



# *Newsletter*



## *Spring 2026*



Epworth, Scunthorpe & Gainsborough  
**Methodist Circuit**



FROM THE MANSE



Dear Friends,

Have you ever said or heard it said – ‘I’ve already told you about this...’? Jesus first disciples could not claim that he hadn’t told them what was coming around the corner in Jerusalem : ‘From that time on Jesus began to

explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.’ (Matthew 16 v 21). They had heard what Jesus said with their ears, but they had not fully taken on board what this meant in their hearts. They knew intellectually that Jesus was about to be taken from them and to Father God, but it didn’t seem real until it actually happened. Jesus first disciples are not the only ones to experience this phenomenon. Sometimes there are things that we don’t, maybe cannot, understand until we have lived through and experienced them. For example, at our Meeting at Ashby on 25th February and at March Circuit Meeting, Circuit Leadership Team will be sharing more about pastoral cover across the Circuit from September 2026, but we will all be learning more about the reality of the circuit having 2 instead of 3 full-time ordained staff for many months after Rev Paul ‘sits down’/retires. Likewise possible changes in the District will in due course be outlined in proposals from District Working groups but, it will still take time and care to work out what they mean in practice even if District Synod votes for change.

How does our journey on the Way of the Cross and ultimately to the empty tomb, lead us in such times where we have only a general outline of the road ahead? Guess what, an Easter faith is not so much about answers as encountering the mystery. An Easter faith has travelled along the desert pathways of Lent to reach its destination. An Easter faith is perhaps less about ‘what’ and more about ‘who’. The Lent and Easter seasons heighten our awareness of those we

journey with – we journey with Jesus and we journey alongside other disciples. Sensing our unity in prayer and witness is something we want to encourage as a circuit. We are in the process of inviting chapels to offer prayer thanksgivings and concerns that can be shared in Sunday worship across the circuit. (Yes, I do know that worship is a 7 day activity too!). We will probably focus on 2 chapels per week. ***We also invite you to share in the Circuit Quiet Day on Tuesday 10th March by visiting the chapels that are open or by using prayer materials made available.***

- 7am at Old Brumby***
- 9 am at Winteringham***
- 11 am at Gunness***
- 1 pm at Owston Ferry***
- 3 pm at Lea***
- 5 pm at Laughton***
- 7 pm at Yaddlethorpe***

*May we discover more of the reality of God’s grace as we journey through Lent and beyond.*

Blessings,  
Rev Vicki



***Thoughts from Mother Julian 1342-1416***

*He wants us to know that He keeps us safe through good and ill.*

*The best prayer is to rest in the goodness of God, knowing that goodness can reach down to our lowest depth of need.*

♥ ***From “Who Cares?” – Edited and compiled by Mary Oakley***



## Ministers day off

**Rev Vicki Atkinson**

**Saturday**

**Rev Paul Braidell**

**Friday**

**Rev Debbie Caulk**

**Friday**

## **Ashby Wesley Church** **1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday every month**

*If you're feeling sad, lonely or at a loss  
after a bereavement...*



*... come along and have a cup of coffee  
and a chat.*

**2pm to 3pm**

***Everyone is welcome to join us.***



## News From Laughton

It is pleasing to report that our Christmas celebrations went very well. We enjoyed our traditional and well-attended candle-lit Carol Service expertly led by Rev Paul Braisdell with refreshments afterwards. A few days later there was a short Christmas Day service led by a local Laughton resident. At the beginning of January, Rev Paul again led a service, this time assisted by Bronwen. It was an informal affair of mainly older hymns taken from the Methodist Hymn Book and was enjoyed by all. Paul and Bronwen showed off their culinary skills (mainly Bronwen's I suspect) by sharing a Christmas cake with the assembled worshippers.

We are pleased to be part of the forthcoming Circuit Prayer Day on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March when the church will be open at 5pm to allow worshippers from all over the Circuit to visit churches they would not normally attend. We are hoping to open our doors to several new faces on that day, before they move on to Yaddlethorpe at 6pm.

