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The Methodist Church / The United Reformed Church
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December 2015
Dear Friends,

Being Christian in Britain these days is getting harder I find. Society is changing so fast, the church is still not used to changing itself as quick. Most people have installed a new bathroom or kitchen, adjusted to divorce, re-marriage, and open gay relationships much quicker and easier than the church finds it to re-think its faith, the way we worship, and how we engage with people.

I find this focussed no less at Christmas. We had a fascinating conversation at a Congregational meeting recently thinking about Christmas worship: Who is it for? Visitors who don’t come very often, and expect something ‘traditional’ at Christmas? Or faithful regular worshippers who want and need to engage with the Christmas stories and music in worship in contemporary ways like we try to throughout the year, but don’t appeal to visitors.

Even the way we read the Bible at Christmas leads us to different approaches. For some, the nativity story is one, factual account of the birth of Jesus. Others read it as two very different stories, with Roman and Jewish politics going on that we miss most of the time, an intelligent reading sees depths in the story that the primary nativity school production is not aware of.

To many others, Christmas is a midwinter holiday, a time for feasting and drinking, seeing family, and focussing on the children. Others can’t be bothered with it - I once knew a man who left his family for Christmas and rented a small flat in Scarborough over Christmas every year to escape it all!

Like Dr Who being aware of so much pain and struggle, suffering and infinite possibilities in the time space continuum, it hurts him; I too find holding all these differences so hard I feel like bursting at times. I know what I believe about the Bible, how and why it was written, and what the stories mean. Not many people agree with me, and some feel threatened by my understanding, yet I have not always understood and believed in the way I do now.

So what shall I write as your minister?

What pearls of wisdom can I find?
How shall I lead a flock that is rightly and proudly a ‘broad church’?

I try to keep listening, I try to keep understanding without judgement, and to pray; yet I also try and speak a prophetic voice, for I believe that is my gift, my vocation, and my job — I am personally captivated by God.

Three things.

Firstly, it’s all about Jesus. This is and has got to be our one and only priority.

My second and third reflections weave together. How we grow and celebrate our own faith ‘within the fellowship of the Church’, and how we engage in evangelism and mission with those ‘outside or on the edge’ can and must go together I think. To think only of ourselves is surely selfish and not very Christian spirited? Yet as one who loves retreats and quiet times, I know I need to feed my own spirit and soul. To only ‘put on what people want’ is cheap and lacking in integrity, we’re not a business that’s customer led!

The gospels that the Christmas story/stories are about walking alongside Jesus, or realising he walks alongside us. So let us continue to try, difficult though it may be, with integrity, intelligence, passion, and love, to focus on our top priority - Jesus.

Christchurch Comings and Goings

Deaths: We are sad to announce the death of Rev. Keith Parsons at Glen Rosa. Our love and prayers are with his daughter Helen.

We welcome Carol and Mike Gittings who have come to live in Gargrave.
We wish them much happiness in their new home.

Please continue to pray for people in special circumstances and let the Pastoral Team know of any new concerns.
Please keep your directory up to date by noting down the comings and goings.

A huge "Thankyou" to everybody for their cards, phone calls, visits, prayers, food and messages after my still unexplained accident. It was very comforting to know and feel the love of the Christchurch family.

Val Appleton
Monthly Roar
October was a busy month at Dan’s Den, with admission numbers on the increase as the cold weather drew in. During half term, we were really busy - a great refuge during the rainy autumn days.

Christine Henney has started a regular Thursday morning craft session called Happy Hands, which helps children develop a caring and positive attitude while they produce lovely craft. Christine also continues to chat and engage with parents and children – a very practical example of the church’s Listening Year in action. Also, there is an on-going exclusive booking for LS29, a group for families who have children with additional needs. It is on Tuesday evenings, 4-6pm. Do you think you would like to help Christine run this event?

A new Lego Club has opened on Wednesdays after school – thanks for all the donated Lego.

Jeannie Buckroyd and Wendy Mann ran Alpha during October and November and built a lovely group of people exploring the Christian faith.

We now have Ilkley Chat calendars for sale at the Den! If you buy yours from Dan’s Den we get 100% of the proceeds. (Bought elsewhere the proceeds are split between ourselves and the Clarke Foley Centre)

In November, it was decided to close at 1pm for exclusive party bookings on Saturdays, as numbers in the afternoons were low, and lots of people were enquiring about exclusive party packages. An exclusive package is when the party children get the whole soft play to themselves. Other parties take place while the soft play is open to the public, but the children have their party food in the upstairs room that overlooks the soft play area.

