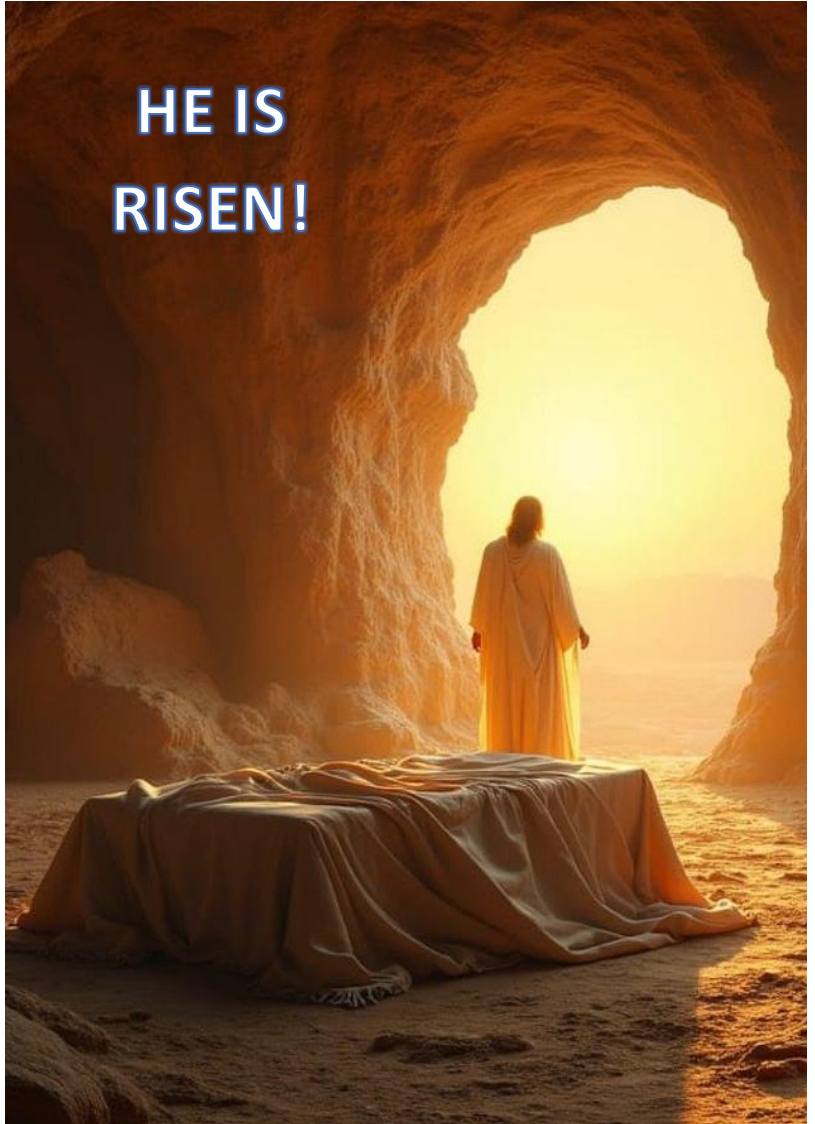


CONTACT

CHRIST CHURCH HALTON
COLTON METHODIST CHURCH

**HE IS
RISEN!**



April 2026

Nicola's Letter

The Gospel writer, John, describes the first Easter over 2000 years ago: "Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark..."

The first day of the week. The first day of something new. At this stage, Mary Magdalene, who arrives at the tomb, does not realise just how transformative that something new will be. "While it was still dark" – notice how the language points us to the bleakness of Mary's grief and lack of understanding.

Let's home in on Mary's point of view: She was there at the foot of Jesus' cross. She was there as his mother and the other women wept. I imagine she was there as the body was taken down, wrapped in cloths, and sealed up in the tomb. What did she feel as the stone was rolled into place? Can you imagine? Can you imagine the terrible darkness?