We then look forward to Easter. For the first time in quite a while, Easter Day falls on a Sunday when Laughton is scheduled to have a service. So, the 5<sup>th</sup> of April is keenly awaited. The 4pm service is again to be taken by Rev Paul and everyone is very welcome to come along and enjoy the occasion.

The renovation of the former schoolroom is still not progressing as quickly as we would have liked. We have 'hit a wall' in as much as we now need planning permission and also the input of an architect. Many thanks to Rev Paul for his down-to-earth advice, to Rev Vicki for her assistance and expertise of all things Methodist and to Alison Godfrey, Lincolnshire Methodist District Officer, for her technical knowledge and advice. We are in touch with an architect who will

undertake the necessary work as soon as he can. Meanwhile, the staff at West Lindsey District Council, who agreed to provide the bulk of the monies for the schoolroom renovation, know 'the ball is in our court' and have confirmed they are happy to wait for the work to be completed.

I wish I was equally happy!

*Kevin Wilbur*



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## Christingle kids service at Crowle

Members of Crowle & Ealand Methodist Church were entertained by a group of talented local youngsters who simply wowed us at our annual Christingle Service in December.....what a performance it was!

Despite a damp, cold and dismal evening, the downstairs of our Fieldside Chapel was packed whilst more visitors watched from the upper floor gallery which, sadly, is rarely used these days.

The children from Classes 3 and 4 at Crowle Primary School helped to raise a total of £145 from the collection which will now help less fortunate kids via the Action For Children charity.

Pupils performed Christmas songs and poetry as part of this special service and were greeted with rapturous applause.

There was also a surprise for the youngsters as 2 of our members, lay preacher Denise Edwards and Belinda McCrea performed a humorous sketch based on the origins of Christingle.

Thanks again kids for making our day, plus a special mention for teaching staff who accompanied them and made it possible.

God bless to you all.

*Roy Briggs*

## Iona thoughts



Had a brilliant stay on Iona last September – here’s some thoughts from the week.

Each night the peace candle is lit in front of the cross in the Abbey.

- God’s mighty peace; more powerful than war, given in love which nothing can overthrow.

Let peace flood the earth and the whole universe.

The church is not about tradition. The church is about “what we do next”.

- Meet people where they are, let them be themselves; listen to them as Jesus did regardless of their belief. Put faith, hope and love into practice daily. See Christ in others; and we and them will be changed, by our meeting, by God.
- Be bold, speak up and speak out! Listen to people, to the earth, to what matters to them – take risks and count the cost.
- Find a common purpose with others and make small steps together to make a difference, show God’s light.

God is the one whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.

*There are two major books to teach us about God :  
The bible and the whole of creation*

***Kirsty Barker***

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## North Lincolnshire Sanctuary group update



A big thank you for all those who have supported the local “Sanctuary” group through gifts of money, donating items and through prayer.

2025 has been another busy year for the group supporting refugees and asylum seekers including Ukrainian, Kurdish, Syrian and Afghan families and others from our worldwide family. A few examples of what we’ve done are below.

During refugee week two schools participated at Vision 2021 on a project on “psycho-geography”, making visual maps of where they feel their communities to be. Our group joined with other agencies to hold a party entitled “community as a superpower” for refugee week and fun was had by all.

The Sanctuary group run a multi-national group for females, meeting weekly. Activities include socialising, sewing, cooking, going out on trips which have included craft activities at “Epworth Old Rectory”. At all these meetings the use of spoken English is encouraged. For many of our attendees these social opportunities have a very important role in their health and wellbeing and the development of their confidence. A similar group for men also occurs supported by our volunteers.

We continue to give vital support regarding providing basic home items, school uniforms and other clothing which is generously donated. We’ve had a shared day with New Life Church’s family bank giving items to those who need them most in Scunthorpe.

Exercise is encouraged for example litter picking, walks, sponsoring swimming, football, cricket, karate and providing bikes.

