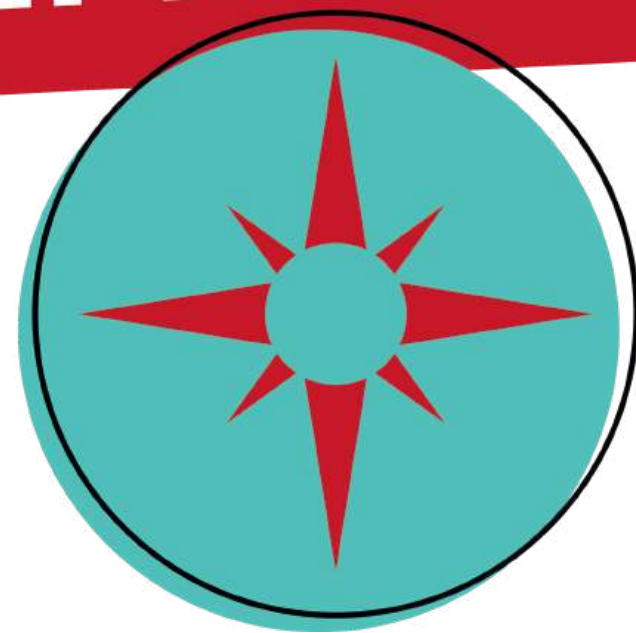
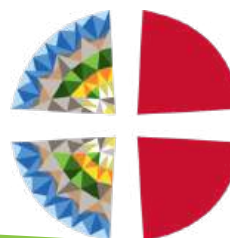


A JUSTICE-SEEKING CHURCH



24/25

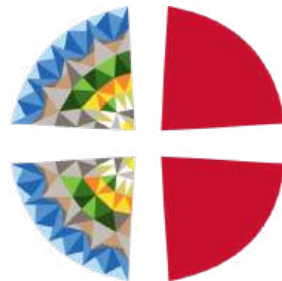
Yorkshire West
Methodist District



District Prayer Handbook

The Yorkshire West Methodist District is part of the Methodist Church of Great Britain and exists to **inspire, equip** and **resource** the circuits and churches of the District to support them in living out the calling of the Methodist Church to respond to the Gospel of God's love in Christ.

Through this working in partnership we seek, with God's help, to be a **growing, evangelistic, justice-seeking, inclusive and safe, church** living out its discipleship and mission.



Introduction from our Chair



Dear Friends,

You will be aware that the Methodist Church has recognised a particular calling to be a Justice-Seeking Church.

“Seeking Justice” is an active stance in our engagement with God’s world and draws us out of the security of our homes and buildings, into the daily struggles faced by others and ourselves. This year, in our prayer diary, we are inviting you to learn about those places where we are engaged in justice seeking and who we are listening to and learning from. I hope you will share in prayer for what is happening and that you will be inspired and equipped to play your part in this calling of the Church.

Yours in Christ,

Kerry

Day 1 - A Justice-Seeking Church

Methodists around the country are actively seeking a more just world, supporting people experiencing hardship, being alongside those seeking sanctuary, campaigning for change, building stronger communities, supporting global justice. This can be costly, but we do this because we are called to be part of a justice-seeking Church. As Christians we're called to seek God's justice. Justice that enables everyone, and all creation, to flourish. Justice that removes everything that diminishes people, that oppresses or exploits them. Justice that enables us all to grow in relationship with each other and with God.

Rachel Lampard, Director of Social Justice and Social Action, The Methodist Church in Britain

*Loving God,
you long for your justice to flow like a mighty river through your creation.
But too often we can be overwhelmed, by poverty or discrimination, by the
destruction of the environment, by conflict and the treatment of those
seeking refuge.
We pray for everyone today who has been harmed, and who is longing for a
better world.
We pray that those of us who have not faced injustice may listen, and those
of us experiencing injustices may be heard.
We ask for your help, as we respond to the call to seek your justice, in our
lives, our communities, our country and our world.
Teach us how to be with others, as you are with us, and together may we
work for your kingdom of love and justice.
Amen.*



Settle - Day 2

In modern times the Dales have become a rich and beautiful place for leisure and enjoyment, but for our rural community in Settle circuit, it is also a place where family farms are upheld, livestock cared for and livings sustained. It is becoming a place of struggle, particularly for those with an eye for nature who make working with God's creation a farming priority; cutting grass later in the season to allow ground-nesting birds, such as the iconic curlew, to safely raise their chicks, whilst also ensuring sufficient winter feed at affordable prices and satisfying a consumer desire for ever cheaper goods. As part of our eco-journey, we

believe we have a part to play in caring for the rich diversity around us, but also in sustaining and supporting rural communities. We encourage our congregations to think carefully about the provenance of the food that they choose. As one local farmer says "if people cared as much about what they buy in the supermarket as I do when working on the farm, then our world would be in a much better place".



