



## 'BEING CHURCH' in BOSTON SPA



Sunday 7th March 2021  
3rd Sunday in Lent

### A prayer reflecting on our present situation and global vaccination

Faithful God,

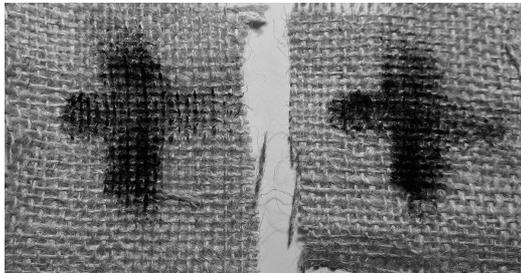
as a cautious route out of lockdown is planned, may we hold on to the hope it offers but not run ahead of the realities. We pray for the work of Covax as they ensure fair access to vaccine, and we ask that poverty would not create vaccine inequality. May we find new and creative ways to reconnect with friends, family members and our church community. May we live the story that we tell – of your suffering love for us, of your creative power, and of the gospel promise of a world made new. May we be ready to play a part in the healing and restoration of our relationships and of your world, and may we be ready to heal the hurt that separation has brought.

[from worship & learning resources, Roots]

Lectionary Bible readings for this week:

Exodus 20.1-17; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1.18-25; John 2.13-22

### Ash Wednesday—17th February



About 30 attended the Circuit Ash Wednesday service on zoom, led by Ann Fox & Steve Jakeman. To symbolise the imposition of ashes, Steve marked crosses on sack material using ash from last year's Palm crosses. All who attended the service were sent a piece of cloth (as shown above) to retain and help us as we journey through Lent.



Snowdrops on the banks of the Wharfe  
near Thorp Arch bridge

**District Service:** Sunday 28th February: During last Sunday's excellent service, we heard the words of Joy Dine's hymn, 'God who sets us on a journey' and the following lines seem appropriate and relevant today. "End our longing for the old days, grant the vision that we lack – once we've started on this journey there can be no turning back"

## Church Council

These are notes from the meeting held on Tuesday 23rd February including dates of church activities:

### Circuit Mission Project:

*[On 21st February, Ann Fox explained the need to refocus our mission within the Circuit. She said that for many their hopes and dreams had been dashed by many issues in their lives, and so as a Circuit we needed to reach out, to bring hope through God's word. This was an opportunity to serve the people within our church families and out in the community, but also to review our mission plans—find out where things have changed, where God is at work in places we haven't looked before. It is a time for listening to what God is saying to us, to move forward with a new strategy and mission policy.]*

### Questions raised:

What happens now? What are our priorities? Are there any changes? Where do we go next? How shall we fulfil our Mission?

There are 9 Churches which should work together as a Circuit supporting each other. There will be a Mission & Ministry Team made up of 1 person from each church and an Away Day will be led by David Perry - Mission Enabler. Discussions will take place soon with the launch at the Circuit Pentecost Service.

**We still need to appoint a Church Representative for the Circuit Mission and Ministry Team. If you feel called to this role, please speak with Rev Steve.**

### Other Events & Dates

From **29th March** Ann Fox will lead a **Holy Week** programme based on 'The Nail', and we are considering Services for Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday. More details to follow.

**Worship: Circuit Plan** – It is hoped to re-open the church for worship on **Sunday 18 April 2021** when David Mountain will be the preacher.

*[Note: If restrictions or circumstances change it may be possible to open on Easter Sunday with Communion]*

**Online worship** – a recorded reflection will alternate fortnightly with a 'live' Zoom service every fortnight. There will be a monthly recorded District Service.

**Christians Together** – Nick Morgan from St. Marys is leading "Psalms for Life" on Mondays through Lent. **9th March**—Psalms of Penitence and **16th March**—Psalms of Redemption [see church website for details of how to access the sessions via Bramham Benefice Facebook.]

The Christian Aid Week Service will probably be held online this year.

**Annual Church Meeting: Sunday 27 June** after morning worship



**17 – 19 September 2021** – Flourish – Theme – “Rooted in Love”

Booking for this weekend is now open. **John Bell of the Iona Community** will be one of the speakers at the event, which may be booked on [Eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk). More information on the District website:

[Flourish 21 - Yorkshire North & East Methodist District \(yorkshirenemethodist.org\)](https://yorkshirenemethodist.org)

**GOD IN LOVE UNITES US**



On Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February I attended my first District Synod meeting over zoom, which had been called to discuss and vote on the resolutions approved by Conference in 2019. The resolutions were in a report of the Marriage and Relationships Task Group 2019 and referred to Circuits and local churches for review. The following account is my personal observations/ views and does not represent our own church or circuit position.

