

the bridge monthly bulletin



October 2024

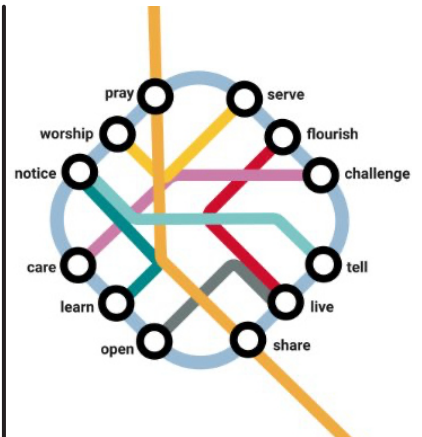
First of all, I want to thank you for the warm welcome that you offered my family and me. It was lovely to see so many of you at the welcome service and I've enjoyed meeting those in the churches where I've led worship.

I'm slowly exploring the area more fully. Malton, you will know, and every poster and website reminds you, is a self-proclaimed food capital. I have already discovered lots of delis and cafés selling some excellent food. It made me reflect on my food history. My childhood meals were wholesome, meat and two-veg traditional fayre. We didn't eat out much, save for the occasional fish and chips, but when we did, it would be at restaurants that offered similar English staples. From Secondary school and particularly at University I began to encounter other cuisines, such as Italian pasta, Chinese rice-based dishes and Indian curries. Being fairly confident in the kitchen I learned to cook them. When returning home from Uni I'd prepare these recipes for my family. My Dad although enjoying them, consistently asserted that a meal without potatoes didn't fill him. My brothers, however, valued this wider repertoire. Having left home, I note that my parents' meals have largely returned to their previous pattern, although they now enjoy more diversity when eating out. Likewise, my cooking has become a subset of that Uni experimentation and this inherited fayre.

My faith experience mirrors this. Brought up in a small village chapel, I largely experienced traditional Methodist worship, a five-hymn sandwich and occasional communion from the worship book. At University I was introduced to choruses, extempore praying, bible studies, times of meditative silence, creative liturgies, Taizé and Iona worship. I got to know people from evangelical and charismatic backgrounds, with their different approaches and hunger for scripture. This increased breadth has continued to develop over the ensuing years, with an ever-increasing array of spiritual practices, biblical approaches, and denominational experiences from which I draw to sustain and nourish myself.

Our Methodist Way of Life reminds us that our worship is one of at least twelve dimensions of our discipleship through which we and those whom we seek to share our faith, encounter God. It's evident to me already that Ryedale's Methodist churches offer some diversity in both theology and approaches to worship and this, I believe, is a gift to us. Some of you already seek a varied diet to sustain and nourish yourselves spiritually, attending several churches to do so, while others gravitate to a narrow and specific expression of worship. I hope that, as a circuit, we might build upon our natural diversity, both in the breadth of spirituality we offer, and also in making it easier to discover and access. This will hopefully leave us with options to enhance our spiritual diets but also develop more opportunities for those yet to recognise their relationship with God.

Rev Andy



**Let us depend above
all things, O Christ,
on your grace,
desire in all things
your love,
rejoice at all times in
your presence
and delight through
all undertakings in
your glory.**

*John William Fletcher
John Wesley's
designated successor
(1729 - 1785)*



LECTIONARY REFLECTIONS *Ann Ibbotson*

6 October Read: Mark:10:13-16

**Jesus blesses the little children.
“Grown-ups Know best!”**

Whether they said it or not, our parents probably agreed with the above remark, and did not consult us, as small children, about many of the things that affected us, holidays, visits to Auntie X, meal times and bedtimes etc.

Mostly we accepted their way of doing things - though we did try it on at bedtime! After all, although we could not have put it into words, we depended on them - for food, shelter, protection, discipline and hugs, - and, by and large, found them trustworthy. We can imagine now how chaotic, dangerous and unhappy our lives would have been, if we had had everything the way we thought it should be, at 18 months, or 3 years, or 5, or 7, or...

