

Keep the verse of the year for South Parade (“see I am a doing a new thing” Isaiah 43.19) in mind as you read this month’s magazine. Today the relaunched “South Parade Together” service sees all the different Gatherings coming together to worship and share fellowship together and to pray to discover what new things God has in store for all of us. In this month’s *Intouch*, Heather, the longest-serving member of the ministry team looks back at her time as Children’s Worker and the many lives she’s touched over this time. Pray for Heather as she retires from this role, and pray for the “new things” in store for the future of the children’s work in the church. Pray that God would show you “new things” to get involved in to build His Kingdom here.

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Matthew Newman Editor

Informed, Involved, Inspired... Intouch!

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From the Ministry Team

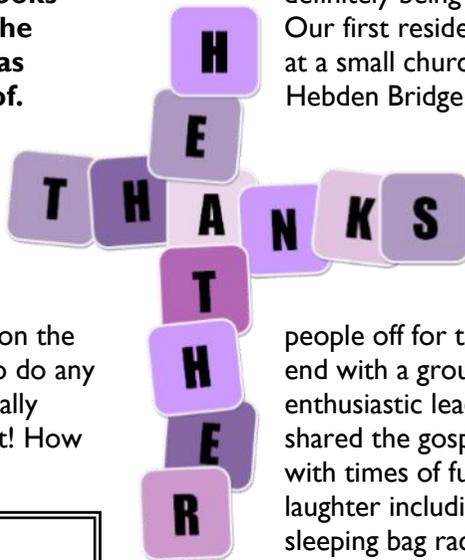
So Many Children

As Heather approaches retirement from her role as children's worker, she looks back over the years at the great things that God has allowed her to be part of.

Before I took up the post I was asked to oversee the Junior Church with a great young woman, Anna Appleford. I accepted only on the proviso that I didn't have to do any church upfront leading, I really didn't like being at the front! How times have changed.



There have been many highlights over the years with residential definitely being up there. Our first residential was at a small church near Hebden Bridge with the



fantastic name of Slack Top. We took the young

people off for the weekend with a group of enthusiastic leaders and shared the gospel, mixed with times of fun and laughter including sleeping bag races at 6.30am (Will Briggs was

the winner every time). We had two years at Slack Top, then had to move somewhere bigger.

We spent a very muddy weekend at Charlton Lodge before moving the weekend to Redmire at the Jonas Centre, where we have gone for the past 16 years. These times away

have been significant times in our journeys with God for both the kids and leaders. So many good memories of encounters with God, fun and laughter and lots of mess.



Emma Hall's Baptism at Redmire 2013

A highlight for me was baptising Emma Hall with Andy Jones (an amazingly gifted friend of many years) in the field at Redmire in very cold water, surrounded by the beauty of God's creation. I have been so blessed over the years with amazing leaders and it's been such a privilege to see kids I have known since they were babies exploring and growing in their faith.

*So many children,
so much fun,
so many Bible
stories shared*

Other highlights are running holiday clubs, again run only with the help of fantastic volunteers. Sam Newby-Wright has put in many hours helping with these and has many stories, some of which are very funny. We worked with Dan and

Ness Brown and Gemma and Dick Bonham for a number of very memorable holiday clubs: so many children, so much fun, so many Bible stories shared, so much PVA glue and glitter.

Another highlight has been the camp-overs. It's great for us to be able to camp, especially as some haven't camped before. I'm so thankful to the Robinsons who have let us use their field for this annual event, which means much sheep's poo clearing for Dave and the boys. It's always very relaxed with barbecue and campfire, and a treasure hunt on the Saturday in Otley. A great time to get to know each other better. Worth going to see Greg play charades.

I've also loved my connections with schools. Although I'd never done an assembly before this job I soon

grew to love them and the interactions with the kids and some of the teachers! In the lunchtime clubs Sam and I grew to know the kids so well. I've laughed lots – ask her about the story of Jericho! Rewind came out of schools' work and we have run it for many years. It's so good to see so many children and staff knowing the real reasons why we have Christmas and Easter.

Other joys have been our evening clubs in Headingley, Little London, Adel and Bramley, again having the opportunity to share the Bible, our faith and what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Again so many amazingly enthusiastic leaders, Andy Jones, Sam Newby-Wright, Andy Hall, Hazel Randall, Clare King, Andrew Hinds, Emma Hall, Emma Furber, Beckie Fenske and many others.

The relationships that have come out of my contacts with school have been a blessing, seeing kids grow up and have kids of their own, relationships forged that have lasted nearly 20 years. What a privilege it has been to be part of Junior Church and see kids grow up as people, learn about



Heather with the Ministry Team 2008

Jesus, sharing their faith and being baptised. What a joy to baptise some of these kids, Emma Hall, Charis Gnanakan, Priya Rockley, and continue to see them grow and flourish. Also, to see young people become young leaders, grow in their faith and chose Jesus as their saviour. A highlight of last year was to see Gideon Fairhall make a decision for Christ and be baptised.

A huge thank you to everyone who has ever helped at any children's or youth event, I couldn't have done it without you

And lastly to mention, Cell which came out of a request from Matt Hall, who asked for a taste of Redmire at home when we were

back in Leeds, hosted for many years by the Halls and then the Vipans and now run at Church. A place where we had fun, shared our lives, the ups and downs, and learnt about what it is to have a faith in Jesus.

event, giving up their time and energy to support the kids work. I couldn't have done it without you all. It has been a huge privilege to serve God at South Parade and have a job which I loved and enjoyed so much.



