

Dear Friends

Once again, we find ourselves with the summer preaching plan and a hope of nice weather and perhaps a nice ice-cream or two!

June is an important month, for not only does the Country celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, but as a Circuit we also celebrate with Rev Julia on the occasion of her ordination. Julia will be ordained on Sunday 26th June, and although there will be many of us across the Circuit who would like to be there with her, but cannot, we will be with her in Spirit. You will see I have marked the 26th of June as 'Conference Sunday' because it is hoped that those who will be responsible for leading our worship services on that day will remember Julia and all the other Ministers who will be ordained and hold them in prayer. Well done, Julia, we are all proud of you!

The Property of the Circuit continues to keep the members of the Circuit Property Committee on their toes. We have very recently received the Quinquennial reports for the five Methodist Burial Grounds at Gunnerside, Low Row, Hurst, Arkengarthdale and Hawes that the Circuit is responsible for. As a Circuit we are required to carry out 'topple' testing on all headstones to ensure that families and individuals visiting grave sites are kept as safe as possible. In the event that one or more headstones are deemed unsafe, we will, in the first instance, be required to lay them down. However, we will do our very best to contact the families who will then have the option of re-siting any such headstone. I recognise that this situation has the potential to be upsetting and we will do everything with as much care and sensitivity as possible, but we will need to abide by safety regulations. Signs will be displayed in all 5 Burial Grounds explaining the situation, but please if anyone approaches you, do explain and reassure, or alternatively pass on my contact details. On others news, I am pleased to tell you that the sale of Barden Chapel completed on 24th January, but at the time of writing, Ravensworth, Aysgarth and Harmby still have a few formalities outstanding. The large cross that came out of Middleham Chapel was gratefully received by Middleham School, the cross from Aysgarth Chapel is now with West Burton School, and only very recently I took the cross from Harmby Chapel to Spennithorne School. All three headteachers were delighted to receive these gifts for use in their school halls.

King's Club is happening this year, albeit in an adapted format. We will continue with the family gift box that was so well received last year with this year's theme focussed on 'one world', but with the addition of the option of one of two King's Club taster sessions. If you are not involved but could offer a couple of hours of your time during the day on Wednesday 3rd August at Leyburn, or Saturday 6th August at West Burton, please contact Rachel Pinkney.

Finally, thank you for your continued support as I seek to lead the Circuit. Nothing is ever straightforward, but Covid has certainly highlighted some unique challenges. I am deeply grateful to the small but wonderful staff team and the equally amazing Circuit Stewards, Circuit Leadership Team, Local Preachers, Worship Leaders, and all those who hold an office and contribute to the life of the Circuit. We step out together as we trust an unknown future to a known God.

May God Bless you.

With Love in Christ.

Rev Melanie Reed (Superintendent).