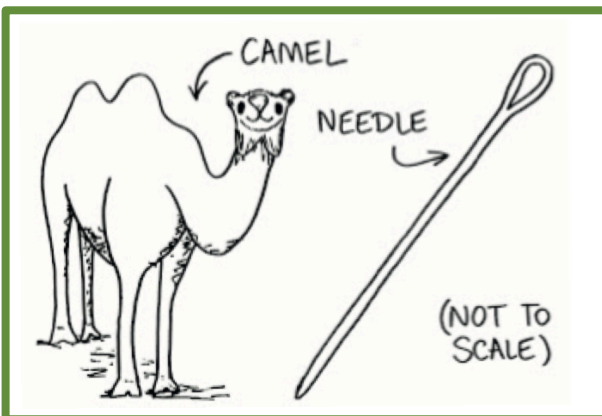
Jesus said: “Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God (i.e. God’s way of doing things), like a child, will not enter it.” But, if we do accept God’s way of doing things, then we shall grow up healthily, both emotionally and spiritually, and live life as it was meant to be lived, in times of trouble and in times of joy.

PRAY Confess the times when you rebel against God’s way – he forgives. Pray too for children who suffer because their parents do not do their best for them.



<https://www.somuchbible.com/bible/mark/>

13 October Read: Mark 10:17-31 A rich man goes sadly away.



“If I Were a Rich man...”

- I wouldn't know what to do with it.
- I would have lots of influence and power.
- I would buy all the things I ever wanted.
- I could at least be miserable in comfort.
- I would put it away for a rainy day.
- I would save it for my old age.
- I would leave it all to my children in my will.
- I would feel that it was a heavy responsibility.
- I would give much of it away to needy people or causes.

I would have to be very careful lest money and possessions became more important to me than serving God.

John Wesley said, “When I have money, I get rid of it as quickly as possible, lest it find a way into my heart.” What would Jesus want you to say and do?

PRAY Confess the times when you rebel against God’s way – he forgives. Pray too for children who suffer because their parents do not do their best for them. Consider prayerfully, not so much what you would do if you were very rich, but what you are doing now, with the money and possessions you have got.



“There are no borders, no prison walls, no doors that are closed when we pray”
- BROTHER ANDREW, FOUNDER OF OPEN DOORS

JOIN AN OPEN DOORS PRAYER GROUP

Millions of Christians around the world face daily persecution; some are beaten, imprisoned and even killed for their faith. Open Doors is committed to come alongside our persecuted church family to help them to stand and shine as beacons of hope in their nations. Your prayers can change the world. Join an Open Doors prayer group and take your stand with Christians who are risking it all to follow Jesus.

PRAYER GROUP LEADER: Claire Robinson

TIMINGS: Monday 21 October at 2pm at ERCC , 62-64 Castlegate, Malton

CONTACT: 01653 648207

 **OpenDoors**

opendoorsuk.org

ST AELRED'S PILGRIM TRAIL



Thus says the Lord:
Stand at the
crossroads,
and look, and ask for
the ancient paths,
where the good way lies;
and walk in it,
and find rest for your souls.