I would like to say a huge thank you to anyone who has ever helped at any children's or youth

Thanks

Heather

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Matthew 19.14 (NIV)



...informed...

For service times, locations, Mission Communities, children's and student work, the weekly notice sheet, sermon downloads, this magazine and much more, go to the church website!

www.spbc.org.uk

Around the Church

Heart for Mission

At the start of January, during an All Age Talk at our Headingley Gathering, Nathan encouraged us to nurture a heart for mission by committing to keep our overseas Mission Partners close to our hearts.

Please find below his suggestions, plus several from all ages across the Gathering:

- Make direct contact with a Mission Partner: Facebook, letter, Skype, text, WhatsApp – take your pick! Please contact the Church Office if you don't have their contact details.
- Pray for a Mission Partner: Updates are sent out regularly and are often included in *Intouch* and displayed in the back corridor



If you made a resolution ask God to help you keep it over the coming year.

- of the Sanctuary at Headingley.
- Send a Mission Partner a postcard with words of encouragement.
- Learn the language: Ask a Mission Partner for some basic vocabulary – you might even ask for phrases which are common in church eg “Christ is risen!”, “Happy Easter!”
 - Watch a sporting event featuring someone from the country of a Mission Partner.
 - Create a craft to act as a reminder to pray for a Mission Partner: Pop it on your fridge, in your Bible or by your bedside.

- Send a flower: A simple act of love, which speaks volumes!
- Find out a Mission Partner's birthday and then send them a card and a gift. You might even want to co-ordinate a parcel of treats from your whole Gathering.
- Host a meal of the cuisine of the country a Mission Partner is based in and then pray for them afterwards.
- Go overseas and join a Mission Partner to be of practical assistance.

Later on in the service people made other commitments.

- Many people committed to pray for Sam and Kate (Chad), Tim (Austria), Ina and Malte (Germany), Levi (Japan), Jill and Colin (France), Jane (supporting missionaries in various countries) and Irene (tbc!).
- Others committed to praying for various friends, family members, work colleagues and other groups of people.
- Others were wanting to get more involved in church life eg learning the names of the kids in junior church, or giving hospitality.
- Also included was a desire to see personal spiritual growth - to be more thankful, less

grumpy(!), more loving towards family and to share our faith.

- Some resolved to stop smoking, do more exercise and find a good work/life balance.

There were other resolutions too including some which I couldn't decipher but God knows these too.

If you were there that Sunday and made a resolution then ask God to help you keep it over the coming year. If you haven't made a resolution then maybe some of the above will inspire you to make a change in your life so that we can continue to grow as Christians and spread the love of Christ to those we come in contact with.

Nathan Shipley & Sue Ricketts

Headingley News

In the spirit of the verse for the year, Isaiah 43.19 – “See, I am doing a new thing”, and being inspired by some of the sermons on that passage, I thought that I'd take advantage of the opportunity to reflect on some elements of 2018 and how we might look ahead to the rest of 2019.

This time last year I was reminding readers of the Headingley 5 -ear goal. We were approximately 16 months along that timescale then

and the Leadership Team had received some constructive feedback through the questionnaire during the previous year. Although the wording of the goal has changed and become the “vision” for the whole of South Parade, that feedback is still useful and valid, and will remain influential in the months ahead.

One of the most visible initiatives that came from the 5-year goal and the feedback has been the bring-and

-share lunches. It was great to enjoy the sunny weather during the summer months and to be together in the grounds of Kirkstall Abbey or to join in with the Friends & Residents of Becketts Park picnic at Becketts Park. The organisers of the Becketts Park picnic have been approached about us being more involved in the preparations for the event this summer and they are enthusiastic about that. It’s a great opportunity for us to be a witness in our community and showcase the

work that God can do through our efforts in a variety of directions.

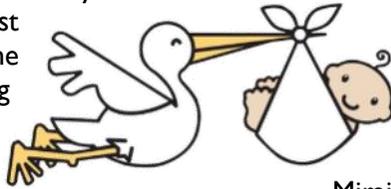
Since the autumn we have resorted to using the indoor space at South Parade, first of all in the youth room and activities in the hall, then in the Green House to accommodate the number of people. There has been a steady increase in the numbers and positive feedback has been received about the events. The six week interval seems to work well, as does maintaining the picnic approach to the food and drink provision. We really are trying to avoid the pitfall of people being drawn into any amount of



The giant Christingle at Headingley made during the morning service on 23 December

preparing (eg provision of hot drinks) and clearing away (eg washing crockery and cutlery). The next lunch is planned for 24 February and you're all more than welcome. It's a great opportunity to get to know more people better.

The time to chat over a bite to eat also lends itself to having conversations of greater significance about church matters, especially in light of the changes being discussed and taking effect for us all at South Parade, but perhaps without the constraints of formal meetings for either the whole church or Headingley Morning specifically. There are lots of plans that will start to take shape as the year progresses, not least the combining of the Headingley Morning and Sent Leadership Teams. It was accepted by a vote at the whole



church meeting on 24 January, with the explanation that the Gatherings (Mission Communities) would continue to have slightly differing focuses but that a combined Leadership Team would allow flexibility to make the best of each Gathering.

