at St. Peter's church with Michael Burlison

14 May. 'Nooks and crannies of a big country' with Mary Ann Dimand.

11 June. 'Mental health in the Harrogate District – what would Jesus do?' with Nick Garrett.

9 July. 'Horizon Life Training' with Gordon Stewart

13 August. Yorkshire Quiz and 'sayings' with Les Sudron.

10 September. 'Resurrection Bikes' with Roger Elliott.

8 October. 'The Frankfurt Group'. Harrogate's Festival of Music in 1929. Andrew Hitchen introduces us to the music of more composers.

12 November. 'Adventures with my camera' – with Matthew Webber.

10 December. 'Harrogate Brown Heritage Plaques' with Chris Dicken.

There are only two days in the year that nothing can be done.

One is called yesterday and the other is called tomorrow

So today is the right day to
love, believe, do, and mostly live.

Dalai Lama

Four Churches Together

to celebrate closer links between our 4 churches,
we invite you to join us for

worship and fellowship on
Sunday, 13th September



Meet at Wesley Chapel
at 10am (refreshments)

followed by a short service
beginning at 10.30,
then a walk to
Trinity Methodist Church



for a short service
beginning at 11.30am
(refreshments)

then a walk to
Harlow Hill Methodist Church



for lunch at 12.30pm
(bring your own lunch,
drinks provided)
and a short act of worship
beginning at 1pm,
then a walk to
Pannal Methodist Church



for a service with
communion
starting at 2.15pm
(refreshments)



Transport available –
please speak to one of your stewards about this.



You are welcome to join us for all or part of the day.



Worship will be led by
Rev Ben Clowes and Clair Webster, Local Pastor.



4 Churches Together Walk continued.

Peter Eves from Pannal had a free afternoon and decided to check out the walk.

He walked from Wesley via the front of Betty's along West Park and took the last diagonal path which leads to Trinity. 11 Minutes, 0.6 miles.

From Trinity he walked up Park Road to West End Avenue and joined the Otley Road, then straight up to Harlow Hill. 16 minutes. 0.9 miles.

From there he joined the ginnel by the Shepherd's Dog and along there to the Pannal Ash roundabout. Down Green Lane across to and down Church Lane into Pannal. Up Rosedale and Spring Lane to Pannal Methodist Church. 44 minutes, 2.3 miles.

The whole walk was 3.8 miles, and the total time Peter walked was 1hour and 11 minutes.

But...you don't have to do the whole walk; you can dip in and out as you wish. Les will be driving the Happy Wanderers bus, so there is no need to walk at all. (Les is very happy to be driving the bus!)

This is a great opportunity to get to know our friends from the other churches in our section, so do come along to all or some of the services, whether you walk or have a lift – it promises to be a happy occasion.

The Real Good by John Boyle O'Reilly (1844-90)

'What is the real good?'

I ask in a musing mood.

'Order,' said the law court;

'Knowledge,' said the school;

'Truth,' said the wise man;

'Pleasure,' said the fool;

'Love,' said the maiden;

'Beauty' said the page;

'Freedom,' said the dreamer;

'Home,' said the sage;

'Fame,' said the soldier;

'Equity,' said the seer.

Spake my heart fully sad:

'The answer is not here.'

Then within my bosom,

Softly this I heard:

'Each heart holds the secret:

'Kindness' is the word.'

HERITAGE OPEN WEEKEND



A National Festival of History and Culture

Wesley will be open as part of the national Heritage Open Days on Saturday 19th September (11am to 4pm), and Sunday 20th September 12pm to 4pm..

Our Harvest Festival will be at 10.30am on the Sunday led by Sue Whalley, and we are hoping to attract visitors to our service.

The theme this year is Everyday Histories and organisations have been asked to share the stories of every day people, as well as our superheroes. As we have our own superhero in the name of Donald Simpson Bell, we will be including his history in our exhibition and slide show.

Offers of help will be very welcome. Would you bake a cake? Help serve refreshments on the day(s)? Chat to visitors? Please speak to one of the stewards if you are able to help in any way..... Or just come along and enjoy musical items from our own musicians as well as other guests,

Visit <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/> for more information about Heritage Open Days, and don't forget to search for Wesley Chapel Harrogate.

Cash Donations for Harvest wanted

Lynne and Pricilla are collecting cash donations for food to create the Harvest Festival display, which will later be given to a suitable charity. Please give generously.