*Creator God, you formed these beautiful Hills and Dales and gifted them to us to nurture, to care for and to enjoy. Help us so to love all of your creation, that we tread carefully through its footpaths, celebrating the diversity and richness of its life and journey together, supporting and sustaining those who love it and care for it on our behalf, both in our words and in our actions.
Amen.*

Day 3 - Climate Change Action Group

The commitment at the Flourish station of a Methodist Way of Life is 'we will care for creation and all God's gifts'. Over the last year, across the District, more individuals, churches and circuits have begun to consciously respond to the reality of the climate emergency and to live out this commitment. This has been done in a variety of different ways, including more churches being awarded eco-church status, energy audits being undertaken on churches and manses, individuals choosing to use public transport more, solar panels being installed, building relationships with local climate change groups, and the development of church gardens. The District Climate Change Action Group has been supporting this important work with the development of a model climate policy for circuits, worship resources and encouraging activism on matters of climate justice. Whilst the climate emergency can feel overwhelming, each action, however small, makes a difference and we give thanks to God for the actions that have already been taken and will be taken in the future.

*Creator God,
We give you thanks for the beauty and goodness of your creation.
We thank you for all the steps we have been able to take so far as
we respond to the Climate Emergency.
As we go forward, help us to be disciples who seek justice for your
creation,
who act in love and kindness towards all that you have made,
and walk humbly with you as we care for creation and all your gifts.
Amen.*



Skipton & Grassington - Day 4

When a number of the circuit churches voted in favour of welcoming same-sex marriage, this also led to a commitment to getting involved in local Pride events. This has given us an opportunity to have a Christian presence at Pride in Skipton and Pride in the Dales, with support from Grassington and Bradley Methodist Churches and Trinity St Andrew's LEP.



This has involved listening and openness, craft and conversation, and generous hospitality with many rainbow cakes being given away! We have also held Pride Praise events with invited speakers and joyous worship. All of this has encouraged us in our journey to be more open, inclusive and welcoming, and to stand alongside those who face discrimination and injustice.

*God of love
We thank you for the rich rainbow diversity of your creation and its people.
We thank you for opportunities to show that your love is without limits.
Help us to be open to listen to others and to learn from their experiences.
May we find ways to go out into our communities and show your love which
overcomes all things.
Amen.*

Day 5 - Wakefield Methodist Junior and Infant School

Wakefield Methodist Junior and Infant School, situated near the city centre, stands as the only Methodist primary school in Yorkshire. The school prides itself on being inclusive and nurturing, with a strong emphasis on developing each child's potential and fostering lifelong learning. It has received commendable ratings from OFSTED and SIAMS, reflecting its commitment to educational excellence and Christian values. The school's vision is to help every child live life abundantly, in line with the teachings of Jesus, encouraging them to live by John Wesley's Rule of Life.

"Do All the Good You Can, By All the Means You Can, In All the Ways You Can, In All the Places You Can, At All the Times You Can, To All the People You Can, As long as Ever You Can."

Loving God, we lift up Wakefield Methodist Junior and Infant School, thanking You for their dedication to nurturing young minds and hearts. Bless their efforts to create an inclusive, supportive, and enriching environment for all children.

As a circuit, help us embody justice by addressing the needs of the poor, caring for Your creation, welcoming refugees, fighting against discrimination, and fostering peace.

Guide our actions to reflect Your love and justice in every aspect of our lives.

Through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



Airedale - Day 6

Airedale Circuit made a New Year's Resolution in 2023 to do our bit towards climate justice. Since then, ten churches have gained Eco-Awards – six Bronze and four Silver – with one very close to Gold. But caring for the planet is very much more than working towards awards; it is about creating an ethos of care within our congregations and the communities around us. Silsden Repair Café happens each month, in conjunction with Climate Action Silsden and Plastic-free Silsden. People bring in items for repair, and most repairs are done while you wait. There is also a pop-up refill shop and free refreshments. Everything is done by donation only.



At Lees, the Crafty Chatters group, among other projects, make Morsbags from unwanted fabric that can be used as an alternative to plastic. They are close to two thousand bags made so far, which puts them 49th on the world leader board for Morsbag making. These are distributed around the village, and many have been used in our Pre-loved Shop. They are also committed to sharing the plastic-free message across the area.

