



# Methodist Women in Britain Darlington District

October 2024



At the beginning of a new Methodist year it is good to look ahead as we look forward to everything that is to come, as well as to reflect on past achievements.

This Newsletter includes an up-date on our magnificent fund-raising total for *Bake for Ukraine* and introduces our new District project closer to home, Hope Church in East Cleveland.



Our themes for the District MWiB President's Evening at Great Ayton on 18th July were "Love, Joy, Peace and Hope".

"Rooted and Grounded in Love" we share our faith and commitment to justice for all as we witness to our local communities in everything we do as Methodist Women in our church groups and beyond; please continue to share your news of everything that you're involved with locally, either long-established or new initiatives – this will help to encourage others who are maybe thinking about trying something different but are unsure how to take the first tentative steps or how to refresh something that has been going for some time and is in need of a boost.

We meet together joyfully in celebration several times a year; it's always good to get together and to catch up with friends old and new.

Our Peace Poles gave us all pause for thought as they remind us of the need to continue to pray for peace - there are more than 110 ongoing conflicts around our world today, some long-standing and others just beginning, all of them inflicting pain, death and destruction, impacting on many innocent families, men, women and children, causing loss of life and of livelihoods, homes and sometimes whole communities.

Watch this space as we move forward together in hope; the District MWiB Committee is working together with Helle Sewell, District Evangelism and Community Engagement Enabler to take us onward into 2025 and well beyond.

*Pamela Stenson*



## Fund raising 2023/2024

You are all amazing!! A very BIG thank you to everyone who so generously supported our fund raising in the last year. We have been able to send £1,000 to Tabitha House in Bolivia and £4,200 to *Bake for Ukraine*.

## Fund raising September 2024 to August 2025



This year we will be fundraising for Hope Church which meets in the old Coop Buildings in Loftus, East Cleveland. Emma Dacey the Lay Worker for the project came to our meeting at Great Ayton and introduced the project to us and the work they do.

*Hope4EastCleveland* is a project set up by the Lay Worker for the Cleveland and Danby Circuit. It aims to support the local community offering a variety of services and activities supporting children, young people and families including; weekly youth groups and kid's clubs, holiday clubs and activities, toddler groups, community grocery, food bank, holiday hunger relief, and a school uniform bank amongst other activities support with debt management and mentoring and support programmes.

More information can be found on their website:

<https://edackyo5.wixsite.com/hopeeastcleveland>

In September Emma sent us an update:

'We are starting to get back into the Autumn programme following a very busy summer of mission. Our weekly groups and sessions will be returning in the Autumn, I have attached a handy guide for our 'Whats on' for you to have a look at. You are welcome to come along and drop in, may I suggest the welcome space sessions are a great place to come and see what is going on.

The summer mission has seen around 97 young people involved in

Christian based activities over the summer break, where we have been able to engage and share the gospel message. We are now looking to build on these relationships into the Autumn term.

A big push for us this Autumn is prayer; we are looking at how we can develop intentional prayer opportunities at the margins and in a variety of ways. This will be through our weekly groups but also setting up prayer spaces.

In terms of support, we are looking at developing more opportunities to engage with young people and families, to be able to share both hospitality and Gospel alongside each other. Funding for these would be very much appreciated, such as our first light party, we were hoping to have young people come into the building on Halloween to share in the message of Christ being in the light. This is alongside our family festival around a harvest theme, where families often have their first engagement with Bible teaching and stories.

We will also be holding our Christmas mission in mid to late December, this year is *Step into Narnia*, and we are praying more schools, groups and families engage this year. We are setting an ambitious target of sharing the Christmas Gospel message with over 500. Prayers for this work would be very much appreciated. I also encourage you as groups to book to come to *Step into Narnia* and join us this Christmas.

Also as the news of the rising energy price cap comes into the news, pray for our community grocery over the winter, as we know demand increases at this time of year. We are now supporting over 300 households each week, which has a huge cost to the church.

I would love to come out to speak to groups, and can do this where possible around work. I am available on Mondays and Wednesday usually during the day, in the evenings it's Tuesday and Thursday. Most of all, please pray, hold us as a team, our families and young people, in your prayers.'

