



**CROSS GATES
METHODIST
CHURCH
Newsletter
March 2024**

MINISTER: Rev Becki Stennett

A Truth Universally Acknowledged

As I've shared with some of you, one of the ways I'm journeying through Lent this year is by reading daily reflections from a beautiful new book by Rachel Mann called 'A Truth Universally Acknowledged: 40 days with Jane Austen'.

For some of you, perhaps this is a book that might make your eyes glaze over a little bit, and for others perhaps you're intrigued. Whether or not you enjoy Jane Austen, it's possible you know this famous four word sequence, 'a truth universally acknowledged'. The full quote from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is as follows:

"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."

Perhaps it takes the delivery of these words by Jennifer Ehle in the role of Lizzy Bennet in the BBC adaptation of the book (still the best adaptation, hands down) to enable us to fully appreciate just how cheeky and sarcastically meant these words are, while also ringing with a laser-targeted social commentary, which perhaps some readers new to Austen might not immediately pick up on.

The words are meant as a witty and tongue-in-cheek introduction to the key social context that the book ahead explores. And while I feel I want to talk to you more and more about *Pride and Prejudice* and indeed this lovely *40 days with Austen* book that I'm reading, I think I'd better get to a point and keep it brief!

The thought I wanted to share with you is this:

There must be so many 'truths universally acknowledged' in our world, and plenty about living as people of faith. So many assumptions,

stereotypes, characteristics and behaviours which people take for granted are universally adopted and shared by Christian people.

This isn't necessarily a bad thing, but I can't escape the niggling feeling that sometimes those things many take to be universally true about Christians might not be things I'd like to be true about me.

I worry that those stereotypes might include 'judgemental', 'boring', 'strict', 'non-inclusive', 'holier-than-thou'.

I wonder if there's a task to be done by all people of Christian faith to remember what it is we're called to be known for, and to spend time and energy on making sure that's what others see.

Shortly after he washed his disciples' feet, on the evening of the Last Supper, Jesus speaks with his friends and tells them that he gives them a new commandment: to love each other.

He says this: 'By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

My prayer for all of us is that we grow in love for one another and for the community we're called to, and that we find new and wonderful ways to demonstrate that love and care, so whatever else people might have thought about Christians, it becomes 'a truth universally acknowledged' that we are a people of radical, wonderful, all embracing love.

Let us turn our eyes and hearts to the greatest example of radical love this Lent, to the very person of Christ. **Rev Becki**

World Day of Prayer Service

The Churches Together in East Leeds World Day of Prayer Service for 2024 will be held at 2 pm on **Friday 1st March** at St Gregory's Church Swarcliffe, Swarcliffe Drive, Leeds, LS14 5LB.

The organisers emphasise that, though this is an ecumenical international prayer movement led by women, the services are for ALL, so everyone is welcome.

Church Annual General Meeting

The Church AGM will take place in Church after morning worship on Sunday 3rd March. Everyone is very welcome to attend. Please bring a packed lunch/snack. Drinks will be provided.

March Services (including Easter)

1 March – 2.00pm	World Day of Prayer	St Gregory's Church, Swarcliffe Drive, LS14 5LB
3 March – 10.30am	All age worship & parade service (<i>in the Church building</i>)	Revd Becki Stennett
3 March – after worship	Our Church's Annual General meeting	All welcome
10 March – 10.30am	Mothering Sunday	Mr Ted Britton
17 March – 10.30am	Passion Sunday Holy Communion	Revd Joyce Nicholson
24 March – 10.30am	Palm Sunday	Dr Paul Coleman
28 March – 7.30pm	Maundy Thursday Holy Communion (<i>at Colton</i>)	Revd Becki Stennett
29 March – 11am	Good Friday (<i>in the Church building</i>)	Churches Together Reading of the Passion
31 March – 9am *	Easter Breakfast	All welcome *
31 March – 10.00am	Easter Day Holy Communion (<i>Coffee will be served after the service</i>)	Revd Becki Stennett

Communion Stewards are Carol Smith & Cynthia Best

***Please let a Steward or Denise Durkin know if you will be joining us for Easter Breakfast.**

Church Flowers

Flowers in Church on 11th February were donated by **Beryl Gledhill** in memory of her **husband Eric, daughter Ruth and her niece Lesley**.

Flowers on the 25th February were donated by **Jennie Reeves** in memory of her **brother Terrance and her Mum's birthday**.

Georgina and Barbara thank them both for their kind donations.

If you want to sponsor fresh flowers in Church please contact either Georgina Cressey or Barbara Leeming. Any donations towards the cost are much appreciated.