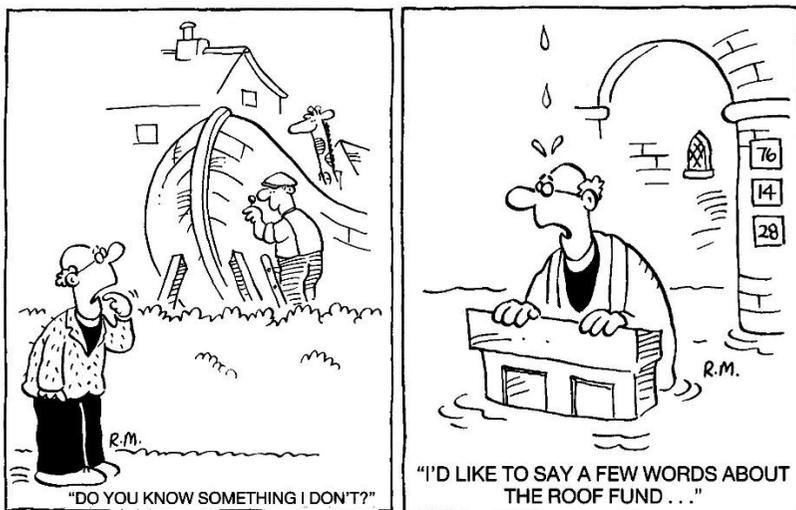
Other support Sanctuary group volunteers offer include teaching English one to one; supporting studying for the Driving Theory Test; supporting at hospital appointments and assisting with navigating access to college places. They offer a listening ear and emotional support if needed. Group members have assisted with sourcing volunteering opportunities for individual refugees and in some cases, this has led directly into employment. They have also helped individuals when dealing with complex bureaucracy.

For all these things we need support – prayers, sharing of talents, time, donations of items and finance. To help boost our funds we are holding a musical concert on the evening of June 6<sup>th</sup> at Ashby Wesley Chapel – time and details to follow.

Please put the date in your diary and join us for an evening of varied music.

Thank you again for your support.

**Kirsty Barker**



## Lea Methodist Church

Our little Chapel is a friendly place,  
Well-endowed with fellowship and grace.

Faces light up as folk enter the door,  
Friendly greetings echo, who could ask for more?

Altar flowers bring a smile to the sick,  
While cheery greetings do the trick.

Supporting charities, a Strawberry Tea,  
We're welcoming and supportive, here at Lea.

Our Monday Club reaches near and far,  
Artists, knitters, each and everyone a star.

Coffee Mornings, scones and friendly gossip  
Covers almost every topic.

The Little Retreat; space for meaningful connections,  
A time for quiet, gentle and thoughtful reflections.

Yoga, art and sound-healing sessions,  
The Little Retreat offers special lessons.

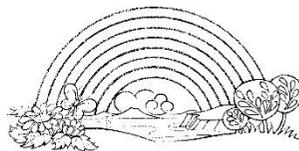
Plants enhance the garden fair,  
Music, fun and laughter fill the air.

Advent, Easter, Remembrance and Christmas too,  
Special Festivals for me and you.

Expert workmen come and go,  
Jobs well done and reputations grow.

So, do drop in to our little white Chapel one day,  
For every Christian has a special part to play.

The poem, **Lea Methodist Church** is written by Margaret Holmes, published with her permission. This poem is part of our churches project for 'Our Story Our Song' which is being contributed to by the members of the church and the Monday Club.



Thank you.  
**Pat Gray**



## **Nativity Pantomime**

On the afternoon of 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan the doors opened at Wesley Memorial church for something a bit different – a nativity pantomime! Would-be Thespians from the 'Open the Book' team and 'Messy Church' were joined by other enthusiastic actors and backstage crew from the church family for this unusual way of presenting the Christmas story.

Characters included Bossy Betty, the innkeeper (dame), Herod (boo!) based on a certain US politician, Lazy Levi and the shepherds who were 'intellectually challenged', mysterious magi, a wicked wolf, a grumpy Roman soldier and the more traditional, although only slightly, Mary and Joseph. The story was kept together by the chief angel and her band of junior angels who sparkled throughout. The ee-aw factor was provided by the little donkey. All characters joined in our version of 'Oh what a night!' as we brought the main character, baby Jesus, to the centre stage.