Few things are as new and life-changing as the arrival of a new baby

Also inspired by “a new thing” from the 2019 verse for the year, few things are as new and life-changing as the arrival of a new baby. There have been five babies in total across South Parade, with two at Connect and three at Headingley morning. At Connect there was Miraim Heather, born in June, and Jacob Daniel, born in August. Within Headingley Morning there has been Robin Nathaniel, born in February, Elizabeth Faith, born in October, and Sophie Ada, born in November.

We look forward to supporting the children, their brothers and sisters, parents and extended families as they grow and develop within the life of the church. We must also be mindful of those for whom the joy

of a new born baby for others is tempered by their own circumstances. We acknowledge that our love and support would be appreciated, although situations may be known only to those immediately involved and to God.

Richard Sykes

Headingley Morning Leadership Team

Sent

As always, it was a delight to host the annual Carols by Candlelight service. We were particularly inspired by Diane and Helen who each brought a handful of colleagues to the service. Please pray for them both and their witness in the workplace.

At the end of January, we started a series entitled People in Prayer. Each Sunday evening, we will be exploring the prayer life of a character from scripture – ranging from Abraham to Paul and seven others in between.

*We are excited about
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are looking forward
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join in the mission of God
in Headingley*

Our engagement with the Headingley Festival of Ideas is starting to take shape. As well as hosting the main festival celebration on Saturday 18 May, we will be putting on an event inspired by Amelie's research. Watch this space for more details!

Please pray for Headingley Morning and us as we transition from being two distinct Mission Communities to one united Gathering. We are excited about uniting together and are looking forward to exploring how we can join in the mission of God in Headingley.

Nathan Shipley

Associate Pastor
Youth and Young Adults

...informed...

Share news from your corner of the church by
emailing magazine@spbc.org.uk



From the Treasurer's Computer

2019 Budget

Church Treasurer Katharine Widdowson summarises the financial position of the church as this year's budget is agreed.

On Thursday 24 January at the first church meeting in 2019, consideration of the budget for 2019 was a major item of discussion. It proved to be just as contentious as changing "Mission Community" to "Gathering".

A former church treasurer at the meeting said he used to tell his employers that budgeting is a Black Art, but thought it an inappropriate

comment to make in church. Mark Vipan pointed out that just because certain assumptions have been made in preparing the budget, it does not mean that irrevocable decisions have been made behind those assumptions.

The main costs for South Parade are staff costs and donations. We employ a Senior Pastor, Peter; Geoff King who works across the church particularly in Cragg and with Rooted; Nathan Shipley who mainly works with youth and young adults; Heather McLeen who works with children and families; Kate Burkett who is part-time with under 5s and their families; administrator Kate Churchill and Delessa Gugsu who looks after the Headingley site. We also employ a cleaner at Cragg Hill.

The Church meeting some years ago set an aspiration of giving away 20% of our income. For several years the cash given away has been around 15%, but Nathan and



Heather spend a significant part of their time working in schools, so we are giving in time as well as money.

The costs are almost all paid for from giving by members and those who attend our services

The budget allows for replacement of Heather, who is retiring at the beginning of March, and calling a full-time minister from the summer. It increases the support for our missionaries, Levi Booth, Sam and Katie Knight and family, and Jane Waites, maintaining support for the Gnanakans, and increasing support for Duncan Stow and his work in Horsforth schools. Support for BMS World Mission who hope to send Irene abroad again later in 2019, is slightly higher than that for BUGB and Home Mission. There is also provision for a café manager two days a week from the summer.

The costs are almost all paid for from giving by members and those who attend our services. Some activities generate income, but it never covers the entire cost. If you are a taxpayer, complete a Gift Aid Declaration and I can identify what you give, then we can claim 25% of

your giving from HMRC (see page 14-16 for details).

Last year we had a Giving Sunday in April when we asked everyone connected with the church to prayerfully consider their giving. It was several years since we had previously done this. Many of you completed pink pledge forms.

Using these pledges, and taking into account those who have left, died, retired, taken a pay cut during maternity or retirement, I estimated that we should have income including the Gift Aid claims of £350,000 in 2019. Total income including lettings etc is less than the budgeted expenditure by £15,000. However more importantly, calling another minister is a long-term commitment, and if he joins us in August we are not including a full year's cost.

So I looked at the next three years to see how income would have to increase to keep pace with expenditure. If we continue our budgeted expenditure without change to the end of 2022, there is annual inflation of 2.5%, and giving by members does not increase, our reserves will run out at the end of 2022.

However there is time during that

period to make savings if necessary, and for members and regular attenders to plan to increase their giving with inflation.

The budget was recommended for acceptance by the Deacons and Elders, and after discussion it was accepted by Church Meeting. If we have your email address you should have received an email with a link

to the church meeting papers including the budget; if not please ask someone where you worship or email me for a copy. I have given a very brief summary below.

Katharine Widdowson

Treasurer
treasurer@spbc.org.uk

	Budget 2018	Actual 2018	Budget 2019
Income	389,450	425,617	390,044
Expenditure	429,854	405,258	405,322
Surplus/(shortfall)	(40,404)	20,358	(15,278)
Reserves b/f	142,440	142,440	162,798
Reserves c/f	102,036	162,798	147,520

What is Gift Aid?

Gift Aid was setup by Gordon Brown in the late 90s (seems a million years ago!) to allow a charity to claim back the tax people have already paid on their earnings that they give to charity. The charity can only claim what has been paid at basic rate.

Myth: Gift Aid is only for those who give regularly by direct debit.