*God Bless  
Emma Dacey  
Community Development Worker*



Cleveland & Danby Circuit  
The Methodist Church  
Diocese of Cleveland, LE10 9BE

## Weekly What's On Guide - Autumn 2024

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Community Grocery & Welcome Space 10am till 11.30am	Community Grocery & Welcome Space 10am till 11.30am	Rooted Home Ed Group 1pm till 2.30pm	Baby & Toddlers 10am till 11.30am	Community Grocery & Welcome Space 10am till 11.30am
Messy Mondays Preschoolers 1pm till 2.30pm	Prayer & Bible Study with Ann 10.15am till 11.45	Rainbows Girls aged 4-7 5pm till 6pm	Community Grocery & Welcome Space 1pm till 2.30pm	Friday Youthie Reception to Year 4 6pm till 7.30pm
Harvest Family Festival Monday 28th October 12noon till 2pm		Brownies Girls aged 7-10 6pm till 7.30pm		Friday Youthie Year 5 to Year 9 7.30pm till 9pm
Light Party - Ages 7-12 Thursday 31st October 5pm till 7pm		Guides Girls aged 10-14 7.30pm till 9pm		
		Rangers Girls aged 14-17 7.30pm till 9pm		

Old Co-op Building, High Street, Loftus, TS13 4HW  
Hope4eastcleveland@gmail.com  
@Hopechurcheastcleveland



Save the Date  
14-16 MARCH 2025

## Wells in the Wilderness

### • New Area Retreat

- Ministeraces
- Facilitator
- Barbara Easton
- Vice President of Conference 2021-22
- WFMUCW President Britain & Ireland



## Memorials

Since our last newsletter we have been informed that some MWiB members have died. Shared memories of these women are reproduced below

### **Remembering Ruth Willett: 6 March 1940 – 5 August 2024**



Ruth joined the congregation at Barnard Castle Methodist Church upon her retirement from nursing in 1998 when she moved to her bungalow at Stainton. Ruth had risen to the top in her career of nursing, a Matron and later Head of Nursing Services at Pinderfields Hospital, Wakefield.

Ruth was a kind-hearted no-nonsense Yorkshire lass who quickly got to the nub of a problem. She quickly identified loneliness issues amongst older people in her neighbourhood and congregation and so regularly opened her home offering a delicious homecooked meal and fellowship. Her baking was renowned, she was the first to instigate a monthly Sunday service followed by afternoon tea.

For many years Ruth was my prayer partner and taught me much by her deep faith and caring concern for others, she was a prayer warrior. Our long telephone conversations always finished with a chat about dogs, who she adored, especially her favourite Beagle.

Many of you will remember Ruth from Minsteracres, she never missed prior to Covid, always a bright smile and a cheery word for everyone. It was during the pandemic that Ruth's health failed, unable to care for herself, she spent the last four years in a care home at Bishop Auckland. She will be sadly missed by those she tutored and mentored, family, friends, neighbours and her church family.

## Remembering Margaret Wearmouth: 24 November 1938 – 25 July 2024



I was honoured to speak at Margaret's Thanksgiving Service on 15th August about her role in the various women's movements within the Methodist Church over the last fifty plus years in the Darlington District listed below.

1976-78 Darlington District Young Wives President

1980's Secretary Darlington District Women's Fellowship

In 1987 Network was founded and Margaret became Darlington District Network Secretary, ten years later becoming Darlington District Network President 1997-98.

Margaret always had a passion for Women's Work and Mission becoming the District Money Secretary over thirty years ago. She understood how vital our giving is to the Mission Fund and over the last ten years took the lead in the Darlington Circuit, planning the Easter Offering Service, to support Mission Partners Overseas. In late February of this year she called a planning meeting and intended to take the leaders role, however a fall just before Easter resulting in a broken hip, prevented her from taking part. Margaret's fall and subsequent operation affected her heart, which sadly did not recover.

Personal tributes were sent by many women from across the District who had worked with Margaret and valued her mentoring and gentle persuasive ways, friendship and Christian love. A Local Preacher for over 25 years she will be sorely missed, not only by her husband John, their four children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, but by many congregations and our MWiB sisterhood.

*Debs Coggrave  
Area Trustee Cumbria, Darlington, Newcastle*

## Remembering Dorothy Hutton



There are many Church and Circuit Committee members who will recall Dorothy's many years of involvement with Women's Work, Network and MWiB at local level.

Since the late 1950s and early 1960s, Dorothy was constantly active in the Methodist Church in Redcar, within the Circuit and the wider Darlington District.

Dorothy and her husband Len joined West Dyke Church in Redcar, where she remained a member until it closed in 2001 and she then transferred to Marske Church. Dorothy was a Church Steward at West Dyke and also very much involved in the various Women's meetings and organisations, including Women's Work and the Ladies Fellowship meeting on a Tuesday evening. The Women's Own group for older ladies met on an afternoon.