NOTES FROM GENERAL CHURCH MEETING SUNDAY, 5TH JULY 2026

Rev. Gordon Hay chaired the annual general meeting. There were 17 people present and 4 apologies for absence. Below are selected notes from the meeting.

General conversation about the life of the Church.

Connexion. Gordon reported that the Methodist Conference took place last week. Ben Clowes was present, representing the circuit. Conference will produce a flyer reporting on debates that took place, including online communion; assisted dying; artificial Intelligence. Also there was discussion on a revised authorised liturgy. – the present one was published in 1999.

Revd. Ian Bryon was ordained at Wellington Methodist Church, near Telford during the Conference.

Circuit.

- Lesley Taylor will be leaving at the end of July and will not be replaced.
- Gordon will be in pastoral charge of Park Grove, Gracious Street, Scotton, Kearby and Kirk Hammerton from September.
- Ben will be minister at Harlow Hill, Pannal, Trinity, Wesley Chapel and, as superintendent will be chair of Wesley Centre.
- CLT. It was reported that Ed Walton and Graham Taylor would be stepping down in September. (*Graham has since agreed to stay on for another year*). Thanks were expressed to Ed for all he has done for the circuit and Wesley chapel.
- Deacon Gary Hoare will take a 3-month sabbatical from mid-August. However, knitters are still asked to produce stars, which should be with Shelagh by the 2nd week in November ready for starching. There will be no Christmas market in Harrogate, Gary is looking at other possibilities to hold a stall for the circuit.
- Circuit Re-organisation. Wesley will have closer ties with Trinity, Harlow Hill and Pannal and conversations have already started between the 4 churches. A small group has already met and will be meeting again on Monday 20 July, Les and Ulrike will attend. Ideas have already been mooted including a weekday communion service which could be held monthly and would mean Wesley would host

three times a year. A walk is also being planned which would start at Wesley, calling at Trinity and Harlow Hill and finishing at Pannal. The Happy Wanderers bus will be available to take people from church to church for those unable to do the walk. There will be refreshments and Ben will lead a short service at each church. It is hoped that as many people as possible will go to the other churches.

- Les reflected that Wesley was disappointed to be losing Gordon and that his leadership and preaching were just what we wanted. However, the rationale for the changes were understandable.
- Resourcing the Plan. This is challenging and three local arrangements per quarter are inevitable. The Circuit is subscribing to The Vine, a useful resource for Local Arrangements, for each church to access. Having the occasional joint service with our sectionals would be beneficial. There was also the view that it is important to have our town centre church open every Sunday, although closing wouldn't be a regular occurrence, and we should take note of what other churches are doing

There will be a joint service at Wesley on 27 December with the other three churches in the section who are not having a service on that day.

Worship

- Reflection on Plan.
 - We are flexible as to when we hold communion services and it is unlikely that there will be fewer communion services.
 - Thanks were expressed to the stewards for all the local arrangements, which are well received and appreciated. Others are encouraged to help in the preparation of LAs. Christine Bunting offered to do the prayers and to help anyone who wished to put a service together.
 - Netmakers held a service at the cenotaph at Pentecost. It was good to see people from different churches worshipping together and an opportunity to take church outside.

Mission

- Heritage Weekend 19- 20 September. (*See page 10*).
- Coffee Mornings. Attendance varies. Concern was expressed that when people came in wanting to talk about their problems church

members felt inexperienced in counselling and unable to help. Gordon pointed out that even ministers don't necessarily offer counselling and a listening ear was the most important thing we can offer. The value of listening should not be underestimated.

The church could offer training to equip people to listen well and suggest signposts for additional help. There is a four-week pastoral course coming up on Zoom shortly. Meanwhile Tuesday coffee continues to be a place where people feel welcome, our members engage with visitors, and it is working as it should.

Wesley Centre. There are a lot of activities taking place, including recent concerts with Harrogate International Festivals. More needs to be done to communicate to Wesley Chapel family about events taking place in Wesley Centre.

Pastoral. Thanks were expressed to those who have formed a rota to visit church family members who are ill or unable to join us at church.

Safeguarding. Job Descriptions are required for every role. This simply means signing a form to confirm that one has read the job description. Going forward everyone taking up a new role will need to complete an application form and will require a referee - a sentence confirming that this is a trustworthy person is all that will be needed. All charities are required to do this.

