

Connected Magazine

Issue 4 Winter 2025



Woodlands Methodist Church
Wetherby Road, Harrogate, HG2 7SG



Staying in Touch

The Minister is the Rev Ian Bryon.

Contact phone number is: 01423 819663

There are lots of ways to keep in touch with Woodlands Methodist Church:

Weekly Notices: these can be picked up at church on a Sunday morning or emailed directly to you. Please contact the editor Rachel on woodlandsnotices@gmail.com to add your email address to the Circulation List.

Huge thanks to Peter and Linda who have kept the cogs of the weekly notices running smoothly since 2017 and welcome to Rachel who has taken on this essential role.

Website: https://woodlandsmethodist.church

Facebook page: www.facebook.com and search for Woodlands Methodist Church Harrogate. Don't forget to Like our page and stay up to date with our events. We also share posts from the Circuit, the Methodist Church and other chapels in the area.

Woodlands Methodist Church is one of 13 chapels in the Nidd Valley Circuit. Find out more by visiting:

Nidd Valley Circuit website: www.niddvalleymethodist.org.uk

Circuit Facebook page: www.facebook.com and search for Nidd Valley Methodist Circuit. Like the page and stay up to date with what's happening.

The Nidd Valley Circuit is part of the Yorkshire North & East Methodist District. Stay up to date by visiting:

District website: www.yorkshirenemethodist.org

District Facebook page: www.facebook.com and search for Yorkshire North and East Methodist District.



Weekly Church Calendar

Sunday

- 9am 1st Sunday of the month Holy Communion followed by breakfast unless stated otherwise. Join us for this simple informal service in the middle hall.
- 10.30am Morning Worship & Sunday Club provision followed by coffee & fellowship.
- 6.30pm Monthly Evening Worship on 3rd Sunday of the month followed by coffee & fellowship.

Monday

WoW group as per programme

Wednesday

9am Garden Gang in the Community Garden

7pm Ladies Circle as per programme

Thursday

10am Thursday morning House Group fortnightly

10am Craft Club fortnightly

Friday

8.45am Toast Community Café in term time

12.15pm Lunch Club in term time

Saturday

8.30am MoW Men's breakfast on 3rd Saturday.



Editorial

Welcome to the winter edition of the magazine for Woodlands Methodist Church. It's good to be sharing our news with you again.

Greetings to our neighbours at MHA Berwick Grange and Fairfax Manor who also receive copies of this magazine. A monthly mid-week service has been running at Fairfax Manor since July and if you would like to be involved, please contact Rev Ian Bryon. Following on from the success of this venture Ian will be leading a similar service at Harcourt Gardens care home. We will be visiting our neighbours on Monday 15th December for carol singing along with our recorder players, do join us f you can, more information within!

Articles for inclusion in the magazine are very welcome particularly updates from groups that meet on and off the premises, also any photos you have taken that would make a good front cover. Please pass to Nicola Pollard.

This month's Methodist Memories focus is on the active Kirk Hammerton Chapel.

The next magazine will be in the Spring, and your contributions are essential so start thinking now about what you could contribute.

Now read on!

Nicola Pollard

Meet the Magazine Team

Editor: Nicola Pollard

Master copy production: Rev lan Bryon

 Proofreaders/Duplicators/Assemblers: Sylvia Fox & Caroline Chang aided/hindered by Master copy producer.

Head of Distribution: Sylvia Fox



From our Minister

Dear Friends,

Recently, I went to the ballet for the first time, Tschaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*, accompanied by a live orchestra. Although the music and dancing were excellent, in the interval I did an internet search to find out what the plot was, as I wasn't quite sure what was going on. Online reviews of the ballet company suggested that while they were technically excellent, they lacked a little in the story telling. Perhaps that was why I couldn't work out what was going on.

On further reflection, I wondered whether my lack of understanding might be because ballet tells the story only through music and dance. As someone with limited musicality and even more limited ballet experience, this is a language that I am not familiar with. Having read the plot, I was in a slightly better place to appreciate the story in the second half. Although I struggled to grasp the nuances of a story told in this way, I still enjoyed the experience, recognising the skill and dedication of dancers and musicians, the creativeness and technical ability of the costume designers, and the genius of Tchaikovsky's music. I left the theatre, thoroughly uplifted and entertained, resolving to go to another ballet, but perhaps after doing my homework first.