The District Churches were well represented at the meeting with over 170 attending. The District covers a wide geographical area, noting members from the Hull/Hornsea area to Pateley Bridge in North Yorkshire. I did know a few from my time in York, familiar faces like Andrew Foster (retired Chaplain from York Hospital) and David Wilkes. Sian Henderson, the District Administrator, emailed me to say that she hadn't realised that I had changed town and denomination!

The Synod representatives discussed a number of resolutions, relating to relationships and on the understanding of Marriage, but the key one was:

**The Conference consents in principle to the marriage of same-sex couples on Methodist premises throughout the Connexion and by Methodist ministers, probationers or members in so far as the law of the relevant jurisdiction permits or requires and subject to compliance with such further requirements, if any, as that law imposes.**

After discussion on the implications of this resolution, it was approved, 110 voting for, 53 against. It should be noted that this now goes back to Conference for a final decision in due course.

It is encouraging that this has been endorsed by our District, but we should recognise that there is still significant division throughout the Connexion, but no different to many other Christian denominations. If churches are to remain relevant to the wider population, we have to be more in tune with Society as a whole. Times have changed!

*Jim Murison*

**Church Property update:** *[from notes provided in Iain Vernon's report to Church Council]*

The future of our church depends very much on improving the community use of our facilities and the current phase of property work is to complete the improvements started four years ago, designed not just to improve the worship experience, but also to make our church a really attractive venue to outside organisations as well as giving us the facility to put on our own events. This falls into three main areas:-

**Car park:** We have now upgraded the car park lighting – a considerable improvement! The re-surfacing part of the project is still under discussion but we plan to complete this work by the end of the summer.

**Kitchen:** Our existing kitchen facility is in poor condition and does not meet the standards required for commercial kitchens. We have the outline design agreed and are now at the stage of obtaining quotations from contractors. I hope that we will be able to finalise this and have the work done in the Spring.

**Audio Visual System:** We are now getting alternative suppliers to quote for this upgrade and the results look very promising. Not only will we have an excellent facility for more exciting worship in the Sanctuary but will also have audio facilities in the Wesley Room. We will be able to put on film shows, concerts and other events which will bring more people into contact with our Christian fellowship.

*Iain Vernon*

## News & Comment

### Martin House Hospice Award

At the annual Market 3rd Sector Care Awards held last month, Martin House won the award for 'End of Life Care'.

**Vicki Greensmith, interim director of care said:**

We're absolutely thrilled to win this award, which recognises the dedication and excellent work of our care and bereavement teams to support families in what is the most difficult time of their lives.

The judging panel described the service as 'inspirational' and said it was particularly impressed with the leadership displayed, the impact the service has on families and the knowledge shared between organisations. It also praised the hospice for its approach in 'putting their arms around the families they support'.



**Census Day is Sunday 21st March 2021**

Look out for your invitation pack in the post. It will show you how to complete it.

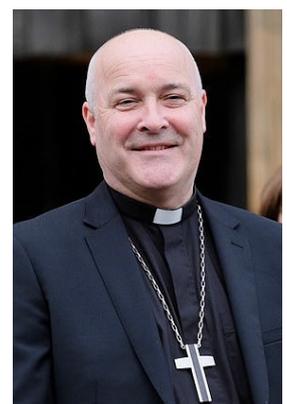
The logo for the Office for National Statistics Census 2021. It features the text 'Office for National Statistics' in a blue font above a purple horizontal bar. Below the bar, the words 'census 2021' are written in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font.

### 'Dear England' - by The Archbishop of York , The Most Revd. Stephen Cottrell

The Archbishop of York has just published a new book, '*Dear England*', with the sub-title, 'Finding Hope, Taking Heart and Changing the World'.

This week in *The Yorkshire Post*, journalist Tom Richmond features the book in conversation with the Archbishop, who hopes his book can lead to a debate about how Church and communities can be reinvigorated.

He goes on to say that he longs for us to live in a fairer world where communities are properly supported and believes that the Church has a part to play in that. It is also noted that in these times of pandemic through the transition to online church, churches have seen growth and he said, '*we need to work out what it means to be an online church as well as a physical church*'. If that bears fruit then we can all rejoice!



***'A deeply thoughtful exposition of faith's transformative power, 'Dear England' gave me hope, not only for the future of Christianity, but for a changed world too.'* - David Lammy MP**

*'Dear England' was published on 4th March and is available online or via bookshops.*