The performance was very well-received by a packed audience, with many requests for another one next year! Everyone – cast, crew and audience had fun! Oh yes, they did!!

**Dave Chennells**



## Carols by Candlelight at Epworth Wesley

On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> December we held our annual Carols by Candlelight service led by Rev Debbie.

It is a service that we have held for many years, and it is very well supported by the local community, with our congregation for the evening swelling to well over a hundred people.

Mainly traditional carols are sung with the odd modern one thrown in each year. The carols are interspersed with Bible readings, prayers and festive poems.

The Isle Choral Choir were also present, treating us to two fantastic festive numbers. Their vocal presence just lifts the singing of carols such as O Come all Ye Faithful with their beautiful descants.

Thank you to all concerned.

**Val Hackney**



### Epworth Wesley - Lost and found??



Found fallen from chapel Christmas tree when clearing away.

Hope he or she enjoyed the chocolate 😊



Sunday school - "What did the Israelites do when they came out of the sea? "They dried themselves of course," piped, 5 year old Christopher.

*It shouldn't happen in church by Dorothea des Forges*

## Greetings from Gainsborough

***Hi All***

My ears are still ringing after another lively Praise service led by the music and worship team from the old Wolds and Trent circuit: not only was the music great but they related the Epiphany gift story in a truly marvellous way. Rumour has it that they want to celebrate the 'spiritual revival' at Pentecost. Keep your ears to the ground for any development.

I hope I'm not being evicted from some of my hidey holes. GMC are promoting collection of Postcards for MAF and religious literature for Book Aid; so they'll need storage space. A volunteer in Mission Aviation Fellowship sorts and sells postcard and regularly raises £20,000 each year to fly the extra miles.

GMC thought that the original push for religious books would be terminated, but there is a new Book Aid depot in Saxilby. If you talk nicely to the worship network, I'm sure they will find a way to deliver your donations to GMC and onwards.

The usual events are ongoing, Men's Breakfast on the First Saturday, Brews-Up on the second Saturday and various external social groups. I'm just about managing on the crumbs. Valentines day has been and gone and Easter is upon us... that chocolate is stacking up! For after lent of course.

Recently I had another adventure. There had been a lot of talk about the "Piece Prize". Well, 'they' were discussing going to Norway. Naturally, I was expecting to be awarded the Piece Prize for superlative pieces of literature, such as this, the like that the world has never seen. I'm sure my loyal readers had been wholeheartedly nominating me. Keeping on my winter coat I made myself comfy in the rucksack. I was a bit put out that I was denied the Piece Prize, but some kind hearted creature kindly presented me with their hard won

PIECE of chewy, brown, Norwegian Cheese... perhaps it could have been the (ski) Piste prize I'd heard about.

Ice is everywhere here.. pretty frightening; but, taking solace in Psalm 46 v2 where the psalmist reminds us of Mountains crumbling into the sea. Norway is a great example. The various ice ages and shifting glaciers eroded mountains to create deep fjords, eroding the rock into sand and gravel, taking it hundreds of miles.

God is great !!!!

Have a good Easter, keep praying for each other *James 5*



**Anon-e-mouse**



## **Christmas 2025 at Ashby Wesley**

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> year running Ashby Wesley used the Methodist Church Christmas Campaign materials for Advent, Christmas & Epiphany. This year the theme was 'Gifted', and work began with attending

online training meetings run by Connexion in September, followed by local planning meetings to timeline our own events at Ashby Wesley. The idea of the Christmas campaign is to connect with those who only have a nodding acquaintance with church, or maybe



none at all.

The congregation again donated money so that we could buy Real Nativity Chocolate Advent calendars for each child who attends our Toddlers, Youth Club and Junior Church, plus a chocolate angel and

Nativity story booklet for every young person in the 4<sup>th</sup> Ashby Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts & Explorer Scouts. Accompanying all these gifts was an invitation to all the child friendly Christmas events at Ashby Wesley.