My only experience of ballet before this, other than watching classes when our daughters were very young, was watching the DVD of Barbie in the Nutcracker some 20 years ago. Experience that hadn't prepared me for the reality of seeing a ballet in the flesh, the skill of dancers and musicians as well as with the reality, that ballet shoes squeak on stage, like plimsols on a sports hall floor, and there are loud thuds when dancers land after performing their leaps.

So, what is my point?

It occurred to me, that just as I had little or no experience of ballet, many of our friends, neighbours, families and those in our local community have little experience or understanding of God, Church or faith. What we believe and why, is alien to them. in the same way that I struggled at the ballet, they struggle to understand the nuances, significance and message of hope we are trying to share.

Advent and Christmas is a time when this gap between the gospel of hope, personified in the birth of Jesus, and people's current experience is at its narrowest. It is a time when people go to school nativities, hear carols sung in streets and shopping centres and perhaps think about going to a carol service in a local church. Our Advent theme this year is a message of hope and good news for a dark and weary world. A reminder that, in the words of the John Lewis Christmas advert, "if you can't find the words, find the gift." Jesus is the ultimate gift, a gift of love from God to all humanity at Christmas, and we are also gifts to each other, to our families,



our friends and our communities. Each one of us special, important and loved by God.

Reflecting on my experience at the ballet, I wonder if this Advent and Christmas, we need to think again about how we share this message of HOPE for the world, sharing it so it can be understood, so people know that they are special, important and loved. I believe this is best done by living and breathing this message of hope and love. By treating everyone we meet as if we are meeting Jesus in them, because it is our behaviour folk see first – how we act, how we respond to others, our graciousness or sadly, lack thereof.

So this advent, as we prepare to welcome once again, the with-us-God, love incarnate, let us be a people of hope, of love, of acceptance and of welcome to all.





Advent Liturgy for 2025

This season, as we look forward to and celebrate the arrival of the With-us-God at Christmas, our Advent and Christmas liturgy is based around the theme of:



Gifted is . . .

- . . . a message of hope, of good news to a weary world.
- . . . a message for everyone in our churches and beyond: both believers rejoicing at God's gift of Jesus, and those who might find the season more wearying than wonderful.
- . . . a reminder for everyone, of their inherent worth and beauty not because of what they've done, or what they can give but because of who they are.
- . . . a message of hope reaching out to people longing for transformation but feeling stuck. For those searching for something more, something real but unsure where to look.
- . . . a reminder that each of us matters. We are, each and every one of us, beloved, created with infinite care and a gift to the world just as we are.



Reflection

My prayers are full of words about my wants and cares; but, God, before I ask you know and meet my needs.

Your Word is active in my world bringing it closer to your heart.

My prayers can often be
the wrong way round, because
I want my will for earth
to be your will in heaven.
But your ways are beyond my grasp,
the comprehension of my mind.

So, in my prayers, grant me
words that reflect your will
and, in the silence, find
the purpose of your love;
love that sustains this universe
yet holds me close within your heart.
6.6.6.8.8

© Andrew Brown - August 2012

Possible tune – Samuel (H&P 523)



Christmas Countdown

There are a lot of special services plus events taking place during December. Do have your diary or calendar handy to note these down!

Saturday 22_{nd} November (10am to 1pm) – Christmas Fayre

Sunday 30th November @ 10:30am - Advent Sunday

Sunday 7th December @ 9am - Advent Communion

Sunday 7th December @ 10:30am - Gift Service

Wednesday 10th December @ 7pm – Ladies Circle Carols & Communion

Sunday 14th December @ 10:30am - Family Carol Service

Monday 15th December @ 6pm at church ready to set off 6.15pm – Carol Singing at Berwick Grange, Fairfax Manor and Wedderburn Lodge

Monday 15th December @7pm Interact group's Christmas Singalong concert with seasonal refreshments.

Tuesday 16th December @ 7:30pm – Harrogate Male Voice Choir, Christmas Concert and refreshments.

