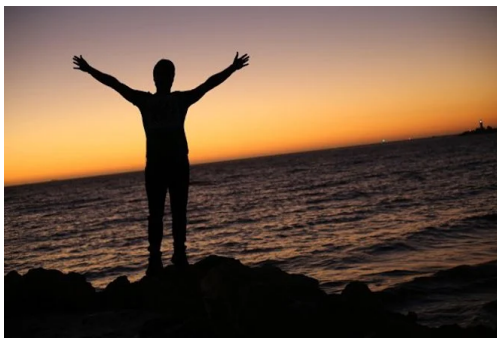


## News



### **Back to the Heart of Worship**

Recently, with a couple of colleagues, I've been reviewing and updating one of the key modules of Worship: Leading & Preaching, the training course for local preachers and worship leaders. Parts of the course are nearly 10 years old now, and well due for a refresh!

Reviewing the section called "Focus on Worship" has been a surprisingly moving task, and has given me much pause for thought. Maybe it's because in the post-lockdown world, I'm so much aware just how wonderful it is to worship together. Maybe also because of conversations about whether it's really possible to worship online. Or maybe like many people, both within the church and well outside its orbit, I'm aware of an unmistakable urge to worship, and a sense of loss if an opportunity to worship passes by.

Perhaps it's inevitable that people are drawn towards worship, especially in a time that is so full of anxiety and disruption. James K A Smith says "Christian worship is nothing less than an invitation to participate in the life of the triune God." What a privilege we have to be those called to pass that invitation to others. And then, to welcome to them to a place where a transformational encounter with the Divine can take place. Never again should preparation for worship become another chore to be completed on a Saturday evening...

Worship in our churches needs to take place in a safe, welcoming and hospitable environment and I would draw your attention to the importance of safeguarding training and the letter below. There are so many other resources and events to equip us for our worship and service - enjoy this issue of eNews!

The quote above is from James K A Smith's "Desiring the Kingdom", p.149.

## **Advanced Safeguarding Training**

By the time you read this, the extended deadline for all Local Preachers and Worship Leaders to have completed the Advanced Safeguarding Module (31st August) will have passed. The Connexional Safeguarding Team are aware that some people may have had difficulty accessing the training, and wrote to all Superintendent Ministers and Local Preachers' Secretaries recently. If you are affected by this, please speak to your Superintendent so they can contact the Safeguarding Team. The text of the letter is here:

*Dear colleagues,*

*You will be aware that the Methodist Conference decided that all local preachers and worship leaders needed to undertake the Advanced Safeguarding Module and allowed a period of four years for this to be achieved. Due to the Covid pandemic, face to face training was suspended and an extension to the deadline for completion was agreed by the Secretary of Conference and chair of the Safeguarding Committee. This extension comes to an end on 31 August. We are very grateful to all those who have now benefited from undertaking the training and all the trainers who have worked hard to develop and deliver both face to face and now online training opportunities as well. We recognise that in a few areas access to training by the August deadline has proven difficult for some local preachers and worship leaders. As completion of this training is necessary for continuing to preach and lead worship, plan making has become even more challenging. If you as superintendent are in this situation in your circuit, please contact the Safeguarding team at **[safeguarding@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@methodistchurch.org.uk)** explaining the problem and the steps you have taken to resolve it, and any help that you need so we can advise on the best way for your local preachers and worship leaders to access the required training.*

*Rev Henry Lewis, Chair of the Safeguarding Committee*

*Rev Jonathan Hustler, Secretary of Conference*



Preach magazine is delighted to announce Charmaine Yip from Bromley as the winner of the Sermon of the Year 2022.

Following the grand final on Thursday 23 June, which was broadcast online, Charmaine's sermon on the theme of Welcome the Stranger was declared the winner by the judging panel.

The announcement was made by head judge Tobi Olujinmi, who also presented Charmaine with the winner's trophy.

The video of the final and an interview with Charmaine can be viewed **[here](#)**.

