

CONTACT

CHRIST CHURCH HALTON
COLTON METHODIST CHURCH



God's
love
doesn't
stay in
the lines

February 2024

UNBOUNDED
LOVE

LENT 2024 – More from the Methodist Church
and URC inside this month's Contact

Becki's Letter

As we got stuck into a new year, Methodists in many places will have said the very special Covenant prayer together. It's a prayer in which we offer ourselves to God, in response to God's faithfulness to us, and we recommit to following where God will lead us in the months ahead. The prayer itself isn't easy to pray, but the bit that follows is probably harder, as we try to put into practise those good things we've prayed about.

It was a real privilege for me in January to explore the Covenant prayer and an image from the biblical prophet Jeremiah of God being like a potter, with us being clay, with a group of families. After we heard the Bible story, we set to creating some things out of clay for ourselves, and together talking about what we think it means that God is the potter and we like clay.

Since I'm an avid fan of *The Great Pottery Throw Down*, I greeted the task with relish! But, sadly, however many hours I may have spent watching amateur potters creating beautiful things, I do not seem to have magically gained the talent required to make something I could feel proud of from the raw clay!

But this isn't a surprise is it? We know that if we're going to see change in something, be it a slab of clay or the world we live in, we have to work at it, work with it, and spend time and energy getting involved, putting our hands to the task.

In the same way, we must, I think, be ready to allow God to be hands-on with us. Perhaps sometimes we're like that fresh cut lump of clay that resists being moulded, but holding all manner of unexplored potential until God moulds us and shapes us into all we're called to be.

This year, I wonder what you are being called to get hands on with and stuck into? I wonder how God is waiting to work with you?

- *Rev Becki*



You probably know that Jean Hopkinson has been finding some creative ways to raise money for the Christ Church window appeal, selling a variety of items on ebay. Jean is now appealing for old or outdated British coins which can be 'traded in' for funds for the appeal. Please speak to Jean if you think you have anything to offer.

Happy Birthday to all at Colton who celebrate this month, including Barbara, Keith, Robert, Dorothy and Alison W

It's a Wonderful World

A warm ready smile, or a kind thoughtful deed, or a hand outstretched in an hour of need can change our whole outlook and make the world bright, where a minute before just nothing seemed right. It's a wonderful world and it always will be if we keep our eyes open and focused to see the wonderful things we are capable of when we open our hearts to God and His Love.



Some days are better, some days are worse. So look for the blessing instead of the curse. You can't do it all, but you can do your best, so when life knocks you down you're in the perfect position to pray, for God helps those who depend on Him.

Thank you dear friends at Christ Church, at the Tuesday Guild Meetings and the Luncheon Club for the kindly and wonderful 104th Birthday and Christmas greetings and sincere Best Wishes. It helped to make it all one of the best celebrations I've ever had. Thank You – *from Frank Ireland.*

New Beginnings

By Pauline Hardman

New year, new hopes,
resolutions to renew.
What does the new year,
hold for you?
A fresh start, another chance
to be our best,
To begin again and all the rest.
Welcome in another year,
but know that God is ever near
and gives us each and every day
a brand new start
to find our way.
The slate wiped clean
to begin again
with love wrapped around us
as a sweet refrain.
Giving us that time anew,
each day.....always
for me and you.



Messy Church at Christ Church

Join us for Messy Church, however young or not-so-young you are, all are welcome. This month, we're meeting on Saturday 10 February at our usual time, 2-4pm. We'll start with our usual mix of crafts and activities, we'll join together in church for some songs, stories and dancing, and then we'll finish by sharing in some delicious refreshments. We operate on a "pay as you feel able" basis, with a suggested donation of £1 per child. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Why not bring a friend to try us out?

Colton Christ Church Window Appeal Fund – Grant Awards



We are very pleased to have received a grant from the Congregational and General Charitable Trust of £2,300. We are also grateful recipients of a £500 grant from the Green Vision Fund of Morley Glass and Glazing. Their awards provide financial support to charities or not-for-profit community groups in the West Yorkshire region whose activities or initiatives help to improve the local environment and/or provide social benefits to the community. This funding initiative coupled with their 'post consumer glass recycling scheme' recently earned the company the 'Sustainability Initiative of the Year award' at G23 – the premier awards event for the UK glass and glazing industry. Morley Glass and Glazing are the UK's largest specialist manufacturer of sealed and double-glazed windows, doors, conservatory units and decorative glass, containing integral blinds (blinds in glass).

<https://www.morleyglass.co.uk/uni-blinds/>

The award of these two grants means our fund is well on target to get to the required total of £11,500 and the upgrading of the remainder of our ground floor windows this coming spring. For these we say a GREAT BIG THANK YOU!