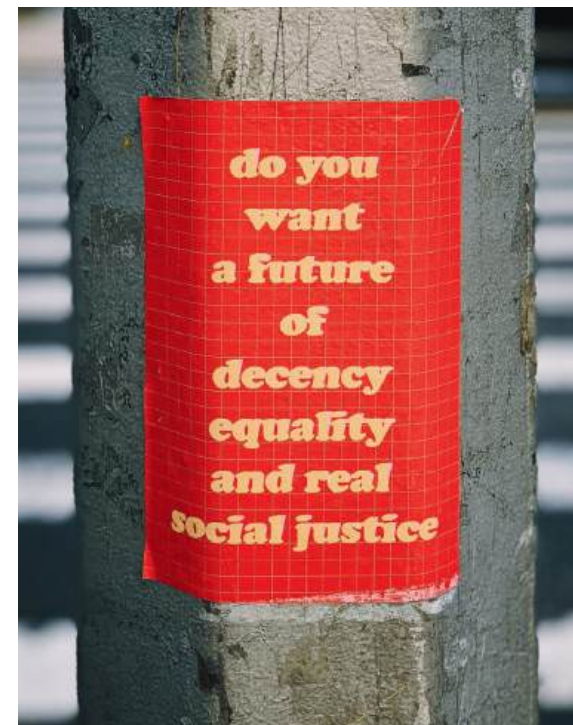
Loving God, open our eyes to see your signature through all of creation. Open our minds to the things we can change about the way we live, to reduce our impact on the planet. When we complain about the inconvenience of a thunderous downpour, or the excess heat of an occasional heatwave, may we remember those whose very existence is affected by the way other people live their lives, and help to turn this planet around. Amen.

Day 7 - Justice, Dignity and Solidarity

The Methodist Church, through the Justice, Dignity and Solidarity strategy, seeks to be an Inclusive, Justice Seeking church. The strategy stands on the long history of the Church being an advocate for social justice and challenging injustice; a history of standing for work, gender and racial justices, among others. The JDS strategy seeks to celebrate the rich diversity of people within our church and celebrate each person created in the image of God. Therefore, the strategy seeks to eradicate all forms of discrimination, by treating all people justly and with dignity, and standing in solidarity with those who feel discriminated in any way across the breadth of the church. The strategy calls for a complete change in the culture, practices and attitudes of the church so that all Methodists are able to be full participants in the Church's life and affirm our belief that "all are welcome". Solidarity circles for Disability, LGBT+, Racial Justice and Women have been formed to help implement the strategy.

Although the Methodist Church supports the protected characteristics as stated under the Equalities Act 2010, issues of discrimination based on race, sexuality, gender and disability, are still a major challenge for the Church. We are called to open our minds and hearts and learn about our own unconscious biases.

Lord God, give us vision of your world as you created it. A world where all get justice and are treated with dignity. Give us courage to stand in solidarity with those who are discriminated against. Forgive us when we have devalued your image in others and treated your creation unjustly. Amen.



Wharfedale & Aireborough - Day 8

Forest Church is attracting new families, offering a space to wonder and worship and a challenge to protect, care and nurture our planet. This is a growing community and is making new connections. Wander and Ponder is our new initiative for adults in Addingham, to reflect on creation and good mental health.

Many of our churches are working towards or have gained an Eco Award status and a good number are using worship, church life and campaigning to support this important work.

The Circuit's new part-time CAP Manager, Michael Dodd, spearheads the practical "getting-alongside" work with vulnerable individuals and families.



Our Morsbags evenings at Otley making shopping bags from waste material to prevent plastic bag use continues to attract circuit and non-church participants.

*Loving God,
we are amazed and delighted by the beauty of your wonderful world. Yet also, we are saddened by the ongoing destruction of the planet's resources and our inability to care for all creatures and the whole creation. Guide us to live justly and responsibly, and enable us to build a stronger future where all creation can fulfil its potential and flourish in your love and grace. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Day 9 - Leeds Sanctuary

In February 2024, we hosted “Intersections”, an opportunity for change-makers across the city of Leeds to come together to learn more about community organising and successful campaigning, and network with others. There was so much diversity in the room – of experience, passion, ethnicity, and age – and this made for such an informative and interesting evening, with many impactful reflections across the room.

In response to the evening, we’ve begun a new community called “Social Justice Lunches”, which will offer quarterly opportunities for people in our city to learn more about activism, with the potential to build campaigns together. Our first meeting in June was around “what is activism?”, and our second in September will be an opportunity to learn about the heritage of activism in Leeds.

*Elohei Chasdi,
We pray for our city
Which in many ways is thriving and growing.
Thank you for the blessings you have given us.
We pray for those who are struggling
Who perhaps are overlooked
And for those who see their plight, and feel called to advocate.
May we and they model our perfect Advocate, Jesus, and may we
see the flourishing of all people in Leeds, physically, emotionally and
spiritually.
Amen.*



Bradford North - Day 10

At Easter 2023, Methodists at The Crag at Windhill agreed to Cease to Meet. The circuit, however, wondered if God might still have purpose and plans for Crag; in particular, the Friday Drop-in illustrated something of a need for Methodist mission and ministry in the area. Church at the Margins and New Places for New People offered encouragement and challenge, and so we are exploring ongoing mission at Crag, recognising that many residents face challenges of economic and social deprivation, and that the Friday Drop-In continues to draw people after twenty years of service.

“Crag Road Community Hub” has been growing slowly over 2024. The Drop-In is a good foundation for the work throughout the week; a craft club now meets, inviting those who attend to try a new skill; the gardening club has done enormous work at the back of the building and we have peas, potatoes, rhubarb



and much more growing. The Wellbeing Cafe allows for a time mid-week for people to call round for a chat, and we have a monthly prayer walk, noticing the area and it's residents. It is becoming a place where the community drops in either for support or a chat, and it is very much a community that is beginning to become cohesive and active.