It is the darkness that eradicates hope. A suffocating, creeping darkness that erodes any belief in the future. It's the darkness of death. It's the darkness of illness. It's the darkness of struggle. It's bleak. It's desolate.

And yet... there is a competition going on in, in this first line:

"Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark..."

Darkness dominates, but we are also alerted to the fact that dawn is coming – a powerful thought. Yes – darkness might surround Mary and each one of us at times – but with God, dawn will break through. Dawn always comes, following even the darkest, most desolate nights. Yes – the night hours are hard and long, but nothing can stop dawn.

Just as with Mary at the tomb, in our lives and across the world, there are many situations and experiences which are deeply painful and frightening. Ill-health, grief, isolation, poverty, racism, ongoing wars, the climate crisis, all can create darkness and despair.

And yet, God calls us to trust that even when we cannot see or feel it ourselves, God never, ever leaves us. God is right there with us, going through it all with us. God is with us, nurturing new life from the very seeds of pain and fear. This is an utterly transforming hope which we can hold onto, and share, in the darkest times and places, at Easter and beyond.

- Nicola

URC Ministry: Meet The Team

Next up in our series introducing the URC Ministry Team is Reverend Angela Hughes.

“My first memory of Church was when I was allowed to join the Girls Life Brigade as a cadet at Stanmore Baptist Church, North London. I must have been 7 or 8. I loved it. The new friends, games, competitions, gymnastics and of course Jesus! A whole new world full of opportunity was opened up. Alongside this, my education at a Roman Catholic Convent widened my perspective and piqued my curiosity.



Alongside this, my education at a Roman Catholic Convent widened my perspective and piqued my curiosity.

At 18 I was baptised as a believer in the Baptist Church and it was soon after this, that I met Donald (a Baptist from Wales) on a Youth Club trip to Austria and a few years later we were married in the Baptist Church with a Guard of Honour from the Girls Life Brigade. And that was 66 years ago.

Moving up to Leeds where Donald, a Medical Physicist, had a new job, we became members at Harehills Lane Baptist Church where Donald played the organ and I taught in the Sunday School. When we moved onto the High Ashes in North Leeds we became founder members at Wigton Moor Congregational Church – soon to become United Reformed. In due course we had 3 children Karen, Mark and Jonathan.

Establishing this new church on this new estate was challenging and I remember the sterling work done by Revd Constance Clark who became an extra Grandmother for our children. What a role model! I also remember the strong support for Wigton Moor from St Andrew's Elders at this time.

In the late 1980's I became an Elder and Church Secretary (Moir's predecessor), one of the first representatives on Mission Council and active on other national committees. A great overview of 'how the United Reformed Church works' – no hierarchy - consiliar at every level.

Meanwhile at home, following a very brief career with the Medical Research Council in Mill Hill, I oversaw the running of a small publishing company which specialised in scientific publications – a hobby for Donald, and a job for me.

Meanwhile at home, following a very brief career with the Medical Research Council in Mill Hill, I oversaw the running of a small publishing company which specialised in scientific publications – a hobby for Donald, and a job for me. And then I had what I often call an 'aha' moment. In spite of my involvement in church life, I was conflicted. Faith and action - personal salvation and social justice. How did I reconcile the two? (continued...)

It was a time of reading, thought and prayer. Encouraged by Revd Andrew Francis, our Minister, I went with him to the Leeds Anabaptist Group and shortly after this I committed, similar to Geoff, to the life-changing WORKSHOP Christian Discipleship Course. Real faith involved action – personal salvation surely led to social justice. ‘Just as I have loved you,’ says Jesus, ‘you also should love one another.’ (John 13:34). Ecumenically, theologically, spiritually I felt I had come home. It was this peace – shalom – that I felt called to share with others.

Following four years at Northern College, I was ordained in 1997 as a Non-Stipendiary Minister and inducted into the Leeds District Council. I spent time at St Paul’s Harrogate setting up a Team for their Youth work, I moved to The Church in Cottingley where I discovered the joy of community ministry and estate mission. And then I moved to Stainbeck where I was charged with establishing an ecumenical community project now InterACT. But that is all another story!

