

# CONTACT

CHRIST CHURCH HALTON  
COLTON METHODIST CHURCH

December 25/January 26



# Nicola's Letter

## Light In the Darkness

I'm writing this letter just before 4 o'clock and it's getting dark already! At this time of the year in the UK, we often only have 7 or 8 hours of daylight every day. Oh, how it makes me crave the long, light nights of summer.

However, this darkness pales in comparison when we acknowledge the darkness of the news: where we see and hear the ongoing wars and conflicts; the destructiveness of climate change, the suffering of refugees on unsafe boats and in camps or hotels. There is also the darkness in our lives: in the midst of illness and grief; poverty, cuts in disability benefits.

And yet in our darkness, God will meet us there. In our darkness, God is present. A God of faith, hope and love. A God revealed in Jesus. A God who intimately understands our vulnerability because Jesus came to earth a helpless new-born baby.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus was born into a world characterised by the occupation and oppression of the Roman Empire. An Empire which impacted on so many parts of a person's life and must have felt like it could last forever.

We talk about Jesus' coming into the world, as light shining in darkness. The light of Jesus reveals how darkness in our lives and world can be overcome. To quote one of the Gospel writers, John: "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it".

Christmas is about Jesus Christ entering the pain and darkness of every time and place, including ours, to bring light. A light of faith, hope and love that each and every one of us, can share with our families, our communities, our world.

So, my hope and prayer is that Jesus' light can provide each and every one of us with peace and hope this Christmas.

# **Family JAM (Jesus and Me)**

## **At Colton Methodist Church**

We had an enjoyable time at our November Family JAM, led by Revd Janet, when we thought about what we give thanks for, shared a story about Jesus, made some thank you cards, sang, and enjoyed jacket potatoes!

Our next Family JAM session will be held on Sunday 25th January 2026 from 4pm to 6pm, led again by Revd Janet. There won't be a session in December, but please come along to our Carol Service at Colton on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December at 3pm.

If you'd like to know more, or to let us know you are coming to the January Family JAM, please speak to Amanda or Kathryn, email: [info.coltonchurch@gmx.co.uk](mailto:info.coltonchurch@gmx.co.uk) or message our Facebook page "Colton Methodist Church, Leeds".

### **Loving against the Grain**

I have come to believe that we need, we have to, love in spite of the inevitable likelihood that such loving will break our hearts. It may be that we are called upon to love because our hearts will be broken. The deaths of those we cherish, the surrender of our most buoyant aspirations, the demise of life-giving moments, all test the stamina of our hearts. Everything and everyone we love we will lose. But, perhaps, it is this inexorable loss of all we love which insists that such loving is precious, transcendent and ultimately triumphant. For is it not love which hallows and imbues our days with purpose and joy. In the face of such unavoidable loss, it may be that the bravest and holiest act available to each of us is to love without qualm.

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

A little girl saying her prayers one night was heard to finish with remark, "Please God, take care of yourself, because if owt happens to you we're sunk"



## **Brightness** **by Pauline Hardman**



The Christmas fair,  
What a joy!  
The beginning of all to come.  
Long preparations in the planning,  
But when all is said and done.....  
a bright and merry time  
is had by all.  
Music and cuppa's and cake,  
festive goodies and a magical train,  
And craft.....and things homemade.  
It puts us in the spirit  
And shines a light in the gloom,  
when the world is dim,  
and the weather grim,  
bright hearts warm the room.  
From there we can look forward in hope,  
counting down to that special day,  
when the Lord gave us the gift  
of love, the light and the way.

### **Christmas Shoe Boxes at Christ Church**

Thank you to all who have returned shoes boxes. They are to be distributed to needy families in Harehills from the Meeting Point Cafe on Wednesday, 10th December at 11.00am. Concordia will be singing carols outside the café and the café will be serving hot chocolate, coffee and mince pies.

### **Christ Church Saturday Coffee**

Each week from 10.00am - 11.30am, this is our "warm space" and very well attended. The donations taken on Saturday 8th November were over £105.00 and will be going to Hurricane Melissa. Grateful thanks to all who support us.

## Christmas Fair @ Colton

THANK YOU everyone who made Colton's Christmas Fair a success. We couldn't have done it without you. From the planning stage through to the event it wouldn't happen if people didn't get involved. To all those who pounded the streets delivering flyers in all weathers a big thank you.