God who builds on rock, bless and guide Deacon Joy Sykes and the Management and Development Group overseeing the work at Crag.

Bless too those whose spiritual home it was for many years, and those finding their place in the new work. Amen.

Day 11 - Leeds North & East

Across the circuit we are striving to challenge injustice and be accountable for our environment. Our Repair Café started in 2023 and continues to flourish; as items are repaired, it reduces landfill and the volume of raw materials and energy needed to make new products. At the Meeting Point Café, we offer free meals for those who can't eat every day, give out emergency food parcels and offer breakfasts to homeless sleepers, in a safe and inclusive welcoming space, where they are known by their name. The circuit gives thanks to the church communities for their continued support to Meeting Point and their local foodbanks. The Gipton Night Shelter hosting destitute asylum seekers continues, and workshops and information evenings are held to discuss the injustice felt by refugees and how we can be supportive and proactive. We work towards net zero from both big to small changes and we thank Oakwood Church in making changes to their building, and encouraging the young people to think and care for our environment.

*Father, you created each one of us in your own image.
Give us the patience to build on what unites us, to celebrate our differences and to learn from them.
Grant us the wisdom to recognise your Church, beyond our building, reaching out across all communities, countries and cultures.
Give us the courage to offer refuge to those in need, to challenge prejudice and seek justice for all.
Help us see that you created us in your image.
Amen.*



Bradford South - Day 12

The Bradford South Circuit is committed to making our churches places of hope and welcome, and sees our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as integral to this mission. As well as welcoming “Warm Spaces” providing food, warmth and company to anyone in our communities, we continue to explore how we can make our worship more accessible in various places and different ways around the circuit. From the use of technology to enrich our more traditional worship services, to the creation of a purposely and vocally inclusive church at St Arnold’s (our pub church in Bradford City centre), we are aiming to live out the words of the hymn “Let Us Build A House” (STF 409).



*All are welcome here
Heavenly father as we continue to work towards a more inclusive,
Justice-Seeking Church...
Guide and guard our words and actions,
Help us always to choose to love and provide safety,
Make space within us to clearly hear your word,
Fill our heads with dreams of your kingdom and our hearts with hope built
on Jesus Christ.
As we look towards the cross...
May we dwell within your grace,
Share the feast of your love with all,
offer freedom and peace to all in trouble.
Let us build a house fit for your heavenly glory.
Amen.*

Day 13 - Safeguarding

As part of our commitment to being a Justice-Seeking Church, we encourage all churches, circuits and projects to create spaces where people can feel safe; where we seek to support those who have been abused, where we provide safety for those who are vulnerable, where we enable those who have abused to be part of our church, without the opportunity to cause harm to others.

*Almighty and loving God,
we are called by you to care for each other, to love our neighbour as
we love ourselves, to give a voice to the voiceless and lift up those
who are weak or powerless.
We know we don't always get it right.
We don't challenge abusive behaviour because it frightens us, or
because we are afraid to upset the apple cart;
because the perpetrator is in a position of power, or because they
threaten to resign when challenged.
Give us the strength and the conviction to speak truth to power, to
hold one another accountable for the behaviours which seek to
cause harm to others, and to make our spaces as safe as we can for
the most vulnerable of your people.
Amen.*



North Kirklees & Morley - Day 14

Cleckheaton is one of several churches across the circuit responding to the needs of those facing poverty in their local community. The church is an Acts 435 partner, with volunteers visiting clients and coordinating practical support, which is supplemented by the church's community fund. The local food bank operates out of the church premises, and though it began with church support, this is now a separate charity with much community involvement. An organisation offering support with training and job-seeking also operates from the premises. Referrals made between the different organisations enable people to receive support and to know that they will be heard, valued and cared for. The church frequently offers hospitality, with food and drinks available free of charge so that those we meet have a place of welcome.



*God of community,
we praise you for the joy of sharing.*

*Thank you for opportunities and blessings discovered through
conversations and relationships.*

*We pray for meaningful connections to be made through the work of
Acts 435 and through food banks at Cleckheaton, Drighlington, West
Ardsley, Newlands and across the District.*

*God who notices and nudges,
as we listen to and share with those around us, help us, we pray, to
see where you are at work and inviting us to join in.
Inspire and equip us as we seek to be channels of your endless mercy
and love.*

We pray in the name of Christ, who gave himself for all. Amen.

Day 15 - District Grants Committee

A District Grant supports Trinity Mission, a Christian Charity working from the Hope Centre in Trinity Methodist Church, Castleford, in the Aire & Calder Circuit. Stephanie, the Services Manager, and Mark, Senior Support Coordinator, are assisted by a group of volunteers. The Mission offers help and support to those in need in the wider community, often marginalised and isolated. In addition to signposting guests to local agencies, they have a food and clothing bank, and offer hot meals and medical drop-ins. Many guests go on to become volunteers at the Mission.