Election of Stewards.

- Stewards. Les Sudron, Mike Greenberg and Ulrike Hitchen were elected to continue as stewards.
- Christine Sudron, Maureen Greenberg, Jenny and Philip Goodwin, Shelagh Outhwaite and Andrew Hitchen were elected to continue as occasional stewards.
- Anyone who would like to become a steward would be welcome.
- Pat Webber will represent Wesley Chapel at the circuit meeting, together with Les Sudron (Senior Steward) and Mike Greenberg (Treasurer).

Prayers were said for those of the church family who have died this year: Helen Evison, Penny Sissons, Shirley Hislop.

Finances. There are no financial concerns. It was agreed that the Church Council be asked to agree an increase of the contribution to Wesley Centre next year. Thanks were expressed to Mike for his work as Treasurer. Mike noted his appreciation for the trust that people give to him

On behalf of everyone at Wesley, Les expressed thanks to Gordon for his support and inspiration during his ministry with us.

Gordon closed the meeting with prayer.

Message from Christine

To the people of Wesley Chapel.

Thank you to everyone who assisted me during my recent collapse and subsequent hospitalisation and recovery. Thank you for all your prayers, kind thoughts and good wishes. I felt truly surrounded by ministering angels when I was taken ill and surrounded by love. I am truly blessed to belong to such a loving, caring community.

My heartfelt thanks to you all.

Many blessings.

Christine Bunting.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Congratulations



At the Harrogate Choral Society AGM, Jenny received a certificate marking 60 years of membership and was also honoured as a Vice-President of the Society. Jenny received a lovely message from President Brian Kay, an early member of the King's Singers, who also called her the next day to congratulate her. Congratulations also from all your friends at Wesley, Jenny.



David celebrated his 90th birthday with family and friend and enjoyed a lovely few days marking this special occasion.

David would like to thank friends at Wesley for the birthday message and cards. He was chuffed.

Lynne took this photograph of Jenny and Philp on their first day back to Wesley after Philip's recent illness



Anita's beautiful garden.
Below: Red Admiral butterfly
Right: Pots of agapanthus adorn
the front the of house.



Janet sent us this lovely
photo of hydrangeas
outside Andrew
McKenzie's's front door.



Barbara spent a few days
in Seahouses and sent us
this lovely photograph of
the harbour.

Pat and Matthew visited Northern Ireland and had a lovely time catching up with family and visiting places that brought back happy memories. Pat writes: 'we visited the cathedral while we were in Belfast- I used to attend services there with my parents and was confirmed there'. They also visited the City Hall and the old rope bridge near Giants Cuaseaway..



Janet went to the Settle Flower Pot Festival and here are some of the flower pot creations!



School teacher and pupil



Town Crier



Bathing



Daschsund

The Sudrons went to Somerset recently to spend time with the Malessa family, life-long friends. We travelled via Bolsover castle and visited an array of National Trust properties. *Below* Keep from the Wall.



(Above) Puffing at the top of the Glastonbury Tor where Daniel met us after 'his leisurely stroll'.

(Left) Three generations of the Sudron and Malessa families.

More photographs on the back page.



Lunchtime Recitals
1pm. Tickets £12.

Monday 5 October 2026. Leonore Piano Trio. Music by Haydn and Brahms. The Leonore will be treating us to Joseph Haydn's thoroughly entertaining Trio No.45 (his last) and the magnificent Op.87 C-major Trio by Johannes Brahms. It's music to lose yourself in. What better way to spend a Monday lunchtime in October.

Monday 2 November 2026. Sofya Gulyak. Piano recital. Music by Bach-Busoni, Chopin and Brahms.

Monday 7 December 2026. baritone Andrew Hamilton (baritone) and Joseph Middleton (pianist). Songs by Britten, Coates and Novello, alongside Schumann's *Dichterliebe*.

Monday 4 January 2027. Pavel Sporc (violin) and Anna Tilbrook (pianist). Music by Dvořák, Smetana, and Janáček.

Monday 1 February 2027. Astatine Trio. Music by Schumann and Beethoven.

Monday 1 March 2027. Italian pianist Filippo Gorini. Programme includes Schubert's A major sonata D.959.

Monday 5 April 2027. Violinist Fenella Humphreys and pianist Martin Roscoe. Music by Beethoven and Schubert.

Monday 10 May 2027. Elisabeth Brauss (pianist). Music by Schubert, Brahms, Schumann and Bartok.