November saw those who come to Thursday morning coffee busy filling gift bags with chocolate gifts and invitations, or knitted angels & invitations, or sticking labels on Gifted Christmas cards. This year we used 1000 cards and filled 600 gift bags! All the user groups who come into Ashby Wesley from Knit & Natter to choirs and bands that rehearse to AA are offered a gift bag; plus the knitted angels are used to 'yarn bomb' the railings around the car park one night in December. A well supported Pizza, Quiz and Carols night on a Saturday evening in early December funds this outreach.

Our first carol service happens on a Friday evening in early December when families and friends from the Gateway group bring a smile to our faces as they enthusiastically sing their favourite carols and share the Christmas story with Rev Paul. This year they presented him with a retirement card signed by them all.



Carol singing on the steps outside church with Hot Chocolate was well supported on a cold but clear night this year and reminds people that we are here. Our garden lights up with twinkly fairy lights at Christmas and at our Christmas Eve Christingle service the crib with baby Jesus moves into the garden.

Two local primary schools hold their carol services at Ashby Wesley and we also held a family morning with activities in December and a Toddler & siblings event after Christmas.

A quiet Christmas service on a Tuesday evening offers space for a more reflective time of worship for those who find the season challenging. In contrast a full church upstairs and downstairs resounds to enthusiastic singing as families gather, often 3 generations, for the 5pm Christingle service on Christmas Eve – for many this is now a Christmas tradition. Attendance at this years 9pm (midnight in Bethlehem) Holy Communion service was up on previous years and as usual ended with the singing of ‘Come and behold him ..’ on the steps outside church with our candles lit from the central candle on the advent wreath.

Worship throughout the season was intergenerational and interactive with Laura & Rev Paul leading this years Scratch Nativity when the congregation come dressed up and ready to tell the story together. Our evening Carol service was well attended and brought together familiar carols with traditional readings alongside more thought provoking contributions. Throughout the season we had visitors who shared that they were attending having received an invitation or having seen our posters or Facebook posts.



Christmas morning was a real family occasion and is always fun when people share the gifts they've brought and we were delighted to be joined by so many from our section on the 29<sup>th</sup> December. The singing and the fellowship afterwards was a great end to 2025.

***Bronwen Braisdell***

## Winteringham's news

### BOX IN A BARROW

This was a huge success again. Our barrow goes round the village and stays each day at an agreed venue's driveway. We advertised that food is being collected for the Forge Centre in Scunthorpe, a centre for underprivileged people, where they can get a cooked meal and support. Food is prepared on site. Showers, toilets, clothes for



rough sleepers and all-round support given to those in need. *The Forge is not a food bank but is a valuable centre for those in need.*

A big thank you to all the residents of Winteringham for their generosity with the amount of food given and to helpers who transported the food from the Chapel to The Forge. Alfie Borrill took the barrow out each day and without his help we would have struggled.

This campaign helps our Chapel reach out to all in the village and is a brilliant way of keeping our flag flying.

**The picture shows the food we collected at the Forge centre in Scunthorpe. Permission granted to publish photo.**

### CHRISTMAS EVE ALL AGE SERVICE

About 15 all age people gathered for this special event, with age ranges from 3 to early 80 year olds. We presented a drama entitled *NO ROOM, NO ROOM AT THE INN*. The play was based on the nativity but in a very special way. Rev Vicki led the service with about 60

people present. That meant standing room only and thank goodness we were able to get some of the congregation in our kitchen.

The evening concluded with a buffet. We are sure everyone felt a real meaning for a Christmas celebration and so thank you once again to everyone who contributed their time and talents.



**Our picture shows the cast with permission from everyone to have the photograph published.**

## **COFFEE MORNINGS**

We hold these on the first Tuesday of each month in our Chapel from 10.00 am till 12.00 noon. We welcome everyone to join us and those attending say what a wonderful time they have; a time to meet friends and have a good laugh, which is the best medicine.



