

Salford **Methodist** Circuit 



Circuit Magazine

Edition 8 - June 2021

Looking Back And Looking Forward

After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant: 'Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the River Jordan into the land I am about to give to them. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and very courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.'

Joshua Chapter 1

It's almost six years since I arrived in the Salford Circuit. I remember needing a sat nav to get to the churches, and those occasional moments of getting lost and feeling quite panicky as I tried to orientate myself in a strange environment. All of that passed, and I began to feel that streets and communities were familiar. I also remember taking a photograph at Salford Quays when coming over to meet Rev Ken Stokes a few weeks before we moved. I posted it on Facebook, saying "Not home quite yet." But I have been proud to call Salford home during these past six years. I've been happy living in Irlam. I have enjoyed becoming familiar with the different areas of the city, and wandering through the wide variety of green open spaces this city offers.

But the time is coming close to move to new streets, and communities, and open spaces. People ask me about my new appointment, so I thought I'd give you a bit of information on that. We will leave Salford on August 2nd to move to the Airedale Circuit, part of the Yorkshire West District. Although I have spent most of my life in Yorkshire, I've only had one year in West Yorkshire before when I trained as a teacher in Leeds. So it's new territory! Someone said, "you're heading back to the right side of the Pennines". I think it would be more accurate to say I'm moving right on top of them. Our new home will be high on a hill in Keighley, with views down over the town, and beyond to the surrounding countryside. So I'm guessing there will be a lot of walking up and down hills.

My role will be as Superintendent of the Airedale Circuit, which covers Silsden, Keighley and Bingley as well as the surrounding villages, 17 churches in all. I will be minister in pastoral charge of six churches, in Silsden and the villages at the north end of the circuit. The exciting bit for me is that these churches have agreed to become effectively one church, run by one church council, with one set of finances. But they will maintain all six buildings as an important presence in each community. The same thing is happening in the Keighley and Bingley sections of the circuit.

Airedale circuit is going through a similar period of change as our own circuit here. All their staff are moving on, both lay and ordained. So I will be leading a completely new team - two other ministers and four lay staff. That will no doubt present challenges of its own. I'm hoping that during August we can at least find our way around the area. It will be very different from Salford - not a motorway in sight, but probably quite a few tractors and combines at that time of year! Then from September the key task will be to get to know the people who are the church, as well as the new staff team.

After all the frustrations we've all experienced over the past year and a bit, I know that I am ready for a change. In my mind I see September as a real return to more normal patterns of life for us all. (Only time will tell if that is actually what will happen!) And so that feel likes a good time to be starting a new life in a new place among new people. That does not mean that I won't be sad to leave here. On the contrary, there will be a great deal of sadness, doing things for the last time over the coming weeks. I have felt very supported, encouraged and loved by the people of Salford. I have felt at home among you. And I believe we have achieved many positive things together. It has not been without its ups and downs, but that is the same everywhere in life of course.

Tracy and I have begun the packing process, by doing some serious decluttering. There's a lot more of that to do, but we have our removal boxes, so we can do it a bit at a time. Tracy leaves her current post at the beginning of July, and will be managing that operation while I'm still working. She hasn't yet got a job to go to, but hopes that the right post will be there for her in time.

I wish I could give you full details of the circuit farewell service for both Kim and myself, but it's still a little early to be sure what will be possible. It will happen on July 25th in the afternoon at the Height. More information will be shared as and when it's possible.

Ministry is a funny profession to be in. It's not like a job where you go in at the bottom of a staffing structure, and gradually work your way up. I know that I did some pretty intensive training before I began in ministry, but on the day I started I was definitely a raw recruit, but already fully responsible for three churches, and everyone assumed that I knew everything that needed to be done. There was a very steep learning curve. And every year since that start has been about learning. Nothing in ministry is ever predictable. No amount of training can prepare you for the experiences you encounter along the way. And you never reach the point where you are the expert at any of it. New learning, new possibilities, new experiences are constantly unfolding before you all the time. The pandemic has been a classic example of the unexpected dominating life - and it has dominated all our lives for far too long.