Gift Aid is for taxpayers who give either:

- *In cash (or cheque) through the offering bag OR*
- *By monthly direct debit / standing order*
- *Once a year, one-offs, irregularly OR*
- *Regularly*

It is for both members and non-members.

So, it doesn't matter whether you do it through the offering bag or by direct debit, whether in £1 coins or electronically. The only limitations are:

- you **must** fill in a Gift Aid form once and give it to the treasurer
- you **must** have paid / be paying tax up to the value of the Gift Aid we reclaim in the financial year
- you **must** identify to the charity what you are giving, ie a lone £5 in the offering bag **cannot** be claimed back BUT a lone £5 with a PostIt with your name on it or in an envelope with your name on it **can** be.

giftaid it

Obviously it is easier, and more practical for me, if you were to keep four or five £1 donations together and give it every four or five weeks but I'm happy to keep count on a weekly basis.

Example

So, if you earn over £11,850 per year you should be able to give tax-efficiently by Gift Aid. A very simple example is shown below, which uses the current tax-free personal allowance for 2018-2019 of £11,850. Let's imagine the following:

Personal Income: £21,850 per year

Personal allowance: £11,850 per year (current rates for 2018-2019)

Taxable income: £10,000

Tax paid (UK): £10,000 x 20% = £2,000

On that basis the maximum Gift Aid you can instruct a charity to reclaim is £2,000. So, the maximum you could give to charity, **on which you ask them to receive gift aid**, is £8,000 as effectively the charity claims back £8,000 x 25% = £2,000.

You could clearly give as much as you like to any charities but the maximum you can instruct them to claim gift aid back on is on the £8,000 you gave. If you gave £5,000 to one you could only ask all the others to whom you give to claim back on a total of £3,000, not £3,000 individually. If this isn't clear please speak to me.

Confidentiality

If you are a basic (or higher) rate taxpayer and the church claims back Gift Aid on your giving that shouldn't be visible to anyone else, as far as I am aware.

Your name is not on our accounting records – you have been allocated a number which only the Treasurer knows. The Gift Aid form remains in the treasurer's files and when I fill in the form online every month to claim the money back from the HMRC that is where the process stops.

Higher Rate Taxpayers

If you pay higher rate tax the charity can only claim back what was paid at lower rate. You personally, however, can claim back the difference between the standard rate and the higher rate on your self-assessment tax return so, if you don't already, it is worth filling that in annually because if you are paid PAYE that will take no, or little, account of your charitable giving, certainly not of any differences in what you might have predicted it was going to be.

Queries?

If you do have a query on any situations regarding Gift Aid please do speak to me but I hope this addresses particularly money given by the offering bag.

You can ask Kate in the church office for a Gift Aid form or email me at any time. If you have never filled one in and think you might give by Gift Aid in the future fill it in and return it to me.

Just to make clear that this is by no means a focus on giving levels, just doing it as tax-efficiently as we can.

Thanks,

Katharine Widdowson Church Treasurer

“Religious faith makes for a good night’s sleep, researchers in the United States have suggested. They found that those who believed in salvation and felt that they had an unshakeable relationship with God tended to sleep longer, fall asleep faster, and feel more rested in the morning.”



Church Times 25/1/19

Prayer Diary



February - March 2019

FEBRUARY

Sun	3	The South Parade Together service this morning
Mon	4	The gospel choir rehearsal with other local churches tonight
Tue	5	Heather McLeen
Wed	6	Your New Year resolutions to support those serving abroad
Thu	7	The Arabic Christian Fellowship
Fri	8	Your neighbours
Sat	9	Your homegroup, small group or cell group leader
Sun	10	Preachers and worship leaders across the church
Mon	11	Your Gathering's Leadership Team
Tue	12	Rooted
Wed	13	Your friends and family who don't know Jesus
Thu	14	The church office
Fri	15	Street Angels in Leeds tonight
Sat	16	Your local MP and councillors
Sun	17	All of South Parade's Gatherings

Pull out and use!

Mon	18	The Deacons
Tue	19	Colin & Jill Jones and their work with the church in Normandy
Wed	20	Geoff King
Thu	21	All those who look after our church buildings
Fri	22	Friday Lunch in the Green House
Sat	23	Nathan Shipley
Sun	24	Headingley bring-and-share lunch today
Mon	25	Events to mark Fairtrade Fortnight
Tue	26	Sam and Katie Knight
Wed	27	Barnabas Bunch
Thu	28	The Elders
MARCH		
Fri	1	Paul Rockley at Blenheim Baptist Church
Sat	2	Horsforth Farmers' Market and Horsforth Churches Together
Sun	3	Levi Booth
Mon	4	Young People meeting in Cell Groups
Tue	5	Kate Churchill
Wed	6	Your own walk with Jesus this Lent
Thu	7	Peter Morden
Fri	8	Female church leaders on International Women's Day
Sat	9	Transformations Leeds
Sun	10	Connect Gathering
Mon	11	Steve Fairhall, Tim Rowe and the work of the CAP centre
Tue	12	Missionaries with BMS World Mission
Wed	13	The Baptist Union Council meeting in Swanwick