Sunday 21st December @ 10:30am – Advent 4 + Communion

Sunday 21st December @ 6:30pm - Traditional Carol Service

Wednesday 24th December @ 6pm – Family Christmas Eve Service

Thursday 25th December @ 10am - Family Christmas Day Service

New Year Dates 2026 - Special Services

Sunday 11th January @ 10:30am - Covenant Service

Sunday 18th January @ 10:30am - Local Arrangement

Sunday 18th January @ 6:30pm – Evening Covenant Service

Looking further ahead:

Sunday 15th February @ 10:30am - Songs of Praise (Flourish Weekend)

Wednesday 18th February @19:00 – Ash Wednesday Service (Circuit Service)



Flourish 2026 @ University of York



Book your place now for an amazing get together of like minded Methodist folk from all over the Yorkshire North & East District!

- Flourish Festival: Woven Threads Tickets are live!! Following on from our successful events in 2019 and 2023. Come to York in 2026 for this diverse all-age festival of inspiration, celebration, worship and renewal.
- A diverse programme across a 3-day event, Friday evening to Sunday lunchtime, to help us grow as Flourishing Missional Communities. Our theme for 2026 is WOVEN THREADS
 - Rediscovering our place together in God's big tapestry.

Click the links below to purchase your Flourish2026 tickets!

General Admission – https://bit.ly/Flourish26
 Children Youth and Family Streams – https://bit.ly/FlourishCYF

The event features well known Christian musicians, writers and performers. Those who enjoyed being in the audience for Paul Kerensa's After Hours show will enjoy Adrian Plass' own brand of humour. There are workshops, exhibition and resources to browse and purchase, creating a unique tapestry and much more.

Follow this link for all the information you need: FLOURISH Festival 2026 - Woven Threads

Not sure what you might be in for? Have a word with those who have been to the previous two in Scarborough, these include: Andrew and Anne, Neil and Sue, Nicola, Caroline, Jan and Gillian amongst others.



Reflections ahead of Flourish 2026

Take time to read and consider these reflections from the Flourish team: As we enter the run up to the Flourish event in February 2026, our reflections are based on the four 'threads' or themes that will run through the weekend. Find out more at https://www.yorkshirenemethodist.org/flourish26/



Rediscovering curiosity at the heart of faith

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119 v105

Do you welcome the opportunity to learn more about the Christian faith, to explore stories from the Bible or the experiences of other people and reflect on what they might teach us?

Where do you practice curiosity in your day to day life? Maybe in what you read or watch or spend your time on? Do you seek out the stories of others from different backgrounds and experiences to enrich your understanding? Do you notice things when you are out and about?

What might God be encouraging you to be more curious about?

Rediscovering justice at the heart of life

"What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Micah 6 v8

Do you like to get stuck in to making a difference in your community? Do you long to see justice on issues of poverty, or climate change, or discrimination? How do your beliefs about the importance of justice affect your day to day life? In how you spend your money, where you shop, where you go on holiday? Do you notice whose voices aren't being heard? Are there actions you can take- by



donating items or money, joining campaigns, volunteering or raising issues in your church and community?

Where might God be drawing your attention to the need for justice?

Rediscovering God's call at the heart of you

"Speak, for your servant is listening."

1 Samuel 3 v10

Do you feel called by God to a particular role, whether that's a paid job or voluntary role, perhaps at church or in the community? Does a particular thing you do energise and encourage you- do you see how you make a difference, even when it can be challenging?

God calls each one of us to be part of the big 'tapestry' that is being woven throughout time and across the world. What talents or skills or interests do you have? Have you considered how you might be able to use them to bring glory to God? That might be in words, or music, or flowers, or cakes, or craft, or listening- the possibilities are endless!

Our roles might change during our lives, but God still calls us all to be part of the bigger story. Where might God be calling you today?

Rediscovering revolution at the heart of church

"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" Isaiah 43 v19

Do you get excited by the possibilities of new ways of being church? Of going outside the walls, finding worship in the world, walking alongside those who have never known or have rejected traditional forms of church? Maybe in conversations over food, reflecting on the beauty of God's creation, or finding fellowship with others who share our struggles.

We can sometimes forget that the way we do church hasn't always been the same. To enable people who have struggled to connect with church to see and understand the message of Jesus, it can be necessary to find new ways to share that story. In doing so we can find that our own faith is enriched and expanded.

