

CONTACT

CHRIST CHURCH HALTON
COLTON METHODIST CHURCH

September 2026



"LORD, you have made so many things! How wisely you made them all! The earth is filled with your creatures." (Psalm 104)

Nicola's Letter

The Like the natural world, where we have the seasons of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, our church year is made up of seasons. We begin with Advent, followed by Christmas, leading into Epiphany, Lent, Easter and so on.

The Season of Creation, running from 1 September to 4 October, is an annual, ecumenical celebration of prayer and action for Creation that Christians on six continents have commemorated for many years. This year as we approach the Season of Creation, in the midst of heatwaves, wildfires and droughts, we've been made acutely aware of how essential it is for us to take steps to acknowledge and respond to the climate crisis.

The theme for the Season of Creation 2026 is Living Water. The prophet Ezekiel proclaims a vision for his world and our own: "Wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish, once these waters reach there. It will become fresh; and everything will live where the river goes. ... On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing." (Ezekiel 47: 9,12)

Ezekiel's vision stands in sharp contrast to the reality of the water crisis we face. According to the United Nations, 1.7 billion people lack basic hygiene services at home, and 2.1 billion people still lack access to safe drinking water - that is 1 in 4 people on the globe! So, during the Season of Creation we are invited to engage in contemplation alongside action through three interconnected steps:

- 1. Contemplation:** walk alongside a river, lake or beach. Or remember a time when you have spent time beside a body of water. Take some time to contemplate how the water flows and all the life that it sustains.
- 2. Immersion:** engage with those facing environmental and social challenges caused by the climate crisis. Read up on or listen to stories from Christian Aid or Water Aid to learn about real people and real situations
- 3. Sending out:** consider one action you could take as an individual or as a church: recycling more, litter-picking, creating or nurturing a community garden. When we each change one thing and encourage others, we can make a big difference for our beautiful planet.

I invite you to share these reflections and actions and thank God for Her life-giving water.

- *Peace and solidarity, Nicola*

Thoughts from Mary Patchett

At Colton Church recently we held a creation-themed songs of praise service, during which we asked the congregation to think of pledges they could make to help protect God's creation. Over the summer Mary Patchett, one of our Circuit local preachers, has put some thoughts together to share in a weekly letter on a number of subjects and this one ties in with our songs of praise service. She has kindly agreed for it to be shared in Contact. Mary writes:

"I think the majority of us in the world are now convinced that our climate is changing across the whole world. Over the aeons of geological history, the world and its inhabitants have changed phenomenally, hasn't it? It has evolved. And it is still evolving. But we are learning from the experts in such fields, and then brought to us by the wonders of modern picture production, just how that has occurred— probably in some instances, definitely in others. We know and understand so much more than we ever used to. There were those who struggled to make any connection between the scientific evidence and the God in whom they believe. There are also many who can accept both unquestioningly. Some of these have never given it thought; others have thought deeply and been able to satisfactorily integrate them. There are those for whom it remains contentious. They can't quite resolve the science on the one hand with God on the other. Let's pray they continue searching. Take some space and just reflect on your position. Science, creation in Genesis, God's very existence.

But we can all tell the tales of those long, hot summers of our youth, those dreadful winters of snow almost burying us; it was so deep. And of course now, when we suffer prolonged periods of rain and cooler air, as well as extensive times of great heat and drought. For us here in Leeds, the extent of our misery is our discomfort with the current weather, our sadness as we watch our gardens become water-laden or seeming desert-like. But for many across the world, we know only too well the loss of life, the loss of home, <continued>

the horrific experience that the consequences of climate change are having on individuals. People like us, nowadays some of them wealthy but many very poor. And as I look out on my garden this morning when the sun is shining, the sky is a mixture of summer blue and cloud, and the temperature is comfortable, I give thanks to my good fortune that I can do such a thing, but I also find myself sadly reflecting on the extent of my own personal contribution to climate change. I don't buy local produce all the time because it costs more money. I often buy far more than I need, of many, many things, not just food. I don't buy as many environmentally friendly items as I might; it's easier, and they are more expensive. I travel at the drop of a hat without thought as to the cost to the Earth of that travel. In fact, every practical aspect of my life is evidence of how much I cost the Earth, from the amount of water I use, to the amount of concrete with which my patch of earth is covered. I feel guilty.



