

-io Ashbourne Methodist One Church Circuit

Ashbourne, Brailsford, Kniveton, Kirk Ireton,
Tissington, Parwich, Milldale.



Ashgate hospice Tree of Life

Connections August 2026

Dear Lord,

I've been behaving
myself quite well
this morning.

No grumbling.
No fussing.
No impatience.
No unnecessary
opinions shared.

Honestly, I'm feeling
pretty proud of myself.

Of course, I've only
been awake for about
ten minutes.

The real challenge
starts when I leave
the house.

Please stay close.

Amen.



Dear friends in the Ashbourne One Church Circuit and further afield

I want to start by thanking all those who have contacted me following the recent re-invitation process. It is unlike a review in any other working role and slightly strange knowing that conversations are happening about you. I am grateful to the Circuit Invitation Committee for all their work and especially the pastoral support from the circuit stewards during the process. I am very excited to accept the 5-year re-invitation that has been offered from 1st September 2027. Please hold Chris and the Derby Circuit in your prayers as they discern their future ministry.

No person is perfect and we can always learn, grow and develop. I look forward to the opportunity to continue doing that with friends within and outside our circuit life. There is plenty of mission and ministry for us to share together in, as we consider all the possibilities in our different communities.

At the recent Church Council and Circuit Meeting we have agreed the appointment of a part-time Local Lay Pastor to work predominantly with the smaller churches in their communities. The adverts have been circulated, and we will be interviewing on 18th August. You will find a copy of the advert later in this edition of Connections. Please do prayerfully consider if you know someone who could fulfil this role. I am more than happy to have informal conversations with any interested candidates. We have already received confirmation of 50% of the 3-year post from the Nottingham and Derby District. If you would like to consider supporting this individually or as a church, there will be pledge forms available in due

course. Thank you to those who have already been in contact about this.

September will also see the start of a year's partnership with Cliff College. 50% of the funding for this has been given to us by the Nottingham and Derby District. I am pleased to tell you, Revd Dr Andrew Stobart, Principal of Cliff College, will be leading a circuit service with me at Ashbourne on 13th September to formally launch our year of partnership. We plan to have a bring and share lunch following the service so we can have conversations about how we make the most of working together. This will be the only act of worship within the One Church Circuit that day so that we can all gather together and share. Do remember you can now park in the Leisure Centre Car Park all day for £2 so no need to worry about needing to move the car.

Lots to think about for the next connexional year. Before we get to that point, we have our outreach opportunity at the Ashbourne Show (15th August) and the Dedication Service for the Link and Gateway Lodge on 22nd August. I am thrilled that both the President and Vice President of The Methodist Conference will be us and sharing in the dedication service. We will also have the Lord-Lieutenant of Derbyshire and the High Sheriff with us. Please remember this is a [free] ticketed event. When the tickets for the Trinity Hall have all been taken we will be offering overflow ticketing in the Riverside Hall and it will be possible to join us online at www.youtube.com/@ashbournemethodist.

With all that is coming around the corner I have been reflecting on the words of this Charles Wesley hymn:

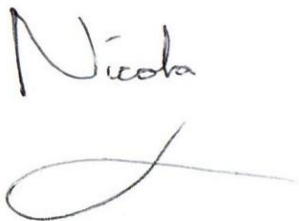
THIS, this is the God we adore,
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend;
Whose love is as great as his power,
And neither knows measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;
We'll praise him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come.

There is so much we can praise God for in the recent past and the legacies we have from our ancestors in the faith. Now is the time for us to trust God for all that is to come.

I look forward to ministering with you as we look back and look forward.

Blessings

A handwritten signature in dark ink. The word "Nicola" is written in a cursive, slightly slanted font. Below it is a large, elegant flourish that starts with a loop and extends to the right.

Church Family News August 2026

I'm not sure whether the temperature will be as high, when you read this, as it is today. But so far this month, it has been a scorcher and I, for one, have been struggling with the heat! Fortunately, the atrium of the Link Centre is air-conditioned, which helps to cool the Trinity Hall for our church services in Ashbourne. This week many of us came together there to celebrate the life of Brian H. It was a very special service where we learned more about his Christian journey. Sadly, there will be another funeral service on 20 July for Jean W, who died in June. This is being held at the Main Chapel of Markeaton Crematorium at 12.30 pm. We hold Jean's loved ones in our prayers.

In July, two members of our one church circuit are celebrating their 80th birthdays: Val K on 21 July and Richard O on 26 July. We send our birthday wishes to them both. Summer is also often chosen as a time to get married. On 25 July, Rose & Jonathan W celebrate their Ruby wedding anniversary. Back in 1976 two weddings took place on 14 August. So this year sees the golden wedding anniversaries of Helen & John B and Sally & David L. Congratulations to both couples!