Monday 7 June 2027. Peter Moore (trombone) and Jâms Coleman (pianist).

Monday 5 July 2027. Alan Barnes & David Newton. Jazz Concert.
Wesley Concerts continued.

Evening Recitals
7pm. Tickets £20.

Steven Osborne OBE

Saturday 24 October 2027 Tickets are selling fast for our first evening concert. Steven Osbourne is one of the UK's most treasured pianists and a musician who is most rewarding to hear live, so join us for his programme which he calls *Reflections on the Waltz*. It's packed with melody, drama and terrific variety which audiences in California and London's Wigmore Hall have already enjoyed, so we're delighted that Steven is bringing this feast of treats to us in Harrogate. .

Sir Stephen Hough

Saturday 22 May 2027. Music by Debussy, Ravel, Liszt and Chopin.

For more information and to buy tickets online visit

<https://wesleyconcerts.org/whats-on>

Derek the Cleric





AROUND THE CIRCUIT

Bilton Methodist Amblers. All walks start on the car park of Bilton Area Methodist Church where we meet to arrange transport at 9.30. Summer walks generally about 5- 6 miles. We bring a packed lunch or go on to a pub or cafe at the end. All welcome. If interested please contact Janet Allen, T: 524634 E:

janetallen09@btinternet.com.

The next walks are: Saturday 12 September, Saturday 10 October

Gracious Street.

Saturday, September 19, 3:00-4:30pm: LET'sGO 2 Church: Bible stories and creative play with building bricks followed by snacks.

Monday, September 21, 1:00-3:00pm: Digitally Connected Knaresborough: Free digital skills training and one-to-one technical help. Come enjoy an informative briefing on "Security 101" where you will learn good practices to keep yourself and your data safe.

Saturday, September 26, 10:00am-12:00pm: Coffee Morning supporting Dementia Forward: Come enjoy a cuppa and learn about the wonderful things Dementia Forward are doing to help community members.

Harlow Hill Coffee Morning. Every Monday from 10am to 11.30am. Everybody welcome.

Little Beans Playgroup. Parents and toddlers playgroup. Every Wednesday Morning. Drop in between 10am and 11.30am for play, coffee and a chat. £3 per family. During Term-time.

Kearby. Sunday 4 October – 3pm, Harvest Festival.

Killinghall. Saturday 26 September. Coffee Morning. 10:30am-12 noon. £2 ~ Tea, coffee, biscuits. Raffle

Scotton. Harvest Festival. Monday 14 September 7pm. Short service led by Rev. Gordon Hay, followed by Pie and Pea Supper and sale of produce.

Trinity now livestream the Sunday service on the 2nd Sunday of the month at 10.30am on their YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@TrinityMethodistHarrogate>

Saturday 26 September 2026. Festival of Creative Talents & Hard Work 10:30am At Trinity Methodist Church Display, sell or donate your craft – art, preserves, crochet, photography, jewellery, vegetables, etc Lucy A: elliessafety@gmx.co.uk Lucy M: lucygrace1206@gmail.com

Woodlands. Woodlands Community Gardens Come and discover our wonderful community garden behind Woodlands Church. he

Inside Out. The Circuit is still asking for Christmas Stars to be made. (Judith has a copy of the pattern). They need to be sent in before mid November as they have to be starched.

More Useful websites

Nidd Valley Circuit YouTube Channel:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCGs9zOlnk5tMKC8SCeQY1w

Nidd Valley Circuit Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/NiddValley

Gracious Street Facebook Page:

www.facebook.com/graciousstreetmethodist

Knaresborough TV: www.youtube.com/c/KnaresboroughTV



Lecture by John Bell Imagination as a Key to Unlocking Scripture.

Saturday 19 September 2026. 10am – 12, St. Mark's Church, Leeds Road or via Zoom.

£10 pp including breakfast from 9:30am. Students £7, Under 18s free. Tickets on Eventbrite or at the door, Zoom: £5 pp (bought online in advance)

The imagination is sometimes regarded as being an unreliable or mischievous faculty, more of a danger to faith than an aid. But given that it is commonly employed by the prophets in their writings and Jesus in his parables, it deserves serious consideration. In this lecture, John Bell will argue that the imagination is an essential aid not only to interpreting scripture but also an ally in pastoral work and preaching, as it offers an alternative to rigid thinking and dull speech. John Bell has worked for over 30 years in the areas of music, worship, spirituality and social justice. He conducts workshops and seminars across the globe and, with his colleagues, develops new and accessible liturgical materials. He is an occasional broadcaster and for over 20 years was a regular contributor to Radio 4's Thought for the Day. John has published 17 collections of original and global songs, and numerous collections of liturgical material.