# Events



Do you long to see a new commitment to God-encounters in your churches? Do you struggle to know how to enthuse and embolden people in their prayers? The new Sunshine and Showers prayer course from the Evangelism & Growth team and the Learning Network might help.

It is designed for anyone in formal or informal leadership who has a role in encouraging prayer in your churches, youth groups, and communities. That includes Worship Leaders and Local Preachers.

Over six evenings, we will explore six paradoxes that can prevent people from praying, and consider how viewing prayer as friendship with God can unlock peaceful acceptance of these tensions.

Register now by clicking [here](#).



The Manchester and Stockport District are hosting a study day on **Biblical Worship in a Climate Emergency** on the afternoon of Saturday 1st October, 2pm - 5pm at Methodist Central Hall in Manchester. It will showcase material that has recently been produced for the Continuing Local Preacher Development (CLPD) programme (see item below).

It is open to local preachers, worship leaders and ministers in the Manchester and Stockport or Bolton and Rochdale Districts. For more information and/or to register click [here](#).

If you would like support in putting on a similar event in your district, please e-mail Richard Baker by clicking [here](#).

# Ordination Exploration Day – 8 October 2022

- Has anyone ever suggested to you that you would make a good minister?
- Have you ever felt God calling you to serve the Church as a Deacon or Presbyter? Do you want to know more about the life of the ordained?
- Wondering if you're called to be ordained?

If so, please join us on zoom on Saturday 8th October 2022

Click [here](#) to book your place.

The event is free and you are welcome to bring a friend or significant other with you. For more information please contact [mvw@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:mvw@methodistchurch.org.uk)



Church at the Margins is part of the **God for All** strategy of the Methodist Church. The vision is to start and nurture new Christian communities amongst economically marginalised people. This vision is at the heart of the gospel, and the birth story of the Methodist Church. As the cost of living crisis emerges, and even more people experiencing poverty, how might you and your church respond?

We are offering the following online learning spaces and other resources which may help local preachers and worship leaders in sharing the vision and values of Church at the economic margins. Click on the titles for more information.

**On the Edge online course**: A NEW learning opportunity, starting in October. The code to access a free ticket for Methodists is MARGINS2022.

**Social Justice and Evangelism Webinars**, starting in November.

**Beginning a Church at the Margins**: 3 interactive online sessions, starting in October.

**Church at the Margins advocates and practitioners online network** starting in September.

## Ideas & Resources

**Sri Lanka Appeal**



The economic crisis in Sri Lanka is devastating for those living there, with rising prices and shortages of food, fuel and medicines. The Methodist Church in Britain has supported the Methodist

Church in Sri Lanka with a Solidarity Grant of £15,000 from the World Mission Fund. The **Samaritan Journey Project** gives relief packages of food, grants for medical expenses for children and kits for people to grow their own vegetables.

Would your church consider an additional retiring collection for this appeal during harvest or another time during the autumn? For resources that you can use in worship and details of how to donate, click [here](#).



The last few years have caused many of us to ponder on what matters most. If you're wondering about how you want to respond to God's invitation in a changed and changing world, RSVP might be for you.

The course offers four reflective Saturday mornings to consider who you are, and how you want to live now. The series is open to anyone over 18 who wants to take some time to listen to God's invitation.

Book for all the sessions, or for the ones that particularly interest you.

Further information and bookings, click [here](#). Or contact Edel McLean by email [here](#).



## Will you travel hand in hand with communities in Zimbabwe this Harvest and beyond?

You and your church can make a difference by walking in partnership with people like Maritha, from the Binga District in Zimbabwe, southern Africa. All We Can's local partner, Zubo, are helping women like Maritha take their next steps, overcome these challenges, and begin to see their potential fulfilled.

During the Covid lockdowns in Zimbabwe, All We Can's partner Zubo supported women in making and selling 6,000 ilala palm baskets and take their next steps in

overcoming the challenges of poverty, the climate crisis and the pandemic. You can hear more of their story and be a part of the transformation by ordering free harvest resources for your church [here](#).