This month is a very important time for our young members as they receive their exam results and we will be thinking and praying for you at this time.

We also continue to pray for all those who are unwell and receiving treatment including: Chris D, Diane P, Hyacinth S-D, Kay O, Liz Hi, Margaret He & Nina C.

Finally, I am pleased to share that Rev Nicola Briggs has accepted the invitation to serve an additional 5 years as our Superintendent Minister of Ashbourne One Church Circuit from 2027. We look forward to continuing our work together...

Wendy Haslam (Pastoral secretary 12.07.26)

Colossians 3: 17

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Sponsor a chair

We are thankful that the new chairs are now in place and serving our church and community, but we are still raising the remaining funds to cover their cost. If you are able to sponsor a chair or contribute towards one, your support would be greatly appreciated.

 THE LINK CENTRE

Sponsor a chair

AT THE LINK CENTRE

We are inviting members of our church and community to sponsor a chair for the Link Centre.

Helping us create a welcoming space for all

Supporting a space used by our community every day



Each chair costs £170, a donation towards a chair(s) will be gratefully received.
Thank you

Thank you for helping us reach our goal

Every sponsored chair brings us one step closer to completing this important project and supporting those who rely on the Link Centre.

To sponsor a chair go to: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/sponsorachairthelinkcentre>

If you find connecting to the website a challenge contact
Cath Patterson - email - linkfinance@ashbournemethodist.org.uk or phone 07803 266918

ASHBOURNE CHURCHES TOGETHER

SUMMER FUN DAY

Saturday 1st August

1.00pm - 5.00pm

ASHBOURNE RECREATION GROUND

JOIN US FOR LOTS OF FUN!

- bouncy castles •
 - obstacle course •
 - garden games •
 - giant slide •
 - face painting •
 - picnic area •
- and much more!

ALL FREE

**We will also be joined by some local businesses
selling yummy food, drinks & treats**



Ashbourne
Churches
Together

The Editor would like to apologise to Tim Dutton for omitting this item from the July edition of Connections.

THE TRINITY TREE

As part of our return to Ashbourne Methodist Church, we now have our new art installation in the Trinity Hall. This was commissioned by the Church Council and produced by Rebecca Warwick, with guidance from Anne Payne.



We thought you might be interested in the concept and how the brief was interpreted by the artist:

Welcome to the 'Trinity Tree'.

{Artwork materials: hands made from plaster; tree made from steamed willow}

This piece marks a new beginning as Ashbourne Methodist Church gather again in the newly developed building.

Looking at this art installation, hopefully you will see the image of cupped hands holding a tree. When reflecting on the Trinity within the artwork: the hands represent God the Father, as the Foundation, the tree trunk represents God the Son, with reference to the wood of the cross and the flowing branches represent God the Holy Spirit.

In making this piece, I was led back to Genesis, considering the three persons of the Godhead actively working together in creation from the beginning. I felt the artwork was about new creation, new growth and a joyful emergence of life.

But it can also be related to our personal walk of new creation, new growth and new life.

How can we partner with and allow the Trinity to work through us in creating something new?

Willow symbolism

When looking at the willow tree in the bible, it can symbolise sorrow and mourning; joy and celebration; and spiritual sustenance and life. In life, we can walk through seasons of pain, sorrow and mourning. While this is a part of our life cycle and walk with God, as with blessing also comes trial, it's in God's nature to turn things around: to bring joy from mourning, healing from hurt, beauty from ashes.

Isaiah 43:18-19 (NIV)

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing!

*Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way
in the wilderness*

and streams in the wasteland”

The words "springs up" within this verse can suggest an unexpected flourishing of new life: in difficult circumstances; after a time of waiting or from a season of barrenness. If you look at the movement of the willow rods within this tree, you might see they are collectively bursting upwards like a fresh water fountain / spring, imitating the movement of a new plant growing from the ground.

Whatever season you might be walking through, I feel God wants to invite us to draw closer to Him so that we can receive His spiritual sustenance and life, like the willow tree being rooted and growing close to the waters.

We are now well into Spring, the season of new birth. Let us look forward with hope and expectation for a bursting of new life within the church, for those around us and within our personal lives.

I'd like to invite everyone to come, sit at the foot of the tree and spend time with the Trinity. Like creation, let's go back to the beginning, where it all started. Let's allow the Godhead: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit to work through us and with us in creating something new.

The Open Mind

O God, help me always to have the open mind which can see another person's point of view. Take from me the spirit which would contradict and be stubborn. Teach me to listen to other people's opinions, even when they are different from my own. And may the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ shine into my mind and show me how to do his will. Amen.

