



# SPRING NEWSLETTER

2026



## Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

I was taken aback, as my sister declared “Well with Nathan being your favourite.” “What!” I exclaimed. “Well, he is the eldest” my sister continued. I replied, “Nathan may be the eldest, but I love all three of my children equally but differently”. Not unlike the churches in the Circuit! All different, each with their own idiosyncrasies, amazing people and wonderful attributes.

My family is not perfect, nobody’s is, but we try to be there for one another, in the challenges and celebrations of life. When Nathan graduated at Leeds, both Joshua and Iona came along to the graduation, easy for all concerned, one carload from the same destination. When Joshua [Hull] and Iona [Newcastle] graduated, I wasn’t sure if everyone would be able to make it, with the travel and other commitments. They did! For Iona’s graduation, her two brothers took time off from work, Nathan travelling from London and Joshua driving from Macclesfield. Regardless of the time, effort and expense, they wanted to support and celebrate their sister’s graduation. Now that they are scattered, they even organise “sibling weekends!” between them and their partners.

The Circuit is in many ways a family, a church body, a team. Though Dunston Hill church will be sold in due course do we all share in the thankfulness of that congregation’s witness over the years? Do we rejoice that the ministry of Unity church [Ravensworth Road and Dunston Hill combined] is reaching out to the local school, engaging with the nearby Care home, continuing its mission? Do we pray that Spoor will get its much-needed ramp as the women’s meeting continues to attract more members who filter into worship? Did we notice the positive comments on Facebook about Centenary’s community presence in Crawcrook? Are we celebrating that SRMC has increasing numbers of worshippers, and cheering that growth on? Are we working together as a family, or misjudging favouritism? In other words, are we willing to make the effort to attend each church’s graduation?

Not only should we “carry each other’s burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ, [Galatians 6:2] but we should also celebrate each other’s successes and so give thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Another saying which you have heard from me before, is this “Together Everyone Achieves More =TEAM”. May we all be team players across the circuit to God’s glory and praise.

With every good wish.

*Rev Janet Capstick*



### EASTER PRAYER

Glory to you O God,  
The vacant cross  
and empty tomb  
show us that the love  
which suffers  
is the love that saves.  
So fill your people  
with joy this  
Easter Day,  
that all may know  
that your Son Jesus  
is not a dead hero  
we commemorate  
but the living Lord  
we worship.  
AMEN  
Source unknown

**Happy Easter  
to one  
and all!**



## My Sabbatical

Dear Friends ,

I am very grateful for the first 6 weeks of my sabbatical, where I went on retreat, walked and read a lot. I am hoping to put what I have learned into practice in the next 6 weeks.

In a nutshell, my sabbatical focused on encouraging people to use the word "death" and talk about our mortality more, so that we appreciate every day of our lives. One of the ways to initiate that conversation is to consider decluttering / death cleaning. See the book by Margareta Magnusson The gentle art of Swedish death Cleaning. With a lighter load maybe we can enjoy life more freely.

I have pulled together a few thoughts if anyone is interested in receiving them please contact Margaret Hall who will pass them on.

Thanks again. Janet



Happy  
Easter !!!  
...



## Ecumenical Schools Work

A highlight of my work over the past couple of years has been working with ecumenical teams to undertake schools work in Ryton, Crawcrook and Greenside.

I work with two different teams.

One team, is a Ryton team, formed with members from Holy Cross. I created the team to run Prayer Spaces at Ryton Juniors. It has been wonderful working together, mirrors other joint projects that happen in Ryton and has given us a greater number of volunteers to make this work happen.

The second team, is in Crawcrook and Greenside with members from Greenside Parish church. We run Open the Book and Prayers Spaces together and it was an established team that I joined. Joining the team was such a positive step as working together has strengthen our schools work and created better link to what we do.

Sam Cree  
Circuit Youth & Family Worker

(Photo-some of the Prayer Spaces team at Emmaville School in Crawcrook)



At Centenary on a fortnightly basis our Schoolroom is hired by MHA and we hold a Singing for the Brain afternoon in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Society. The session is well supported by members of the church, alongside others in the community, including local care homes. The sessions usually have a theme each fortnight and members contribute to the choice of songs too. It's good to share the afternoon with all and we go home with our spirits lifted and our brain exercised that little bit more too. Each session is ended with coffee, cake and a bit more chat before the journey home. We're not a choir just friends having a bit of a singalong in a safe environment. Why not come and join us one Friday and see what you think? The first session is free and after that it's just £3.50 per session with carers going free each time.