You will receive a USB stick with videos, worship ideas, prayers, sermon notes and a PowerPoint presentation, as well as optional posters and additional giving envelopes for your church.



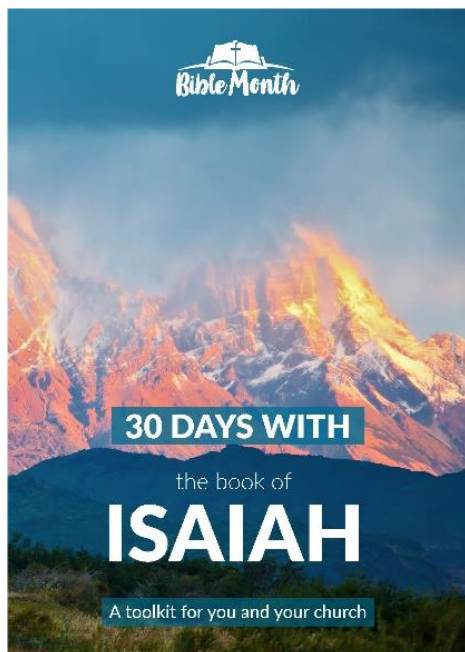
St John's Timeline is back! Having gone offline with the closure of St John's College, Nottingham in 2019, Timeline has been taken on by Hymns Ancient and Modern and made available on the web once more.

This unique collection of video resources from leading theologians and biblical scholars for study, research, ministry, and discipleship. Over 100 hours of video covers theological ideas from the 3rd century to today, books of the Old and New Testaments, and key philosophical concepts.

Explore the Gospel of John with Paula Gooder, Black Theology with Anthony Reddie, or the influence of Plato on Christian thought with Andrew Davison.

An annual subscription with full access to every video is just £20 when you pay by Direct Debit.

Find out more at the timeline website [here](#).



## The Year of Isaiah

This year, Bible Month is focussing on the key book of Isaiah, which is right at the centre of the Bible and at the heart of its message. Isaiah speaks of the justice and mercy of God and points the way to Jesus.

Tackling Isaiah might seem a daunting prospect. Bible Notes author Helen Paynter has picked out four key themes which help unpack Isaiah's message in accessible way. Preaching points are suggested, and ideas for small groups to discuss. There are ideas for all-age and intergenerational worship too.

Remember, you can use Bible Month in whatever way works best:

you could devote a month of services to Isaiah, or use it throughout the year, or as the focus for small groups. Copies of the Bible Month booklet can be ordered from the [LWPT website](#).

The Learning Network are providing a wide range of events and resources to help you use Bible Month in your church and circuit. You can find the latest information [here](#).

The team would love to hear your experience of using Bible Month and your suggestions - contact them at [biblemonth@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:biblemonth@methodistchurch.org.uk).



The very popular annual **LWPT DIARY**, which includes the Lectionary readings for 2023 is now available. To order your own copy, or place an order for your Local Preachers' Meeting, click [here](#).

LWPT (The Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust) was created to support local church leaders (both lay and clerical) in developing their preaching ministry. Should you be planning on taking on some further studies at a recognised learning institution, LWPT's "Vocational Grant" programme offers a tuition grant of up to £1,000 and/or book grants of up to £300 https. For more information, click [here](#).



LWPHomes is one of two charities (the other being LWPT) set up as successors to LPMA in 2005.

LWPHomes continues to carry the work of LPMA by prioritising Local Preachers and their families when they require care and support later in life.

We provide high quality care at a price that represents value and worship is an integral part of the life of our Homes, often led by Local Preachers.

We are very grateful to all our loyal supporters and hope that you will wish to continue our 'mutual aid' in times of need by donating to the work of LWPHomes. Please contact the Office at our Westerley Home in Westcliff (phone 01702 342059) or use the 'Contact Us' form on the LWPHomes website [here](#).