Since Women's Network of the Methodist Church came into being in 1987 and was succeeded by Methodist Women in Britain in July 2011, Dorothy was involved one way or another at Church, Circuit and District level throughout. She was Circuit Secretary: she was District Network Secretary and continued as District MWiB Minutes Secretary until 2019 – yes, 2019 when she was well into her 90s; she helped to run the Marske Women's Network group; she attended and no doubt organised mid-week conferences for Network and later MWiB at Brockley Hall in Saltburn and then latterly weekends at Minsteracres.

Sheila Jones told me:

I have been thinking about Dorothy Hutton and the one thing that always comes to mind about her is how efficient she was! I know that she knew and taught shorthand but the speed with which she took the minutes at any meeting, and joined in with



the conversation at the same time, and then typed them up and sent them out was just incredible. She was always humble about it, though, and said that anybody could do it really, if they tried. She never saw it as a special gift.

Dorothy also made arrangements for and supported the ecumenical Women's World Day of Prayer annual services.

Throughout all of this time, Dorothy continued to support and encourage those alongside whom she held office; indeed the aims of Network were to encourage, to equip and to enable – qualities that Dorothy herself embodied. Always ready to lend a hand, to write an encouraging note and to listen and advise. Dorothy was supportive and encouraging, enthusiastic about so many things as we've heard and most of all, it was agreed by everyone I've spoken to – she was somebody who was very good at getting things done – and done right! And I believe that everything was done in faith and for love of Her Lord and Saviour.

I conclude with these words from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians 2: 7-10 “Made alive in Christ” from The Message translation: *Now God has us where He wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all His idea, and all His work. All we do is trust Him enough to let Him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join Him in the work He does, the good work He has got ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.*

And from Ephesians 3: 20+21 (NIV): *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

## Minsteracres 2024

Back in the Spring we met at Minsteracres and shared an overnight retreat. Mrs Tricia Mitchell led the time of teaching, prayer, activities and fellowship. Two of the ladies attending wrote poems:

### **Jesus in Focus**

It happened suddenly  
From a jumble of purple and green  
Came the word.  
And so, from a shadow  
From confusion of symbols  
From lines etched on a page  
He emerges  
His presence seen and known  
In representations of life,  
Fabric seas and sand  
Fish, shells  
Stones and words.  
It all becomes real.  
New life emerges  
The hard work of belief  
Recedes with the purple shadows  
The doubts and confusion  
Besetting and upsetting  
Fade with the risen son.  
*Anonymous*

### **The Road to Emmaus**

I feel so disappointed  
I just don't know what to say  
I'm hiring so much inside  
Why did it happen this way?  
  
I honestly don't know how  
I will ever understand  
Oh, but I must remember  
Everything by God is planned.

So, are you on the same road?  
Yes, to Emmaus today  
Can you not feel his presence?  
Oh please stop, it's time to pray.

Ask our Saviour to fill you.  
With the Holy Spirit too  
I can guarantee you'll feel  
his presence and love for you.

*Mrs Janet Harbisher  
Spennymoor Church*

I met Mary in the marketplace  
Her eyes red-rimmed and sore.  
'They murdered him!' she wailed at me.  
'They slaughtered my dear Lord!'

I met Thomas in a busy street,  
He looked like he'd not slept.  
'Didn't they understand just who he was?'  
'I can't believe it!' he wept.

I met Mary down the high street.  
She was buying fragrant spice.  
'It's the least I can do for him,' she sobbed,  
'Preparing the body of Christ.'

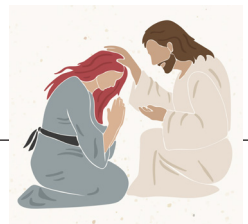
I met Thomas round the corner.  
Weighed down, his tears undried.  
'They've all seen him!' he blubbered  
'But I don't believe them! He died!'

I met Mary running through the garden,  
Laughing and full of life.  
'I can hardly believe it!' she called to me.  
'My Jesus is alive!'

I met Thomas leaping down the steps.  
'It's absolutely true!' he said.  
'Jesus is back! I've seen the wounds.  
He's risen from the dead!'

I met Jesus in the garden.  
'Daughter,' he smiled, 'Now's the time.'  
'Let's walk together and talk together.  
For you're precious, you're safe and  
you're mine!'