Thank you to all who helped set up on Friday, baked, served, made copious cups of tea and coffee, washed up, sold raffle tickets, managed a stall, helped with the naming of this year's plush toy, or even mingled making every one welcome, without you all our events wouldn't be a success. The total raised was **£885**, which is a brilliant sum and will help in keeping the premises in good working order. A BIG THANK YOU to all.

At a school Nativity play, three young children were cast as kings. Presenting their gifts at the stable, the first said "gold", the second "myrrh" and the third "and Frank sent this!"



## ***New Year Party at Colton Church***

***Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2026 3pm to 5pm***

Start the New Year with a time of celebration and fellowship at Colton Church! There will be games and entertainment for all ages, along with a bring & share tea (just bring along a contribution of food to share) and of course a raffle! Please speak to one of the church stewards if you'd like to help or just come along and join in the fun!

**Thought for the month: Turn your face to the sun  
and the shadows will fall behind you.**

# **A Greener, More Eco-Friendly Christmas**

## ***From the Methodist Church Website***

### **1) Buy less**

Although it may seem counterproductive to cut back on Christmas purchases, we frequently do so in order to acquire new, useless items. So why not take a step back and consider other options for gifts? Simplifying the "gift-go-round," purchasing locally made presents, or deciding to only accept used gifts are some possible solutions.



### **2) Are gifts to be brand new?**

Ok, ok, hear me out. We all like to get the latest gadget in its plastic packaging and the tag attached, but there are a lot of options from charity and second-hand shops to get good items, for a cheaper price. Sometimes, they even have the original packaging and tag attached!

### **3) Reusable packaging makes a difference**

Reusable cloth or bags to wrap gifts can be found on sale in many shops around the country. For the craftiest, you can make your own using whatever textile you have. They are super original and durable. It gets really fun when everyone in your family/group of friends/church does it, so you can switch packaging.

### **4) Find a Christmas jumper exchange to expand (or decrease) your collection**

Who does not like Christmas jumpers? And it's nice to have a different one each year, maybe even for each occasion. But Christmas jumpers have a limited use, so what can we do? There are always the options to donate or sell old ones, and check options in charity shops, or you can find (or even organise) a Christmas jumper exchange, which is a great way to get your neighbourhood and community involved.

### **5) Rummage in charity shops for your Christmas outfit**

The glitz, glamour and one-time use of the majority of Christmas attire make it both exciting and intimidating. Who does not have a sequined outfit that is gathering dust?

As for Christmas jumpers, great options are donating or selling old outfits to make space for new ones. Charity and second-hand shops have an increasing number of good clothes to offer. Don't miss out on original pieces!

### **6) Don't throw away what you got!**

It is tempting to get rid of our plastic trees, Christmas lights and old ornaments for more sustainable options, but it is not sustainable. Keep them and start replacing them with more sustainable options when they are broken.

### **7) Choose an eco-friendly wreath**

When purchasing a Christmas wreath, the best way to ensure sustainability is to enquire about the wood's origin and confirm that all other materials are plastic-free and environmentally friendly.

An even better option is to make it yourself, a great activity between friends and family!

### **8) Try eco-friendly crackers**

There are many options nowadays for original and eco-friendly crackers. Why not check it out and try them? For the crafty ones, you can even have a go at creating reusable crackers.

### **9) Get ethical chocolate**

Chocolate is delicious, but it can also be quite problematic. Check where it comes from and pick ethical chocolate whenever possible.

If you're feeling fancy, try making mendiants, which make a beautiful and sophisticated gift. There are also fairly simple recipes for making your own chocolate bars.

### **10) Make homemade cards**

In addition to being costly, Christmas cards can have a negative environmental impact. Why not create your own cards?

Although homemade cards are more intimate and equally valued, they might not be as polished. In the weeks leading up to Christmas, friends, youth groups or families can enjoy making the cards.

But, most of all, have a great Christmas!

# Christ Church Halton Guild

After a busy October we hoped that things would be a bit more relaxing for the November meetings and that was the case as our new Methodist Minister Revd. Janet Titterton introduced herself to us - early years, teenage rebellion, marriage and children, and finally coming to realise what God required of her. Her talk was entertaining and informative and we all know a little more about her now thank you Janet.