I cannot undo what is done. I can only be more aware as I go forward, for this *is* God's world, and as a human inhabitant of it, I have been given the responsibility to look after it, as has each one of us. How responsible are you?"

Need for Each Other

"I sense that all of us harbour a bedrock longing for community; to belong, to matter to others as the modern world hurtles forward, pulling against its leash. The dizzying speed of electronic communication, the access to an avalanche of information, the visual assault of bright and confrontational images on television all contribute, I suspect, to a disquieting feeling of inner imbalance. It is the grounding of human relationships which we seek, which we long for, to know and experience ourselves as reassuringly human. Caring for each other lifts us away from being tethered to blandishments of the material world and frees our hearts to enjoy a purposeful peace which satisfies beyond the tight descriptive reach of words. Community, belonging – none of us can flourish alone."

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

SEASON OF CREATION 2026 PRAYER

Holy God, whose Spirit hovered over the waters at the beginning, we gather as part of your community of all creation, thirsty for your grace. We give thanks for the gift of water, the veins of our common home, that sustains the cedar and the whale, the pasture and the city. We are grateful for the local waters that nourish our homelands and our fellow creatures. We give thanks that in your well-watered garden, every drop is a sacred testament to your love.

Yet, we confess that we have treated this gift as a mere commodity. We have choked the seas with our waste and watched the warming tides rise in judgment. We lament the cracked earth of the drought-stricken and the salty tears of the climate refugee. Melt our frozen hearts, O God, and let the waters of repentance flow.

Lord of all Life, you promised that wherever the river flows, everything shall live. Stir in us a calling to care for the waters — to protect the watershed, defend the rights of water, and honour the dignity of the thirsty. May your Word be a spring within us, gushing forth for the healing of the nations.

May God our Creator who brought water from the rock sustain us in the desert. May Christ our Lord who is Living Water refresh us for the work of restoration. And may the Holy Spirit carry us on currents of grace until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.
Amen.



Thoughts on the Way Forward: Leeds North & East Circuit

As previously reported in the Contact newsletter and at our church meetings, the Circuit is currently exploring options for a way forward. This is happening as we recognise the financial, staffing and volunteer challenges facing the Circuit and churches within it. We recognise that as a Circuit we can't continue as we are, particularly in light of the Circuit's current financial forecast. 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.

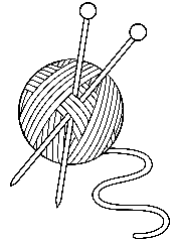
We have held 2 meetings so far of a strategy group, consisting of a couple of representatives from each church and the circuit leadership team. At these meetings we have heard from Circuit Superintendents of other circuits who have carried out a review and are progressing change within their circuits. They have explained how they went about the review and some of the changes they have made as a result. No two circuits are the same, so we are keen to hear from a range of circuits which we hope will give us ideas to explore in Leeds North and East. We've also carried out a SWOT analysis for our Circuit in discussion groups – this is to identify what we see as the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for our Circuit.

We have another meeting in October and the aim is to bring an option or options to a future circuit meeting and the wider circuit of ways we can move forward in Leeds North and East Circuit.

If you'd like to find out more about the review please see your representatives on the Strategy Group (Helen Lappage & Geoff Lomax from Christ Church and Kathryn Glasby & David Preston from Colton Church).

The Great “Dishcloth Knit”!

As part of Colton Church’s eco church commitment, we’re having a big dishcloth giveaway during Advent & Christmas, to help people move towards using washable dishcloths without plastic materials. A team of knitters are already busy clicking their needles to create dishcloths. We are using cotton yarn, recycled if possible, that knits as double knitting yarn. Patterns and yarn are available for any willing knitters! If you’d like to join in the fun please speak to Kathryn or Dorothy at Colton.



2026 Harvest Festival Weekend **at Colton Methodist Church**

Saturday 3rd October – Harvest Coffee Morning **10.30am to 12 noon**

We will be serving coffee/tea/juice and a selection of cakes and savoury scones. Come and enjoy some refreshments and take a look at our Harvest Display. There will also be a raffle.

Sunday 4th October – Harvest Festival at 10.30am

Led by Mr Tom Ferguson
All Age worship and Parade service

Monetary donations would be welcome on either day for All We Can (*the Methodist Relief and Development Fund*). If you would like to make a donation of food items we would appreciate packet or tinned goods so they can be donated to the local Foodbank or Meeting Point Café. These can be brought to the coffee morning or to Sunday worship.

