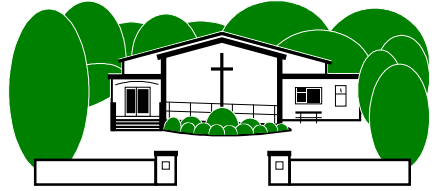


# Oakworth Methodist Church

**MISSION  
POSSIBLE**



## December 2020 Newsletter



If you are passing Church in the evening from 12<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> December, this is the lit scene that will greet you from the kitchen window - the church's contribution to the 'Village Advent Calendar' - painted by Kath Batty.

# Pastoral Letter



Dear friends,

As Christmas approaches, I've heard a lot of people wondering whether to bother putting up decorations or sending out cards this year: 'It doesn't really seem worth it when there's nobody coming', they say. 'Who's going to see them?'

On the first Sunday in Advent, I was walking home just as dusk began to fall and I suddenly became aware of the lights that had started going up in people's houses and gardens. There were white lights and brightly coloured lights and illuminated figures of deer and other woodland creatures. Somewhere a family were putting the final touches to an arrangement of coloured lanterns and the sounds of their laughter filled the air. I found my spirits lifted and I began to think how I might brighten up my



house and garden to share the joy of Christmas. Even when we don't feel like celebrating ourselves, there is always something we can do to help bring a bit of light to others who may be feeling the same way. Sometimes, the very act of doing something like getting out the decorations or putting up a small crib scene or sitting down to write some Christmas

cards or posting the advent words: Hope, Joy, Peace and Love in our windows can change our mood. It's a bit like an act of defiance: like lighting a candle instead of just complaining about the darkness. Christmas *is* going to be different this year: but the message of Christmas is just the same as ever. The message of Christmas is: 'Don't give up hope – God hasn't!

One of my favourite Bible passages is the verse in John's Gospel which says: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.' (John 1: 5) Let's see what we can do to keep that light shining..

However you spend Christmas this year, may God bless you with love, joy and peace and a New Year filled with new hope.

Every blessing,

*Barbara*



**Minister: Rev Barbara Fairburn**

**☎ 01274 568163**

**e-mail: [barbara.fairburn@airedalemethodists.org](mailto:barbara.fairburn@airedalemethodists.org)**

# Sunday Worship



*A warm welcome awaits as we worship together*

- Dec** 13 10.30 am Rev Barbara Fairburn  
Thu 24 **4.00 pm** Rev David McAloon - **Christmas Eve Service**
- Jan** 10 10.30 am Mrs Philippa Normanton  
24 10.30 am Rev Barbara Fairburn - **Covenant Service**
- Feb** 7 10.30 am Mrs Janet Clark  
21 10.30 am Rev Barbara Fairburn - **Holy Communion**

We have seating in the church for 20 (+ extra for family bubbles).

If you wish to attend any of the Services, please phone or email David by the day before the Services you wish to attend in order to reserve your seats. Contact details are below.

Don't forget your face mask to help us keep each other safe.



Socially-distanced worship

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# News Snippets

## Reopening of Church

Worship Services finally resumed on 25 October when 19 worshippers gathered, almost filling our socially-distanced church. Glenda Coogan led a service which suited the occasion well. Showkids dance classes had resumed earlier that month and Worth Valley Young Farmers had begun using our Hall for their weekly meetings.

Then came lockdown two and everything ground to a halt once again.

Services are starting again on 13 December and will continue fortnightly for the time being. Other groups will return when they feel ready to do so.

## Fundraising

We have not been able to hold our regular fundraising events since March. However, the Haworth Marathon was able to go ahead and they sent us £100. Many of the Sunshine Bags were sent in, raising £170 this year. Thanks to all.

## Remembrance

We couldn't hold Remembrance Services this year but this lovely bowl of poppies appeared outside church.



## Messy Church

The children have continued to meet together each month - on zoom. Last month, they made Christingles.



Clare Stainsby



Nel Shallow

## New Ministers

We are delighted to report that Rev Clare Stainsby and Rev Nel Shallow have accepted our invitation to join the Circuit in August 2021, subject to Conference affirmation in June.

Clare will be our Superintendent Minister with pastoral charge in the Craven area and Nel will have pastoral charge in the Worth Valley area. Clare and Nel will both share their experience and skills across the Circuit, together with the rest of the staff team.

Oakworth will be one of Nel's churches. Andrew met her at a zoom meeting and was suitably impressed. He thinks she will be a real asset to us and the rest of the Circuit.

# Pantomime News

Sadly, the February Pantomime had to be cancelled in September to comply with government Covid 19 guidelines. Since then we have been trying to come up with an idea that would bring the Panto cast together to do panto-related dance and drama even though we cannot put on a normal panto this year.

The outcome of our deliberations is a **Pantomime Extravaganza**, which will bring together several mini pantomimes using extracts from previous scripts. These will be rehearsed over the Spring and Summer in small bubble groups and then everyone will be brought together in September (by which time we hope that most restrictions will have been lifted), to put together a Show that will be presented to a full set of Pantomime audiences in early October. Look out for more details!

Oakworth Methodist  
**Pantomime  
Extravaganza**  
2nd - 9th  
October  
2021



Six mini-pantomimes for the price of one!