We heard about life in the RAF regiment during the World War II with all its drama from Pete Spedding who talked about his father's service in the RAF, and "The Last Gasp Players" rose again to entertain us with a play depicting what happens just before a play goes on stage. In fact the play replicated what happens to players in real life showing the ups and downs of putting on a production and grateful thanks go to the people who stepped in literally at the last minute as other dropped with the dreaded bug. In the end the production was wonderful in spite of the many hiccups and was enjoyed by all.

At our last meeting in November Alan Pugh stepped in as a stand-in speaker (nothing ever runs smoothly) with a talk about Beckett Street Cemetery, its creation and tales of some of the "residents" there!

Here's a taster of what's coming up in December and January.

**2 Dec:** Dr Richard Vautrey "How to live later life well" We all need that don't we?

**9 Dec:** An evening of songs poems and stories to start the Christmas season off, presented by some of our own very talented members.

**16 Dec:** The Guild Carol service this year is led by Revd. Keith Hunt, a well-remembered friend of Christ Church. All are welcome to join us from 7.30pm followed by refreshments and fellowship. (Our new programme should be available at this meeting, after which we close for two weeks over the Christmas period, but we will return!! That's a promise not a threat.

**6 Jan:** we welcome the New Year with a fish & chip supper, and Paul Kaufman, who you may remember from last year, entertains us with a great quiz.

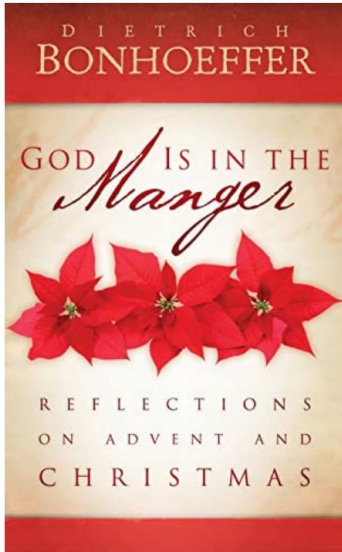
**13 Jan:** URC Moderator Revd. Jamie Kissack with "That they may be one", reflections on an Ecumenical Journey.

**20 Jan:** Mr Eric Jackson talking about model villages.

All are welcome to join us for any of these sessions, all start at 7.30pm.



# God in the Manger: Advent Gatherings



**A  
time for  
reflection and  
discussion  
over **three**  
weeks,  
led by the Leeds  
URC Partnership  
Ministry Team**

The remaining sessions in this series are:

**Mondays** (8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Dec), 11am, URC in South Leeds, LS10 3LG

**Wednesdays** (10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Dec), 7.30pm via Zoom

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7019277749>)

**Thursdays** (11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Dec), 1.30pm, Stainbeck Church, LS7 2PP

For more information, please contact Rev Nicola Robinson (details on the back page of Contact)

## *Messy Church @ Christ Church*

Join us on Saturday 13 December at 2pm for our special Christmas Messy Church. It would be great to see everyone for our final Messy Church of the year – all ages are welcome for our crafts, our food and drink, finishing with a short Christingle service at around 3.10pm. Christmas jumpers not required, but welcomed!

# community **Reverse** (With a twist) **Advent Calendar**

## IT'S BACK!!

The hugely successful Community 'Reverse' Advent Calendar returns for the fourth year running. Throughout the year, Colton Church continues to collect for St Cyprian's Foodbank & Meeting Point, but in the run up to Christmas, we do something special - instead of receiving something from an advent calendar (chocolate!) we give something (donation or prayer).

Suggested donations of small items are made for each day leading up to Christmas & include a mix of treats, items in short supply at the Foodbank & basic toiletries because these are often overlooked as donations. You might like to give an item on the day that you visit the church building, give one item each week or give one item for Advent. Alternatively, or additionally, you might wish to give your prayers for those who will receive the donations.



(With a twist)

We want to spread the Christmas cheer as far & wide as we can, so we're starting our Reverse Advent Calendar early (November 22nd) to make sure that all the items can be shared out to the people who need them before Christmas.

This is a community project & all donations, big or small, however they are given, will be gratefully received & will make a difference this Christmas.