In all His dispensations God is at work for our good. In prosperity He tries our gratitude, in mediocrity, our contentment; in misfortune, our submission; in darkness, our faith; under temptation, our steadfastness; and at all times, our obedience and trust in Him.

(from Footprints along the way of life)

REFLECTIONS. At our last Local Preachers and Worship Leaders meeting our District Chair, Rev Andy Fyall put to us three questions.

The first of which was, *"How can I better love God through personal devotion, prayer, and bible study? What difference would that make to my ministry as an L.P. / W. L.?"*

In the group we had, I mentioned, that some may think it may be through picking up a bible, and times of prayer, in a morning but I pointed out that, for me that question is answered by what I see, and walk through on a day-to-day basis, on our land, and how it ties in with scripture.

The first that came to mind was that a certain time of year, when the Dandelion seed "clocks", (as I remember calling them from my childhood), are full. If you get the sun just right in the morning skimming the horizon, the land is in shadow, but the seed clocks are all lit, akin to hundreds of globular light bulbs all over the hill. For me it reminded me of Psalm 119.v 105.

"Your Word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path".

The next thought is when going through my morning exercise routine, as I look through the window, I watch the birds going about their daily business. Sparrows, Blue and Great Tits, flitting between the bushes and the bird feeders we have in the garden. Some amuse me when they alight on our wrought iron gate, and rub their beaks, as if they are sharpening them for the next feed. Matthew Ch 6. v. 26. *"Look at the birds of the air, they do not sow or reap, or store in barns, yet your Heavenly Father feeds them"!*

Also, our summer residents, the Swallows and House Martins, their amazing speed and agility in the air, none more so, when they speed up to the eaves of our farm house, where their nests are, and in a split second their speed is negated as they perch on the nest to feed their young.

The birds of the air, as I remembered Elisha, as written in 1 Kings Ch. 17.v 4. The Lord said, *"You will drink of the brook, and I have ordered the Raven's to feed you"!* Occasionally, as I walk out the door, we have Pied and Grey Wagtails on the roof of our buildings, their songs competing, sometimes with Sparrows, in who can make the most noise. Psalm 100.

"Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth, Worship the Lord with gladness, come before him with joyful songs"!

Later in the day as I walk the path over the land, to check our cows and the gates and pathways, I see the wild flowers of the land.

Honeysuckle, woven, in some places into the hedgerow. Buttercups, Ox-eye Daisy's (they seem to be the prominent wild flower this year), Clover, Wild Orchids, and other wild flowers I can never Identify, filling the meadows.

We have no Lillies on the farm as far as I know, but I do on the land, looking at the flowers, think of Mathew Ch. 6 v. 28 & 29.

"See how the Lillies of the field grow, they do not labour or spin, Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these!"

Also, whatever the flowers, one sees the wonderful sight of various types of Butterflies feeding off them, Peacocks, the occasional Red Admiral, Skippers, of various types, and others the names I do not know, but what a sight.

In the flowers too, Bees, flitting from flower to flower. One I saw the other day caught my eye, as I heard his "buzz", and looked for it. There it was in a Poppy like flower walking round in the cup of it, I felt that the sound of his "Buzz" seemed to spell contentment in a moment of joy where it was and would remain to be "comfortable" for a while.

Yes, there are some "off moments" to, as I thought of this morning, thinking, "Why, when a fly has millions of cubic feet of air to fly around and through, why does he wish to have a go at the dark hole of my ear"?

Yet all in all, I feel blessed that I see a living Lord, in the living word and world I walk through. God Bless You.

Tom P.

BRAILSFORD COFFEESHOP

The most recent visit of the local schoolchildren was by Mrs Hilton and Attenborough Class (Years 3 and 4).

The theme of their songs was God's wonderful world beginning with two all time favourites,

1 Morning has broken - "It's high!" said Mrs Hilton, but it went well

2 All things bright and beautiful

These were followed by two more 'modern' songs, much loved and heartily sung by the children.

3 The world is a garden You made

4 From the tiny ant, to the elephant

both of which challenge both singer and listener to take good care of God's wonderful world.

eg 'Life for our food, life for our joy, life we can kill with our selfish greed'

and 'Care for them it's up to me/you/us'

They finished with an action accompanied rendition of the school prayer which they sing every day at home time which goes like this,

'May the road rise up to meet you,

May the wind always be at your back,

May the sun shine warm upon your face,

May the rain fall softly on your fields,

And until we meet again,

May God hold you in the palm of His hands.

Amen.

Singing along 'in my head' got me thinking about Morning has broken.

Those of a certain age may remember it reaching number 9 in the UK singles chart in 1972, sung by Cat Stevens.