## Stars of Hope



This has been a difficult year for everyone and the message of hope that Christmas brings is more important than ever. During Advent, we want to share signs of hope with the people of Oakworth. We will be making stars with words of hope and peace, and planting them in the church garden. We also want to encourage everyone to put up pictures of stars and words of thanks and hope in the windows of our homes.

If you want to join in please make your own stars and add words of Hope, or a message of peace, or a thank-you. If you would like to add your stars to the display in the church garden, please send them to the Howarths at 217 Fell Lane, Keighley BD22 6DL so they can be laminated.



# The Legend of the Christmas Tree

Two little children were sitting by the fire one cold winter's night. All at once they heard a timid knock at the door and one ran to open it. There, outside in the cold and the darkness, stood a child with no shoes on his feet and clad in thin, ragged garments. He was shivering with cold and he asked to come in and warm himself. "Yes, come," cried both the children; "you shall have our place by the fire. Come in!" They drew the little stranger to their warm seat, shared their supper with him and gave him their bed, while they slept on a hard bench.

In the night they were awakened by strains of sweet music and, looking out, they saw a band of children in shining garments approaching the house. They were playing on golden harps and the air was full of melody. Suddenly the Stranger Child stood before them; no longer cold and ragged but clad in silvery light. His soft voice said: "I was cold and you took Me in. I was hungry, and you fed Me. I was tired, and you gave Me your bed. I am the Christ Child, wandering through the world to bring peace and happiness to all good children. As you have given to Me, so may this tree every year give rich fruit to you." So saying, He broke a branch from the fir tree that grew near the door and He planted it in the ground and disappeared. But the branch grew into a great tree and every year it bore wonderful golden fruit for the kind children.

Find all the blue words from the passage above in the grid opposite and then read the message in the unused letters!

D	E	R	A	E	P	P	A	S	I	D	R	A	G	G	E	D
E	C	G	N	I	N	I	H	S	S	E	N	K	R	A	D	L
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## Summary of Oakworth Methodist Church Accounts 2019-2020

Receipts	£	Payments	£
Collections	11,282.74	Circuit Share	14,550.00
Property/Lettings	9,696.00	Utilities	5,783.79
Fund Raising	8,634.00	Property Maintenance	7,797.18
Tax Recovered	2,742.60	Cleaner's Wages	4,147.60
Project Income	635.59	Project Costs	0.00
Mission Collections	720.48	Mission Donations	1,673.48
Donations/Gift Appeals	1,945.07	Youth Work	55.45
Photocopying/Printing	2,006.50	Sundry Payments	999.11
Job Retention Grant	925.94	Circuit Loan Repayment	3,000.00
Investment Income	18.99		
	<b>38,607.91</b>		<b>38,006.61</b>

### Treasurer's Report

Last year was a year of two halves - at the half-way point we were optimistically forecasting a break-even budget - but then came the pandemic and many of our income streams dried up. However, we give thanks for the commitment and support of so many people during this difficult time for all, which has enabled us to balance a revised budget.



### Receipts & Payments

Collections and Donations have held up really well. Pre-School only lost two months but all other groups were closed from March so Property income was down. Most of our Fundraising income comes in during the first half of the year but Printing receipts were 50% down. The Job Retention Grant supported the Cleaner's wages.

Most Payment figures were broadly in line with the original budget. The Circuit agreed to waive one quarter's Circuit Share payment and suggested that the additional £3,000 went towards reducing our **Mission Possible** Loan.

### Summary

The £600 surplus enabled us to top up our General Reserves to help us weather the next 12 months, bringing them up to £1,545 - which equates to two weeks budgeted expenditure for a normal year. Our aim is to hold three months of the budgeted expenditure figure when circumstances allow.

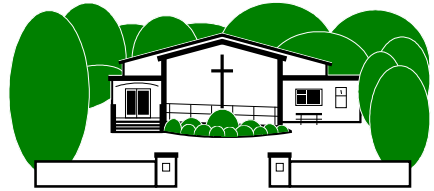
Total Reserves were much higher because they still included £15,152 of funds held for the **Mission Possible** building project as well as £485 of other restricted funds.

A total of £10,000 was repaid to the **Mission Possible** Circuit Loan during the year, reducing the balance to £25,000 - to be repaid over the next few years from continued fundraising.

The current year is proving to be even more challenging than last year. We ask for your continuing prayerful support through the year so that we can continue to cover our revenue expenses.



# MISSION POSSIBLE



The **Mission Possible Appeal** total has increased by £4,345 since August: £3,000 transferred from General Church Funds, £875 from Donations/Gift Aid, a wonderful £425 from the sale of Christmas crafts & gifts and £45 Bank Interest. Local fundraising and donations now stand at £122,920 and the total amount secured to date is £457,775.

A further £3,000 repayment has been made to the Circuit Loan so the outstanding balance has now reduced to £25,000.

All outstanding contract work was completed over the Summer. Sadly, our electrician has been unable to complete the extra work he started and so most of what is left is being done in-house.

Good progress is being made whilst most of the church remains closed due to the Covid restrictions! It has also helped us to save on costs and so the total project budget has reduced to £470,000.

Just £12,225 to raise now. Your prayers continue to be valued.