*Josie  
March 2024*



## Bishop Auckland Methodist Church Homemakers 60th Anniversary Weekend

Our first Homemakers meeting started in February 1964 with the help from the then Minister's wife, Mrs Foss, so our 60 year journey began. In the earlier years, the meetings included a crèche for the younger children and we still continue to meet fortnightly on Wednesday afternoons. Our meetings are always opened with Devotions led by one of our Vice Presidents, followed by a guest speaker.



Our wonderful 60th Anniversary Celebration began on Saturday 18th May when 40 members, including past members who had travelled from various parts of the country, gathered together for a Devotional Service in Church.

Many memories were shared including photographs showing the varied things we have done as a group, such as outings and coffee days held in our homes.

Afterwards we all enjoyed a beautiful afternoon tea with a celebration cake cut by one of our longest serving members, Mrs Ellenor McDougall. Our weekend continued on Sunday morning, 19th May, when all the Homemakers along with other Church members, attended a Celebration Service in Church.



A wonderful weekend was had by all celebrating 60 years of fellowship and friendship which shall be reminisced about in the years to come.

*Audrey Dinning / Olive Ingram*

## LAMENT

In 2010 Alan and I visited Ripon Cathedral which was hosting the Holocaust Memorial art installation called *6 Million+, Every Person Counts*. The artwork is made up of six million buttons, each one representing someone killed in the Holocaust.



Last October we were horrified at the actions of Hamas against Israel. While we were still trying to take in what happened on October 7th in Israel, we were immediately faced with having to grasp what Israel has done to Gaza in response.

This is my personal response to events, my lament to express my grief. I am often tongue-tied, struggling to put what I feel into words, but earlier this year I had the idea of how to put it into something visual. I decided to use beads stitched to strips of ribbon. Each bead represents a person killed, a beloved child of God, made in

God's image. It isn't finished, but I am not sure what 'finished' will look like.

Other people's words are often helpful and last Sunday preachers at the morning and evening service both chose hymn 103 from *Singing the Faith*. Verse 2 says:

God is Love: and he, enfolding  
all the world in one embrace,  
with unfailing grasp is holding  
every child of every race.  
And when human hearts are breaking  
under sorrow's iron rod,  
then they find that selfsame aching  
deep within the heart of God.

*Heather Coustick*

## Celebrating 50 years of Womens' Ministry at Elm Ridge Church



On the 14th September the Darlington District celebrated 50 years of the ordination of women as Ministers.

The service of celebration not only recognised this anniversary, but also celebrated the vital part that women in many and varied roles have played in the past and the present.

The address was given by Revd Dr Liz Kent Director of the Wesley Study Centre at St John's Durham.

MWiB had been invited to take part and Debs Coggrave gave a talk, she opened her talk by reminding every woman that was at the service that she was a member of MWiB. Her presentation gave a history of MWiB, local, national and in Europe and Worldwide. She included references to our groups and events in the District and used photographs of our meetings, and told everyone how we always had a project that we fund raised for.

Debs also reminded the meeting that MWiB gave every Presbyter/local preacher/member a free gift every year, the gift of the Easter Offering Service.



The service of celebration was followed by a fabulous afternoon tea prepared by Lindy, Cath and Hazel.

## Future Events

### **Advent Service**

Friday, 6th December 2024 at Barnard Castle Methodist Church, Flatts Road, Barnard Castle. DL12 8PW. There is no parking at the church although you can drop off passengers. Refreshments from 10am, the service starts at 10:45am. This is a morning only event and there are no refreshments after the service. There are however lots of cafes near by.

### **World Day of Prayer**

7th March 2025, please support an event near you.

### **Area MWiB Minsteracres Retreat**

14th to 16th March 2025. Facilitator Mrs Barbara Easton. This event is an opportunity to meet with women from the Newcastle and Cumbria Methodist Districts. More details will be available nearer the time.

### **Spring Event**

Wednesday 14th May 2025 at Bishop Auckland Methodist Church, 21 Cockton Hill Road, Bishop Auckland. DL14 6EN. Refreshments from 10am, service at 10:45am. Please bring your own lunch, refreshments are provided. Afternoon session 1:15 to 3pm.

### **Summer Afternoon**

Wednesday 25th June 2025 at Marske-by-the-Sea Methodist Church at Hummershill Lane, Marske. TS11 7DH. Singalong with afternoon tea from 3:30 - 5:30pm.

# Darlington District Contacts

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Vice President: Vacant

Newsletter Editor: Vacant

Minsteracres: Vacant

Project: Vacant

If you want to know more about the vacancies or wish to contribute to the Co-ordinating Team please get in touch with one of the above.

If you have ideas for the 2025/26 programme or wish to host an event, please let us know.