In all of my ministry so far, and certainly throughout this time of pandemic and lockdowns, I know I have existed in the constant, loving supportive presence of God. Paul expressed to the people of Athens, what I have discovered to be true: "In God we live and move and have our being." Acts 17: 28. There is nowhere we can hide from God, but why would we want to when God is shown again and again and again to be like the most loving, caring, and supportive of parents, and very much more beyond that: patient, restoring, encouraging, refreshing, exciting, creative, innovative, source of direction and meaning and purpose, source of hope, source of peace. I know that I have learned many things in Salford; about God, about myself, about people, about the church. And I know that I will learn even more on the next leg of the journey, and wherever that journey takes me. In God I put my trust, now and always.

Rev Clare Stainsby

What's Next?

I'm sat on a Sunday evening at the manse with such a lot to do and that feeling of I don't think I'm going to have enough time to do it. How can it be June already and in the life of ministry the last 3 months of my being stationed in the Salford Circuit. I will of course be 'sitting down' after my appointment here is completed on the 31st of August. I will have completed 8 years of a wide experience of ministry.

So many changes have happened in those 8 years, not only changes in the staff team, lay and ordained. So many changes within our churches too. Some will have been difficult changes that will have affected individuals as well as whole church families and the circuit. We have celebrated people joining together in marriage, we have had marriage blessings, we have had Baptisms and Blessings. We have shared the sadness of losing our loved ones throughout the circuit and communities but have been able to celebrate the lives of the beautiful people they have been and what they have meant to us.

We have shared this last 16 months together even although we have been apart. That has been so very painful.

Aleck and I have been very blessed when in 2013 you invited us to come back, to serve you, as I have, here in Salford. You were of course very much a part of life and my call to Local Preaching in the mid 1990's and early 2000's years as well as my call to Presbyteral Ministry so it has been quite a journey we have had together. I want to say thank you for all of the love and the support that you have given to us both and to our family.

Life will be very different as we move to our new home in Cadishead. Aleck's dad will be living a few streets away from us as will our Andrew, Hayley and Archie. Mark, Jess, Louie

and Hattie live a little further down the road in Irlam. George and Vee have now moved to Newhey and will very soon have a new addition coming to live with them – Piper – a wee Springador puppy. I am sure that our Millie our miniature labradoodle and Piper will have lots of play time together. I knew that I would be able to be more involved with my grandchildren but wee Piper will, I am sure, be coming to have a few sleepovers.

I will be noted as a Supernumerary in the Manchester Circuit, although I won't be in active ministry for some time to come.

I will continue to pray for you and for Rev John Palmer as you welcome him into the circuit and as he begins his ministry with you. He, I am sure, will be a blessing to you as you will be to him.

I will be continuing to be with you in circuit until the 31st of August so I will continue to look forward to leading worship and being with you until then.

We trust in our Lord always and forever in Jeremiah 29:11 we hear the words

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” We have been through so many joys and sorrows, this does happen in our personal as well as our church life. Try, if you can, to always remember these from Jeremiah. Maybe one day, if not now, they will speak to you - you personally. Bye for now and God bless each of you.

With Christian love and prayers, Rev Kim, Aleck and our ever growing family

Rev Kim Ratcliffe

Methodist Conference

The Methodist Conference meets in Birmingham (and virtually) from 26th June—1st July. It has a packed agenda, discussing a whole range of issues from the Theology of Safeguarding to Oversight and Trusteeship. Finance to Climate Change and of course the God In Love Unites Us report. It will also see the ordinations of new ministers.

We pray for all the members of the Conference and their conferring, including Ruth Dawson and Matt Collins.

The whole proceedings will be livestreamed on the Methodist Church Website (www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-conference/conference-2021)

Walking With Micah

Rachel Lampard, former leader of the Joint Public Issues Team, writes about the new Methodist project, *Walking with Micah*

It's hard to avoid the call to justice in the bible. I wonder what springs to mind for you? Perhaps it is the call of the prophets or the laws to protect widows, orphans and strangers. Or perhaps it's the way in which Jesus deliberately overturned the world's expectations, drawing the poorest and most marginalised into the centre. Or perhaps you are inspired by the vision of God's Kingdom.



I, along with many others, have always been stirred by the words of the prophet Micah. When asked how God wanted his people to worship, to respond to God's love, Micah replies:

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
And what does the Lord require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.