Following the establishment of the project, Stainbeck called me to pastoral ministry and I was inducted as their Minister in 2005. I was Synod Pastoral Elder before Sheana and tasked with the job of forming a partnership of the Leeds churches. Then in 2022 it was all change. At last! I moved on to become part of the current Ministry Team for the evolving Leeds Partnership

Although sadly we lost our son Jonathan in the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami, our family has grown over the years – we have three grandsons and two greatgrandchildren. Nine years ago, we down-sized to a retirement flat in Roundhay – not an easy move but in retrospect one for which we are thankful.

We look back over great family holidays; seaside, mostly wet until we discovered camping in France. Donald’s work took us over the pond to Minnesota in the United States where we managed some holiday to travel down to Los Alamos and New Mexico – taking an over-active two-year-old daughter. We spent time in Iran and Hong Kong – good memories but so long ago. We went to Thailand and out to the little island of Phi Phi Dom to see where our son had been on that Boxing Day morning in 2004.

Why am I still ‘working’? I can only say because I enjoy what I do and still feel that call. I still feel passionate about community, ecumenism and the ongoing possibilities of new beginnings and change and if there is a useful role for me at enabling this to evolve – count me in! Alongside this I know that I must be very aware of the right time to step back and that I must listen to the words of others and to that inner voice which is of God. I have also discovered that age brings perspective and a degree of peace about the future. And that is new. Confirming my trust that I will know what to lay down and when to do it.

- Angela

Christ Church Halton Guild

Time seems to pass quickly these days – as you are reading this article the Guild has come to the end of another wonderful session. We had our AGM on the 24th March where we looked back on the year's programme, discussed the evenings we enjoyed, and looked forward to what's to come when we meet again on the September 8th. But during the summer break we have many dates to put in your diaries when you can come and support us, which are open to anybody and everybody.

Coffee afternoons and evenings:

26th May 3pm to 8pm

16th June 2pm to 4pm

21st July 7pm to 9pm

Buffet lunch:

18th August 1pm for 1.30pm (you may have to book – details to follow)

Annual Plant Sale:

14th May 9am to 4.30pm

15th May 9am to 4.30pm

16th May 9am to 12.30pm

We hope to see many of you there at one or two of the events, or we will look forward to meeting up again in September where anyone and everyone will receive a warm welcome.”

- Elizabeth Moll, Guild planning committee member (the youngest one!)



Quiz Night at Colton Church Saturday 9th May

We know you love a quiz, so please make a note in your diaries to keep the evening of Saturday 9th May free! We hope to have a fundraiser for the Scout trip to the World Jamboree in 2027, which one of our Colton Scouts, Kathryn, will be attending, along with Eva, granddaughter of John & Kathryn Glasby. More details will be available nearer the time – look out for flyers and for information in the weekly notices at Colton.

Wind

Of all the faces of weather I find strong winds most disquieting. With their bravura, staccato gusts, they get beneath my skin and unsettle me. Winds seem to ebb and then aggressively assault my personal sense of safety and well-being. Gale force winds belligerently threaten with a "take no prisoners" personality, playing docile trees with impunity and lifting waves to slash the stoical shorelines. Such winds, raucous and unfettered, seem to have the purpose of reminding human beings of their humble and rightful place in Creation.

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



CHRIST CHURCH HALTON GUILD
PLANT SALE
Chapel Street, Leeds LS15 7RW

	Thursday & Friday 14th & 15th May 9 am - 4.30 pm	
	Saturday 16th May 9 am - 12.30 pm	

**A varied selection of Plants for
your Garden, Pots, Tubs and
Hanging Baskets.**



Refreshments
served from 10 am



Including on Saturday 16th May
10 am - 12.30 pm

Table Top Sale
with a wide variety of stalls

Images by freepik.com & rawpixel.com



Why did the Easter bunny go to the barber?
He was having a bad *hare* day.