It is, however, much more than a 'pop' song as it alludes to verses of scripture from the first chapters of both the

book of Genesis and the Gospel of John. The capital W for Word is intentional.

The lyrics were written in 1931 by author/poet Eleanor Farjeon, commissioned by editor Percy Dearmer. He was familiar with a beautiful Gaelic melody, Buessan, (collected back in the 1880's from a wandering Highland minstrel) for which he envisioned lyrics celebrating the beauty of creation.

My earliest memories of singing Morning has broken are at Etwell Primary School, not at Sunday School, as it is not in either the Methodist Hymn Book or the School Hymn Book of the Methodist Church (that little green soft back book) that I grew up with.

What are yours?

I love both lyrics and tune. Indeed I remember that during my Christian Union student days in the early nineteen seventies we sometimes sang 'Love divine all loves excelling' to Buessan.

Thank you Attenborough class for your inspiration.

Sue Leese

Pray for a Stranger

Here is a way to pray more and bless others at the same time.

Next time you are in a public place, walking somewhere, on a bus, in a queue, in the supermarket etc why not silently pray for the strangers around you. Pray good things for them, ask God to bless them.

As you learn to seek the good of others, you will begin to discover a whole new way of looking at the world.

Taken from Wesley's Primitive Physic

Deafness with a Head ache and Buzzing in the head.

Peel a clove of Garlick; dip it in honey and put it into your ear at night with a little black wool. Lie with that ear uppermost. Do this eight to ten nights.

A bruise.

Apply treacle spread on brown paper, or a mixture of chopped parsley mixed with butter, or to reduce swelling take a cloth folded three or four times and dip in cold water and apply, repeat often.

Outstanding

1 Corinthians 1 v 2

Psalm 30 v 4

Recently I received a telephone call from my daughter. She was commuting to work and had heard a funny story on the radio and she seemed anxious to share it with me, The story was – why has a scarecrow been recognized in the Kink's Honours list? Answer – because he was outstanding in his field!!

This made me reflect about how society recognizes achievements of people who have made outstanding contributions in their field or specialty over their lifetime.

The King's Honours list has for centuries recognized and honoured gallantry in battle, but has also

recognized individuals who have given of themselves for the benefit of others. Captain Tom Moore raising millions for the NHS during Covid was one such. Another source of recognition is by way of being awarded a Nobel prize, which may be a little less familiar. These prizes are a product of a Swedish inventor and industrialist. Alfred Nobel who on his death in 1895, bequeathed an allocation in his will to enable an annual prize to be awarded to 'Those who during the preceeding year, have conferred the greatest benefit to human kind'

There are five categories – Chemistry, Physics, Phycology/Medicine, Literature and Peace.

The prizes can be given to individuals, groups or charities.

Although the scale and enormity of the Nobel Prize may be out of reach to most of us, and the selection process a bit secret, some other awards and recognition enjoy wide publicity in the press and other media- BAFTA, Turner prize, Booker prize, etc and we have all witnessed the emotional response of some of the recipients.

Regardless pf where in society an award or recognition has emanated it goes without saying that generally it is considered a great honour to be a recipient and to be aware that your work and achievements have been recognized and appreciated.

So, if it is a great honour to receive recognition in the secular world, how much more of an honour will it be to receive a similar recognition for contributing to the work of God through our Lord Jesus Christ?

In the eyes of the Roman Catholic Church a saint is a holy person who is known for his or her heroic

sanctity. Saints are people from all walks of life who have dedicated their lives to the loving pursuits of God. Many like St Stephen were persecuted for their faith and ultimately forfeited their lives, whilst others like St Mother Teresa worked tirelessly and devoted themselves to the service of the poor and disenfranchised.

The Bible contains many references to sainthood, and none are more prevalent than in Paul's letters to his churches. He emphasizes that scripturally speaking the saints are the Body of Christ and therefore all Christians can be considered to be, and called to be, saints.

1 Corinthians 1 v 2 states 'To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified and holy' in other words to the saints of Corinth.

Similarly in Psalm 136 v 4 the Psalmist tells us to 'Sing praises to the Lord O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name'

If we, as followers of Christ, are considered to be as saints called into his church, how honoured are we to be offered such an accolade and be privileged to do God's work in the our world.

However, Paul also preaches that for him there is no accolade greater than to be recognized as an apostle of Christ and there is no reward greater than to see people brought to Jesus Christ through Paul's preaching. We do not carry out God's work for prizes, we do it for love of Jesus Christ and everything he did for us.

(Thoughts from a Garden Seat volume two – Derek Turton)

Follow Me – Love on another

A man asked Jesus, 'Who is my neighbour?'

Jesus replied with a story. 'A Jewish man was travelling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by Bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road.

By chance a priest came along. But when he saw him, lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. A temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.

Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put him on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, - Look after this man. If the bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I am here.

Now which of these would you say was the neighbour to the man who was attacked by bandits? Jesus asked.

The man replied 'The one who showed him mercy'
Then Jesus said 'Yes now go and do the same'

A Celtic prayer by David Adam

Lord you give yourself for me,
May I give myself to you
You give me life
You give me love
You give me yourself
May I give my life
My love, myself to you.
In the Power of your cross
Deliver me from all evil
And lead me into life and peace,
O Christ, who died and rose for us
And lives forever and ever. Amen

Cornerstone Coffee House

On Tuesday 7 August 2022, at 8.30am, we opened the doors of the Cornerstone Coffee House – four years ago! We were proud to follow in the footsteps of those who had been part of Cornerstone over the previous 25 years and hoped that we could play our part in its history. We didn't know what to expect on that day, not least because the temperatures were 30°C+, but we were grateful that people came along and enjoyed what we had to offer.

A lot has changed in the last four years, and we are now much more confident about who we are and what

we offer. We now have a team of 8 staff, rather just the two of us, and have built a community of regulars and visitors who are the backbone of the Cornerstone community. Many have become friends and we have walked alongside many of them at the different stages of life – from new-born to passing on. We have moved location twice and are grateful to all those who supported us through that: those who helped us move, who helped us build the venues and those who came to drink coffee, eat cake and support us in our different homes.

We are proud of how we have enabled everyone to enjoy Cornerstone and, in particular, the 'This One Is One Me' scheme, which enables those in need to have food and drink funded by others. Over the last four years over 800 vouchers have been used and we are very grateful to all those who have funded this by buying them.

Over the last few months, as we have been reflecting on how Cornerstone has developed, we have developed seven statements which we feel summarise what we are about:

- we aspire to be sustainable
- we bake amazing cakes
- we build community
- we buy local and small
- we create everything on-site
- we serve great coffee
- we welcome everyone

This is easy to say but what does it look like in the day to day? Last year we shared a day in the life of Table 9 – today we share a day in the life of the easy chairs:

- a dad and his daughter enjoy a drink and a chat on the way to school
- two mums meet, with their babies, for cake and a catch up
- a man has coffee and a croissant, as he reads his paper
- a group of cyclists break their journey and gather round on the stools
- a lady comes in during her lunch hour for coffee and to read her book
- a young couple enjoy iced drinks and brownies
- two friends have tea and fruit toast after a day walking
- two bikers have tea and cake after shopping at 'Second Gear', over the road
- we meet with a lady wanting a celebration cake and brownies for her anniversary
- the staff relax at the end of a busy day!

Thanks for all your support over the last four years and we look forward to the next stage of our journey as we play our part in the development of the Link Centre.

Beth & Paul Taylor

Hola!

Thank you so much for your prayers, messages and cards to follow up on my Venezuelan family and myself following the double earthquakes last month.

We have been very lucky in 'Merida' City (12 hours away from the coast) and I can confirm my family is safe and their homes have not been affected.

My last trip to Venezuela was three years ago and La Guaira was always the first and last town where I stayed before my flight from/ back to the UK, I treasure my time in there where people, nature and the sea amazing, It is heart breaking to know that is all in ruins now. Please keep praying for Venezuela!

If anybody would like to support Venezuela during this crisis, please use this UK Charity 'Healing Venezuela': <http://www.healingvenezuela.org>

Thank you and see you soon.

Gaby Ciacia

Gateway Lodge – A hostel for all occasions

During the first two months since opening we have welcomed seven whole hostel bookings to Gateway Lodge. We have been especially pleased with the wide range of guests that have stayed at the hostel. We have had two Church groups, including the return of the 16th Liverpool Girls Brigade from Bethel Church in

Liverpool, who have stayed at Gateway on numerous occasions. They greatly appreciated the special package we were able to extend to them, so they were able to afford to return.

We have also had, one school group, two social groups, one local community group and one club group. The club booking was a ladies running club from Cambridgeshire and later this year we now have a men's group coming from the same running club !As well as accommodating groups, our aim is that Gateway Lodge will become established hostel for guests wanting to just book a room. We appreciate this will take time, but to ensure the hostel has the maximum amount of exposure it now appears on all the major online booking portals like booking.com.

Word of mouth is also extremely important. So if you know anybody who would like to know more about the new affordable accommodation in Ashbourne, do recommend they have a look at our website; www.ashbournegateway.org.uk If you have any questions or queries, please give either Amanda or Amy a call in the Sales office on 07749 771827 and they would be delighted to help.