Acting justly (as God does) and loving mercy (or loving in the way that God loves) are at the heart of becoming more like God. And we learn this by walking humbly alongside God.

For Christians, therefore, acting in ways that increase justice, promote fairness and right relationship, and tackle injustice is part of our discipleship. Indeed in *the Methodist Way of Life* we are asked to reflect regularly on how we have "challenged injustice".

As Methodists we find this response to God's love through acting justly present in our tradition. John Wesley, one of Methodism's founders, was a vocal opponent of the slave trade and excoriated those who condemned the poor for being lazy without knowing or understanding them. The Tolpuddle Martyrs – many of whom were Methodist lay preachers - were early activists in the trade union movement. A disproportionate number of Methodists have served in Parliament. Sybil Phoenix OBE is one of many community activists and anti-racists. The work of All We Can, Action for Children and MHA speak powerfully of the commitment of Methodists to see justice for all people in God's world.

What does "challenging injustice" look like in your own life? Methodists are involved in responding to needs in our communities or the world, through running debt advice centres, giving to foodbanks, raising money for charities, writing to political prisoners. Sometimes we use our consumer power, through buying fairtrade bananas or avoiding excess plastic wrapping. And through our protesting, writing letters to MPs or community organising we try to change problems at their source.

But as humans we find that "justice" isn't a simple concept. Some things we can agree on

– poverty isn't good, people shouldn't face discrimination because of their ethnicity, climate change is happening. The challenges often come when we get into more detail, or try to decide how to respond. Then there are some issues where there is little agreement at all. There are Christians in all the major political parties, for example, all trying to “do justice”. We have different lenses, priorities, experiences and understandings of what justice means and looks like.

So if we truly believe that we are called to “act justly” and to be a justice-seeking Church, then how can we recover our passion for justice amidst all the pressures we face, find ways of speaking and acting together, and make justice real in our communities?

The Methodist Church has set up – **Walking with Micah: Methodist Principles for Social Justice** – to explore what it means to be a justice-seeking church. Over the next two years, I will be working to help the Methodist Church to focus on our principles and priorities for justice, and through that increase our practical ability to seek God's justice, as a Church and in our own Christian lives.

During this time I hope we can have a big conversation about justice, as we listen and learn from each other, from those experiencing injustice, and from others. What have we seen and learned about the need for justice today and during the pandemic? And what do we know from our history? How can we recover that passion for justice, and what practical tools do we need as individual and as a Church to live as a justice-seeking people of God?

To find out more about the project as it develops, watch the Methodist Justice Lecture by former Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, which launched the project, and sign up for updates about getting involved, visit www.methodist.org.uk/walking-with-micah/

Rachel Lampard

We Welcome Our New Lay Workers

We are pleased to announce that after a rigorous process we have appointed two people to join the staff team in the coming weeks:-

Janet Crozier has been appointed as Church and Community Development Worker, to be based at Boundary Road. Janet lives in Leigh, and is a member at Glazebury Methodist Church. She will be working 20 hours per week, building relationships in the community around Boundary Road, and seeking ways of using the building to offer support, to meet needs, and to explore faith.

Anne Huddleston has been appointed as Lay Pastoral Assistant, to work for 20 hours a week alongside the new minister, Rev. John Palmer, to offer pastoral care to the people of the churches of Glazebrook, Wesley, St. Paul's and Boundary Road. Anne is a member at Monton, and worked for many years at Irlam primary school, and so knows this end of the circuit well.

They will be starting on 5th July. We know that you will welcome them in their new roles, and will support them in all that they do.

Returning To Onsite Worship

As onsite worship returns across our churches, members share their reflections on what it has been like for them.

It was great to go back in the building and see it alive again. It was a different service to what I'm used to. No singing, no pre-brew or chit chat round tables. However it was amazing to partially see people with masked faces. Looking up to preacher instead of down at screen. Roll on more physical services and getting back to normal.

Kimberley Wilcox — The Height



Thanks to everyone for filming the online services but I'm afraid they were not the same as the "real thing". May 23rd had arrived. Reopening! At the end of that service I thought that was lovely, so moving. I realised I had missed it such a lot. The warmth of friendship and the power of Kim's words made me feel more relaxed and happy for the future than I had felt for a long time.