Churches Together in Ilkley

Sunday 5th December, 3:00pm
CTI and Ilkley Parish Council Carol Concert at the Bandstand, led by Rev Steve Proudlove of All Saints’ Church, with Carols, readings and other contributions from local school choirs and musicians.

Sunday 24th January
Evening service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at Ilkley Baptist Church led by St Margaret’s Church.
What's with all the “begats”? Do you skip over the genealogies when you read through the Bible? If so, you’re not alone. These long lists of names (in The Book of Genesis or Matthew’s or Luke’s gospel) usually joined by the famous “begat” in the King James Version or “became the father of” in other translations, often seem like tedious interruptions to otherwise riveting stories.

I like to think of myself as “a bit of a genealogist” – I’ve a family tree that has at least one line back to the 1600’s. The leaves on my branches have become more than just names as I’ve discovered more about them – where they were born and lived, their professions (a lot of “ag labs” and even a prison conviction!).

My ancestors have made me who/what I am. The “begats” tell us more about people critical to our faith. Within every genealogy is a story, a claim of identity, an answer to the question, “Who are you?” The next time you encounter a genealogy in the Bible, dwell on it awhile. You may find a new story lurking behind those names.

And if you are interested in a good read (700 pages!) with genealogy thrown in, try reading “Roots” by Alex Haley. It follows several generations of one family from Africa, through slavery then freedom,
News from URC Synod
The Yorkshire Synod of the URC met in St Columba’s Headingley on 10 October. Highlights were:

Rev Kevin Watson reminded us that we should ask not ‘What would Jesus do?’ but rather ‘What is Jesus doing?’ He spoke of the need for us to be constrained by our earthly resources. Instead, knowing God is what is important.

Rev Dr Janet Tollington, lecturer from Westminster College, led us in Bible Study on Numbers 11 where the Israelites were in the desert journeying to the promised land but complaining about the provision God made for them. We learnt how we should be careful what we ask God for!

We heard from Beverley Gilbert, the Children and Families Worker, about what happens at St Andrew’s Roundhay and how their activities have been broadened to provide something for every age group.

Chris Cranwick who has spent two years finding out what work the 99 URC churches in Yorkshire are doing with children and young people, spoke of his findings. His recommendations for how the Synod should develop this work were received.

Simon Loveitt, Church Related Community Worker, spoke about work on the Manor Estate in Sheffield where the church is involved with wider community groups arranging food banks, skips to help people dispose of rubbish and avoid fly tipping, and organising trips to the coast for needy families.

We heard about Silcoates School, Wakefield, which has its roots in the Congregational Church and where the URC has provided a chaplain for two years.

Synod is to respond to the General Secretary of the URC by 31 March 2016 on the resolution to allow local churches to host Equal Marriages should they so wish.
Some dates for our diaries looking to next year are:

23 April 2016 – The annual Elders’ conference will be held at St Andrew’s Roundhay on Saturday 23 April 2016 on the theme of discipleship. This is open to our trustees and will include guest speakers and opportunity for discussion.

11 May 2016 – The annual Yorkshire Assembly will be held in Scarborough. A good day out with speakers, worship and cream tea and open to all.

10 September 2016 – The Yorkshire Synod plans to take over Flamingo Land for the day. A reduced priced of admission of £20 per person has been negotiated. Why not invite your friends and family? The event is not just aimed at young people or families but is for all.

Worship News
We're highlighting St Andrew's day this year - continuing our UK Saints series. November 29th will see Michael Hardstaffe leading 10:30am worship on St Andrew followed by a lunch. Tickets at £6 are available in the Café.

The Gift services on December 13th will see a slight change this year. We are thinking of children in the Middle East whose Christmas may well be a difficult time. We are asking you - if you are able - to donate money which will be sent via 'Embrace the Middle East' for children-centred projects. The 10:30am worship will be led by Fiona Kendall. After this we are to go carol singing at Ilkley Rugby Club again!

December 20th offers us three services- Online@9 carol service will be followed by 10:30am worship led by Rev Rob Hilton using some newer worship material for Christmas. Our annual Carol Service will be at 6:00pm.

Christmas Eve offers a Christingle service at 4:00pm and Midnight Communion at 11:30pm.

On Christmas Day Rev Rob Hilton will lead the all age worship at 10:00am.

On 27th December there will be no services at Christchurch - we are invited to worship at Ben Rhydding Methodist Church.