Saturday October 24, 2026, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Woodlands Methodist Church. Seminar entitled *Forgiveness*. Revd. Emma Walters. Breakfast available from 9.30am. Tickets: General admission: £8. Under 18s free.

"But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you." – Job 12:7-9

A message from Revd. Leslie Newton.

Heartfelt thanks.

Dear friends

It is hard to find sufficient words to express my gratitude for the love, kindness and generosity you have shown as I stepped down from the role of District Chair.

I am deeply grateful for the many personal cards and messages, as well as for the District farewell service at Acomb. It was such a moving occasion for me personally – in the worship, prayers and preaching, and in the generosity and thoughtfulness expressed through the gifts.

I will treasure the wonderful hamper, with such carefully chosen gifts from every circuit and mission area. The red and white rose is now planted in our new garden (with the *How to Look After a Rose* book close at hand!), and the superb Mouseman bookends already have pride of place on my new desk. I am also looking forward to deciding how best to use the generous monetary gifts.

Thank you all so very much. It has been an immense privilege to serve as your District Chair. I will continue to hold you in my prayers and will be cheering you on as you journey on, seeking the new things that God has in store for you. With love Leslie.



President and Vice President of Methodist Conference



The Methodist Conference elected the Revd Mark Slaney to serve as President and Caroline Stead to serve as Vice-President, starting their year of office when the Representative Session of the Methodist Conference opened in Telford on 27 June 2026.

The Revd Mark Slaney currently serves as Chair of the Scotland District and the Shetland District. Mark preached his first sermon at the age of 15. Prior to his ordination 24 years ago, Mark served 10 years in youth work plus jobs as a builder's mate, cleaner and van driver.

Mark says that what matters to him most as a Methodist is the three-letter word 'ALL' meaning everyone, everywhere, everything, the scope of Gospel and Kingdom, and therefore worship, mission and ministry.



Caroline Stead is a local preacher in the Yorkshire West District, where she is also the Synod Secretary. She is also an accompanist to a minister in training, serves on the Discerning Ordained Vocation (DOV1) Committee and on Chairs' nomination panels.

A former maths teacher, Caroline was also a Lay Stationing Representative for 11 years. She has been a representative to the Conference since 2008, including six years on the Business Committee.

Caroline is passionate about inclusivity and ensuring that people are welcomed and safe within Methodist Church, and supporting volunteers within the Church.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about/structure-and-governance/the-methodist-conference/conference-2026/presidency/president-and-vice-president-designate-2026-27/>

PRAYER CORNER



Fruits of the harvest

Generous God, we praise and thank you
for the gifts that you have given us:

the fruits of the harvest and the joy of your love.

Free us from the fear that leads us to store up more than we need.

Fill our hearts with gratitude which moves us to share what we have.

Show us how to plant seeds of hope and together reap a better world,
where each and every person can share in the fullness of your love.

Amen.

Catherine Gorman/CAFOD

Peace is...

Peace is the resulting action on an agreement to end a war.

Peace is the mutual laying down of weapons.

Peace is the worldwide cessation of armament production.

Peace is the reconciliation between adversaries.

Peace is the change of hearts and minds of people who wage war.

Peace is the smile of the refugee housed following exile from home.

Peace is the satisfaction in the face of a hungry child just fed.

Peace is the return to boyhood of a child soldier.

Peace is the respect for women and their equal rights as human
beings.

Peace is the just, merciful and compassionate use of power by the
powerful.

Peace is the empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised people.

Peace is the healing arrived at through truth and reconciliation
commissions.

Peace is the mutual respect of people of all faiths and none.

Help us, Lord, to continue to strive for peace in all of its forms.

Amen.

Trevor Stockton/CAFOD

<https://cafod.org.uk/pray/prayer-resources/>

Sudrons trip to Somerset continued.



Wells Cathedral. We stayed for evensong which was very special



Glastonbury Abbey. (Ask us about the guided tour!)



Montacute an “architecturally daring’ Elizabethan mansion.