Crispin Scott

1 John 1:5-10 taken from a silence and a shouting

Lord, I don't have to pretend
Not with you.
There really isn't any point in trying to
Because you know me
Better than I know myself.
You know all there is of me.
The hopes.
The joys that come bubbling out when I'm feeling
good.
The disappointments and failures I try to hide
To keep up appearances.
The murkiness and mud there is in my subconscious.
I like to pretend it isn't there at all
But it swirls and drifts to the surface,
Polluting the open beaches of my life
Like oil patches floating on the tide.
Yet you still love me, Lord.
I don't know why, the reasons don't matter.
Theologians may explain it
But I feel it, and I rejoice.

And because you live me, I can be honest.
I can admit the failures, the frustration,
And all things that tie me into knots of pain
And make me cry out in anger and hate, and shame.

And because I bring them to you
And you can deal with them.
With me

It's such a relief, being honest with you.

To lose the fear, to know that my honesty
Doesn't push us apart
But brings us nearer.
Because I am loved.
I belong.
I have a value which no one can take away
Because you love me.
With all my faults.

A short course in Human Relations

The six most important words
I ADMIT - I MADE A MISTAKE
The five most important words
YOU DID A GOOD JOB
The four most important words
WHAT IS YOUR OPINION
The three most important words
DO YOU MIND
The two most important words
THANK YOU
The one most important word
PLEASE.

(Shropshire Favourites)



The **Methodist** Church

Ashbourne One Church Circuit

Local Lay Pastor (part-time, 20 hours/week)

Salary £16,848 per annum (full time equivalent
£33,696)

The Ashbourne Methodist One Church Circuit is seeking to appoint a part-time Local Lay Pastor to support mission, ministry and pastoral care across the Circuit but with particular focus on our rural chapels and worshipping communities.

We are looking for an enthusiastic, self-motivated person who can work collaboratively with our Superintendent Minister and volunteers. The role is for someone who will be hands-on in supporting volunteers who run Church groups and activities and will also help to develop new mission initiatives to help the church connect with the local rural communities through outreach, hospitality, and relationship building.

If you have proven leadership skills, and an ability to support, encourage and inspire, we would love to hear from you.

The post commences in September 2026 to benefit from our Circuit's inclusion in Cliff College's Joyful News Connection Project, starting in September too.

You will need to be able to work flexibly to meet the needs of the role. Some evening and weekend work will be required.

THERE IS A GENUINE OCCUPATIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR THE POST HOLDER TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

Closing date for applications: Noon, Monday 10 August 2026

Interviews: Tuesday 18 August 2026

For an information pack (including job description and person specification), please contact our **Circuit Steward**, Jacqui Marsh

Email: jacq.marsh@gmail.com **Telephone:** 07941 524301

For an informal conversation about the role contact **Rev Nicola Briggs**, Superintendent Minister.
Telephone 07307 524955

To learn more about the Ashbourne One Church Circuit please visit: www.ashbournemethodist.org.uk

Heaven Comes to Hell's Green

How often in the past have famous explorers written of their experiences in the 'Green Hell' of some steaming tropical jungle? Mercaston nr Ashbourne in Derbyshire, in the 18th century was known as hell's green; and this is the story of one woman who sought to hack her way through the jungle of ignorance and unbelief in her efforts to bring the Kingdom of God, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.... To her local people.

Her name? Sarah Kirkland. The time? 1794

Sarah Kirkland was born at a time when industrial life was just in its infancy. Farm labourers and coal miners were mere chattels of their masters. They had no share in any form of democracy. The conditions of their employment were determined by the whims of their superiors. Miners toiled underground for eighteen hours a day; children of six years of age slaved for a cruel pittance. There were no safeguards or guarantees of employment; nothing for old age.

Evangelists of the Primitive Methodist Church began to visit the outposts of rural Britain with the burning zeal of the apostles. They urged miners into temperance, and tried to bring comfort to starving women and children. They built chapels, and from Pulpits began to spread the Gospel where it had never been heard before. Meetings were held outside public houses and on village greens.

But it was a mammoth task, even for men¹ Tyranny was rampant; robbery the order of the day. All this, the Primitive Methodists braved... at least the men did. But women? Any woman venturing abroad risked being molested or even killed.

A STEP IN FAITH

Yet the teenage Sarah Kirkland did step out from Hell's Green to become the first female travelling preacher. Sarah's first religious ideas came from the visit of one William Bramwell. Mr Bramwell preached one day in Mr Kirkland's house. Sarah was 'moved to tears' Later in 1811, Hugh Bourne came round to Mercaston. 'Now then young Sarah' he asked, are you close to the Almighty? Have you been saved?'

Suddenly, those early impressions left by Bramwell, came flooding back into her heart and mind; Sarah Kirkland found that unique peace that can only come from the infilling of the Holy Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ.