What might God be calling you to explore today?



Interact singing group

On Monday nights in termtime you will hear the sound of singing from the middle hall as a group of learning disabled adults get together with their voices and percussion to sing along karaoke style with songs on the big screen. Mary Soar is the lady who runs the group along with volunteers who support the singers. Their repertoire includes much loved songs from the musicals and currently they are rehearsing for their Christmas singalong to which YOU are cordially invited! The group are aware some of us are carol singing but will be back in time for hot chocolate and seasonal treats!

INTERACT presents

A Christmas Singalong

Woodlands Methodist Church Harrogate

Monday 15th December at 7pm



Join us for a festive feast of Christmas songs and carols plus seasonal refreshments in the hall.

Admission is free but donations are very welcome!





Harrogate Male Voice Choir

Invite you to enjoy an evening of Christmas music and other songs at Woodlands Methodist Church
Wetherby Road, Harrogate HG2 7SG
On Tuesday, 16th December at 7.30 p.m.
Light refreshments will be available
No entrance fee, retiring collection – donations only.

There will be a chance for some audience participation





Recipe Corner

In each issue we will feature a classic recipe from individual members of the church family plus our amazing Lunch Club chefs! This time Jean Beckingham shares the secret of her famous Muesli Bars!

Muesli Bars

Ingredients

- 150g plain cooking chocolate
- 3 tablespoons golden syrup
- 25g butter
- 225g Swiss style muesli cereal
- 150g milk cooking chocolate



Method

- Melt the plain chocolate with the golden syrup and butter.
- Stir in the cereal and mix thoroughly.
- Press into a shallow 19cm square tin.
- Melt the milk chocolate and spread over the cereal mixture.
- Chill until set, marking out into "bars" of the desired size, part way through this process.
- Enjoy!

NB: Caution re- portion sizes- these are yummy but very rich Ingredient amounts can be easily adapted for a smaller tin.



Junior Mission for All



Money collected by JMA supports the World Mission Fund and the Mission in Britain Fund. Find out more on the Methodist Church website: www.methodist.org.uk and click on JMA.

We are currently bereft of any JMA collectors so if any of the young at heart would like to collect, please let Nicola know. You will get a special badge for doing so!

St. Michael's Hospice



Woodlands Church Family have been supporting the Hospice since it opened in 1989 with five inpatient beds in the Convent of Society of the Holy Child Jesus on Oatlands Drive. In 1992 an appeal was launched to raise £1.4 million to buy Crimple House, in 1994 the target was achieved, and a 10-bed inpatient unit was opened. Our support started 25 years ago by collecting Pennies in Smartie tubes, we now collect 1p, 5p, 20p and £1 coins in *Steradent* tubes a sign of just how long we have continued to support them. At present all Hospices are suffering a lack of funds the Government only supplies 25% of the money required to run the Hospice the rest of the money has to be raised by fundraising and donations. So please can I encourage you to pick up a tube from the Vestibule or talk to me or Elizabeth Wearing? Elizabeth will be taking over the collection of the tubes and paying the money into the Hospice from 1 January 2026.

Many thanks Sylvia Fox.



Harrogate & District Foodbank

A big thank you to those who take the time to bring some groceries along to church each month to put in the baskets for the Foodbank. All the donations however big or small are very much appreciated. Read on for an update from one of the Foodbank Trustees:

Last year the Foodbank fed 4,059 people which breaks down into 2,750 adults and 1,309 children. A new Foodbank location also opened at Jennyfields.

Woodlands Methodist Church and friends donated 525 kg of food, that is over half a tonne! This is a fantastic amount especially as many people are struggling with the current cost-of-living crisis. The amount donated in 2024 was similar to that of 2023. Your donations really make a huge difference in the fight against food poverty locally.

Harrogate District Foodbank would like to say a BIG thank you to everyone for your very generous donations.

For more information:

Telephone 0788 552 9864

Website https://harrogatedistrict.foodbank.org.uk
 Facebook www.facebook.com/HarrogateFoodbank/
 Email info@harrogatedistrict.foodbank.org.uk

Did you know you can drop off your Foodbank donations at Waitrose on Station Parade and Morrisons?

