

Dear Friends

As we step into the Season of Christmas when we joyfully celebrate 'Emmanuel' God with us, it is my sincere wish and ongoing prayer that we can do so safely and with confidence. However, as I write this, already the increase in Covid cases is concerning, and by the time you read this, the situation will have inevitably worsened. Having been so very poorly with Covid during the month of August, even after being double vaccinated and extremely careful (probably considered overcareful by some of you across the Circuit), it was a stark reminder that anyone of us can contract Covid at any time. So, whilst I do not want to be alarmist, and I certainly do not wish to discourage you from coming to worship and enjoying fellowship, I am appealing to you to continue to wear face coverings when you are in church, unless of course you are exempt. This is especially important when you are singing as well as when our churches are fuller than normal with people that we do not usually mix with. Over the Christmas season one of the joys is that many of our places of worship receive visitors joining us for Carol Services and concerts, this creates a wonderful atmosphere and is something that we look forward to and missed so very much last year, but please, please, let's ensure we keep everyone safe by wearing a face mask and encouraging those around us to do the same.

Those keen eyed will notice on the plan that Vani Masiwini has now progressed as a Local Preacher 'On Note' to a Local Preacher 'On Trial'. This means that Vani is now authorised to conduct services on her own across the Circuit as she continues her training. Many of you have shared how blessed you have been by both Vani and her husband Tom as they lead worship amongst you. Do continue to pray for them both and offer your encouragement as they respond to God's calling.

Many of you have asked about King's Club, recognising that it has been an important, long-term, mission project of the Circuit. Covid has meant that it has been delivered in a different way in 2020 and 2021, and whilst there is still uncertainty around whether it can be delivered face to face in 2022, the report below from Rachel Pinkney highlights the wonderful impact of what has been achieved, when we think 'outside' or in this case 'inside' the box! We received a myriad of 'thank yous' from grateful families.

#### KING'S CLUB

*Rosie, Roy, and I spent a busy day packing 70 gift boxes in Thoraby Village Hall at the end of July. These fun packages were posted out to families connected with King's Club and the church to give them some encouragement during another Covid-19 affected summer. These free gifts contained activities and treats including a bird box making kit, pens, a notebook, chocolate, biscuits, and other goodies to let people know that the Church was still thinking of them even though King's Club could not go ahead. Thanks go to the Co-op in Leyburn for donating items and to the independent traders who gave big discounts on their bird box and seed ball making kits which enabled us to put together a really wonderful surprise parcel. Rachel Pinkney (Circuit Schools and Families Worker).*

I would like to thank you all for the support and encouragement that you give both Rev Julia and me as we minister across the Circuit. Julia is now in the second year of her probation as a newly appointed Minister and in February several reports will be submitted in order to aid the Probationers Committee to assess whether Julia is ready for ordination during the Methodist Conference in June 2022. A probationer has a considerable amount of study and extra commitments to engage with as well as their ministry amongst the churches in the Circuit and I know that Julia has appreciated your understanding, prayer support and encouragement. Please continue to pray for Julia as she moves ever closer to ordination.

And finally, as we step into a New Year, may the God of new beginnings fill you with hope and peace.

Every Blessing.

*Rev Melanie Reed* (Superintendent).

### Additional Christmas Services/Concerts

|   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| 11 <sup>th</sup> December 7pm @ Richmond          | Musicality Choir Concert     |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> December 7pm @ Brompton on Swale | Carols by Candlelight        |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> December 7pm @ Leyburn           | East Witton Male Voice Choir |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> December 2pm @ Carlton           | Children's Christmas Concert |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> December 6pm @ Gunnerside        | Shortest Day Service         |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> December 7pm @ Richmond          | Christmas Carol Service      |

### **Christmas Eve**

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|-----------------|---|
| Richmond 6pm    | Christmas Eve Service with Holy Communion |
| Melmerby 6.30pm | Carol Service – Rev K Couchman            |
| West Burton 8pm | Communion – Rev M Reed                    |

### **Christmas Day**

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| Leyburn 10.30am United – Rev M Reed & Rev S Hanscombe |
| Gayle 10.30am United at Hawes St Margaret's           |
| Hunton 10.30am – Ruth Poultney                        |
| Richmond 10.30am – Rev Julia Reid                     |