Thackley Methodist Church, in the Bradford North Circuit, has received a District Grant toward the cost of installing solar panels on their church roof. Already, they have done much on their journey toward net zero, including improving sustainability by switching to LED lighting, installing smart switches, encouraging recycling, and creating an educational nature space.

Generous and bountiful God, You have put us on this earth to share your generous bounty. Help us to be more willing to share the good things you give us with those who have little. Let us never pass by one of our sisters or brothers who we find in need. May we live through the words of Jesus, our Saviour, 'whenever you did this for one of the least important of these followers of mine, you did it for me!' (Matt 25:40). In Christ's name we pray. Amen.



Church at the Margins - Day 16

The vision of Church at the Margins is to nurture and build new Christian communities amongst economically marginalised people.



God of all, we pray that as individuals and as a Christian community, we would always reflect your love for people through a desire for justice for all. Loving God, give to us empathy to both recognise injustice and have a desire to challenge and eradicate it.

God of all, we pray for everyone with a lived experience of facing the challenges associated with economic insecurity and marginalisation. Help us to be people who seek to empower, support and be agents of transformation.

God of all, forgive us when we overlook the gifts and skills of others and when we fail to build and nurture local leadership and Christian communities, especially in economically marginalised contexts. Creator God, enable the formation of brave and safe spaces for people to better be able to notice and experience You.

Amen.

Day 17 - Universities of Leeds Chaplaincy

The Universities of Leeds Chaplaincy is an ecumenical partnership supporting around 100,000 staff, researchers and students across four of the Higher Education institutions in Leeds - The University of Leeds, Leeds Beckett University, University of Arts (Leeds Branch) and University of Law (Leeds Branch). The District provides the ministry of Revd Tim Nicholls to support the work of the Chaplaincy.

The Chaplaincy provides space and opportunities for the University communities to worship, to explore their faith and identity, a confidential pastoral service when times are tough, and support for those who are grieving, feeling isolated or overwhelmed.

We pray for our Higher Education institutions as they navigate the challenges of financial insecurity caused by policies which affect student recruitment and retention. We pray for all staff facing greater levels of job insecurity whilst seeking to support our students and young people with their own significant support needs.

We pray for the many students who are personally affected by the violence in the Middle East, and the impact of that conflict on community cohesion and individual wellbeing on our campuses. We recognise that peace cannot be truly achieved without justice. We pray for attempts at building bridges of reconciliation between communities on our campuses, and tentative steps towards enabling conversations and dialogue between opposing viewpoints.



Calderdale - Day 18

The Calderdale Circuit is a rich mixture of former textile towns and independent weavers' cottages, a busy commercial centre in Halifax and rural communities in the Upper Calder Valley. There are sixteen active chapels across the circuit and two Heritage Chapels which use their unique place in Methodist History to continue to proclaim the Gospel. The priority for all is putting the love of Christ at the front and centre of their lives for all to see. Each chapel has its own way of demonstrating its commitment to social justice. Many are working towards becoming Eco churches and are passionate about climate justice. Some host and staff Food Banks, others provide hubs of warmth and welcome for those on the margins of society, many are committed to Fair Trade, seeking justice across the world. Members of all congregations volunteer with community projects that work towards social and ethical justice.



*God the Weaver,
You entwine us together, our experiences the warp to the weft of the Gospel,
creating intricate patterns of hope inspired by the passion for all people
preached and lived by Jesus Christ.*

*As we work in and with our communities, weave us more closely with hope
and compassion so that in us, people will see the strength of your love and
know your passion for justice; as we continue to feed the hungry, befriend
the lonely, care for creation and speak out against injustice.*

*In the name and for the sake of your Kingdom we pray,
Amen.*

Day 19 - Youth

Our District Youth work provides space for young people to come together and be part of something wider than their regular church context. We seek to empower young people to speak out about justice issues, and to equip those leading their groups with the skills and confidence to support them.

*Almighty and loving God,
who sees the potential in people regardless of age or experience,
who anointed David, the youngest of his family, and called him to do great things,
equip our young people with voices to speak out for the persecuted as Esther did.
Open their hearts to hear you calling them in the night, as you called Samuel.
Open the hearts, minds and ears of those around them to hear what you are saying to us, through them, that we might journey and grow together as your people.
Amen.*



Huddersfield - Day 20

Huddersfield circuit has launched the "Webs of Poverty" project to explore and challenge socioeconomic issues in the community. This initiative aims to spark dialogue, share information, and collaborate with individuals who have experienced poverty firsthand. The project's centrepiece is an interactive exhibition designed to foster unity in the fight against poverty. Showcasing a giant, crafted web with personal responses to poverty, the exhibition encourages participants to reflect on their experiences and propose actions to end poverty. In response to post-pandemic challenges, Gledholt Church family offers a free Simple Tea and Toast Breakfast, providing a warm, welcoming space for the community. With grants and partnerships, the church has expanded its outreach to include a food giveaway, school uniform exchange, wellbeing events, and short



courses for families. Opening up the church building has spurred growth, with young families, students, and newcomers transforming the congregation into an international Christian community. Gledholt Church family remains committed to addressing poverty and fostering hope within the community.