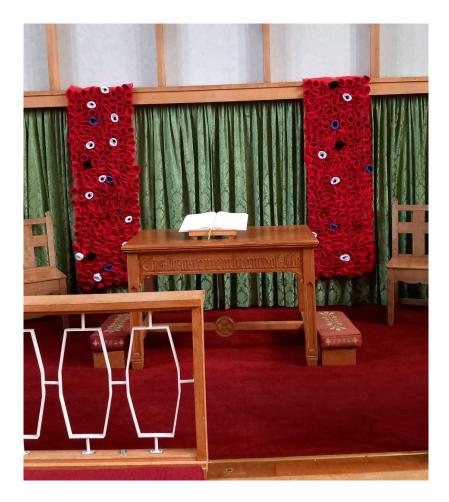
Please keep our food hampers stocked up! There is a current shopping list on display.





Thursday Crafters

The craft group have been involved in various projects since its start in 2024. Our most recent project has been creating two Poppy Falls for the front of church composed of over 400 hand knitted poppies. These were then attached to a roll of plastic net that came from the Cone Exchange, the only roll there! Many hours of work have gone into creating these pieces so a huge shout out to Violet, Sheila, Pam, Helen and Nicola plus our distant member Susan from Bishop Auckland who has generated a few hundred of the poppies! The next project is creating felt angel decorations to give away at the Christmas services. New members always welcome, we meet on alternate Thursday mornings in term time from 10am to 11.30am with coffee provided. Speak to Nicola for the next set of dates.





Circuit Update

Many of you will be aware of the Circuit Regrouping Exercise that is currently being undertaken. The following information was shared with the Woodlands congregation in August following the meeting between Rev Ben Clowes, Circuit Superintendent and the Woodlands steward team with Ian in attendance as Chaplain.

With Lesley Taylor sitting down (retiring) next September the Circuit has a responsibility to ensure that all churches have a named Minister. This will require some restructuring of the churches / circuit to reduce the weight of governance and reflect the reduction in Presbyters from four to three. This reduction means that doing nothing is not an option.

First Steps

As part of this activity, Ben Clowes and a Circuit Steward visited all 13 chapels over the summer to talk to the steward / leadership teams (for a maximum of one hour) and gather information about what they are doing now, what they may do in the future and whether there are any existing links between the circuit churches. Part of the pre-work for each church was to reflect on current and



future activities within the Three Mission Policy Priorities - worship, **mission** and **discipleship** - approved by the Circuit Meeting in September 2022.

Woodlands' Stewards and Ian met with Rev Ben Clowes on Tuesday 12th August. Ben made it clear that nothing has been decided, and this meeting was to listen to the churches. The meeting covered:

- Where Woodlands is against the Mission Policies
- Current links with other circuit churches or ecumenically + potential future synergies



 Potential options for the future organisation of the circuit. Ben reminded us that all options, other than not changing anything, are on the table.

Next Steps / Future

- Stewards to share informally with Church Members the discussions (A more detailed document is available, please ask for a copy)
- Circuit Leadership Team to consolidate outcomes from these meetings and prepare proposals for the re-grouping of the Circuit.
- 15th November 2025: Circuit Away Day to present options for the Circuit to reps from all the chapels. Caroline, Mark, David Munroe and Sylvia attended from Woodlands.
- March 2026: Circuit Meeting coming to a decision.
- Spring / Summer 2026: Implement the new structure

Latest update from November Away Day!

There were 3 suggestions discussed for creating 'groups' of churches:

First suggestion:

- Wesley/Harlow Hill/Trinity/ Pannal
- Killinghall/Bilton Area/Starbeck/Woodlands
- Scotton/Park Grove/Gracious Street/Kirk Hammerton/Kearby

Second suggestion:

- Killinghall/Bilton Area/Scotton/Park Grove/Kirk Hammerton
- Harlow Hill/Trinity/Pannal/Woodlands
- Wesley/Starbeck/Gracious Street/Kearby

Third suggestion is Team Ministry:

- Killinghall/Bilton Area/Wesley/Woodlands/Harlow Hill/Trinity/Pannal
- Starbeck/Scotton/Park Grove/Gracious Street/Kirk Hammerton/Kearby

If you have any questions or just want to talk it over, please make contact with Rev Ian Bryon or the steward team: Nicola, Jan, Mark and Caroline.