Thu	14	St George's Crypt
Fri	15	Chris Gnanakan
Sat	16	Katharine Widdowson, Church Treasurer
Sun	17	Headingley Morning Gathering
Mon	18	Retired people in the church
Tue	19	Cragg Gathering
Wed	20	Work with children and young people across the church
Thu	21	Sent Gathering
Fri	22	Drop-in at Cragg today
Sat	23	The Ministry Team
Sun	24	Jane Waites speaking at a church in Scotland today
Mon	25	Students in Leeds
Tue	26	Tim Jackson in Austria
Wed	27	Kate Burkett
Thu	28	Junior Church leaders and helpers
Fri	29	For those who lead our nation
Sat	30	For peace and justice across the country
Sun	31	Mothers across the church
APRIL		
Mon	1	The Yorkshire Baptist Association and our regional ministers
Tue	2	Ina and Malte von Blumroder in Germany
Wed	3	Someone you know who doesn't know Jesus
Thu	4	TLG mentors working with children in schools
Fri	5	Connect Bible Club
Sat	6	Charles Fletcher, Church Secretary

Pray with Jane Waites

	Week commencing 2 & 16 Feb, 2 & 16 Mar	Week commencing 9 & 23 Feb, 9 & 23 Mar
Sun	That I will always have: Passion for God, Love for People; Heart for Mission	
Mon	SHARE Families: educating children at home while living and working overseas	SHARE Staff: as they help families overseas and serve with their companies in different locations
Tues	Caring for Life: as I supervise one of our beneficiaries and alternate Tuesdays join Bible Study	Transformations Leeds: Living Room working with International Students in Leeds
Weds	TeachBeyond UK: as they continue to grow. For new volunteers and support for those overseas.	Training: I have good opportunities for training in the upcoming conferences and continued consolidation
Thurs	SHARE Families: whose children are away from home at boarding schools or university	Fundraising: Give thanks for my supporting partners, and pray for new ones, that I might hit my target soon
Fri	I maintain regular contact with supporters through various media	SHARE Families: serving overseas whose children are in international schools, and those in national schools
Sat	I plan "time off" and maintain good times with God - listening as well as talking!	SHARE Staff: as they travel, especially the Testing Team



BMS World News

Ditching the Chalkboard for the Computer Lab

How you're helping Nepali students.

How did you learn to use a computer? You probably sat in front of one, right? Pupils at school in the UK learn the same way. They'll probably have regular access to a laptop or personal device at home, too. It's easy. Accessible. Normal.

That's not how it is in Lamjung District in central Nepal. In Lamjung, only a small minority of students have access to a computer at home. Everyone else has to learn at school, which is difficult as schools don't have enough of them.

Students learn instead by taking down instructions put on

Thank you for giving children in Lamjung the opportunity to learn the skills they need to succeed in the modern world

the classroom chalkboard or written in a textbook – instructions for how to start a computer and work through the very basics. They memorise the steps, and then eventually get to watch a teacher put them into action on an actual computer.



If there are other computers available for students to use, they often don't work properly, or can't be used because of national power cuts. And so it's back to learning from the textbook for these young people who need IT skills to get on

in a world that is becoming increasingly reliant on technology.

BMS World Mission worker Simon Hall lives and works in Lamjung, training teachers in IT, and helping bring technology into the classroom.

In the past few months, he's helped four schools through the process of securing and installing computers, and it's hoped more will follow.

Over 100 computers have been installed in schools in Lamjung over the last two years through Simon's work. The computers are new, publicly funded, and are in rooms that are battery-powered.

The students are understandably loving the opportunity to spend more time in front of a computer, as opposed to simply reading about them. Thank you for giving children in Lamjung the opportunity to learn the skills they need to succeed in the modern world.

Your support means children in Nepal are getting the education they deserve. Head to www.bmsworldmission.org/ditching-the-chalkboard to read more of their story.

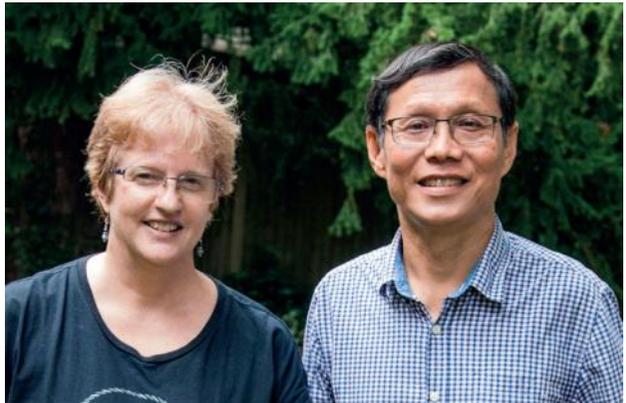
The Church Planters who need your prayer



“There were no Christians when we first came. None at all.”

Being Jesus in a village that is 100 per cent Buddhist is challenging work. But church planters Helen and Wit Boondeekhun insist on living out their faith in Wang Daeng village.

It's really difficult for people to convert to Christianity in Wang Daeng, northern Thailand. BMS World Mission workers Helen and Wit have been faithfully serving the community and trying to meet the practical needs of their new neighbours for the last two years.



Helen and Wit Boondeekhun



Basket weaving is changing lives in Wang Daeng

Creating strong relationships within the local community is especially important because many people there struggle with drug and alcohol addictions. “Recently, I found out one of the people I know, they’re under 40, they just died because of alcohol,” said Wit. Watching their friends struggle is immensely challenging for the Boondeekhuns, but they are committed to finding ways to keep the community thriving and bring people to Christ.

When they first arrived, they set up English classes. At first with just a handful of students, but now they have about 40 local students enrolled. But their first believer came through other means.