We're delighted that, as a result of our sessions we have been asked about giving an Easter service at one of the local care homes. Rev Jenny Gill, who is MHA Chaplain and also one of our volunteers, will be leading this service during Holy Week, representing MHA and Centenary Methodist

We will also be continuing our Coffee, Cake and Chat mornings in 2026. These are very well supported by the community. We have also booked in 4 Afternoon Teas - these have proved very popular in previous years on occasions such as the King's Coronation etc. One is booked in as part of our Harvest celebrations on 10 October and on 21 November the Afternoon Tea will be followed with a concert by the Ryton Singers. All are welcome at any of these events.

Christine



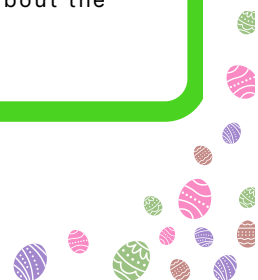
We hope to welcome in September Rev Joseph Musiyiwa, and his family from Zimbabwe.

Joseph will be joined by his wife Prisca, daughter Nyasha (18) and son Kudzwai (7).

Brigitta and I along with a couple of Circuit Stewards have already shared in a warm conversation on zoom, with no doubt more to follow.

Please hold all the family in your prayers as they make this huge transition. The day we spoke the temperature was 23 degrees in Zimbabwe and 3 degrees in Ryton!!

I told him we always talk about the weather in the UK!!



## Circuit Meeting Summary held 17th March, 7pm at Fellside

**District Mission plan** - Janet thanked all Churches for responding to the District Mission plan. Following the Circuit Away Day, William Gray addressed the meeting giving feedback on the District Mission Plan and discussed restructuring Dreaming Dreams proposal into a Circuit Mission Resource Team to address District feedback on the pastoral support role. Neil Cockling raised concerns that circuit vision should extend beyond existing churches to address mission gaps in areas like Dunston Hill and Sunnyside, emphasizing need for new congregations rather than focusing solely on existing buildings. Janet noted the importance of asking how churches can contribute to the circuit, not just receive support. Circuit Mission Resource Team proposal to be developed further.

**“Try Praying” booklet** Janet explained how this booklet initiative could work in the circuit. Circuit proposed each church apply for 100 copies to receive a free banner; implementation over two consecutive Sundays (use booklet personally first week, share second week). Circuit-wide outreach planned during the Way Weekend in Rowlands Gill. Circuit encourages participation; churches to apply for booklets individually, with circuit funds covering the cost. See <https://do.trypraying.org/> for further information

**Stationing update** - Rev Joseph Musiyewa will take pastoral charge of Burnopfield, Centenary, Greenside Café Church and Whitehall Road in September 2026. A zoom meeting is taking place on Thursday 19 th March to arrange a virtual visit.

**Circuit Stewards report** - Lyn Cookson told the meeting that the focus now was to get ready for Joseph and his family to join the circuit. The meeting was asked to keep the family in their prayers.

**Worship and Local Preachers report** - Simon Zwolinsky has been approved to become a fully accredited

Local Preacher. His service of admission is 19th April at SRMC Rowlands Gill.

**Safeguarding report** - A new safeguarding policy was received and signed by the meeting and key points were highlighted and an audit will need to take place within each church later this year.

**Sabbaticals** - Janet will take the second part of her sabbatical from 15th June onwards. Dave’s sabbatical starts 13th April to 13th July 26. Four supernumeraries have offered to help cover preaching appointments and there will be one minister always covering in the summer.

**Rev Janet’s leaving service** will be held on Sunday 14th June, 4pm at SRMC, Rowlands Gill.

**Stephen Lindridge** - In acknowledgement that Rev Stephen Lindridge was doing more than his allocated 0.5 appointment, the Circuit meeting felt it was appropriate to acknowledge this increase of hours in both time and stipend, moving him to a 0.75 appointment. This proposal was passed.

**Security Cameras** - Circuit has agreed to install security cameras at Barmoor manse after Janet and Trevor reported their car has been vandalised three times.

**Circuit Property Mission Secretary** - Lyn Cookson volunteered to do this role.

**Grant** - William will resubmit the “Dreaming Dreams” grant at the start of June, and the working party will look to repackage the application differently and there will be no additional spending beyond previous approval.