29th Nov – small selection box

30th Nov – toothpaste

1st Dec – hot chocolate

2nd Dec – toothbrush

3rd Dec – biscuits

4th Dec – deodorant

5th Dec – dried fruit or nuts

6th Dec – sanitary products

7th Dec – shower gel

8th Dec – box of mince pies

9th Dec – tinned soup or vegetables

10th Dec – tea or coffee

11th Dec – wet wipes/face wipes

12th Dec – tinned ready meal

13th Dec – shaving gel

14th Dec – small microwave pudding

15th Dec – box of tissues

16th Dec – children's chocolate

17th Dec – small Christmas pudding

18th Dec – jam or marmalade

19th Dec – toilet roll

20th Dec – small chocolate bar

21st Dec – soap



@ the heart of the Colton Community

# CHRISTMAS “MUSINGS”

## Remembering

I hesitated to send a Christmas card to a dear old woman whom I hadn't heard from, or seen, in twenty years, and who was reported to have been suffering from geriatric depression for some time. Though 3,000 miles away I remembered her as a source of easy affection, great inclusive smiles and a natural and generous warmth. I wrote a few lines telling her how I still held onto vivid memories of her goodness and how I remembered with thanks the buoyancy she lent to my life in the past. In the days before Christmas I learned from my sister that this woman had died in her sleep at the age of ninety-four. She had received a phone call from the woman's son with the news of her death. The son asked my sister to pass on to me his thanks for sending his mother that Christmas card. He had opened it and read it to his mother in her bed who had smiled broadly and been joyfully pleased to be remembered by me. She died within a few days of being read my Christmas card. Not only am I deeply glad that I sent that Christmas card but hearing of the small pleasure it brought her near the end of her time on this earth I remember it as the finest Christmas present I could ever hope to receive.

*(From “Musings Of A Wayward Pilgrim” by Mark Zenick and reproduced with the author’s kind permission.)*

## Healing

This horrible, thick cold infests my lungs and stuffs my head with a nagging feeling of being miserably separated from a sense of easily taken for granted well-being. Yet it just may be possible that such a time of physical disease serves as a reminder that a condition of feeling useless, incapacitated, cut off from vigorous health cannot simply be healed by the passage of time or the taking of antibiotics but at the deepest level can only be relieved by a gift of grace – a gift which we cannot earn or ever fully comprehend.

*(From “Musings Of A Wayward Pilgrim” by Mark Zenick and reproduced with the author’s kind permission.)*



# **My Christmas Card List**

**Shared by Jean Hopkinson**



I have a list of folk I know, all written in a book,  
And every year at Christmas time, I go and take a look.  
And that is when I realise that these names are a part  
Not of the book they're written in – but of my very heart.  
For each name stands for someone who has crossed my path sometime  
And in that meeting they've become the Rhythm of the Rhyme.  
And while it sounds fantastic for me to make this claim,  
I really feel I am composed of each remembered name.  
And while you may not be aware of any special link,  
Just meeting you shaped my life more than you can think.  
For once you've met somebody, the years cannot erase,  
The memories of a pleasant word or of a friendly face.  
So never think my Christmas greeting is just a mere routine  
Of names upon a Christmas list forgotten in between.  
For when I send a Christmas greeting that is addressed to you,  
It's because you're on a list of folks I am indebted to.  
For I am but a total of the many folks I've met,  
And you are one of those I prefer not ever to forget.  
And whether I have known you for many days or few,  
In some way you had a part in shaping everything I do.  
And every year when Christmas comes, I realise anew,  
The biggest gift that life can give is MEETING FOLKS LIKE YOU!  
And may the spirit of Christmas that forever and ever endures,  
Leave its richest blessings in the hearts of YOU and YOURS!

## **Christian Aid**

In lieu of individual Christmas cards, Alison invites everyone at Christ Church to send greetings to other members and friends by filling in a gift tag (which can be found next to the board in the hall) during the month of December. On Sundays you'll be able to leave a donation to Christian Aid from the money you save, in the dish provided near the board.

## **Christmas giveaways at Colton**

Grateful thanks to all those who have made some lovely gift tags to give away, with a message from Colton Church, for people to hang on their Christmas trees or use as a bookmark. We're handing them out together with a postcard from the Gifted Methodist Advent & Christmas theme, advertising our Carol and Christmas Day services. Please take one if you haven't already received one.