Table Top Sales – 2nd March & 6th April

9.30am to 12 noon

Why not come along for a drink and a chat and then browse round all the items for sale. You might just find the item you have been looking for at a good price.

If you would like more information or to book a table, at a cost of £5 for Church funds, please contact John Smith or phone 0779904472. *Come along and pick up a bargain!*

Monday Coffee Morning

Please come and join us between 10:00am and 11:30am if you would like someone to talk to while you enjoy a drink.

Ladies Friendship Group

Meetings are at 2.30pm in the Wesley Room on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. All welcome

27/02/24 Roy Cressey – Whistlestop Tour of England & Wales, part 2.

12/03/2024 - A musical Afternoon with Concordia

26/03/2024 Revd Becki Stennett – Holy Week

Men's Fellowship

Meetings are at 2pm fortnightly in the Wesley Room on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. All welcome.

East Leeds History & Archaeology Society

Friday 23rd February, 2pm

Dr Christine Holdstock will deliver an illustrated talk: 'The Stories of the People named on the Methodist Church First World War Memorial.'

Friday 27th March, 2pm

Andy Wilson will deliver an illustrated talk: 'Berenblum and the Bari Bombs – How the research of Issa Berenblum in Leeds contributed to the discovery of chemotherapy'.

Talks take place in the Methodist Church Hall, Cross Gates and all are welcome. **Admission £2.00 including refreshments.**

Music Hour

Every second Wednesday of the month, 1.15pm to 2.30pm.

Bring an instrument, sing-a-long or just enjoy a cuppa and a biscuit. All ages welcome. Suggested donation £2. Upcoming dates: Wednesday 13th March, 10th April, 8th May, 12th June.

East Leeds Gathers – Free Soup Lunch

Saturday 9th March @ Cross Gates Methodist Church Hall, 12-3pm

We'll be building relationships, sharing food and praying in groups and altogether. There'll be a mixture of led, silent and corporate prayer for various themes using different styles. Something for everyone!

As well as praying for wider East Leeds, we will have time to pray for Cross Gates and its Churches. We will also be praying especially for the Seacroft Mission which is starting Sunday 17th March. **All welcome**
Jonathan & Kären Gray, Crossgates Community, 07985 035125...
church without walls ...

Leeds South & East Foodbank **helping local people in crisis**

The Trussell Trust, who run the foodbanks, have sent the following thoughts:

'We recognise that fasting is a common practice for many Christians at this time of year but rather than asking you to give up something this Lent, we have a different invitation for you. A way to stand in solidarity with the people we support in our food banks. We want to invite you to 'give up' some time, to read the reflections, stories and prayers of people who have direct experience of hardship. These can be found in our 'A Shared Journey Lent Course' which is available on the Trussell Trust website'. **www.trusselltrust.org**

Our Church donated 10 baskets (134kg) to the foodbank last month. You can bring items to Church or John Best can collect them from you. **If you would like to contribute food/toiletries please contact John Best , email jvbest39@hotmail.com who will gladly collect.**

Charitable Donations

A big Thank You to everyone who gave so generously to St Gemma's Hospice and to Action for Children at Christmas.

£149.27, including £23.75 Gift Aid, was donated at the Carol Service for St Gemma's.

£180.00 was raised in lieu of Christmas cards, £122.68 from singing carols on the Church steps and £155.00 donated at the Christmas services for Action for Children. With an additional £22.50 Gift Aid a total of **£480.18** was raised over the festive period.

Your continued support for these worthy causes is greatly appreciated.

Alison Lambert, Church Treasurer

Memories of Raymond Winders

A few thoughts about Raymond Winders - he and his wife Kathleen were good friends to us. He was a great help to people at Church, especially me when I went in the vestry as only the second female steward. He took me under his wing and helped me a lot, also when I helped on the hymnal. He used to organise barn dances and a few of us used to go with him to different churches. He liked us to go as he said that at least he had some people who would know what they were doing! Happy memories.

Dorothy Tate.

I have known Raymond since I moved to Cross Gates in 2013. I worked with his late Sister Muriel at St. James's, so I'd heard a lot about him before I even met him. I would say that Raymond was one of the longstanding members of Cross Gates Church, who along with others, made many major changes to the building and was very involved in the upkeep of it. Raymond told me a lot of stories of Keith and him doing repairs and alterations. A weekly reminder for us Stewards is that he made the gadget that holds the door to the notice board when open to save the wind ripping it off its hinges. I started visiting him at home when he lived in Cross Gates, shared in his sadness as he realised he was falling more often and finding it difficult to manage at home alone. He was a great favourite among the staff at Sunnyside Nursing Home, where he lived when he returned to Cross Gates. after living with his daughter. He knew all the staff by name. At one time he was making plans as to how to re-design the building to make it more accessible for the residents. He was always a great character, with a deep faith and who never lost the love he had for Cross Gates Church. ***Barbara Lloyd***

