

Dear Friends

The putting together of this preaching plan has reminded me that Spring is around the corner as the rhythm of nature continues its merry dance. When Semerwater at Marsett was completely frozen over in December and it was minus five it was hard to imagine the sight of families gathered on its shores with picnics and children paddling joyfully, but it won't be long. 'For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven' (Ecclesiastes 3:1). This scripture has popped up a couple of times recently and I have reflected how true it is and how glad I am that God is present with us in each, and every season.

So, as we enter yet another season, you will see that there are 3 Sundays on this plan when we celebrate together as a Circuit. The Local Preachers Reaffirmation Service on **12<sup>th</sup> March at 10.30am** at Richmond is an important occasion to recognise the giftings of all those who have been called to preach and lead worship in our Circuit. Please do attend if you are able and give thanks to God for all our Preachers as they renew their promises. It can be so easy to take our faithful Preachers and Worship Leaders for granted, without grasping the dedication and preparation, and of course the travelling that is involved. So, do join me for this special service.

The second Circuit celebration will be the Easter Offering. This Connexion-wide annual service focusses our attention on the theme '**No borders to God's love**'. As many Methodist churches support people who have come to the UK in search of sanctuary, we are encouraged to use the Easter Offering 2023 dedication service for considering our welcome and hospitality, especially to people who are displaced and forced to migrate. The service gives us the opportunity to celebrate God's love and mission worldwide and includes the dedication of the Easter Offering (envelopes will be made available in your Chapels in the weeks leading up to Easter), all of which goes to the World Mission Fund of the Methodist Church in Britain, supporting and working with over 100 Partner Churches and organisations around the world. I recognise that for some of us travelling across our Circuit presents challenges so there are 2 morning Circuit Services on **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April**, one at Leyburn led by me, and one at Richmond led by Rev Julia. We would love to see you at either.

And finally, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit Service on **Sunday May 14<sup>th</sup> at 10.30am**, is a very special one indeed. A time to gather with all your friends from across the Circuit and the local Anglican Deanery at the wonderful venue of Tennants in Leyburn (with grateful thanks to Rodney Tennant). I am delighted to say that Rev Richard Andrew, our Chair of District will be preaching, and the Leyburn Band will be providing the music. My colleague Rev Stephen Hanscombe, Vicar of Leyburn and Bellerby and Assistant Area Dean, will be coordinating this celebration in honour of the King's Coronation. I am only sorry that I will not be there, but my sabbatical will have started by then, however Rev Julia will be present and I look forward to hearing all about it.

I have been using these letters to bring you up to date with the progress of selling Circuit property and I am delighted to say that the Aysgarth Chapel sale finally completed on 19<sup>th</sup> December. It is also planned to go to Auction on 28<sup>th</sup> March to sell Ravensworth Chapel, and at the time of writing the Circuit has accepted an offer on the old Leyburn manse in St Matthews Terrace.

Finally, thank you to all of you who regularly support the Chapels in our Circuit. I know this can, at times, feel like an uphill struggle, especially with increasing costs, and too many tasks for the available willing and able volunteers, but we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us and honour their memories by doing our bit.

With Love in Christ.

*Rev Melanie Reed* (Superintendent).

**Additional Dates for your diary**

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March @ 10.30am

World Day of Prayer at St Matthews Leyburn

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March @ 7pm

Circuit Meeting on Zoom

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March @ 3pm

United 'Picnic' Service at St Matthews Leyburn

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April @ 10am

Good Friday Walk of Witness starts at Leyburn Methodist

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April @ 7pm

East Witton Male Voice Choir at Leyburn Methodist

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May @ 2pm

Emmaus Walk from Melmerby Chapel

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May @ 7pm

Ascension Service at Jervaulx Abbey

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May @ 3pm

United 'Picnic' Service at Leyburn Methodist