God of compassion and justice, guidance and boundless love, open our eyes to the injustice of poverty around us. Ignite within a passion for action and change. May Your wisdom and strength guide us, standing together, demanding dignity, equality, and respect for all. With Your kindness, empathy, and love, may we embrace hope, uplift those in need through Your grace, reflecting Your boundless love.

May Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

*In Jesus' name, we pray,
Amen.*

Day 21 - Leeds South & West

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed planted in a field...

Like many circuits, our journey towards becoming a Justice-Seeking Church is underpinned in how we use our resources – people, buildings and finances. We're prayerfully discerning how God calls us into partnerships to be sustainable and flourishing, bringing about small changes that together make a difference. As part of becoming Eco-Churches, one church has recently installed infra-red heaters and some churches are investing in LED lighting. Many churches offer 'Welcoming Spaces' using local food share opportunities both to reduce food waste and reach out to those struggling with hunger. Another church is working alongside refugees from Ukraine. All churches are completing EDI training as part of our commitment to be inclusive and welcoming.

Lord of the Harvest,

We offer you our 'mustard seeds' as we grow towards becoming a Justice-Seeking Church...

- *The small changes to heating and lighting;*
- *Becoming Eco-Church congregations;*
- *The open door of our sanctuaries, offering warmth, shelter, refreshment and fellowship;*
- *The willingness to walk alongside others, not to be their voice but to help them find their voice.*

Lord of the Harvest, when our contributions feel too small, remind us you can do more than we can dream or imagine. Lord of the Harvest, when we see how the seed has become the tree – a home to nests and new life – may we praise you and be encouraged to trust you for all we cannot yet see or understand. Amen.



Denby Dale & Clayton West - Day 22

DDCW is a rural circuit, fringing the Southern Pennines. Rural isolation makes access to services difficult for vulnerable people and the Denby Dale Centre is a charity we set up 15 years ago to address this.

Our location also makes us alive to the sky above our heads, the earth beneath our feet and the wonderful world that God has made. We are working hard, therefore, to connect our worship, prayer and action with the need for change around the climate emergency. Churches are discussing how best to continue to serve rural communities while reducing the resources we need for mission and ministry.



We try to take worship outside at key points in the year and celebrate: a Sunrise service in Bullhouse Chapel garden on Easter Sunday; a mid-summer Pentecost service on windswept Royd Moor; a harvest walk of pilgrimage along the Transpennine Way; a mid-winter Christingle at Cannon Hall Park. Some of the events are also attracting beyond the boundaries of normal church life.

Loving God, we pray for our world at a time of climate crisis. Bless our scientists as they work to help all living things to flourish. Bless our leaders as they seek create a world where we live well together. Bless us as we try harder to care for the Earth. Amen.

Day 23 - Bronte House and Woodhouse Grove Schools

At our schools, we celebrate the diversity and cultures of our pupils and staff, who speak over thirty different languages. As we prepare ourselves to become a "School of Sanctuary", where we further engage with the complexities of how to be more welcoming, we are grateful for the opportunities to learn from the students and staff groups from around the world. We have partnered with a local hotel where asylum seekers are being housed and have been able to set up sports footwear donations, leading to our hosting of sporting events like football, which is a great leveller for all – two of the players have now come and spoken about their lived experiences of asylum and being refugees. We have welcomed and learned from visits from Dina Nayeri and Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal, exploring how to embrace showing "Hospitality not Hostility" to those seeking sanctuary. Our Charity Committee, made up of seven Y13 pupils, continues to promote a greater understanding of need locally, nationally and internationally through awareness and fundraising events for our local food bank, Hope for Justice, Zarach, and our international charity, EduKid, who support children in Uganda; we hope to be able to organise a life-changing visit there in 2025.

Gracious and Holy God, your son Jesus taught and inspired many through His words of love and inclusion. We give thanks for all our staff and students, praying they will be inspired by those same words and encounter a living God. We pray for the continuing Christian presence of peace and justice, through word and action in our schools and communities. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.



Aire & Calder - Day 24

Trinity Mission at the Hope Centre in Castleford is a beacon of hope for those in need. Offering a variety of services such as hot meals, food parcels, and clothing, they strive to support the community with dignity and care. Their holistic approach includes working with local agencies to provide comprehensive assistance, from healthcare and housing to job support. This mission embodies the church's commitment to social justice, aiming to uplift the vulnerable and create a supportive environment for all.



Gracious God, we give thanks for the dedicated work of Trinity Mission and the Hope Centre, serving as Your hands and feet in Castleford.

Bless their efforts to feed the hungry, clothe the needy, and offer support to the vulnerable.