We hope that you will be able to join us for some of the time over this period.
Financial Update
A summary of our financial activities for the year to 5th April 2015 and fund balances at that date is set out on the opposite page. The overall surplus of £37,232 includes a small deficit of £498 on the General Fund (the Fund to which income from offerings, room hire etc. is put and day-to-day expenditure met).

This result is a significant improvement in the General Fund position when compared to the deficit budget for the year, but it must be borne in mind that it was due mainly to the generosity of members and others in their giving to Christchurch through one-off donations.

Significant grants from funding bodies, as well as donations from individuals and others, and income from fund raising activities, were received towards the Dan’s Den Project. These contributed to the overall surplus.

So we are currently on a sound financial footing and our gratitude is due to all those whose giving has contributed to this.

However, we have a General Fund budget deficit of £18,500 for the current year. A major factor in determining the extent to which this materialises is our regular giving and the level of donations received over and above the provision in the budget. The latest forecast of income from offerings indicates there will be a shortfall of £3,000 for the year compared with the budget figure of £122,000. So at present it looks as though the budget deficit will materialise. This would, however, be covered by Reserves.

It will not, however, be sustainable in 2016/17 or in future years so we face a number of challenges when compiling budgets for these years.

One of them is demographic change and the reduced amount of time people have, or are willing or able to give to volunteering. This is already having an impact on the Café, which made a loss of some £8,000 last year after paying its budgeted contribution to the General Fund. We may well have to pay people for more jobs presently carried out by volunteers if the necessary skills and time commitments are not available. We therefore need to increase our giving and find other income streams. Income from offerings has been static at around £120,000 over the last four years. In the absence of increased income the Trustees will need to look at our current levels of expenditure and some unpalatable decisions taken which would impact on our Mission.
Summary of financial activities-year ended 5 April 2015

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<tr>
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<th>2015</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Offerings</td>
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<td>Gift aid</td>
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<td>Grant's donations and fund raising</td>
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<td>Legacies</td>
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<td>Room hire</td>
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<td>Café</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
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<td>£5,911</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>£514,273</td>
<td>£523,917</td>
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|                        |         |         |
| **Expenditure**        |         |         |
| Circuit Assessment     | £83,969 | £80,731 |
| Staffing costs (including café) | £124,988 | £101,108 |
| Property and equipment costs | £198,619 | £213,412 |
| Cafe provisions        | £38,787 | £39,375 |
| Charitable giving      | £17,500 | £18,600 |
| Other expenditure      | £13,178 | £15,405 |
| **Total expenditure**  | £477,041| £468,631|

|                        |         |         |
| **Surplus**            | £37,232 | £55,286 |

|                        |         |         |
| **Fund balances at 5 April** |         |         |
| General Fund           | £109,190| £109,687|
| Café                   | £13,024 | £21,058 |
| Dan's Den Fund         | £152,532| £62,242 |
| Roof Fund              |         | £43,658 |
| Major Expenditure Fund | £20,348 | £20,289 |
| Legacy Fund            | £6,043  | £6,043  |
| Other Designated Funds | £3,267  | £4,195  |
| **Total Funds**        | £304,404| £267,172|

This is a summary of the accounts approved by the Trustees on the 30th September 2015. The full Financial Statements and Annual Report are available from me.
The next invitation – thank you for your interest in asking about the progress of Alastair and Catherine Rundle’s ministry – here’s an update:

Well over a year ago now, a group of friends and neighbours gathered in Alastair and Catherine’s Westlake apartment to fill it with worship, one last time. It was their final night in Los Angeles, and their melodies reverberated through the kitchen like a litany to the Lord. ‘Thank you for bringing us here. Thank you for meeting us here. Thank you for changing us here. Thank you for changing others through us. Here.’

(I will let Alastair and Catherine take up the story):

‘A newer friend and ministry partner led the song circle. Born and raised in Los Angeles, he has a mantle upon his life for prayer and revival in the City of Angels, and all year as our sabbatical drew nearer he kept saying, “You must come back to LA. You must come back.” That last night however, he turned to us, eyes aglow with the Spirit, and said, “You are released. I hear God saying, ‘You are released.’”