## **HIRE OUR HALL**

Winteringham is renowned for its fantastic and different walks along the Humber banks, to meandering through our interesting and historic streets. At the Chapel, we welcome anyone wanting to hire our Hall; for groups, parties and other events. This is complete with a kitchen and toilets. Booking our hall could give groups a central place to meet up in our village. We charge £10.00 per hour, and details are available from Will Maw tel 01724-734631.

***Will Maw***



## Journeying

5 Feb · 🌐



Thank you, my Lord,  
for the mountains  
and lonely valleys;  
for strange islands  
and resounding rivers;  
for the whistling breezes  
and the tranquil night;  
for the rising dawn  
and the beauty of a new day.

(John of the Cross)



[www.journeying.co.uk](http://www.journeying.co.uk)



**Brews Up**

In aid of

FOREVER  
25  
**Laybo's**  
LEGACY

Saturday 14th March 2026

10am till 12pm

Gainsborough Methodist Church

**Laybo's Legacy are here to help**

Our vision is to help all bereaved families living within Gainsborough and the surrounding area, who have lost a family member to suicide receive the financial assistance they need.

**Lincolnshire District Methodist Women in Britain**



**Come & join us for our District Day**



**with**

**Olive Ruvimbo Ruzvidzo – CoChair MWiB**

***Light in Motion: Lincolnshire Acts***

*A fun-filled, active day focused on turning our vision into real, local action; a day that will be very hands on and interactive!*



**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March**

**Middle Rasen Methodist Church**

**Mill Lane, Middle Rasen LN8 3LE**

*Parking at the church or on the road – please car share if possible*

Tea & coffee served from 10.30am for 11am start, bring a packed lunch and finish by 3pm

*Fellowship & friendship, faith in action*

**All Welcome**

Contact Rita Rowe: [ritarowe18@gmail.com](mailto:ritarowe18@gmail.com) for more information

# A Methodist Way of Life

A Methodist Way of Life encourages us to grow together.  
Make time to discuss these questions regularly with others.

## Worship

- What is the pattern of your prayer life?
- How easy or hard do you find it to pray?
- What has spoken to you recently in worship or in the Bible?
- When, lately, have you felt close to God or distant from God?

## Learning and Caring

- How have you practised generosity since we last met?
- How have you shown hospitality to others recently?
- How are you caring for yourself?
- How and what are you learning now?

## Service

- How are you seeking to serve others in your communities and beyond? What has helped or hindered you in your service of others?
- How are you caring for God's creation?
- How are you using God's gifts (including your financial resources)?
- What issues of injustice are you currently concerned about? What are you doing in response?

## Evangelism

- When was the last time you were able to talk about God?
- What opportunities to share your faith have there been since we last met?
- How have you responded to opportunities to share your faith?
- Is there anyone you might invite to consider Christian faith?

**How can we support each other in our Way of Life commitments?**

# A Methodist Way of Life

**The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission.**

As far as we are able, with God's help:

## **Worship**

- We will pray daily.
- We will worship with others regularly.
- We will look and listen for God in Scripture, and the world.

## **Learning and Caring**

- We will care for ourselves and those around us.
- We will learn more about our faith.
- We will practise hospitality and generosity.

## **Service**

- We will help people in our communities and beyond.
- We will care for creation and all God's gifts.
- We will challenge injustice.

## **Evangelism**

- We will speak of the love of God.
- We will live in a way that draws others to Jesus.
- We will share our faith with others.