She almost ran to nearby evangelist William Clowes; and from him she received the full Blessing of Salvation....and her first class ticket as a Methodist. Two years later she gave her first faltering sermon, a travelling gypsy fell to his knees and gave himself to the Lord.

'Wherever yer preach, missy, I'll go afor yer an' tell 'em all yer comin'

The gypsy was true to his word. With Old Testament faith, he proclaimed what God had done for him

through the preaching of this young woman, and he invited people to come and hear for themselves. Roving bands of gypsies came from all around to experience this great awakening. Then, sadly, in an epidemic of smallpox, Sarah's father and her two brothers died.

Her orphaned condition appealed to an Ambaston farmer named Robert Winfield. Seeing clearly the oratorical gifts she possessed, he helped, directed and generally looked after the girl evangelist.

Next month the wonderful story of Sarah will be continued.

(taken from A memento Of 150 years of Methodism at Mercaston Chapel 1977)

Announcement for all churches in the Ashbourne One Church Circuit

At the Ashbourne Methodist One Church Circuit church Council on Tuesday 23rd June it was agreed that Ashbourne Methodist Church could register for marriages of same sex couples. It was agreed that the Authorised Person for these marriages would be Revd John Hellyer. It was agreed that Blessings of Same-Sex couples who have been married could happen at Ashbourne Methodist Church.

These decisions apply only to Ashbourne Methodist Church and none of the other churches who are part of the Ashbourne One Church Circuit.

If you have any questions or would appreciate discussing this pastorally, please contact Revd Nicola Briggs.

Morning Hymn (from Aotearoa Psalms)

Kia ora, My Friend God.
I give you the voyage of this day.
That to be which is already yours,
Adding to it my rejoicing,
A shout of praise. Amen. Amen.

You are the wind: fill up my sails.
You are the water: run fast beneath my keel.
And I will sing in the wind
And dance over the water,
God my friend, oh God my friend.

You are the light: enfold me,
You are pain: hollow me,
You are the darkness: embrace me,
You are love: overflow me,
The storms of change are you,
and the peace of tranquil waters,
You are all these things, friend God.
And I thank you. Amen. Amen.

May I journey without fear
Through all the seasons.
In emptiness let me find fullness.
In imprisonment let me find freedom.
Render me passive in your will
And I shall be most active,
Moving with you in everything.
Seeing you in everything,
knowing you in everything.
Amen. Amen.

'Don't forget we're here forever' by Lamorna Ash

In the Thursday housegroup, we have recently read a book together that has sparked some interesting and challenging conversations and reflections. Lamorna Ash is a journalist. The catalyst for this book was two of her friends becoming Anglican priests and her desire to understand their stories. This was the start of her two-year journey across Britain, exploring what it means to different people in different places, to be a Christian in the 2020s. As she listened to the stories, and asked questions, a picture began to emerge that she shares in this book. Throughout she reflects on how these experiences have impacted on her as she explores what faith means in her context, struggling with her mental health and her sexuality.

The picture painted in this book is one of a broad range of forms of Christianity, in terms of both theology and church tradition, and raises the question of how complicated Christianity in Britain has become. Individuals initially join a church for a variety of reasons, usually unrelated to its theology or church tradition, which are usually about the people and the relationships that develop. As individuals grow into a church community they begin to ask questions, which as a journalist Lamorna does easily. Many churches find this challenging and struggle to respond in an effective way. One of the questions I think this book asks is how ready are we to have questions asked of us about how and why we do church in a particular way?

Lamorna visits a range of churches as well as joining a variety of courses, pilgrimages and retreats across the country. She reflects on how they impact on her, and the people around her, and this variety of experiences creates a rich and varied faith journey that challenges her as she explores Christianity for herself. It reminds me of the value of a variety of Christian experiences as we grow in our discipleship.

This book comes with a health warning as it paints a picture of a church that you might find difficult and challenging. However, Lamorna is a journalist who is looking in and reflecting back on what she sees, and I believe we need to hear this if we are going to fully understand what it means to be a relevant and growing church today.

Each member of the Thursday housegroup has a copy of this book and is willing to lend it to you!

Paul Taylor

LINK COMMUNITY HUB DEVELOPMENT PROJECT – FUNDRAISING

The Link fundraising team had their final meeting on Wednesday, 8th July 2026. We had our first meeting in February 2017 and have overseen the Link fundraising initiative.

Our sincere thanks go to our team members, past and present, who have worked tirelessly to raise funds. Thank you to Cliff Lewer, Joy Mallard (part of the team from the start), Cath Patterson, Tony Walker, and Jonathan Webb.

We also thank previous members of the team, David Clarke, Peter Flinn, Paul Haslam, Rachel Murt, and Sandra Lewer.