## **Leeds URC Partnership Ministry Team Vacancy**

The Vacancy Group of the Leeds URC Partnership is delighted to announce that, after meeting with a candidate at the beginning of November, he has accepted our invitation to Preach with a View on the weekend of 17 - 18 January 2026. Exact details are still being finalised but there will be an opportunity to meet informally with the candidate on the Saturday. He will then lead two services on the Sunday. The second service will be followed by a meeting of all the Partnership Churches, at which members will vote on whether or not a call should be issued to the candidate to join the Partnership Ministry Team.

*Thanks to Jenny for sharing this good news.*

### **Colton Christmas Card**

Thanks to the Junior Church leaders and children we once again have a large Christmas card which will go on display at Colton Church throughout December. You are invited to write your greetings to everyone at Colton Church, then make a donation to the charity Save the Children.





## Congratulations

Many congratulations to Prince Jnr Ofori-Kura from our Junior Church, on winning the Go Henry Dream Big Competition. This is a competition run by the Go Henry money app, designed to help children and teens learn about managing their cash.

Prince is not your average 12year old – he won his prize of £1,000 in the ‘Kidpreneur’ category for his brilliant business selling fidget toys and sensory products. On winning Prince is quoted as saying "I was so excited when I found out I was one of the winners of Go Henry's Dream Big Competition! I am planning to use the prize money to expand my range of fidget toy products to bring joy to many more children, while also supporting neurodivergent children and their families. I want to reach as many children as possible and with my toys and also inspire others to c

Find out more



**Thursday 4  
December**

7:30pm

on Zoom

Meeting ID:  
7019277749

***A gentle, reflective service for anyone who finds this time of year difficult, who misses someone, or who wants to spend some time remembering.***

## Something to ponder

These items are from the book that Revd. Ruth Crofton wrote before she died. They remind us Christmas and New Year can be sad for some people as well as a time for celebration and that God is always with us sharing our joy and sorrow whatever is happening in our lives. Be quietly at peace with yourself so that you can face whatever life brings.



You might like to look at the two figures above. Which most represents you at this moment? Which represents you as you look at the future? Which most represents you as you look around at the people you see in the street, on television? In truth, it's fine to be either, at any one time! But do we seek that knowledge of God's love for each of us, that lets us be unhappy sometimes and happy other times without being overcome? God does love you. Always.

### New Year 2000

At the millennium, we had a watchnight service at Christ Church, Halton, Leeds, where I was Minister. At midnight we went outside to sing the hymn, 'This, this is the God we adore' ('How good is the God we adore' in *Rejoice and Sing*). It's the second verse that says it all:

'Tis Jesus the first and the last  
whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;  
we'll praise him for all that is past  
and trust him for all that's to come. *Joseph Hart (1712-1767)*

Can you think of five things to be thankful for in the past year? And five things you pray for the coming year – for the world? for you?

## Advent & Christmas at Colton Methodist Church



*Gifted* is the Methodist Church's open invitation, speaking the good news to people that they matter. That they are Beloved. Created with infinite care. A gift to the world, just as they are.

There's a different theme each week with an Opening liturgy to accompany the lighting of candles throughout Advent, continuing into Christmas. Each week has a symbol which will be added to our light tree as a visual reminder.

You can find out more and sign up to weekly messages at:  
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/christmasresources/>

Here are special services during Advent and Christmas at Colton:

### **Christingle Service Tuesday 16th December 6pm**

Organised by Colton Rainbows and Brownies, this is an open invitation to anyone who would like to come along and share in this special annual event, followed by refreshments.

### **Carol Service Sunday 21st December at 3pm**

This will be all age worship, held at Colton, led by Mr Tom Ferguson. Followed, of course, by refreshments! **Please note this will be our only service that day – there won't be worship at Colton in the morning.**

### **Christmas Day Service, Thursday 25th December 9.30am**

A short all age worship service starting at **9.30am**, to share in this special day together. Led by Revd Janet Titterton.



### **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December 10.30am**

Joint worship at Christ Church Halton– no service at Colton this day.