The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion is a Cambridge-based research institute which aims to improve public understanding of science and religion. Its main focus is on the relationship between science and the Christian faith, but it also engages with those of any faith or none.

Their website contains a wealth of useful resources for preachers, and loads of possibilities for continuing development. Useful starters are Dr Ruth Banciewicz's [\*\*How can science be used in preaching and teaching?\*\*](#) and Dr David Wilkinson's seminar on [\*\*Wonder, Wisdom and Worship\*\*](#).

Visit their website or sign up for their monthly newsletter [here](#).



Resourcing the Methodist Church  
for Mission and Ministry

Essential resources for the Connexional Year 2022/2023. Wherever we are and whatever projects you're engaged with, these will help us to fulfil Our Calling of responding to God's love in Christ and living out its discipleship in worship and mission. Click [here](#).



## Small Groups

Autumn, and the start of the new school, college or Methodist year is a good time to gather a new small group, or reinvigorate an existing one. Here's Abi Jarvis' sixth Top Tip for small groups:

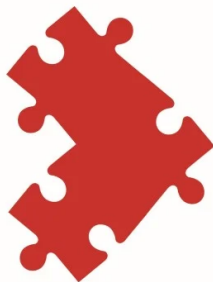
***Be invitational*** – consider how you will invite people to join your small group when it starts. Once it's going, will it be a 'closed' group to allow safe spaces to share, or will you continue to allow new people to join?

*If the former, make sure you have new groups for newcomers. If the latter, you may need to issue personal invitations, and make sure everyone is comfortable with newcomers, and gets to know one another.*

(Abi Jarvis is Discipleship and Faith Formation Officer in the E & G Team)

## Training

Worship:  
leading &  
preaching



### One Final Push...

A reminder to all of you who are still working on your WLP 2.0 portfolios. The final deadline for uploading your portfolios for moderation is **30th September 2022**. Please be kind to your Tutor and give them as much time as you can for assessing your work. This needs to be completed, together with all the forms and cover sheets so you can upload the whole portfolio before the deadline.

The WLP 2.0 website will be switched off at the end of 2022 but the Welsh language version of WLP 2.0 will continue to be available for the foreseeable future.

### Online Training opportunities

#### WLP Online Induction





All new WLP3 Students, their Tutors and Mentors are invited on enrolment to a 90-minute online induction session, providing an overview of the course and an introduction to the course website.

For more information and details of forthcoming sessions (generally monthly, alternating between Friday afternoons and Wednesday evenings) there is a link on the WLP3 webpage, or click [here](#).

### **Study Skills for new WLP Students**

If you're nervous about studying, or haven't done any study for a long time, this NEW four-session ONLINE course may help. Four Tuesday evenings, starting on 27/9/22. For more information and a link to the booking site, go to the WLP3 webpage [here](#).

### **Introduction to WLP for LP Secretaries, Mentors & Tutors**

A 90-minute Zoom session for those supporting students on the Worship: Leading & Preaching course, or who are considering these roles. The session includes a short introduction to the course with breakout groups looking at the roles of Tutor, Mentor and LP Secretary. Sessions for 2022 are on Monday 10th October at 7:30pm and Thursday 3rd November at 2pm. More details and booking links on the LP Secretaries webpage [here](#).

### **Further Skills for Tutors & Mentors**

Five separate reflective sessions with shared wisdom from experienced practitioners in adult education. Sessions are booked separately and tutors and mentors are welcome to come to one, some or all. All sessions will include case studies or worked examples.

Sessions planned are:

5/11/22: Knowing your students, looking particularly at aspects of diversity and how we can approach particular student needs.

28/1/23: Accompanying students doing Exegesis,

18/3/23: Giving constructive feedback,

13/5/23: Who am I? Knowing yourself in your role,

1/7/23: Building supportive LP Meetings

All of these sessions can be booked on Eventbrite [here](#).