I remember spending many, many hours with Raymond at Church, not on a Sunday with hymn book in hand but armed with toolboxes and paint brushes at the ready. He was such a perfectionist and never considered a job to be completed until it was "just right." The stewards are still benefitting from the lovely key cupboard he built in the vestry, sorting keys and labelling every hook in great detail. After his barn dancing days had finished, he joined the Church Rambling Club and I have many happy memories of us strolling around the Yorkshire countryside. ***Keith Tingle***

The first thing that always comes to mind whenever Raymond is mentioned is barn dances. What an enthusiastic caller he was, always making sure we understood the correct steps and moves for each dance but also that we were having lots of fun. In 1980 our two families spent a week together in Bournemouth. I think Raymond and dad spent more

time digging on the beach than us girls! Of course they didn't stick to standard sandcastles, there was some elaborate boat building and sea walls being built as well. I'm sure Raymond had a tape measure and spirit level hidden away so he could get everything "spot on." He also had quite a sense of humour. In more recent years when I took Raymond and dad to Men's Fellowship I'd walk from the car with one on each arm steadying themselves and he'd laugh and call me the rose between two thorns. Happy memories. **Deborah Carter**

The History of Cross Gates Libraries - Part One **By East Leeds History & Archaeology Society**

Now we know the future of the Percival Leigh library which has served our local community so well over the past eight decades, we thought you might like to be reminded about the history of the Leeds Library Service here in Cross Gates, and since 1998 our society's part in it.

The 14th December 2023 marked the 84th anniversary of the opening of the Percival Leigh Library in Cross Gates. It could have been a time to celebrate, but now perhaps, maybe a time to reflect on the history and development of the library movement in this area. Beautiful photos of the early days of the library can be found on www.leodis.net.

The first public library in the region, to serve the needs of the populations of Cross Gates and Seacroft, was opened with an event on 24th April 1922 in a room above the Co-operative Stores on Austhorpe Road, Cross Gates (now the site of Wetherspoons). The official opening ceremony was performed by Councillor Fred Bentley, chairman of the Libraries and Arts Committee, assisted by Councillors E Hawksworth and J Lambert. The City Librarian at the time was Thomas W. Hand. In order to use the library, residents who were on the Ward List of Voters had to sign a formal guarantee form and pay 2d. They were then issued with a borrower's ticket, any resident who was not on the Ward List had to obtain the signature of an elector in the City. The library was equipped with 1,000 books which were regularly changed. As well as the books for home reading, a selection of newspapers, weekly periodicals and monthly magazines were provided at the reading tables within the library. The library opened for business on the evening of 27th April, and subsequently opened Monday, Thursday and Saturday evenings from 6.00pm to 9.00pm. This library continued in use until 1939 when the Percival Leigh Branch Library was opened. ***To be continued in the next edition.***

Please remember in your thoughts and prayers: All those people in our prayer book and those we know who are unwell, in hospital, in Nursing Homes, going for tests at Hospital, recently bereaved and who find this time of year particularly difficult.

Congratulations: Many congratulations and best wishes to Revd Helen White on her marriage to the Revd Paula Hunt.

Free phone service to hear prayers and news from the Methodist Church:

Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514. Listen to news: 0808 281 2478.
Pastoral message from the President & Vice-President: 0808 281 2695
Content is updated weekly on a Thursday evening.

Service Options: Please do contact Barbara Lloyd if you would like to receive details of worship via email or would like to have printed worship sheets delivered.

Websites: Circuit: www.leedsnandemethodist.org.uk
District: www.yorkshirewestmethodist.org.uk

Your Financial Contributions: Thank you to all those who continue to contribute to the Church's running costs. If you are unable to attend Church in person, please continue sending them to Linda Booth or to the Church's address.

Spotlight on.....: Please consider writing a few words about your life for inclusion in a future Newsletter, as have many of our Church family already. Please send your contribution to Tracy Dick (see below for contact details)

Newsletter: Please email contributions for the Newsletter to Tracy Dick tracylouisedick@gmail.com Deadlines coming up:
Sunday 17th March, Sunday 21st April

CROSS GATES METHODIST CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

We are a group of people who are seeking to celebrate and share God's love for all.

Through Worship, Witness and Service in the Community we aim to follow Christ's example of open arms, hearts, minds and doors

Cross Gates Methodist Church, Austhorpe Road, Cross Gates, Leeds, LS15 8QR