Helen and Wit are consistently living out their faith and sharing it with their new friends

“Through the basket weaving project, we got to know this lady, and she became a Christian,” said Helen. “But nobody really knows about this. She hasn’t been brave or bold enough to tell her friends yet, because it’s hard.” Even though it is a challenge, the Boondeekhuns are consistently living out their faith and sharing it with their new friends in Wang Daeng. And they believe that more ears will be opened.

Helen and Wit have become part of the community – and they’re so happy that they have seen one of their new friends come to faith. Now, they would love to see more fruit!

Want to hear more from Helen and Wit?

Head to www.bmsworldmission.org/wang-daeng to watch a video about their lives in Wang Daeng.

“The Bible is littered with stories of liars, tyrants, prostitutes, murderers and adulterers. And those are the good guys.”

James Cary, The Sacred Art of Joking

Parables for Today

Maradona and the “Hand of God”

How a conversation about football presented an opportunity to talk about the worship of one of the game’s most famous players - and Jesus. By Mark Roques.

Picture it. We are enjoying Sunday lunch with friends and the conversation turns to football. It could be Brexit but it isn’t. Before you know it, the diners are debating that pressing question. Who is the greatest footballer of all time? Jackie plumps for Pele. Frank is a Johan Cruyff fan. Susan urges us to consider Cristiano Ronaldo. Roy puts in a kind word for George Best. The conversation is noisy and passionate.

Do you go and do the washing-up

or do you remain at the table and engage in bespoke evangelism? Bespoke evangelism begins with everyday conversation. You find out what people naturally enjoy talking about, what they find enthralling, and then you build bridges into this delightful chat zone.



Today the chat zone has a sharp focus. Who is the greatest ever kicker of the pig’s bladder? Ron, a bricklayer friend, jokingly suggests Bobby Charlton

and Susan, an accountant, snorts with derision. “Bobby was a great player, if a tad bald, but let’s not pretend he was the greatest.”

It is now time to tell one of my football parables based on a true story. “In my view, Maradona was the greatest player ever. He had

incredible dribbling ability, close ball control, incisive passing and his goal against England in 1986 was sensational. And by the way did you know that thousands of people worship him as a god?"

*Our religion is football
and, like all religions, it
must have a god.*

*We will never forget the
miracles Maradona
showed on the pitch*

The guests are intrigued and probe me on the Maradona faith as they tuck into second helpings of the coq au vin. I wax lyrical:

"Worldwide there are 200,000 worshippers of the Argentinian football genius Diego Maradona. Founder of the faith, Alejandro Veron put it like this: 'Our religion is football and, like all religions, it must have a god. We will never forget the miracles Maradona showed on the pitch and the spirit he awoke in us, the fanatics.' The Church of Maradona insists that you must get baptised by slapping a football. The candidate jumps in front of a life-size cardboard cut-out of goalkeeper Peter Shilton and endeavours to recreate, by means of a left hand

punch, that exquisite loop over Shilton's head and the ball dropping into a gaping net."

The consumers of the coq au vin are alert and attentive.

"This 'baptism' celebrates the moment when Diego cheated and scored the infamous 'Hand of God' goal against England in 1986.

"The 'Ten Commandments' of the Church of Maradona are as follows:

- 1) The ball is never soiled.
- 2) Love football above all else.
- 3) Declare unconditional love for Diego and the beauty of football.
- 4) Defend the Argentina shirt.
- 5) Spread the news of Diego's miracles throughout the universe.
- 6) Honour the temples where he played and his sacred shirts.
- 7) Don't proclaim Diego as a member of any single team.
- 8) Preach and spread the principles of the Church of Maradona.
- 9) Make Diego your middle name.
- 10) Name your first son Diego. There is also a prayer to Maradona that goes like this: 'Our Diego who art on earth hallowed be thy left foot. Thy

magic come. Thy goals be remembered.”

“So there you are dear friends - is the coq au vin to your liking and how do you respond to this faith in Maradona?”

Jackie is the first to pipe up and ask: “And what does Diego think about this bizarre faith in himself?”

I am well prepared here as I unpack the parable: “Well Diego clearly approves of this faith in Himself as a god because he sometimes tele-phones his worshippers and thanks them for their adulation.”

Franks is by now fuming. “Maradona is one of the seediest guys on the planet. He once fired a rifle at photographers and he has abused alcohol, drugs and food in outrageous ways. Surely someone like that should never be worshipped!”

Having unleashed my football parable I continue full throttle. “For me Maradona was the most incredible player who ever lived. He took an ordinary team and through sheer genius and bottle made them World Champions in 1986. You can’t argue with that.”

“Here’s my take on the Church of Maradona. Atheists will say that this

faith is pure superstition - rank nonsense. Others will say ‘whatever works for you’. If you believe Maradona is the Messiah then it is ‘true for you’. The Maradona faithful are full of pious reverence for their football god. For some it’s a joke, for others it’s deadly serious.

Christians believe that it is foolish to get baptised in the name of Maradona because he is just a broken sinner like everyone else

“Christians, however, would beg to differ. Christians believe that it is foolish to get baptised in the name of Maradona because he simply isn’t the Messiah. Just a broken sinner like everyone else.

“Let me ask you three questions. Can Maradona forgive your sins? Can a certificate of baptism signed by Maradona help you out on the Day of Judgment? When Maradona dies, will he come back from the dead?”

