

Newsletter and Plan

March—May 2024



High Cup Nick taken by Wendy Swinbank

**KIRKBY STEPHEN, APPLEBY
& TEBAY METHODIST CIRCUIT**



Cumbria District (09/07)

'Our mission is to know Jesus and make him known'

From the Manse

Tread Gently

I have written in the Methodist plan about our God for all values **Follow Daily, Care deeply, and Speak Boldly**. These values are difficult for all sorts of reasons, but none of them have made me as nervous as writing about **Tread Gently**.

Caring for creation seems to me like a foundational Christian belief, and yet it has become deeply polarised, and this has crept into our church cultures too. Christianity's relationship with science has historically been a strained one, and I wonder if that has also influenced the way elements of the Church approach research on the environment. On top of that, I have encountered theologies of the coming of Christ which actively encourage our destruction of the world.

It is important to recognise that this question is more pertinent for Christians now than it has ever been. One of the dangers people have is saying 'the scriptures, including Jesus' ministry, doesn't seem to be too concerned with the issue, so why should I?'. That may be true in one sense, but drastically misses the point in another.

The Good news is for everyone, in every time and place, and in all the changes and complexities that come. While Jesus may not have spoken directly to environmentalism, the foundational belief that we are to care for creation is on first page of the bible. The creation of the world was a process of creating order out of chaos, which meant darkness was contained, and the sea no longer covered the earth. This made way for God to create light, land, and life on the earth. We were the only creature made in the likeness of God, and while other creatures were to fill the earth, humanity was to have dominion. This has been used by some as permission to exploit the earth's resources, whereas the intention was instead to take part in God's creative masterpiece of bringing order to the world. In Jesus' words, it is about bringing the kingdom of heaven near. You will notice that when the final creation is completed, when heaven and earth are one and the old earth and heaven have passed, there will be no more darkness, or sea: in other words, chaos is no more.

The question I often ask myself as I live on this world is if I am contributing to bringing order in the world or chaos? It is clear climate change is bringing unimaginable chaos to people across the world, and that means humanity in general is either ignoring the problem or actively making it worse. When we then consider the science around our contribution to climate change then we must acknowledge the sin of our apathy and exploitation. I am culpable too, I dare suggest this world is caught up in a fundamentally evil system that is causing greed to flourish, and people, creatures, and the creation to suffer.

Jesus said it is the meek (praus- in greek) who will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5). This word implies a gentleness of spirit. What does it mean to both have dominion, and to be gentle? I wonder whether our stand for the world should be strong, and our treatment of it gentle. I know people who have made stances like this; some make me uncomfortable, and others I fully understand. It may be that in the face of such evil we simply do not know what the right thing to do is as followers of Christ. Many of you will know my own decision on becoming vegan, and while I am aware many who read this will disagree with my decision, it is nevertheless one based on a deep held conviction to care for the earth and the creatures who live on it. While I don't expect people to do what I have done, I nevertheless look forward to more conversations on how we can be a people who tread gently, in the different ways people feel led. I pray that our calling as stewards can be renewed, and we will again learn to tread gently in God's creation.

Rev Andrew



Chairman of the District

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Staff Rest Days

Ministers

Rev Stephen Radford	Friday
Rev Andrew Sterling	Saturday

Circuit Administrator

Mrs Avril Swinbank	Friday, Saturday, Sunday
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Circuit Connexion Services

March- 6.30 Kirkby Stephen—Rev Keith Speck

April- 6.30 Appleby

May- 6.30 Newbiggin on Lune—Local Preachers service led by Rev J Betts

Website Addresses

The Circuit website is currently being updated, look out for further details

Circuit Website

www.ksaandtcircuit.org.uk

Methodist Church Website

www.methodist.org.uk

Cumbria District Methodist Website www.cumbriamethodistdistrict.org.uk

HOW link <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6iZVadGymIBC04aEEOJryw>

Please look at the website for latest news and also reflections from lockdown.



If you are on Facebook please “Like” our Kirkby Stephen, Appleby & Tebay Methodist Circuit page and keep up to date with our latest news!

Hello from Eve and Nathan

Hello, my name is Eve and I am one of the interns this year along with Nathan in the Heart of Eden Benefice. We are both very excited about this year and all that it holds. We thought that we could share a little bit about ourselves and what we are looking forward to this year.

So, I finished my A-Levels in 2020 and went on to join a mission organisation called Operation Mobilisation. I spent just over a year with them doing a vast variety of things from working maintenance, being involved with different outreach projects around England to eventually living in Portugal for three months. After I finished there I worked as an Au Pair in Germany looking after four beautiful girls. While I was working in Germany I had a video call with my mum in which she told me “Eve I think you should become a Vicar” to which my response was “no way”! However, something about it struck a chord in me and after much contemplation I decided I needed to explore this idea more, so last year I joined the Ministry Experience Scheme and was placed in Carlisle. Well, through my experiences last year, I decided that something about working for the Church feels right to me. This year I have decided to begin the Discernment Process, which is the interview process in the Church of England that helps both yourself and the Church decide whether or not “Vicaring” is what you’re being called to do. So this year I am wanting to dive deeper into the realities of ministry, in both its expanse and practicalities, and so far I am absolutely loving it. It has been a pleasure getting to know so many of you already and seeing how beautifully everyone works here together ecumenically. -Eve





Born, raised and marching out of Boston, Lincolnshire (Go Pilgrims), I arrived up in Kirkby Thore at the start of September after spending the previous year working on a chicken farm. The two years prior to that I studied countryside management at Moulton College in Northamptonshire. I am here so that I can better reflect and discover the nature of God's calling on my life, be it to the priesthood I am sensing, or perhaps to someplace else. The internship seemed an invaluable and pragmatic opportunity that could not be passed up. In my time here so far, I've had the pleasure of meeting and working among the Anglican and Methodist churches, partaking in all-sorts of church life and work. From groups for the young, to groups for the young at heart. From interceding at services to being a thurifer and making things smokey. From meetings to...other meetings! My time here has been incredibly precious and I'm loving it all. I thank you all for being a part of that experience so far, and I thank you in advance for whatever is to come next over the coming year. - Nathan

All the best,
The Interns!