Alastair and I did not speak of this for months. As advised, we allowed our first quarter of sabbatical to be full of family and full of listening. And once we did allow ourselves to finally turn our conversation toward the future, though we each hear from God in quite different ways, we had heard exactly the same thing: Jesus was inviting us into a new season from a different vantage point. We now understood that our friend’s words were heralding a larger invitation from the Lord—to launch from our years of “on the ground” inner city ministry into a more strategic, equipping role—one with an aerial view. This was very exciting and slightly terrifying. After all, we have spent our entire married lives—eighteen years—living among the poor. What would this new placement
Within a week of our private conversation, we received a phone call from a leader in our missions organization, Church Resource Ministries (CRM). He oversees a team that is devoted to catalyzing disciple making movements in cities around the world; though his team is seeing great success in cities in the Middle East (meaning new disciples made), contextualizing these methods for cities in the West is proving difficult. Knowing our experience among the urban poor and our passion to see holistic city-wide transformation, he asked us to pray about joining his team. As we did, we heard Jesus say, “Yes,” and therefore, so have we.

Our new team, Accelerate, is still within CRM, but saying “Yes” to Accelerate meant transitioning out of InnerCHANGE. We spent much of the spring communicating with leaders and former teammates, expressing our gratitude so that we might leave a wake of blessing rather than miscommunication. We also returned to Los Angeles to spend time with friends and neighbours, some of whom have already visited us here in Redding and more who promise to. Which leads us to the final major logistic of this next season—we will be remaining in Redding (northern California)!

Since Accelerate operates as a network of ministry practitioners in cities throughout the world, our ministry will be rooted locally but with a growing global reach. And though Los Angeles will always be a part of

Christmas Lunch at Emmandjay
We are delighted to have received an offer from the manager at Leconfield House to cook Christmas dinner for us this year!!
If you will be on your own, or know those who are likely to be, on Christmas Day, and would like to join us for lunch, please let me know by 4th December.

Emmandjay Court proved to be a very suitable venue in 2013 and a mix of residents and those from the community and Christchurch attended. A good time was had by all – I look forward to receiving your names!!

By the time you read this, I hope that you will have spotted the news in the weekly notices and the list will be growing!
From Tapes to Discs
After several years of ‘if only’ Christchurch can at last say that Sunday’s 10.30am services will, in the not too distant future, be recorded onto compact disc rather than the current thoroughly outdated audio tape.

The technical advantages of this progression into the 21st Century have been quite obvious for some time eg. better quality reproduction without distortion caused by the age or condition of the tape, no need to switch to the other side to complete the service, less need for storage space. Although no firm decision has, as yet, been reached, it is likely that once received and played, the discs can be either retained, loaned out or disposed of according to the wish of the recipient.

From a pastoral point of view, it is hoped this transition will also lead to more people taking advantage of the recordings than is currently the case.

Whilst at the present time the equipment is to hand, there is an acknowledged need for technicians to be trained in its use and the somewhat amended recording and distribution protocol established.

In recognition that not everyone will have a CD player, I would be pleased to hear from anyone who has a spare one that they would be prepared to loan out when the new system gets under way.
Orchestral Musings
An orchestra, playing a symphony:
Many different instruments of all shapes and sizes.
Some loud – the French horn, the drums,
Others softer – the flutes, the glockenspiel.
Some have a large part to play – the violins for example barely seem to rest,
Others wait carefully to play their small but essential part.
The melody is passed from one set of instruments to another, from the strings to the woodwind, from the woodwind to the brass, no one group has it all the time.
Some instruments seem to be always in the background, supporting the more dominant ones.
Deep notes, high notes, melody, harmony – all play their part in the richness of the whole.
The sweetest music will be played when each instrument follows faithfully the part it has to play, not being distracted by those around it, or wishing for a bigger or smaller part.
What is most important of all is that each instrument is aware at all times of the conductor’s guidance, keeping in time with his leading, and thus knowing when to slow down or speed up, when to play more loudly or softly, when to begin and when to be silent.
And so it is with us – what is important is to faithfully play the part we have been given, to play as well as we can, whether in the foreground or in the background, whether big or small, or loud or quiet, and to

A musical director wasn’t happy with the performance of one of the percussionists. Repeated attempts to get the drummer to improve failed. Finally, in front of the orchestra, the director cried in frustration,
"When a musician can’t handle their instrument, they give him two sticks and make him a drummer!"
A whisper was heard from the percussion section:
"And if he can’t handle that, they remove one of his sticks and make him a conductor!"
Christchurch Online Calendar
To get your event or activity onto the Weekly Notices or the 'Month' page in Wider Horizons, please ensure it gets onto our website Calendar - and this happens once you've passed on details to Steve Amos.