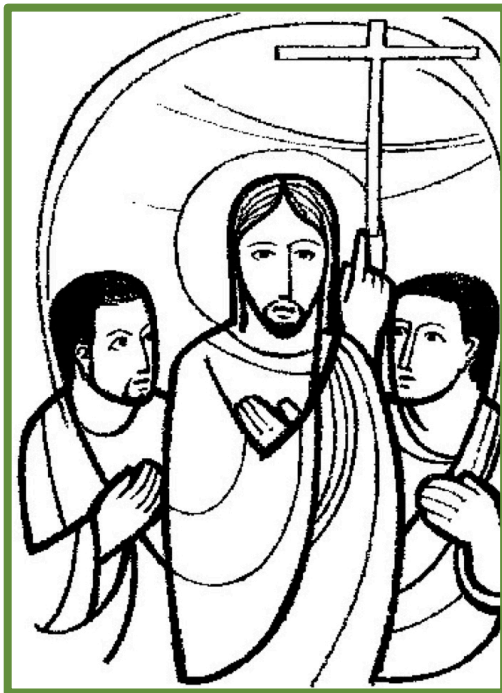
JEREMIAH 6:16



You may not be aware, but in my other role as Assistant Chair, I laid the gauntlet at synod back in April, for each church in the district to develop a walk from their church. This was inspired by a colleague of mine in West Yorkshire, who was offering a monthly, spiritual walk for his circuit and the Peak Methodist churches, who have developed a pilgrim trail with accommodation <https://peakwesleyway.com>. You can find all these walks, on the Kairos website <https://www.kairosmovement.org.uk/walking-the-way/>. I was informed by Rev Graham, on the day of synod, that he was intending to walk on his sabbatical, and I will be adding his walks to the website when he has verified them. He also mentioned that Mel was involved in developing a pilgrim way 'St Aelred's Pilgrim Trail' <https://www.saintaelredspilgrimtrail.com/>. It includes several of the churches North of Helmsley. It was delightful to be invited to take part in its launch. I joined enthusiastic church members, and walkers for the latter half of the day, walking from Cold Kirby to Rievaulx. Rievaulx chapel offered us a warm welcome and refreshments after which we held a beautiful service in the Abbey. We were joined by horse riders, who had their own version of the route, and a very fit individual who had run all 41 miles of the route on the day. I understand they now plan 'petal walks', ie circular walks around each church that will be added later. It truly is a remarkably well designed site and set of materials to guide you. There is an accompanying Pilgrim trail guidebook, and stamps at each church, to record your visit. I'd love, to extend this idea and do the same for the churches across our patch. Do explore the walk, but my gauntlet challenge remains. Can we develop a walk around or between each of our beautiful churches? **Rev Andy**

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20 October Read: Mark 10:35-45

James' and John's request. "too many chiefs...?"

We've heard the story of James and John asking for the top places when Jesus "came into his glory" many times. So it's no surprise to us, that Jesus went on to say that it is better to serve others than to be served; and that he had come to be the servant of all.

However, the idea, that serving is better than being served, directly contradicts our usual attitude.

We admire the ambitious worker who wants to have power and influence in his place of work – and wonder what's wrong with those who don't. This attitude is common in society and – despite Jesus' repeated comments – can be found in the church too. It's a sad reflection on our faith.

Sadder still, I think, is the situation I have come across in some churches, where it is extremely difficult to find anybody to take on the smallest responsibility or join a committee. They certainly don't seek power and influence – but neither do they seek to serve.

PRAY: Why not ask Jesus, the Servant of all, to keep close to you whenever you are going to do a job in the church, whether it's reading the Gospel lesson or cleaning the loo?

27 October Read: Mark 10:46-52 Bartimaeus receives his sight.

An example to follow.

Usually, if he's telling a healing story, Mark focuses on the words and actions of Jesus. After all, it's Jesus he's writing about. However, in this story, much of the interest centres on Bartimaeus instead. Obviously, he is being held up as an example for us to follow.

Notice: -

Bartimaeus recognises how needy he is;
He recognises in Jesus his only hope;
He calls to him;
He persists despite opposition;
He responds immediately when Jesus calls;
His sight restored, he follows Jesus.

Pray: Ask yourself: -

Do I recognise my own neediness?
Do I see in Jesus my only hope?
Do I look to him for healing and wholeness?
Do I persist in my prayer?

And when I hear his call,
do I respond immediately and follow him?

Turn your answers into prayer.



<https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/article/healing-bartimaeus>

FAITH-ROOTED COMMUNITY ORGANISING



Circuit Stewards Kate and Julia plan to attend this course at Cliff College on 4-6 April 2025, as part of a Ryedale team. If there are those who would like to join them, please let Revd Andy know. The up-front cost is £50 but this is refunded following the course.

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for further information



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