**May we be a blessing within and beyond God's Church,  
for the transformation of the world.**

## Bible Crosswords

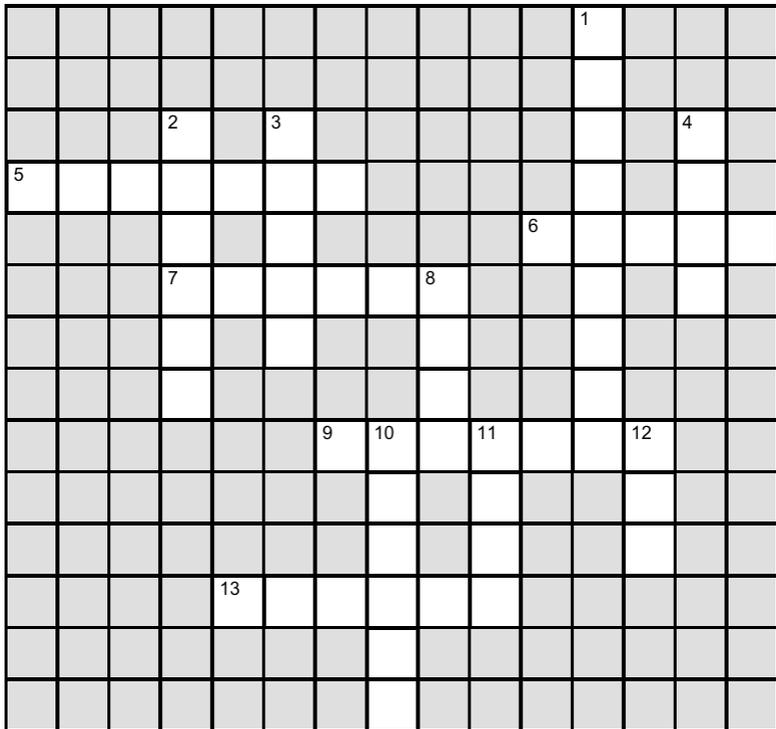
### Across

- 5 Who was the father of James? (7)
- 6 What was Jesus tempted to turn the stones into? (5)
- 7 Where had John been put? (6)
- 9 What was Jesus doing for forty days and nights? (7)
- 13 Who led Jesus into the desert? (6)

### Down

- 2 Where was Jesus taken to be at the highest point in the holy city? (6)
- 3 Who was tempting Jesus? (5)
- 4 What did James and John leave to follow Jesus? (4)
- 8 What spread about Jesus in Syria? (4)
- 10 Who was one of the fishermen? (6)
- 11 What must you not put the Lord your God to? (4)
- 12 Who did Jesus say you should only serve? (3)
- 1 What place by the lake did Jesus go to? (9)

## Matthew 4



### **Bible Crosswords:**

- These thoughtfully crafted crosswords are available for free use.
- While they are copyrighted, you're welcome to print them for private enjoyment, inclusion in church magazines, or educational purposes.
- Our goal is to encourage individuals to read and study the bible, so we intentionally do not provide crossword answers.

<https://bible-crosswords.co.uk/>



**Lectionary readings for**  
**March to May 2026**

1 <sup>st</sup> March	Psalm 121 John 3:1-17
8 <sup>th</sup> March	Psalm 95 John 4:5-42
15 <sup>th</sup> March <b><i>Mothering Sunday</i></b>	Psalm 34:11-20 John 19:25-27
22 <sup>nd</sup> March	Psalm 130 John 11:1-45
29 <sup>th</sup> March	Psalm 31:9-16 Matthew 27:11-54
5 <sup>th</sup> April	Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 John 20:1-18
12 <sup>th</sup> April	Psalm 16 John 20:19-31
19 <sup>th</sup> April	Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 Luke 24:13-35
26 <sup>th</sup> April	Psalm 23 John 10:1-10
3 <sup>rd</sup> May	Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16 John 14:1-14
10 <sup>th</sup> May	Psalm 66:8-20 John 14:15-21
17 <sup>th</sup> May	Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35 John 17:1-11
24 <sup>th</sup> May <b><i>Aldersgate Sunday</i></b>	Psalm 104:24-34, 35b John 20:19-23
31 <sup>st</sup> May	Psalm 8 Matthew 28:16-20



## **John Wesley quote**

*“Be rooted in  
the faith... and  
grounded in  
love”*



*Photo credit : Cdoncel, Unsplash.com*

Circuit Safeguarding: Mrs Karen Elvidge

07533-554615

Circuit website @ <https://www.esgmethodist.org.uk/>