

As a minister arriving new to a circuit there are always plenty of questions to ask, of myself, and of others, in order to try and make sense of a new appointment. One of the questions I've been asking myself and others very frequently in recent weeks is: what is our new church structure all about? More specifically, in meetings and in worship I have been asking, what does it mean to be the Craven Church, that being an area of responsibility for me. I think the conclusions I have come to are also relevant for Worth Valley and Aire Valley Churches, as well as the other churches that form our Airedale Circuit. These conclusions are by no means the definitive answer. The questions will continue to be asked regularly and frequently in the coming months as we together fulfil our calling to make this circuit work for the glory of God in Airedale. But they are my starting point.

Some words from Acts 2: 42-47 are proving helpful to my thoughts, as they provide information about another new church - the very first church!

They (*the first church*) devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

The first church spent time together in fellowship and in learning. Eating together was also important to them. I believe those are important factors in the life of our churches: spending time together, supporting one another, and together deepening our understanding of God and of our purpose as God's church. And sharing food together is always a pleasure!

They sold property and possessions to support those in need. We need to decide together as church families how we might best support the needs of the communities around us. Selling our possessions may seem a bit drastic, but we need to remember that the resources of our churches: people, buildings, finances are not ours to keep for our own purposes, but are ours in trust to be used for the building of God's Kingdom. So identifying the many and varying needs around us and using our resources to help support people in their struggles is surely a key aspect of purpose as churches.

They met together in the temple courts, and in each others' home, praising God. Worship and praying together are key aspects of our church life, as is breaking the bread of communion. Clearly the first church were willing to do this in both the large public places such as the Temple, and in smaller more intimate places, such as homes. We need to be willing to worship together in our own buildings and those of others, as well as recognising that both larger and smaller gatherings are a valid part of our worship.

The Lord added to their number daily. That gives us food for thought! Are we encouraging people to find faith in God for themselves? Are we willing to be public about what we believe, and to encourage others to take steps of faith? Or do we prefer to keep what we believe to ourselves? And if we do, what future does the church have? Something to ponder!

I suspect that we will soon get into a rhythm of worship as churches, but that the other things will need to be worked on, and developed. We are a work in progress. And our God who planted this vision for a way forward for the Airedale Circuit, will be at the heart of all we are and do, and will encourage and inspire our next steps. We, the people of this circuit, need to trust, and to be willing to take new steps in faith. Let's see new things happen as God works through us and with us here!

*Clare*

## ADVENT BIBLE STUDY

Long Lee Chapel are hosting Advent Bible Study Sessions on Thursdays at 2.00pm throughout December.

Dec 2nd Waiting; Dec 9th Accepting; Dec 16th Journeying; Dec 23rd Birthing

All followed by refreshments and a chance to chat at 3.30pm. Everyone welcome.

## Bingley Methodist Church

Herbert Street, off Mornington Road



# CHRISTMAS FAYRE

**Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November**

**10a.m. to 2p.m.**

Hot lunches from 11.30a.m.

Refreshments throughout

Stalls to include:

**Books & Gifts, Jams & Chutneys,**

**Cakes, Jigsaws...**

In light of the current situation with Covid,  
we would ask you to sanitise your hands on entry  
and wear a mask when moving around in the building.

Turn back the clock with our fun  
and friendly exercise  
classes to improve your balance

- ✓ Balance & confidence
- ✓ Mobility & flexibility
- ✓ Strength & independence

Classes every Tuesday, 10.30 am - 11.30 am  
At Bingley Scout Hut, Sycamore Avenue,  
To book your free taster session, or for more  
information, please ring 07866395316 or  
email [alison.banks@moveitorloseit.co.uk](mailto:alison.banks@moveitorloseit.co.uk)

Come &  
try your first  
class FREE



## \* NEW CLASS - RIDDLESDEN \*

"It's friendly & fun and it's given me my life back!"

Come & try your first class FREE

Classes starting on Thursday November 4<sup>th</sup>,  
at 10.30 am at Riddlesden Institute, 3 Scott  
Lane, BD20 5BU. To book your free taster  
session, or for more information, please ring  
07866395316 or email [alison.banks@moveitorloseit.co.uk](mailto:alison.banks@moveitorloseit.co.uk)



## LONG LEE METHODIST CHURCH

**AUTUMN COFFEE MORNING  
SATURDAY 27 NOVEMBER  
2021**

**10 am to 12 noon**

**ALL WELCOME**

The poster above is not very clear but the  
information below may help.

I am running exercise classes for the elderly in  
Bingley and starting a new one in Riddlesden in  
November. I would like to let the members of  
your churches in Bingley and Riddlesden know  
about them. For a bit of background infor-  
mation:-

"Move It Or Lose It" classes are a simple yet  
effective way to achieve better health and well  
being in the local community by providing safe,  
evidence-based exercise that is especially helpful  
for those with mobility problems, long-term  
health conditions, the socially isolated and frail.  
Please see the official website for further  
information. Tel: 07866395316

email: [Alison.banks@moveitorloseit.co.uk](mailto:Alison.banks@moveitorloseit.co.uk)

### LEES MEETING POINT

COP 26 Climate Summit - How much do you know about **Our World Environmental Issues?**

The speaker at **Lees Meeting Point on Thursday 4th November at 2.00pm** will be Rev Anthony Bennett whose topic is  
"Profound anxiety, deep lament, fierce hope - One Christian's emerging response to the Climate Emergency!"

Anthony holds degrees in Environmental Science and Water Technology. He has worked as a process engineer and contributed articles on environmental issues such as water supply, renewable energy, climate change and the ecological emergency, to industry magazines. Although now a priest he is following his deep concern on environmental issues as he pursues postgraduate doctoral studies.

A rare opportunity to hear the facts from an expert, who also has a Christian perspective - do join us at Lees -  
4th November 2pm. You will be very welcome.

Please send items for the November newsletter by the 22 November to Penny Moon, Circuit Administrator  
[office@airedalemethodists.org](mailto:office@airedalemethodists.org). Please send email to Penny if you wish to receive the Newsletter by  
email.