Focus on Prayer & Fellowship

There are two prayer trees at Woodlands, one in the middle hall and one in the prayer corner. Both are supplied with a basket of cardboard leaves to write on and a ribbon to hang on the tree. Please make use of them for personal prayers, prayers for the world, prayers for the community. etc. There are a lot of stories in the daily news on tv and radio that need prayer.

Sign up to the daily prayer online from the Methodist Church which also appears on their Facebook page and ours.

The Methodist Prayer handbook is published each September with a wealth of ready made prayers and prayer pointers for the Methodist Church worldwide. Each page focusses on an area of the world as well as a district in the UK. Photos are also included; it could be the Darlington circuit on a pilgrimage or a street market in Guyana.

Various Christian organisations have their own prayer diaries you can subscribe to. Examples include Mission Aviation Fellowship, Bible Society, Operation Mobilisation, Leprosy Mission, Christians Against Poverty and Scripture Union. Check out the prayer resources of the organisation you support.

We have learnt recently about the importance of the Methodist Church's original class system, similar to today's Pastoral visitors each with their dedicated list of church family to pray for, visit and support. Our valued team of Pastoral Visitors under the direction of Sylvia Fox were rededicated recently. They are committed to looking after YOU.

Two house groups operate out of Woodlands, the weekly Thursday morning group and the monthly Women of Woodlands (WoW) group that meets on a Monday evening. These are supported by 'pop up' seasonal groups for Lent and Christmas. These groups offer an informal environment to share and grow, you don't need Bible knowledge either as we all learn together through conversation and following a set study that has something for everyone.

Don't forget the valuable fellowship over a mug of coffee after service on Sundays and look out for our new coffee mornings in the Spring!



Chapel Focus: Kirk Hammerton



There has been a Methodist chapel in the Kirk Hammerton since at least 1812 and the present one has been here since 1899. We thank the members from Tockwith who take an active part in chapel activities, without whom our continuation would be in doubt. For many years now we have worked with the Anglican congregation to show a joint presence in village life and provide a varied form of worship. We are continually reviewing this relationship to ensure that we use our resources to the best advantage.

In recent times the Chapel has been used for a variety of village meetings etc. Members are pleased for it to be used in this way.

Services are held at 10:30am on Sundays, alternating with the Anglican church every fourth Sunday.

Les Hornby BEM

Explore the history of Oatlands Chapel in the next issue.



Nidd Valley Circuit online

Facebook

The Nidd Valley Circuit Facebook page is the home of **online Morning Prayer** and you don't need to join Facebook as a member to access it.

- Already using Facebook? Search for Nidd Valley Methodist Circuit and click on the page
- Not on Facebook? Type <u>www.facebook.com/niddvalleymethodistcircuit</u> into your browser and click on the link.

Find **Morning Prayer** live at 8am or log in later in the day when you have time. Each day is taken by a different member of Circuit staff and the Chair of the District also takes part! The session last up to 30 minutes.

Gracious Street streams morning and evening services regularly at 10.15am and 6.30pm. A great option if you are unable to come to Woodlands due to illness, etc. You feel totally involved and at the end can hear the chatter as folk greet each other.

YouTube

Head to www.youtube.com/@NiddValleyCircuit for more Circuit content and online services. As with Facebook you don't need to be a YouTube subscriber to view the content.



This magazine needs you!

How to contribute to the next issue:

- Spring themed cover photo needed: have you a suitable one in your collection you could share?
- Recipe Corner: have you a favourite spring time or Easter recipe others would enjoy?
- Good News: anything uplifting to share? Special anniversaries and birthdays?
- Birthday corner: have you a birthday from March to June and would like a mention?
- Quizzes and puzzles for all ages
- Group news: what has your group got planned in their programme?
- Memories of Harrogate chapels, which one do you want to read about next? Have you any memories to share for the magazine and our own archives?



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Thank you for reading and we look forward to seeing you at Woodlands over the festive season.





This magazine was brought to you by:

Name:

Role:

Contact Details:

Phone -

Email -