Grateful thanks also go to all the many volunteers who have provided a significant support in helping with the many events that have been organised since 2017. Over £64,300 has been raised from these events and activities.

We have very fond memories from these gatherings. The events included –

Car wash	Crowd funding
Wesleygogs event	
Afternoon Tea in marquee at the Lewers	Auction of promises
Rhythm of Life Concert – Chameleon Choir, Saxophone quartet and Organ pieces with Greg Barker	
Pop Up Shop in Ashbourne	Dinner and cabaret with Lydia Slack at the Golf Club
St Agnes Fountain (twice)	Ashbourne Town Band
Hot House Community Gospel Choir and Screaming Kicks Big Band (twice)	
RAF Squadronnaires	Beyond the Blue–
Phil Baggaley and Nina Blaszczyk (twice)	
National Methodist Youth Brass Band	Burns Night
Alice In Wonderland event	

Together We Made It Happen

This project was made possible through the generosity of our supporters. Every financial contribution, large and small, has helped create

something that will benefit our community for years to come.

Our grateful thanks go to Grant organisations and local businesses. Our special thanks go to all our church members and friends whose donations made up the majority of the funding raised.

CONTRIBUTORS

Benefact Trust Edward Cadbury Charitable
Trust The Beatrice Laing Family Trust
Garfield Weston Foundation Gibbs Trust
 The Hunter Rowe Trust
Lester Lowe Ltd Longcliffe Quarries
 Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes
(TMCP)
Norton and Newton Settlement Nottingham
and Derby Methodist District
Woodroffe Benton Foundation Church members
and friends

We will be handing over our responsibilities to the Resources and Finance team over the next couple of months. Any list of donors and contributors will remain confidential.

Although we have made significant contributions towards the funding of the project, we still have a shortfall of around £600k, covered by a loan from Methodist Chapel Aid. On-going donations and legacies are still very gratefully received.

You will also be aware that we have been promoting chair donations, as seen on the poster. We have so far raised £10,240 + £1,851 contribution through gift aid. We thank you for all your support towards the purchasing of the chairs. The total cost of the chairs is over £42,000 and so we continue to value your financial support with them.

Many thanks again for all that has been achieved; it is so rewarding to see The Link Centre up and running and the major contribution we are making to the community now and in the future. We still have challenges, but the impact and feedback we have received has been extremely positive.

We now start a new era. Many thanks for all your support.

The Fundraising Team, July 2026

Dates for the Diary – Services

Sunday 19th July

Ashbourne 10.30 Revd Nicola Briggs and Stuart Green
Baptism, Altogether Worship

Ashbourne	18.30	Lorraine Hawkins Praise
Brailsford	10.30	Revd John Hellyer Holy Communion
Tissington	10.30	Revd Mark Broadhurst Holy Communion

Sunday 26th July

Ashbourne	10.30	Fiona Green, Ruth Barratt and Lorraine Hawkins
Brailsford	15.00	Revd Bex Allpress at All Saints
Kirk Ireton	18.30	Revd Tim Morris, Church Anniversary
Kniveton	11.00	Allan Shaw

Sunday 2nd August

Ashbourne	10.30	Peter Taylor and Gareth Rutledge Altogether Worship
	16.30	Tim Dutton Afternoon Tea

Brailsford 10.30 Own Arrangement
 Altogether Worship
Parwich 14.30 Revd Nicola McNally
 Holy Communion, United Service

Sunday 9th August

Ashbourne 10.30 Revd Arnold Dixon and Jonathan
 Webb
 Revd Nicola Briggs and Anne Payne
Brailsford 10.45 All Saints
Kniveton 14.30 John Dyster

Tuesday 11th August

Milldale 19.00 Allan Shaw

Sunday 16th August

Ashbourne 10.30 Revd Nicola Briggs and Stuart Green
 Baptism, Altogether Worship
Ashbourne 18.30 Gareth Rutledge
 Praise

Brailsford 10.30 Revd Andy Fyall
Holy Communion
Tissington 10.30 Revd Tim Morris
Church Anniversary

Dates for the Diary – Events and Meetings

Saturday 18th July 11-3 Community Open Day
at Ashbourne
Tuesday 21st July 19.30 Worship Forum at
Ashbourne
Saturday 15th August Ashbourne Show
Saturday 22nd August 14.30 Dedication Service at
Ashbourne

Deadline for the September edition of Connections Magazine is Sunday 9th August 2026 – please send by email to clifflewer@aol.com or in person

Wesleygogs Event - 2017



RAF Squadronnaires - 2022





Afternoon Tea 2018

Hot House – 2023





Alice in Wonderland – 2025



The Garden at Ashgate Hospice – by Mark Eden