“Isn’t the right faith staring us in the face? Jesus created the possibility of football in the beginning and declared it very good. He is the Creator and Redeemer of all things. We should worship Jesus Christ be-

cause he was the sinless Son of God who died to take away the sins of the world. Those who trust in Him will enjoy bodily resurrection in a new heaven and a new earth. Football will then be perfect with no greed, no corruption and no crafty 'Hand of God' cheating."

There was a pause around the table. And then the conversation exploded. It just got better and better. Later

that day everyone said how much they had enjoyed the coq au vin and the lively debate about Diego Maradona and the kingdom of God.

Mark Roques

Mark preaches at Cragg Hill. He is the director of RealityBites which is part of the Thinking Faith Network based in Leeds. He is the author of *The Spy, the Rat and the Bed of Nails: Creative Ways of Talking About Christian Faith*

Thank You!

A huge "thank you" for your extraordinary generosity in supporting Home Mission.

Last year saw YBA churches give more money, over £205,000, to the Home Mission Appeal than at any point in our history – each church contributing as they were able, together allowing us to provide small grants for church planting, ministers-in-training, classic missional-ministry grants and support Regional Ministry.

So many of our churches, who themselves are facing financial challenges or have benefited from Home Mission support in years past, gave over and above what was expected of them. This meant that in 2018, Yorkshire Baptist churches gave more money per member than any other Association in the country!

So, a huge thank you for the Gospel work we enable together through our generosity. Alongside this is huge appreciation from the YBA Team for the support and words of encouragement we regularly receive from folk around the Association for the ministry that you've called us to.

Rev Graham Ensor

Regional Minister and Team Leader on behalf of the YBA



yorkshirebaptist
●●● association

Ford's Focus

John's Gospel Part 22: Crossing the Ravine

John 18

John starts the chapter with the phrase “when Jesus had spoken... He went over the Brook Kidron.” (John 18.1). You may be saying “so what?”, but let's look a little closer at this phrase “over the Brook Kidron”. We know from John that Jesus was heading for a garden. What we know about this Brook Kidron is that in fact it is a ravine which only carries water after very heavy rain, it is also known as the valley of Jehoshaphat and had been a very popular place to bury the dead.

The earliest mention of “the Brook Kidron”, and possibly the most significant, is in 2 Samuel 15.23 where it is recorded that “all the people wept as they passed over.... and the king himself passed over the Brook Kidron... toward the way of the wilderness”. This verse comes in the story where King David and his people are fleeing his lawless and rebellious son, Absalom, and they have been forced out of the city of David (Jerusalem) and their only escape is over the little Brook Kidron and to disperse in an inhospitable landscape with no thought or hope of return. It's as if they were crossing from life into death through the valley of the dead.



*Jesus enables us to
live a life of hope in
a hostile and broken
world, giving hope to the
lost and pointing out
a new way to live*

So just in that little dig into the phrase “He went over the Brook Kidron” we can immediately see a sense of purpose and meaning. John wants us to see that Jesus purposed to cross over into a place that leads to the wilderness in order for us to realise that the story that is unfolding here in John 18 is not the end but the beginning of something that leads to life not to death.

Jesus will overcome this notion that life is not lost when we die and will re-

place it with a living hope, worked out by His obedience to carry the pain and humiliation of betrayal, torture and execution of a cross, so you and I can return to, and be redeemed and regenerated to our creator, to enable us to live a life of fullness and hope in a hostile and broken world, giving hope to the lost and pointing out a new way to live in Jesus.

As we read this chapter we find that it is not just about Jesus’s unjust trial but we also see two counts of betrayal by two of his disciples and towards the end we see Barabbas set free on the account that he was deemed

less of a threat to the Jews and their religious leaders than Jesus.

On the one hand we can look at this chapter and say well it was all in God’s plan, this death and sacrifice of the only begotten Son and come to the conclusion that I get to choose Christ rather than He choose me. Or we can look and see



the utter hatred, anger and rebellion of those whose lives were lived for

their own well-being and ill-gotten gains enjoyed by those who had misused, misappropriated and misrepresented him in order to gain a position of power and control.

It’s interesting to note that it is those who have the most to lose who are the most vehement in their assault on Jesus.

*We all need to be asking
“What is truth?”*

When we come to Jesus’s trial before Pilate we find that Pilate himself does not appear to be offended

by any of Jesus's words, he even utters a probing question "what is truth?" (verse 38), which is a question that all of us need to be asking, especially regarding Spiritual life.

We are all familiar with "fake news" but how many of us really dig deep into our lives and ask the real questions of life, the deep Spiritual questions that will change the course of our lives?

Jesus said:

- ASK and it will be given
- SEEK and you will find

- KNOCK and it will be opened

Are we going to be the betrayer or are we going to be the one who seeks out the truth about a man who claimed to be God? Jesus willingly submitted himself to death and who crossed over the "Brook Kidron" so we could experience life in all its fullness, life eternal, a life that the creator intended for all humanity.

Steve Ford

Headingley Gathering
blog.steveford.org



"In my own prayer life, and as part of my daily discipline I pray in tongues every day - not as an occasional thing, but as part of daily prayer... I expect to hear from God through other people with words of knowledge or prophecies - some of which I am unsure about, others I can sense there being something of the Spirit of God."

Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury
Premier Christian Radio 18/1/19

The Bright Field

*I have seen the sun break through
to illuminate a small field
for a while, and gone my way
and forgotten it. But that was the
pearl of great price, the one field that had
treasure in it. I realise now
that I must give all that I have
to possess it. Life is not hurrying*

*on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seemed as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.*

R S Thomas



*Terrible weather for the wedding today.
Wish I could do something about it.
Unfortunately, I'm in sales not management.*



Rev Giles Fraser @giles_fraser 1/12/18

Church Noticeboard

Host Wanted!

For all my Leeds area SPBC friends here's an opportunity to be a host to 1 or 2 Italian teenagers in July for two weeks. They will be on a language course at Leeds Beckett University (at Beckett Park site). It should be an easy bus ride to Beckett Park site and you should be able to offer breakfast and evening meal for the two weeks. Students are in school all day and a Saturday trip usually - please contact lizcrathern@gmail.com for further details. We have done it for a few years and it is great. We have made some lovely Italian friends. You get paid enough to cover board and lodging.



Liz Crathern

Gospel Choir

I am putting together a choir for an Easter presentation on or around Palm Sunday, hopefully drawing on other local churches. Before you commit we are having an evening for you (yes YOU!) to give it a try. The first session will be on Monday 4 February at 7.30 at Headingley with further practices in February and March. No previous experience needed. No need to be able to read music. Enthusiasm essential! Further information from me at brackleyjones@outlook.com



Colin Jones

Fairtrade Fortnight

25 February – 10 March

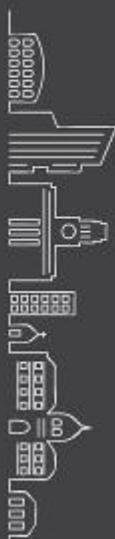


[www.facebook.com/
spbaptistchurch](http://www.facebook.com/spbaptistchurch)



Pray for the “Known” Mission with the Leeds Christian Unions 4-8 February

7.30PM // RILEY SMITH LT // LEEDS UNIVERSITY UNION



EVENING EVENTS

MONDAY

KNOWN FOR BEING REAL

Searching for authenticity in a world of filters
An evening of music from Raven and the Rain, DIY cheesecake, a short talk, and an interview with ex Gladiator Warren Furman

TUESDAY

KNOWN FOR BEING SOMEBODY

Searching for significance in a world of 7 billion
Join us for pick n' mix, a thought-provoking short talk, and an interview with sports personality Si Poole

WEDNESDAY

KNOWN FOR BEING FREE

Searching for fulfillment in a world of never enough
Mocktails and live jazz, with an insightful short talk and an interview with Leeds student Imogen Scott

THURSDAY

KNOWN FOR BEING GOOD

Searching for justice in an unjust world
Enjoy homemade cakes and puddings, a short talk, and an interview with John Kirkby, founder of CAP

FRIDAY

KNOWN FOR BEING LOVED

Searching for lasting love in a temporary world
Join us for chocolate fondue, a short talk, and hear from ex-paramilitary member Billie McCurrie

LEEDS CHRISTIAN UNIONS

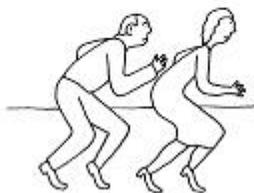
@KNOWN_LEEDS

THE CHURCH HALL

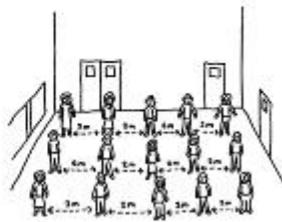
CONDITIONS OF HIRE



FILL IN THE PAPERWORK



ARRIVE AND LEAVE QUIETLY



DON'T CREAM TOO MANY PEOPLE IN



DON'T STICK ANYTHING ON THE WALLS



STACK THE CHAIRS AS YOU FOUND THEM



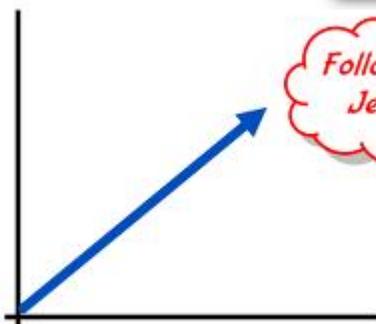
CLEAN EVERYTHING UP

Proverbs 10:12

CHRISTIANITY EXPLODED

Love

Hate



Stirring up
Conflict

Covering
all wrongs

Following
Jesus

#17



Passion for God
Love for People • Heart for Mission

*South Parade meets as four Gatherings across Leeds: in **Headingley** and **Cragg** on a Sunday Morning, and as **Sent** at Headingley on Sunday evenings. **Connect** meets in the community in Bramley. We run a CAP Debt Centre and have a partnership with the Arabic Christian Fellowship. To find out more, visit the website or contact the church office.*

Senior Minister

Peter Morden

Associate Pastor for
Youth and Young Adults
Children's Worker
Associate Pastor
Church Administrator
Under 5s Co-ordinator

Nathan Shipley

Heather McLeen

Geoff King

Kate Churchill

Kate Burkett

Elders

Steve Burras, Barbara Crosse,
Freeman Dumenu,
Charles Fletcher (Church Secretary),
John Pelham, Tim Rowe, Joe Walsh

South Parade Baptist Church
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info@spbc.org.uk

T H A N K S

“

*Jesus said,
“Let the children come to me and do not stop them,
because the Kingdom of heaven
belongs to such as these.”*

”

Matthew 19.14 (GNT)

intouch

 **SOUTH PARADE
BAPTIST CHURCH**