Colton Dates for Your Diary

- Tues 6th February 7.30pm Colton Church Council Meeting at church.
- Wed 14th February Ash Wednesday Service 7.30pm at Cross Gates Methodist Church.
- Saturday 24th February Concert with WOW (Wakefield Orchestral Wind) 2pm to 4pm.
- Sunday 17th March Church Annual General Meeting following worship.
- Saturday 18th May Colton Plant Sale 10am to 12 noon.

Leeds URC Partnership Lent Course



This year's course is based on the Christian Aid course "Act on Poverty" which focuses on how we think of and react to poverty both locally and globally, especially in a general election year. The course will run for five weeks starting on Monday February 19th, with each session being run 3 times each week. Please feel free to come to whichever session suits you that particular week:

- Mondays 1.30pm URC in South Leeds, LS10 3LG
- Wednesdays 2.00pm Headingley St Columba, LS6 2DH
- Wednesdays 7.30pm via Zoom

Different members of the leadership team will run the various sessions. If you'd like more information, such as the Zoom details, please contact Angela Hughes on 07752 904317 or via email: angela.hughes1@icloud.com. You can also visit the Christian Aid website:

www.christianaid.org.uk/getinvolved/campaigns/actonpoverty

It's not too late for...

Why Churchwardens Love January

Submitted by Dorothy at Colton:

Hail to the Lord's anointed,
Both clergyman and lay!
But they're seldom disappointed
To get past Christmas Day!
The hectic Christmas season is
Of service constantly –
There can't be better reason
To welcome January!

The Curate and the Vicar
A busy schedule keep,
As they rush, ever quicker –
They don't get that much sleep.
And overworked Churchwardens
And their sidespersons team –
Sure don't get time for boredom,
And only seldom scream!

So, when the season's over,
The crib has been put by,
The drapes to green changed over,
They breathe a heartfelt sigh!
They laugh and smile with pleasure,
And sing a merry rhyme,
But short-lived is their leisure –
For soon comes Easter time!

A little boy was praying: “Dear God, please take care of my daddy and my mommy and my sister and my brother and my doggy and my cat and me. Oh, please take care of yourself, God. If anything happens to you, we'll be in a *big* mess.”

Thank you from Colton Church Stewards!

- ♥ To all those who contributed to the amazing number of donations for Meeting Point and the Foodbank as part of the Reverse Advent Calendar, and special thanks to Ali for promoting this and Keith & Sylvia for delivering the items.
- ♥ For all the toys and gifts donated at our annual Toy Service, which were greatly appreciated by the Salvation Army who helped distribute them to those in need.
- ♥ To everyone who helped in any way with worship over Advent and Christmas, including Junior Church for overseeing the Advent Liturgy, our guitarists, all the preachers and our amazing minister Revd Becki who managed to fit lots of extra services in over the season!
- ♥ To everyone who helped decorate the church for Christmas, including Dorothy for the wonderful new fabric Advent banners to replace our “temporary” paper ones! Also, all who tidied it away after Christmas, helping to get rid of those extra calories by wrestling with the Christmas tree box and climbing up to the loft!
- ♥ For monetary donations to Action for Children (totalling £120.44) and Save the Children (totalling £183.85) at Christmas worship, and via the Church Christmas card beautifully put together by Junior Church.
- ♥ To the Methodist Church Connexion for the “Out of the Ordinary” resources used in worship, in publicity and as give aways, and to Revd Mark for the AR Nativity Trail.

It's been a great team effort to make this such a special season, so thank you everyone for all your support!

Can you help?

Leeds Asylum Seekers' Supporters
Network (LASSN)

DO YOU HAVE A SPARE ROOM IN LEEDS?



LASSN is looking for volunteers to temporarily accommodate asylum seekers in Leeds.

Welcome a guest into your home and provide a warm, clean place to sleep and wash.

Minimum stay 1 week.

Receive training and regular support from LASSN.

Must be able to attend training 11th March 10-4PM.

Apply at lassn.org.uk/volunteers

“Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing, some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.” (Hebrews 13:2)

Lent Giving at Colton

During Lent, as last year, we'd like to raise money for our Charity of the Year (People in Action). We're asking you to think of something small that you use or buy often and collect the money you've saved by giving it up. It might be a tempting snack, a magazine or a takeaway coffee – every penny saved will quickly add up and will help our charity of the year in their work. We also invite you to support them through prayer, giving thanks for the work they do and praying for all involved in their operation. Look out for further details in the weekly notices.



Easy Fundraising

Both Colton and Christ Church have supporters who use 'easyfundraising' for their on-line ordering and purchases. A small percentage of your spending is donated by the vendor to our causes.