Donations for Shelter have recently been collected at the Guild, Coffee Morning and at Sunday morning worship at Christ Church. The total came to £209.95.

Christ Church Worship Team

Over the summer, Rev Tim Lowe, a member of the Leeds URC Partnership Ministry Team, has led refresher training for the Worship Team at Christ Church. The Worship Team has been leading worship at Christ Church and other local churches for over 25 years. The original Team of nine were trained initially by Revd Ruth Crofton. Other ministers have led courses from time to time but not for quite some years. Tim initially met with the five remaining team members to ascertain what would be useful for us and then devised several appropriate sessions. These were enjoyed by us all and have re-ignited our enthusiasm for leading worship.



Leeds URC Partnership

Edward Lyne will be ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacraments and inducted to serve the Leeds URC Partnership as a member of the Partnership Ministry Team at 2.30pm on Saturday 26th September at Wigton Moor URC. We welcome Ed to the Partnership and look forward to him leading worship at Christ Church for the first time in December.



WOW

(WAKEFIELD ORCHESTRAL WIND)

JOIN US FOR,
A MUSICAL AFTERNOON of
History of musicals to film &
Last Night of the proms favourites
@

COLTON METHODIST CHURCH,
2PM TO 4PM

SATURDAY OCTOBER 17th
2026

Tickets on sale in advance from
19th September.

£10 to include refreshments.

Children with adults go free

Contact; Elaine tel 07760737515

Ticket proceeds to be shared between the
orchestra and Colton Church.



Holidays!

I have had the privilege of a number of holidays this year. A Visit to Spring Harvest a Christian Conference in Butlins Skegness. Lots of Singing. Teaching. Praising and Prayer. Lots of food, fun and fellowship. Later in the year I went to Jersey to stay in my son's Matthew's apartment - lots of sun, sea and sand, and exploring by bus. On the Sunday I visited the Glass Church: no not made of glass but decorated with famous la lique glass. I was pleasantly surprised (I should not have been) to find a full church with all ages worshipping with praise and prayer. They welcomed me and invited me back for a service with an African children's choir the next week. This was excellent and electric, but sincere prayer was evident.

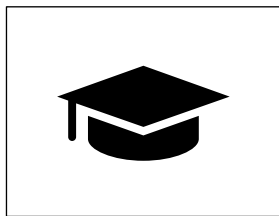
Another visit, this time to Fleetwood to my son Paul's. He was busy on the Sunday morning so I went to Church. Once again a very mixed congregation all ages and nationalities. Great praise, prayer and worship. Once again prayer was offered and evident. These two churches made me think "do we pray enough? Do we believe in prayer enough?" We need to share our faith journey with confidence. I am not saying that I pray enough or share my faith enough but we have someone

special in Jesus, a relationship of love and support which we need to value. Do I pray enough? No. Do we encourage others? I have been encouraged along the way by Bernice – an amazing lady! THANK YOU.

- *Alison Roberts*

Colton Methodist Church dates for your diary

- **Sunday 20th September:** Family JAM 4pm
- **Saturday 3rd & Sunday 4th October:** Harvest Festival weekend (see separate item for more details)
- **Thursday 8th October:** Colton Church Council 7.30pm
- **Saturday 17th October:** WOW Concert (see separate item for more details)
- **Saturday 21st November:** Colton Christmas Fair. More details to follow



Colton Academic Update!

Well done and congratulations – it's wonderful to be able to share all this news with you.

Alf (Dorothy's grandson) has passed all his GCSE's and is moving on to study Computer Studies, Geography & Biology at New College in Pontefract.

James and Kathryn Franklin (members of our Scouting group) have passed A levels and GCSEs respectively.

James is heading to Leeds University, to study for a Mechanical Engineering degree, over four years. Kathryn is continuing in further education to study Biology, Chemistry & Geography to A level.

All the very best to all who are starting a new term in the next couple of weeks, be that at the same school or a different one or college. Every success in the coming year.

MESSY CHURCH @ CHRIST CHURCH

After our summer break, Messy Church returns on Saturday 12 September, between 2 and 4pm. September is the start of the "Season of Creation" in the Methodist Church – maybe a little hint

as to some of what we might be doing...? So come and join Reverend Nicola and all your friends for the usual mix of fun, games, worship, food and drink, singing and stories. Why not invite someone who's never been before? And if you are part of our "Sunday congregation", why not become part of our "Saturday congregation" this month? Come and see what we get up to!