### **In other news...**

A new version of the **Guide to Portfolios** is available (Issue 4) which describes better the way that portfolios are assessed and moderated in version 3. This is available on the course website and on the WLP3 page on the Methodist website [here](#).

The **Project Workspace User Guides** for Students and Tutors have also been updated and can be downloaded from the course website or the WLP3 webpage.

There is a new process for **Accreditation of Prior Experience and Learning (APEL)**. This is designed for people who have recently completed a formal educational qualification in theology, mission or ministry and can result in exemption from specific aspects of the Worship: Leading & Preaching course. A guidance note and application form can be downloaded from the **Local Preachers' Secretaries' webpage**.

And - there are some **new CLPD session outlines** available on the CLPD webpage, click **here**. More on CLPD next time...

**Hot Tip for students:** *When you start a new module-section, look at the **Project Brief** first. Then, as you work through **Learn** you can jot down ideas for your project as you go. There's nothing to stop you sending a first draft of your project to your Tutor for their feedback as soon as it's ready.*



## WLP Summer School

We met again at Cliff College this summer for the relaunch of Summer School. We were fewer in number than previously, but had a great time exploring theology and worshipping together. Summer School 2023 is provisionally booked in for 31st July - 4th August 2023, more details to follow when confirmed.

## Explore Online

Having run a Zoom alternative to Summer School four times now, the time has come for a change. Explore Online will run on **four weekends** in 2022-23. Each weekend will start on Friday evening at around 7pm, and run through to Saturday afternoon (around 3pm).

During the weekend, the Explore sessions for one complete module will be held. Each of the eight modules will be covered once during the year, so a student starting the course in September would be able to complete the Explore sessions for all eight modules in two years. Note that you still need a local Tutor and Mentor to support you during the course, and must have completed the online Learn material before doing Explore Online for that module.

More information and booking links are on the Explore Together webpage **here**.

## Worship: Leading & Preaching in a Year

We will be running this programme for the third time, starting this September. It offers an opportunity to complete the Worship: Leading & Preaching course in a Year. It requires a high level of commitment from you as a student (and from your local Tutor and Mentor), but this may be just right for you if you have a

strong sense of God's call and the opportunity and inclination to commit to intensive study. Explore sessions are provided either residentially at Cliff College or on Zoom.

Please note that you still require a Tutor and a Mentor in your local circuit to participate in this programme, and that your circuit needs to be fully involved in your training.

Further details are on the WLP Explore Together page [here](#).

## Footnote



Just as I've been pondering on worship, and how we provide the best opportunities for worship we possibly can, preaching has also been on my mind.

Something rather subtle happened during the recent pandemic. Those of us who were involved leading worship online realised that it was possible to say in five minutes what previously had taken ten. Or in ten, what had previously taken twenty. In many ways, that was a great lesson to learn - as preachers, we had to learn to be clear and succinct, and to hold attention in a virtual world where minds wander (even) more easily.

But there was a down side. Sermons tended to shrink into homilies, and homilies into short reflections. Very valuable and appropriate in context, especially in an online world, but maybe not all that a congregation look for from the preacher. My concern is that the trend for short, compact, "lite" has become the norm now we're onsite, and preaching is one casualty. Many invitation letters now seem to set a service duration of 30 minutes as the expectation, where previously an hour would be set aside for worship.

This isn't an argument for long, complicated sermons - after all preaching can take many forms: it can be multi-generational, conversational, use stories, drama and mixed media. But whatever form preaching takes, it is often the only opportunity the gathered people get to think about and engage with faith in the midst of busy lives. Preaching (together with singing) has always been in Methodist communities their primary ways to engage with theology. That's even more the case now that small groups are so hard to find. So here's a challenge to those of us who preach: let's be confident as we proclaim God's Word and remind the church of the saving grace we find in Jesus Christ.

*Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. (2 Tim 4:2, NIV).*

### **Bob Bartindale**

Officer for Worship and Local Preachers, The Connexional Team

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