Booking Holidays, buying insurance and on-line supermarket shopping yield very good returns but even if it's a few pence each time collectively it all adds up. With only 8 supporters each, Christ Church and Colton have benefitted by £600 between them on easyfundraising in the last few years.

It's important to stress that you should not be influenced into making purchases or spending more than you would just to get a donation! But please do try it if you order on-line. If you are not happy just withdraw from the scheme. Go to the easyfundraising 'find a cause' web page and insert the name of either Christ Church Halton or Colton Methodist Church – Colton. Either scan the QR code with your phone camera or visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause



Childish Joy

Revisiting the small old church which was my spiritual home for many critical years while I allowed myself to be rediscovered by God, I came across on the bulletin board a list of reasons why children are welcomed to that church. One particularly seized my attention — "children show us what absolute joy looks like". And that, I suspect, is as true as is the Law of Gravity. I fear we spend all our years unlearning, in the face of the woes and trepidations of this life, the liberating powers of unfettered wonder and gladness which children possess in such natural abundance.

Jesus encouraged his followers to find their way to the Kingdom by "becoming like little children", to avoid becoming ensnared in the heavy worries and perplexing anxieties of grown-up life and to behold with fresh eyes all the marvellous glory and fascinating majesty of the teeming Creation. As our bodies succumb to the inexorable ravages of time, perhaps if our hearts can regain the capacity to rejoice in the small yet sumptuous miracles of ordinary life, we will taste in child-like ways the succulent goodness which is always ours without the asking.

(From "Musings Of A Wayward Pilgrim" by Mark Zenick and reproduced with the author's kind permission.)

Big 'Thank You's at Christ Church



Thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas "Coffee and Carols" event. A fabulous £413 was raised for Macmillan Cancer Care.

Huge thanks also to everyone who supported the Christmas shoe box collection. 185 boxes went to Meeting Point Cafe in Harehills to be distributed locally. Special thanks to Julie Digings who collected 125 of the boxes.

Christ Church Table-Top Sale

Our next table-top sale is coming up soon – on 17 February to be exact. If you'd like to book a table for the sale, please contact Sue on 0113 264 7037.



Join us for an afternoon of music, from TV, the shows, films and much more!

WOW

(Wakefield Orchestral Wind)



*Venue Colton Methodist Church
Saturday February 24th 2pm to 4pm
Tickets £6 to include refreshments.*



*Reserve tickets either by email to
info.coltonchurch@gmx.co.uk,
or contact David or Elaine
0113 2253894*



*Colton Church @ the Heart of the
Community*

*Please be considerate to our neighbours
when parking.
Car park first left after road junction.*



Christ Church Guild update

Following on from our Christmas family celebrations, again we return to our programme. On 2 January we shared a New Year supper, Fish and Chips; and we enjoyed some seasonal tales from some of our committee members. The highlight of the evening for me, was the presentation of a Guild tie from my friend and co-president Peter Grubb, I was truly honoured to receive this and will wear it with pride, on the rare occasions when I wear a tie.

You don't have to come very far to be transported around the world to enjoy the experiences that some of our speakers share. In December we were taken around China with John Hollingworth. On 9 January Dennis Brighton shared how he fulfilled his boyhood ambition of visiting Macchu Pichu. In fact, we were given an illustrated tour around South America, a very moving and informative account; I am still amazed that he managed to share over 240 slides. It was a little longer than our usual meeting but people were not rushing to go home, which has to say something. Friendship and fellowship are words I would choose to use.

As I write this, in the middle of January and as I look forward, there are only another two months left in our current programme. Do think about joining us, you will be made most welcome. Have a look below at what might interest you.

6 February – Journey from Asylum Seeker to the Sacred

Priesthood: Father Yemane Aradom, originally from Sudan, raised in Eritrea, came to England as an asylum seeker in 2014 after a long and tiring 8-month journey.

13 February – The Siege of York: Chris Berendt makes a welcome return visit to talk about events preceding the Battle of Marston Moor.

20 February – The Highs and Lows of a Legal Career: Retired solicitor, Robert Stewart, recounts his experience of working in the legal profession.

27 February – The 4th Plinth in Trafalgar Square: This intriguing title comes from Rev. Tim Nicholls, Methodist Chaplain to the Universities of Leeds.



Colton New Year Party

It was great to see so many people of all ages at our New Year Party, both regular church folk and others from the Colton community. Thank you to everyone who helped set up (and clear away!), those who provided a variety of entertainment and a lovely array of food and all who supported the event in any way. There was fun with quizzes and guess the name of the sprout (Smiley!), amusement over “pin the carrot nose on the snowman”, great hilarity over pass the parcel (or should that be “throw the parcel”) and some lovely singing. We are pleased to report that the raffle raised £68 for our Charity of the Year, People in Action.