Mavis Lamb—St Pauls

I've appreciated the online services that we've shared. The Zoom chats and prayers have been helpful too but there's nothing quite as powerful as worshipping in person together. I'm so glad to be doing this again and hopefully we'll soon be welcoming new fold into our church fellowship.

Jennie Smith — The Height





Well we are back to live services. What is it like?! I have done two, one at Emmanuel and one at Monton. I would like to say that it was a wonderful experience, but for me it was very stressful. I am very apprehensive about taking services in this time. Although there is a very thoughtful and spiritual feeling, it is just not the same especially as we cannot sing hymns which give such an uplift to the congregation and preacher and in many respects it is a live version of YouTube service. Many people may feel differently and get a real sense of fellowship as they meet with fellow worshippers. I will continue to do live services and I am sure that the stress and apprehension will start to ease and I will be able to enjoy taking services as much as the congregation appreciate the preachers dedication in being able to overcome all the apprehension and be in real spiritual fellowship and being in our Lord's presence.

John Brocklehurst—Monton

Update Your Contact Details

As Clare and Kim get ready to had over to our new minister, Rev John Palmer, we need to ensure we have an up to date list of contact details for everyone in the Salford Circuit. We have made a good start, but there are still some people missing from our list.

If you receive a printed magazine and have a contact details form, please complete it and return it in the enclosed envelope. If you no longer wish to be contacted by the Salford Methodist Circuit, you can make this known on the form and we will delete your details from the list.

You can also complete the form online at www.salfordcircuit.org.uk/updatecontacts

If you receive the magazine digitally, you will also receive an email if you haven't yet updated your details.

You may have also been asked to do this by your church, if so please also update your details with the Circuit.

If we do not hear from you in the next couple of weeks, we will be required to remove your details from our contact list.

THE WEDDING AT CANA WORD SEARCH



BiblePuzzles.org.uk

BRIDEGROOM

CANA

DISCIPLES

FEAST

GALILEE

JESUS

MARRIAGE

MARY

MASTER

MIRACLE

MOTHER

SERVANTS

STONE

WATERPOTS

WEDDING

WINE

The Next Edition of the Circuit Magazine

The next edition of the Circuit Magazine will be published at the end of July, and we are always looking for items to include. It could be a prayer, a poem, a photo, a story, or news about an organisation or project you are involved with.

Please send any items for consideration to me; my contact details are on the back page. Please include details of where you got it from. Thank you!

Matt Collins

Worship In the Salford Circuit

Our churches are now reopening for onsite worship, following all the guidelines from the government and the Methodist Church. Currently there is no requirement to book to come to the onsite worship.

We are aware that some people may still not feel comfortable returning to a church just yet, and so we will be continuing the online worship at 10am each Sunday for the foreseeable future.

To find the details of the Sunday Worship, visit www.salfordcircuit.org.uk/worship

We also continue to offer the service on DVD for free each week for those unable to access it online. We try to get these out in time so that you can watch along on a Sunday morning. If you, or someone you know, would like to receive a DVD, please contact Matt Collins (details on the back page).



		June 27th	July 4th	July 11th	July 18th	July 25th	August 1st
Online	10am	Rev Stainsby	Rev Ratcliffe	Brocklehurst	Rev Stainsby	Leaving Service	Rev Ratcliffe
Emmanuel	11:15am	G & A Allen	CofE Clergy	Rev Stainsby	CofE Clergy	No Service	CofE Clergy
Monton	10:45am	Brocklehurst	Rev Ratcliffe	B. Barratt	Dawson	No Service	B. Barratt
Height	10:45am	No Service	Rev Stainsby	Huddleston	Rev Stainsby	Circuit Service	Rev Ratcliffe
B. Road	10:45am	Rev Stainsby	G. Allen	Rev Stainsby (3pm)	Wilson	No Service	C. Barratt
St Paul's	10am	No Service	Shepherd	Rev Stainsby	Rev Ratcliffe	No Service	Huddleston
Wesley	10:30am	Rev Ratcliffe	Wilson	Klu	Brocklehurst	No Service	LA
Glazebrook	10am	No Service	Brocklehurst	Rev Ratcliffe	C. Barratt	No Service	Klu



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