So, if you have a programme or meeting schedule for next term (or for the year), even if it is only start and end dates, then please let me know as soon as possible, so that everyone else can know! Many thanks.

Steve Amos

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Christmas Concert
7:00pm Saturday 19th December

Liz Frankland — Soprano
Peter Reasebeck — Accompanist
Askwith Primary & Bilton Primary School Choirs
Desiree & Sabrina Caspers Frankel — Piano Duet

2016 Christchurch Calendar
Sales of the Christchurch Calendar (£5 each) are going well, but stock is still available.

It contains a wonderful selection of photographs taken by members of Christchurch.
Proceeds will be shared between church funds and Parkinson's UK.

What's Christmas
Come 'Inside Christmas' at Christchurch, a walk through the stories, scenes and experiences to discover what is actually in the Bible, what the myths mean, what has been added over time and what the stories really say about Jesus.
December at Christchurch
All our regular weekly activities continue as usual with the
Christchurch Café open each weekday from 10:00am until
4:00pm, and on Saturday from 10:00am until 14:30pm.

Continuing activities most weeks are:
Sunday – Two morning services at 9:00am and 10:30am
Sunday – Scope Youth Group at 7:30pm
Monday – Toddlers at 9:45am
Tuesday – Music Movers, Welcomers & Meditation
Tuesday – Alpha Course in Dan’s Den at 10:15am
Wednesday – Wizards, Welcomers & Wednesday Fellowship
Thursday – Prayer Fellowship & Welcomers
Friday – Pause For Thought at 10:30am
Friday – Jigsaw Fellowship at 6:00pm & Badminton at IGS

Week Beginning 29 November
Housegroup Week
Sunday – Fair Trade Stall between services
Sunday – Abbeyfield Service at 5:30pm

Week Beginning 06 December
Sunday – Fairtrade Stall
Friday – Wider Horizons for January 2016 published

Week Beginning 13 December
Housegroup Week
Sunday – Carols at the Rugby Club (after the Gift Service)
Sunday – Circuit Service at 6:00pm (at Christchurch)
Sunday – Melting Pot, 8:00pm in the Café

Week Beginning 20 December
Most activities, except the Café, have ‘closed’ for Christmas
Sunday – Contemporary Carols at 9:00am, Traditional at 6:30pm
Thursday – Café closes at 12:00noon (until Monday 04 January)
Thursday – 11:30pm Midnight Service
Friday – Family Christmas Service at 10:00am

Week Beginning 27 December
Christchurch closed all week – reopens Sunday 03 January 2016
Sunday – Morning Worship at Ben Rhydding at 10:30am
## WORSHIP AT CHRISTCHURCH
### December 2015

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<th></th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>13th</th>
<th>20th</th>
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<th>27th</th>
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<tr>
<td>10:30am</td>
<td><strong>Rev Rob Hilton</strong>&lt;br&gt;Includes Holy Communion</td>
<td><strong>Ms Fiona Kendall</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Gift Service</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rev Rob Hilton</strong></td>
<td><strong>24th</strong>&lt;br&gt;4:00pm Christingle&lt;br&gt;11:30pm Includes Holy Communion&lt;br&gt;<strong>25th</strong>&lt;br&gt;10:00am</td>
<td><strong>At Ben Rhydding</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6:00pm Circuit service at Christchurch</td>
<td><strong>Rev Rob Hilton</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Carol Service</strong></td>
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### Pause for Thought service each Friday at 10:30am
- A 20 minute time of reflection

- **4th** — Rev Dr John Morgan-Wynne,
- **11th** — Rev Rob Hilton,
- **18th** — Rev Dick Watson,
- **25th** — No Service,
- **1st January** — No Service

### Wednesday Fellowship Programme
- Meeting every Wednesday at 2:00pm

- December 2nd — **Yeadon Handbell Ringers**
- December 9th — **Christmas Party**

**Happy Christmas Everyone!**

The Fellowship resumes on January 20th 2016

### Need a Room?
If you would like to book one of our rooms please contact Val Worrall our booking secretary. Val is in the office on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings (01943 603209) or contactable via

### The deadline for the January 2016 edition of Wider Horizons is 1st December.
Items (maximum 350 words) preferably by email, please, as an MS Word attachment to both:

- Mike Fawcett ([office@christchurchilkley.org.uk](mailto:office@christchurchilkley.org.uk))
- Steve Amos ([steve.amos.gb@gmail.com](mailto:steve.amos.gb@gmail.com))