Churches Together in East Leeds

This year’s World Day of Prayer service will be held at St Gregory’s on Friday 1st March at 2pm. (St Gregory the Great, Swarcliffe Drive, Leeds LS14 5AW), and has been prepared by the women of Palestine. If you would like to volunteer to read and represent our congregations, please contact Christine Holdstock at Cross Gates Methodist.

Churches together are wondering if more church people should be involved in ‘Leeds Citizens’ activity. They offer training for anyone willing to become a coordinator and help ‘mobilise the power of people’! See their web pages at; leedsforchange.org.uk One local issue is the impending closure of the old ‘Crossgates Library’ building. There is a community wide campaign, and on online petition, to save this so please get involved if you can. You can find the petition by searching for ‘change.org crossgates library leeds’. Or in the interests of balance, you may have found the shopping centre location very useful despite its restricted facilities and opening hours, in which case you can feed your views to Karen Gray via email karen@connectingcrossgates.com

Leprosy Mission

On Sunday 11th February there will be a special collection at Colton in aid of the Leprosy Mission, as we seek to continue the good work done by Freda, who was a stalwart supporter of the charity.

Christ Church Flowers

A big thank you to all the Flower Arrangers and Donors for the flowers in church week by week and at Easter and Harvest when much larger displays were in evidence. Without your contributions I couldn't have done it alone!



The flowers are a real addition to the worship time in church and over the past year have been amazing and colourful as well as bringing greetings from Christ Church to those of our congregation who cannot come to church any more but still like to be included in worship. Please keep on donating and arranging so that this outreach can continue. The flower list is on the notice board in the hall, so please add your name if you can, or speak to me in Church.
– from Margaret Whincup.

Lent 2024 – Unbounded Love



The much-loved Charles Wesley hymn *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* talks about Jesus as 'unbounded love' – a kind of love that cannot be contained, that works in our lives and in our world to free us and heal us. *Unbounded Love* is the theme of the Lent campaign of the Methodist Church in 2024 – holding together our commitments to be a justice-seeking church, and a people who experience and proclaim the good news of God's uncontainable love. To receive daily lent reflections via email, sign up by clicking this link:

[Unbounded Love - Lent Reflections](#)

Forthcoming Services at Christ Church

4 February	Mr Ted Britton
11 February	Rev Edward Sakwe
18 February	Rev Norma Davey
25 February	Rev Nicola Robinson Holy Communion
3 March	Rev Edward Sakwe

Other Services

- Circuit Services – Sun 4th February, 4pm at Barwick Methodist Church, and 3rd March, 4pm at Colton Methodist Church
- Ash Wednesday Services – Holy Communion will take place Wednesday 14th February, 7.30pm, at Cross Gates Methodist and at Oakwood Church.
- Quiet Prayer Service – 9.15-9.45am every Thursday at Oakwood Church
- Worship @ MHA Tranquility Court, 10.45am, Tuesday 6th February

Lent Begins

“Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming. It is close at hand.” (Joel 2:1)

Forthcoming Services at Colton

4 February	Rev Becki Stennett All-Age Parade Service
11 February	Rev Norma Davey
18 February	Rev Joyce Nicholson Holy Communion
25 February	Mrs Ann Johnson
3 March	Miss Mary Patchett All-Age Parade Service

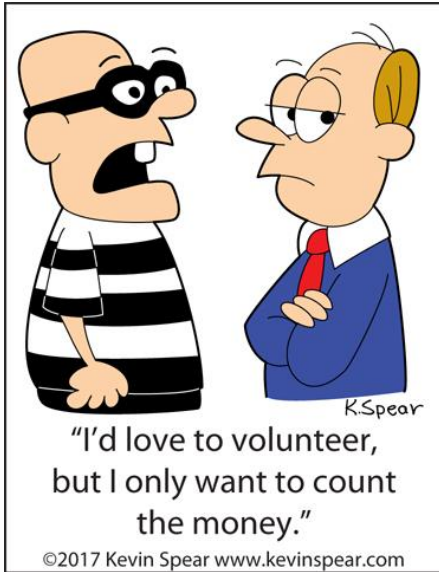
“The Church Picnic”

A church had a picnic and invited the entire community to come. The Pastor placed a basket full of apples on one end of a table with a sign saying, "Take only one apple please - Remember that God is watching."

On the other end of the table was a plate of biscuits where one of the children had placed a sign saying, "Take all the biscuits you want – God is watching the apples."

“Contact” Deadline

Please let Andy have any articles or contributions for the March “Contact” by 7pm on Tuesday 27th February. Many thanks.
andybirkett76@gmail.com or 07952 861316.



"I'd love to volunteer,
but I only want to count
the money."

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"You really have to do
something about the sound
system feedback!"

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