We operate on a "pay as you feel able" basis, with a suggested minimum donation of £1 per child. Children must be accompanied at all times.

Venezuela Appeal

The collections at Saturday morning Coffee and Sunday service at Christ Church raised £255.80. Thank you to all who contributed.

Searching for God by Pauline Hardman

When I first went to look for him,
I thought I'd try the sky.
So I sent a message up there,
By balloon it went so high.
Next I tried a boat trip,
That went far out to sea,
And put a note inside a bottle,
Addressed to God from me.
Then I went deep in the woods,
So peaceful I found it there.
I scratched a sign upon a tree,
To tell him that I care.
On mountain top I searched him out,
And shouted out his name.
A quick reply came back to me,
But the words were just the same.
At last I sat down quiet and still,
And emptied my cluttered mind.
I felt his love within my soul,
He wasn't hard to find.

JOKE CORNER

Have you heard about the new sport, quiet tennis? It's like regular tennis but without the racket!

What do you call a cow with two legs? Lean beef!

Colton Anniversary & Summer Fair

A big THANK YOU to all who helped make our Anniversary Weekend a wonderful success - all who helped set up and dismantle, bakers, volunteers from church and the community & all in the kitchen. We couldn't have done it without everyone's help.

A special thank you to Sue who carried out running repairs on some of the games in time for use. A second special thank you to all the Guides who looked after the Hook a Duck really well all afternoon, supported by Brownie and Guide leaders. You did a fantastic job!

"Did you hear about the wig thief who escaped from prison? Police are combing the area to find him!"

Why don't astronauts like gravity? It brings them down!

CROSS GATES METHODIST CHURCH

FINAL SERVICES IN THE CHURCH BUILDING

SUNDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2026

10.30AM - HOLY COMMUNION & HARVEST FESTIVAL

3PM - SONGS OF PRAISE

FOLLOWED BY AFTERNOON TEA

***ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US AND CELEBRATE
THE LIFE OF OUR CHURCH IN THE LOCAL
COMMUNITY FOR OVER 130 YEARS.***

Forthcoming Services at Christ Church

6 September	Rev Dr Neil Richardson via Zoom from Lidgett Park Methodist
13 September	Rev Timothy Nicholls Holy Communion
20 September	Rev Nicola Robinson Café Service
27 September	Worship Team
4 October	Rev Robert Creamer Church Anniversary

Forthcoming Services at Colton

6 September	Rev Janet Titterton All-Age Worship/Holy Communion
13 September	Rev Norma Davey
20 September	Mr David Laycock
27 September	Rev Nigel Wright
4 October	Mr Tom Ferguson Harvest Festival & Parade Service

We took a break from Family JAM over the summer and after a review we've decided to meet up to 4 times a year, rather than holding monthly sessions.



Our first Family JAM after the summer break will be Sunday 20th September at 4pm when Revd Janet will lead our informal gathering. We will hear a bible story, respond with conversation or craft, closing with a short time of prayer and singing around 5pm. There will be opportunity to eat together afterwards if you'd like to stay. Food and drinks will be provided.

Look out for information about future sessions in the weekly notices, Contact magazine and on our noticeboards, or if you'd like to find out more about Family JAM please:

- speak to Amanda, Elaine or Kathryn at Colton
- email: info.coltonchurch@gmx.co.uk or
- message our Facebook page "Colton Methodist Church, Leeds".

Eunice will be celebrating her 90th birthday on September 27th. Every good wish for a very happy special birthday. From everyone at Colton.



"Contact" Deadline

Please let Andy have any contributions for the October edition of Contact by 7pm on **Tuesday 29 September**. Many thanks.

andybirkett76@gmail.com or 07952 861316.

Unexpected Gift for Christ Church



Christ Church recently received this unexpected gift of an image of our building on wood, produced using a technique known as pyrography. It was made by Tony Pickles, a very good

friend to Christ Church. Tony first came into the building for a series of Churches Together Lent discussion groups many years ago. Since then he has regularly attended our Tuesday evening Guild meetings, which attract people from several local churches (Tony is a Catholic) as well as those who don't belong to any church. Tony is currently co-president with Peter Grubb. Not many of us knew that he was skilled in pyrography and so the gift was a total but much appreciated surprise! Many thanks, Tony.

WHO TO CONTACT

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