COULD YOU BE COLTON CHURCH'S NEXT TREASURER?

Our treasurer is intending to retire after completing the accounts for the 2026-27 financial year (i.e. at 31/08/27).

You don't need to be (or have been) an accountant or have any financial qualifications, but if you have any experience in financial services this could be advantageous, to both you and us.

Your main duties for the Church will be to maintain accurate records of every financial transaction that takes place in each financial year, and then complete the annual return. To help you do so, you will be using a computer program that we have tailor-made to produce Colton Church's accounts and reports.

You will not have sole responsibility for the finances of the church; that responsibility rests firmly with our Church Council. However, you will be responsible for providing accurate and sufficient information to our Church Council to enable them to make informed decisions.

Full training will be given before you take up the role, including hands on experience with our systems (that is why we are advertising this role so far ahead). Please note that if you are not already a member of the Methodist Church, you will need to be one when you take up your official role.

INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT MORE (without any commitment)? Just email: info.coltonchurch@gmx.co.uk with your contact details, in the first instance; and the treasurer will be in touch. Thank you.



**Spring Booster
COVID-19 VACCINATIONS**

BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT
07882 432914

Stay Protected, Stay Healthy

Wednesday 15th April 2026
Christ Church, Chapel St, Halton, LS15 7RW
10:00-12:00

NHS Eligibility Criteria:

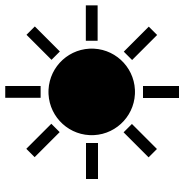
- 75+** Anyone aged 75 before 30/06/26
- Residents of Adult Care Facilities
- Immunosuppressed Individuals

Scan to book

Not eligible?
Private service available
for £79

Halton Pharmacy

NHS



Christ Church Summer Fair

If anyone has any items for the Tombola Stall at our Summer Fair in June can you please let Jean Hopkinson have them. We would also be grateful for any home baking on the day to sell on our Cake Stall please. Thank you. – *Jean*

Lent Groups – “A place for us”

“A number of us from the various churches in Revd Janet’s section attended the 5 sessions of bible study, discussion and reflection based on Steven Spielberg’s film version of “West Side Story”, at either Garforth or Colton Churches during Lent.

I personally found the sessions thought provoking and they put a different slant on what I knew of the film. Some of the sessions were harder than others to deal with, but I’m glad I persevered! A huge thank you to Janet and Barry for facilitating these sessions, which were very much appreciated.” - *Kathryn Glasby*

Thoughts on the Way Forward: Leeds North & East Circuit

Over recent years discussions have been ongoing at Circuit Meetings and at Church Councils across the Circuit, in relation to our circuit strategy and our circuit finances, when we have faced difficult decisions. This has resulted in a reduction in ordained staff alongside lay worker redundancies. Individual churches across the Circuit are also facing challenges, financially or with unfilled roles or both. We recognise that as a Circuit we can't continue as we are - we need to be proactive rather than reactive to move forward. Many of us fear change, but together as a circuit we need to begin to explore options of doing things differently, to enable those in churches to feel less exhausted and for mission and sharing the gospel to be at the forefront.

All the churches in the Circuit have recently completed a questionnaire, to form a baseline of where each church is in relation to areas such as finances, volunteer roles, building maintenance, place within the community and relationship with other churches. As a next step a couple of representatives from each church will join the circuit leadership group in exploring options for a way forward over the next few months. The aim is to bring an option or options to the circuit meeting and the wider circuit.

We ask your prayers for all those involved in the process, from your own churches and for those across the Circuit.