## Colton Church Council

Our next Church Council Meeting will be held on **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at 7.30pm at Colton Methodist Church.**

At our October Church Council meeting, Revd Janet explained that due to our current number of church members (less than 49) Colton Church is classed as a “small church”, which means any member of Colton Church can join Church Council without the need to elect representatives at the General Church Meeting. If you attend the meeting you will need to sign to say you are willing to act as a trustee of Colton Church. If you'd prefer not to do this you can attend Church Council but not take part in any vote. If you'd like to know more or would like to be sent the papers for the next meeting, please speak to our Church Council Secretary, Kathryn Glasby.

A festive poster for the Leeds URC Partnership Advent Carol Service. The background is red. At the top left, the text 'LEEDS URC PARTNERSHIP ADVENT CAROL SERVICE' is written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. To the right of this text is a white circular logo containing a red and white striped cross with a blue fish symbol (ichthys) superimposed on it. Below the title, the date '4 pm, Sunday December 7th' is written in white. Further down, the location 'St. Andrews, Roundhay, Shaftesbury Avenue, LS8 1DS' is written in white. The bottom half of the poster features a stylized illustration of three people (two men and one woman) wearing winter hats and scarves, holding blue songbooks and singing. They are positioned in front of a green Christmas tree decorated with yellow stars and red and blue ornaments. The entire poster is enclosed in a thin black border.

**LEEDS URC  
PARTNERSHIP  
ADVENT CAROL  
SERVICE**

**4 pm, Sunday December 7th**

**St. Andrews, Roundhay,  
Shaftesbury Avenue,  
LS8 1DS**

**Led by the Partnership Ministry Team.  
Details at [www.standrews.cc](http://www.standrews.cc)**

## Forthcoming Services at Christ Church

7 December Mr Tom Ferguson

14 December Mr Michael Prince

21 December Rev Nicola Robinson  
Holy Communion



Christmas Eve “DIY” Crib Service (3.00pm)  
Mr Andy Birkett

Christmas Day Mrs Mary Patchett

28 December Rev Janet Titterton  
*We welcome Colton Methodist  
Church, joining with us for worship  
today*

4 January Mr John Summerwill

11 January Mr Paul Spencer

18 January Rev Nicola Robison  
Covenant Service & Holy Communion

25 January Rev Jamie Kissack



## Forthcoming Services at Colton

7 December	All-Age Parade and Toy Service
14 December	Rev Janet Titterton Holy Communion
16 December	Christingle Service (6.00pm)
21 December	Mr Tom Ferguson (3.00pm) Carol Service
Christmas Day	Rev Janet Titterton (9.30am) All-Age Worship
28 December	<i>Worship at Christ Church Halton, no service at Colton</i>
4 January	Mrs Catherine Freize All-Age Worship
11 January	Mr Ted Britton
18 January	Rev Janet Titterton Covenant Service/Holy Communion
25 January	Mr Peter Howdle



**CONTACT, FEBRUARY 2026:** The next edition of Contact will be published on Sunday 1 February. Please let Andy have any articles, submissions or suggestions by 7.00pm on Tuesday 27 January.

07952 861316 or [andybirkett76@gmail.com](mailto:andybirkett76@gmail.com)



**Christmas Eve Nativity**  
**3pm Christ Church Halton**

All are welcome to  
 come and celebrate  
 the true meaning of  
 Christmas  
 Dressing up optional, costumes  
 provided!

## WHO TO CONTACT

### Senior Stewards

Helen Lappage (CC)	07415 058187	<a href="mailto:helenlappage@sky.com">helenlappage@sky.com</a>
Elizabeth Moll (CC)		<a href="mailto:elizabeth.moll@outlook.com">elizabeth.moll@outlook.com</a>
Kathryn Glasby (Colton)	07503 740500	<a href="mailto:kathryn.glasby@talktalk.net">kathryn.glasby@talktalk.net</a>
Elaine Preston (Colton)	07760 737515	<a href="mailto:ea.preston@ntlworld.com">ea.preston@ntlworld.com</a>

### Room Bookings

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Shirley Dann (Colton)	0113 2820828	<a href="mailto:colton.mcbookings@outlook.com">colton.mcbookings@outlook.com</a>

### Ministers

Rev Janet Titterton	0113 5485136	<a href="mailto:janet.titterton@yahoo.co.uk">janet.titterton@yahoo.co.uk</a>
Rev Nicola Robinson (CC)	07572 986305	<a href="mailto:revnicola.robinson@gmail.com">revnicola.robinson@gmail.com</a>