**24/7 Prayer Networks** Dave Charter discussed the 247 Prayer Network events that are taking place all over the world for global peace. Dave gave an invitation to everyone to join in these meetings using the global peace prayer. Resources are available for public online.

**Spoor Ramp** - John Blundred discussed the ramp at Spoor. It has taken 8 months but finally in the last week permission was granted from Gateshead Council to go ahead. The total project cost will be £55,000 (ramp £30k, tea station £3k, chairlift £10k, door £8k, legal fees) and this quote is valid for three months.

**Zoom praying around the circuit** - The Thursday 9am zoom prayers for the Circuit, is in the process of being reviewed Janet asked if every church could hold their own prayer group once a month, especially in response to the Try Praying initiative.

**Embroidery Exhibition at Whitehall Road Methodist Church** on 24th & 25th April. This is the history of

Methodism in embroidery. Christine told the meeting that this is an interesting event and encouraged everyone to attend.

**Date of next meeting Thursday 11th June, 7pm at Spoor**



## EASTER 2026 SERVICES & EVENTS

### Blaydon Methodist Church

- **Easter Sunday 5th April** Service at 11:15am - Mrs J Winton

### Burnopfield

- **Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April** at 10 am we have the walk of witness from the Anglican church to Burnopfield Methodist Church calling at gospel fellowship for a hymn. This involves carrying the cross. After the service hot cross buns and refreshments are served.
- **Easter Sunday 5th April** Service at 10:30am - Mrs R Blundred

### Centenary Methodist Church

- **Maundy Thursday 2nd April** Service at 7pm - Rev J Capstick
- **Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April** Service at 10am - Mrs A Lancaster
- **Easter Sunday 5th April** Service at 10:30am - Rev J Capstick, Communion
- **Easter Sunday 5th April** Service by Phone at 6pm - Rev D Charter

### Fellside Methodist Church

- **Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April** Service at 11am Mr S & Mrs K Zwolinsky
- **Easter Sunday 5th April** Service 11am - Rev B Steele, Communion
- **Easter Sunday 5th April** Service 6:15pm - Rev B Steele, Communion

### Ryton Methodist Church

- **Easter Sunday 5th April** Service at 10am - Rev D Charter, Communion

### Spoor Methodist Church

- **Maundy Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April** Communion at 6pm - Rev Dave Charter.
- **Easter Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April** Service at 10:30am Mrs A Lancaster

### Strathmore Road Methodist Church - Chopwell & Rowlands Gill

- **Maundy Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April** Service at 7.30am with washing the feet - Rev Dr S Lindridge
- **Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April** Traditional style worship with separate provision for children at 10.30am - Rev Dr S Lindridge
- **Easter Sunday 5th April**
  - **Chopwell** - Sunrise Service at 6:30am - Rev Dr S Lindridge
  - **Rowlands Gill** - United Service at 10:45am - Rev Dr S Lindridge Communion
  - **Rowlands Gill** - Service at 6pm - Rev Dr S Lindridge Communion

### Unity - Ravensworth Road

- **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March** 7.30pm Rev. Wood-Archer
- **Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March** 7.30pm Mrs J Douthwaite
- **Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April** 7.30pm Mr J Simpson
- **Maundy Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April** 7.30pm Rev B Steele, Communion
- **Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April** walk of witness starting at Dunston Hill 10am to service at Ravensworth Rd at 10.30am - Rev B Steele

### Unity - Dunston Hill

- **Easter Sunday 5th April** All Age Worship Service at 10:30am Rev Dr N Cockling, Communion

### Whitehall Road Methodist Church

- **Easter Sunday 5th April** Service at 9:30am - Rev B Steele, Communion



Risen Christ,  
As we greet the light of Easter,  
renew your Church in hope.  
Where our congregations feel tired,  
breathe your Spirit of courage.  
Where we are growing,  
guide us with wisdom and grace.  
Where our communities carry sorrow,  
let your compassion rise among us.  
Make our circuit a place where  
resurrection is seen in everyday kindness,  
in faithful service, in justice sought,  
and in joy shared.  
Strengthen us to follow you with  
open hearts and willing hands,  
so that your risen life may be  
known in every chapel, every home,  
and every street we serve.  
In your name we pray.

**Amen.**  
(Unknown)



# EASTER