Regular events/meetings at Chapel's

Orton – drop in Coffee Morning every Wednesday 10.30 – 12.00 run by the community in association with the Chapel.

Bible study – share with N on L

Appleby – Monthly prayer meeting on the first Wednesday of the month at 10.15am then at 11.00am we have the monthly midweek communion service.

Ladies Friendship Group meet monthly normally on the third Thursday at 1.30pm.

Noah's Boat (0-4 year olds) meet every Monday in term time from 9am-10.30am

Messy Church meets about every 5/6 weeks... see Facebook page for more details.

Douglas Birkbeck



It's not surprising Douglas Birkbeck answered the call, aged sixteen to be a Methodist Local Preacher.

Both his parents were staunch Methodists. His father and grandfather were local Preachers in this circuit. Douglas had an Uncle who was a Methodist Minister.

Douglas took services as a Methodist Local Preacher, travelling on his trusted bicycle, even on cold winter evenings, until he got his first car. He remained preaching until well in his nineties and his services were recognised, for being a local Preacher for seventy years, with a certificate from the Methodist Church at national level.

It was his style that was so much appreciated. The sermons are a reflection of the man. Notable for careful thought and shrewd insight and yet delivered in a style that is readily understandable to all. A man of firm convictions he was, nevertheless, quite willing to hear the other person's point of view.

Lectionary

3 Mar	Exodus 20:1-17, Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 1:18-25, John 2:13-22
10 Mar	Numbers 21:4-9, Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22, Ephesians 2:1-10, John 3:14-21
17 Mar	Jeremiah 31:31-34, Psalm 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16, Hebrews 5:5-10, John 12:20-33
24 Mar	Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16, Philippians 2:5-11 Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39, (40-47)
31 Mar	Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43, John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8
7 Apr	Acts 4:32-35, Psalm 133, 1 John 1:1-2:2, John 20:19-31
14 Apr	Acts 3:12-19, Psalm 4, 1 John 3:1-7, Luke 24:36b-48
21 Apr	Acts 4:5-12, Psalm 23, 1 John 3:16-24, John 10:11-18
28 Apr	Acts 8:26-40, Psalm 22:25-31, 1 John 4:7-21, John 15:1-8
5 May	Acts 10:44-48, Psalm 98, 1 John 5:1-6, John 15:9-17
12 May	Acts 1:15-17, 21-26, Psalm 1, 1 John 5:9-13, John 17:6-19
19 May	Acts 2:1-21 or Ezekiel 37:1-14, Psalm 104:24-34, 35b, Romans 8:22-27 or Acts 2:1-21, John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15
26 May	Isaiah 6:1-8 and Psalm 29, Romans 8:12-17, John 3:1-17



Circuit Calendar

March

2nd	10-11.30am	K Stephen—Coffee Morning
18th	10-11.30am	B Sowerby—Charity Coffee Morning
28th	7.00pm	K Stephen Maundy Thursday Service
29th	10.00am	K Stephen Good Friday Service & Walk of Witness

April

6th	10-11.30am	K Stephen—Coffee Morning
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May

4th	10-11.30am	K Stephen—Coffee Morning
4th	7.30pm	N on Lune—The Longton Family
11th	12.30pm	Warcop—Village Walk and Tea
11th	2.00-4.00pm	Soulby—Crafts & Cream Teas in V Hall

Mid-week Services and Prayer Meetings

Appleby Monthly Communion Service on 1st Wed each month.

B Sowerby Fortnightly Bible Study Tuesday Evening 7pm
Information Available from David on 017683 41223

K Stephen Fortnightly Bible Study Wednesday Morning 10.30am
Information from Heather on 017683 71202
Tuesday Weekly Prayer Meeting at 12.00pm

Kirkby Stephen section prayer meeting
First Wednesday of each month at 6.45pm at Kirkby Stephen

N on Lune, Ravenstonedale & Orton Bible Study
Information from Wilf on 015396 23600

PRAYER POINTS



I am writing this at the beginning of January for the plan which comes out in March. By March I expect a lot of new year's resolutions will have faded away! I look around the garden and the shoots from spring bulbs are already pushing through the earth. The cycle of new life happens miraculously every Spring, do we take it for granted? Every year nature wins out and we can be sure of that, not like anything we resolve to do or not to do. It's part of the bounty God prepared for us at Creation and we thank Him.

A song we sing regularly with the worship group keeps 'springing' to mind. We can use some of the words as a prayer, a thankful prayer to our Lord for His faithfulness, steadfastness and love.

Let's pray:

I love you Lord, for Your mercy never fails me
All my days, I have been held in Your hands
From the moment that I wake up, until I lay my head
I will sing of the goodness of God.

I love Your voice, You have lead me through the fire, in darkest nights You are close like no other. I have known You as a Father I've known You as a friend and I have lived in the goodness of God.

'Cause All my life You have been faithful and all my life You have been so, so good. With every breath that I am able oh I will sing of the goodness of God.

Your goodness is running after, it's running after me.
With my life laid down, I surrender now, I give You everything.
Your goodness keeps running after me.(Thank you Lord) AMEN

He is the one we can put our trust in and know that He is always there for us, not just for a little while but for ever, just surrender to Him.

*Psalm 40 v3 "He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord."*

Sue Thackray