- *Elaine, Kathryn, Helen and Elizabeth – co-senior stewards at Colton and Christ Church Halton*

Christ Church Meeting 12th April

This will take place after our morning service and coffee at 12pm. Please come along to hear updates and look at what we need to do as a Church. It is your time to ask questions and share views and ideas. We will follow this meeting with a light lunch of soup and a sweet. To help with catering it would be helpful if you would please sign up on the list if you are intending to come, but it isn't essential as all will be welcome on the day. - *Helen Lappage*

Colton Eco-Church Bronze Award Achieved!!!

Congratulations to everyone who has been supporting Colton to achieve the A Rocha UK Eco Church Bronze award.

Through the changes we have made in the things we do as both individuals and as a church, we have successfully met the required standards in the following categories:

- Worship and Teaching
- Buildings and Energy
- Land and Nature
- Community and Global Engagement
- Lifestyle

We've even exceeded the standards in some of the categories and are well on our way to achieving Silver.

All of these changes work towards our looking after God's earth, people and nature and we are committed to continuing this.

If you would like to join our small (but passionate!) group, please contact any one of us – we'd be delighted to welcome you.

Another great way of finding out more is to visit the Eco Church website at:

www.eccochurch.arocha.org.uk

And a huge **Thank You** to everyone in helping us to achieve this.

Colton Eco Church Group.
(Kathryn, Elaine, Alison, Ali, Robert and Jo.)

Psalm 96:11-12

“Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it! Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy.”

Poetry Corner

One of our Christ Church congregation shared this poem with us –
“written by Lydia Hemsworth at the age of 13”

When Jesus Christ was crucified,
Jesus suffered, Jesus died.
He hung and suffered on the cross,
To everyone it was a great loss.
While walking in the garden,
Mary saw the stone was moved away,
She saw the tomb was empty,
Wondered where her dear Lord lay.

And then appeared to her in white, a man, who said to her “Mary, why weepst thou? You have now found your Lord”



Colton Church Annual General Meeting Sunday 10th May

Worship on Sunday 10th May will be led by our own minister Revd Janet, including Holy Communion, and will be immediately followed by our church AGM. We invite anyone attending worship to stay for a cuppa and take part in the meeting.

We ask you to give prayerful consideration of how you can contribute to the life of the church at Colton, as we continue to see how we can spread the workload to ease the burden on individuals, alongside thinking about our evangelism strategy, reviewing our financial situation and finding out how the Circuit review of how it operates is progressing (see separate item from your senior stewards in this edition of Contact).

A report booklet, covering various aspects of Colton Church, will be available a couple of weeks prior to the meeting and there will then be opportunity in the meeting for feedback on any of the reports.



Plant Sale

& coffee Morning

@

Colton Methodist Church

Saturday 16th May from 10am - 12 noon



A variety of plants & hanging baskets will be available all at very reasonable prices. Come along & purchase your plants & then enjoy a well earned cup of coffee or tea & a piece of homemade cake. ✨

The proceeds of this year's sale will be for church funds. ✨

Please bring your own bags/containers.

Cash only payments.

Contributions accepted for the foodbank.



Everyone is welcome. ✨

Parking at the church premises is limited. If parking nearby, please keep access clear for neighbouring properties. ✨

@ the heart of the Colton Community

Park Road

Lent offerings for SolarAid

A reminder, if you have been saving money during Lent to donate to SolarAid, to bring your donation to Colton Church by Sunday 12th April. There are some leaflets containing gift aid envelopes for you to use for your donation, if you are able to gift aid. See one of the stewards if you'd like one. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this.

Celebrating Together: A Term Full of Fun with Rainbows, Brownies & Guides

As another term comes to a close, our Tuesdays have been a hive of activity filled with laughter. The girls have worked so hard and earned so many badges. This time, our Rainbows, Brownies and guides had two particularly special events that we want to tell you about which made it a truly memorable term!

A Special Visit from Thelma and Oasis - One of the highlights was an inspiring visit from Thelma of the Guide Dogs Association and her adorable guide dog, Oasis. The girls learned about the incredible journey of a guide dog, from playful puppy to dedicated helper - even their retirement. The insightful stories shared were not just educational but also heartwarming, reminding us of the importance of empathy and understanding. Thanks to the generous donations from our community, we managed to raise an impressive sum of £95!! This support will go a long way in our wider community.