Strengthen our Circuit to actively pursue justice; addressing poverty, environmental stewardship, the needs of refugees, and fighting discrimination.

Inspire us to be peacemakers in our communities.

May Your love and justice guide all our actions, reflecting Your kingdom here on earth.

In Jesus' name, we pray.

Amen.

Day 25 - Digital Discipleship and Church

Both in-person and online, the duty of Christians to speak out against injustice is important. Promoting healthy discernment in what we see and share online and how we conduct ourselves can be an ongoing balancing act of calling out hate, alongside endeavouring to create a warm, uplifting Christian community. Today we keep in mind how we across the Yorkshire West District conduct ourselves online and how we can speak out against injustice online.

We pray for those who are active on social media; that we have the discernment to know what is true and what are lies, what is based on hate and what is shared in love.

We pray for uplifting opportunities to speak out against injustice and to be an affirming, positive influence amongst our friends and family groups. We pray that we can be a positive voice across our networks and shine the light of Jesus into all that we say, share and comment on.

Amen.



Huddersfield Mission - Day 26

Huddersfield Mission is the foremost voluntary organisation in Kirklees working with people with complex needs. This includes people who are experiencing significant poverty, homelessness, poor mental health or addiction issues. Each year we support over 1000 different people through our Community Café, Advice Service and our Community Health project. The Mission is also a Community Resource and the home to various community groups and organisations. Huddersfield Mission is an independent but connected Methodist Charity. We are open to all and remain proud of our Methodist heritage and roots. We seek social justice by supporting people with their immediate needs, but also by looking to address the underlying or long-term needs. This is summarised in our strapline: "Serving People, Changing Lives".



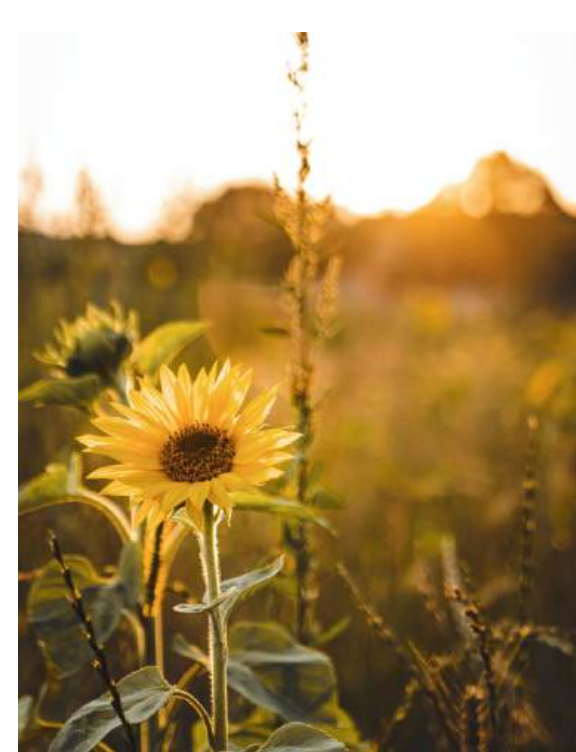
*God of Justice, help us to serve
Hope with every cup of tea.
Dignity with a new set of clothes.
Justice with advice about benefits.
Compassion with a listening ear.
God of Justice, help us to change lives;
Through supporting individuals in need,
By speaking truth to power,
Through challenging the way things are,
By offering a vision of your Kingdom.
God of Justice, give us the confidence and courage to see the potential in
people, in communities and in ourselves.
Amen*

Day 27 - Lay Employment

The District has a Lay Employment policy which provides a framework for good practice, as Christian employers, churches, circuits and districts are expected to operate ethically. As well as being within statutory requirements, employees deserve to be employed competently and constructively. The policy takes into account good employment practice, as well as the current requirements of employment law, Standing Orders and Methodist Conference decisions, which must always be followed by the employing bodies within the District.

Our District upholds the Methodist Church policy that the hourly rate paid to all lay employees should be at least at the level of the Real Living Wage as published by the Living Wage Foundation.

Lord, we give thanks for the commitment and dedication of all those who are employed across our District. May they do so with honesty, wisdom and integrity. We pray too for those whose role it is to ensure good employment practice throughout the District. May all those who are involved in lay employment feel supported in their work and rewarded for their efforts. Help all those who are employed across our District to sense their contribution to God's work and to God's mission as each seeks to be fair, just and honest in character and influence. In many different areas of work, there is much to do, much to share and much to offer. Lord, may your guiding hand and still small voice surround and equip all those who work across the District. Amen.



Touchstone, Beacon and Abigail - Day 28

Touchstone is home to Beacon and to Abigail Housing and both charities work with destitute asylum seekers. Beacon provides learning opportunities, social gatherings, acts as an advocate, and hosts conversations where people can receive legal advice on their applications. Abigail provides housing for destitute asylum seekers and other critical support.

Touchstone Counselling provides a counselling service specifically for survivors of faith-based trauma and/or abuse. Trained counsellors create safe space for people to tell their story, understand its impact better, and to find healing. They also advocate for the experience of survivors.