To deepen our understanding of the challenges faced by individuals with sight impairment, we engaged in fun activities. The girls took turns guiding each other through a mini obstacle course, experiencing firsthand the reliance on trust and communication. We also learned the basics of the braille alphabet using creative materials like egg boxes and cotton wool. These activities also emphasised the values of friendship, teamwork, and helping others.

Celebrating World Thinking Day: A Global Connection - Following our engaging visit, we celebrated World Thinking Day on February 22nd, a significant event marking its **100th anniversary** this year! This special day, initiated in 1926 during the 4th World Conference of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, reminds us of our place in a vast global family. With over 11 million members across 153 countries, Girlguiding is the largest voluntary movement dedicated to empowering girls. The messages from our newfound pen pals around the world filled our hearts with joy and reinforced the values of courage, confidence, and friendship that we cherish.

A Legacy of Friendship and Growth

For over 40 years, our Girlguiding unit has been proudly based at Colton Methodist Church, nurturing more than 500 girls along their journeys. Each girl has found friendship, support, and countless opportunities for growth within our community. As we reflect on our achievements, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported us. Your encouragement helps us continue this legacy of empowerment and togetherness.

As we look ahead, we're excited about what's to come for our Rainbows, Brownies, and Guides!



Forthcoming Services at Christ Church

Easter Sunday	9.00am	Rev Janet Titterton Holy Communion
	10.30	Mr Tom Ferguson
12 April		Rev Janet Titterton
19 April		Rev Angela Hughes
26 April		Worship Team
3 May		Rev Tim Lowe



Christ Church Messy Church

Join us on 11 April between 2 and 4 pm for Messy Church. We'll still be thinking about Easter, new life, and how Jesus is risen – even if we might all be feeling a bit sick after all the chocolate eggs by then!

Songs, crafts, food and drink, stories and more – come and have fun with all your friends. Maybe invite a friend who's never been before! All ages are welcome, from 1 to 100.

Don't forget that all children must be accompanied by an adult throughout. We have a "pay as you feel able" policy, and we suggest £1 per child.



Forthcoming Services at Colton

Easter Sunday	Rev Joyce Nicholson Holy Communion, All-Age
12 April	Rev Steven Jones
19 April	Mr Tom Ferguson
26 April	Deacon Adelha da Silva Circuit Project Service
3 May	Mr Andy Birkett All-Age Worship

Next Month's "Contact"

The next edition of Contact will be published on 3 May. Please let Andy have any articles or contributions for next month's issue by **7pm on Tuesday 28 April**. Many thanks.
(andybirkett76@gmail.com or 07952 861316).

Don't forget you can now find a digital edition of Contact online at the Colton and Christ Church pages of the Circuit website.

Colton Dates For Your Diary

- Sunday 10th May: Church Annual General Meeting after worship
- Saturday 16th May: Colton Plant Sale
- Saturday 4th July: Summer Fair at Colton Church

Christian Aid Coffee Morning @ Christ Church

Saturday 9th May



10-11.30am

Please come along and support this excellent cause, supporting needy farmers with growing their own crops and feeding their families.

Thank you

Alison

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04-06-2012

ACTUALLY, ALL FRIDAYS ARE GOOD ... WE SHOULD CALL TODAY 'GREAT FRIDAY'!

WHO TO CONTACT

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Elizabeth Moll (CC)		elizabeth.moll@outlook.com
Kathryn Glasby (Colton)	07503 740500	kathryn.glasby@talktalk.net
Elaine Preston (Colton)	07760 737515	ea.preston@ntlworld.com

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Shirley Dann (Colton)	0113 2820828	colton.mcbookings@outlook.com

Ministers

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Rev Nicola Robinson (CC)	07572 986305	revnicola.robinson@gmail.com