*God who is the shelter from storms,
who is the sanctuary of the persecuted,
who is the healer of the harmed,
may people find rest, healing and welcome in Touchstone.
We hold before you the staff and volunteers of Touchstone, Beacon
and Abigail.
We ask you to equip them for service,
to care for those who visit them,
and to be open to being transformed by those they walk alongside.
Amen.*

Day 29 - Rural Life

A large proportion of our District is Rural or Semi-Rural. While these may be places of beauty and recreation, they also offer challenges as we engage with being a justice-seeking church. One area which is of great concern is around mental health issues. A recent survey found that 36% of people in rural areas had mental health wellbeing scores that were significantly lower than the rest of the population. Suicide within the farming community is also a significant challenge, with an average of one farmer dying from suicide every week in the UK. Alongside this is the challenging statistic that urban local authorities receive around 57% more grant funding per head to pay for their public health responsibilities than rural areas. This is unjust, and just one area in which rural areas need the support of churches, as well as those willing to campaign and speak out.

Loving God

*Whose son spent much of his time in rural communities,
we hold before you those who live and work in rural places.*

*We especially pray today for those who struggle with their mental health.
May they get the support and resources they need.*

*We pray for the Farm Community Network and the Royal Agricultural
Benevolent Institution, and for all who offer listening, care and support.
Amen.*



Bradford 2025 - Day 30

In 2025, Bradford celebrates being the UK City of Culture. The District is investing in bringing the Methodist Collection of Modern Art to the City under the theme “Everything is Connected” in September 2025. It will be in South Square Gallery, where the focus will be on strong women, and at St. James’ Church in Thornton. Ben Rhydding Methodist Church will focus on the environment, with other pieces at Woodhouse Grove School, Bradford Cathedral, and reproductions in bars on North Parade. We are committed to using the collection to help people reflect, and build our relationships with those who are marginalised in the city; inspiring people to share their stories through the lens of visual art and poetry.



*You, Loving God, are the Maker and the Creator.
You have given shape and form, colour and light, texture and
shade.*

*When there was nothing, You sang your song, and light and colour
poured out; they danced and made life and so, we were born.
You came in Christ the Artist, the work that walked amongst us. We
were startled by his vividness. The vulnerable saw Jesus, the picture
of love and life, of pain, death and hope.*

*In the joy and awfulness of those moments, we saw afresh the
beauty of shape and form, of colour and light, texture and shade.
We saw You, the One who had given all. Let us reflect your beauty
to the world, that it may be renewed again.
Amen.*

Day 31 - The District

The District exists to inspire, equip, and resource the circuits in their mission, worship, and service. We are you, and here for you. As the month ends, take a moment to remember what you have discovered about the churches and circuits that are seeking justice.

How have you been inspired?

In A Methodist Way of Life, one of the stations is **CHALLENGE**. It is where we meet the God who is a liberator; the God who invites us to turn and face the world with love. We are invited to ask what are the injustices we are concerned about, and what are we going to do in response. Take time to think about that, and listen to what God is saying to you.

*God, Liberator,
who frees the world from politics driven by sin,
who seeks to restore life and creation to all you hoped for,
draw our minds to the needs of your world,
and grant us the Spirit of action,
to move with your will,
and share in the realising of your hope for creation.
Amen.*

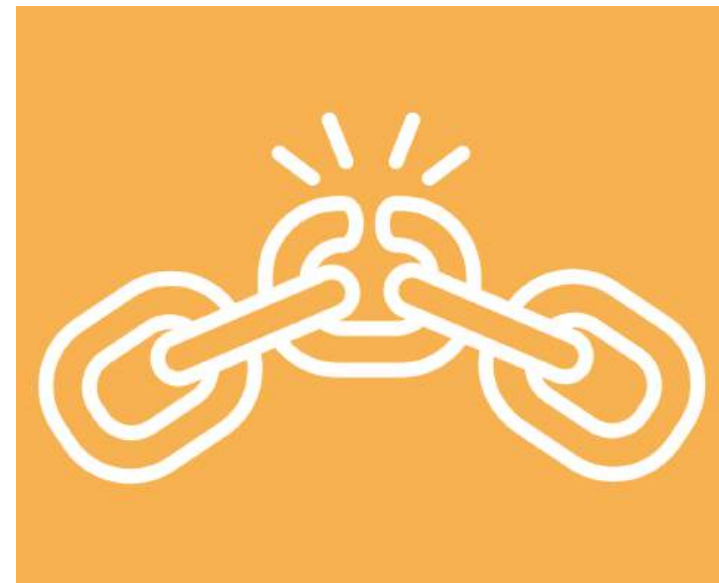


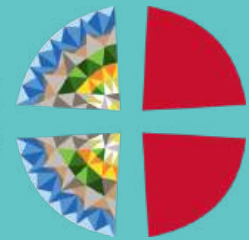
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