

Newsletter -

April 2026



SERVICES	5th Easter Sunday	12th	19th	26th
EXALT 9.50 am	Easter Holy Communion 10.30am <i>Preacher:</i> Rev Angy Long	God is... Alive Elaine Watkinson <i>Also by Zoom</i>	God is... Alive Chris Rolph <i>Also by Zoom</i>	God is... Alive Paul Fox <i>Also by Zoom</i>
Morning Worship 11.00 am		Local Team Service	<i>Preacher:</i> Elaine Fox	<i>Preacher:</i> Kate O'Flynn

Minister, Rev Margaret Asiedu 07831 119605 Email : magsasiedu@gmail.com
Off Duty Day - Monday

DEADLINE for the April Newsletter is Sunday, 19th April

All information to Catherine Rolph by e-mail: rolph@sky.com

For Circuit and District events please look at the Circuit website on
eastlincolnshiremethodistcircuit.org.uk/news

Dear Friends

The phrase that has been coming into my mind recently is 'every picture tells a story'. How true this is in a variety of ways. As my thoughts are turning towards Holy Week and Easter various pictures come into my mind.



Here are just three for you to ponder on. What thoughts I wonder come to mind as you look at them? The picture in the centre almost tells the whole story of Easter. It draws you to the events of Good Friday as your eyes focus on the three crosses. The story in this picture is of humiliation, pain and suffering, of grief, fear and death. But the picture doesn't allow you to stay there, the crosses are empty and your eyes move from them to the light, a light that seems to have burst out from behind the crosses and then dominates the picture. The story in the picture includes Easter day, speaking of light coming into the darkness, of new life given, and a new journey to embark on.

The picture of eggs on the left seems to speak about the secular aspect of Easter - eggs, particularly chocolate ones. Unfortunately, if you are only seeing the printed newsletter, then you are unable to see the full effect of the original picture as it was in colour rather than black and white. If you could (or you are reading online) you would see the white egg sat on top of a nest of vibrant coloured eggs. For me at one level an egg represents potential, represents new life, represents a story waiting to begin. There is the need to wait, watching for the first signs of life. There is the anticipation and excitement as you wait. At another level the picture speaks of the importance of being who you are, everyone celebrating their individuality, their personality, their gifts. A third level may take us to thinking of the egg as representing the tomb where Jesus body was placed and the waiting that took place on the Jewish Sabbath.

Then the picture of the painted stones. Here there is once again the Good Friday story with the crosses and the Easter story with the empty tomb and the stone with a fish invites us to think about the continuing story. The fish of course is a symbol of being a follower of Jesus. So, as I look at this picture I am challenged to think about where I fit into this story as a follower of Jesus today.

For me, Holy Week through to Easter day is not only about remembering what happened 2000 years ago but reflecting how those events impact on my life today and how they influence and shape what I do, what I say and my relationship with

others and with God. The phrase I began with "every picture tells a story", is often said because someone's physical or facial expression tells others of a hidden truth, a 'story' without using any words. So, as followers of Jesus are we a 'person' that tells a story? I leave you to ponder on this question: when people look at us as followers of Jesus what 'story' do they see?

"On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said 'Peace be with you!' After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again, Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you' (John 20:19-20)

May you know the peace of the risen Christ this Easter time and beyond as you are sent in his name to live out the story of his love with those you meet, with friends and with family.

Every blessing, Rev Margaret

Prayers for April

If you have journeyed through Lent via one of our two bible study groups, or if you've responded to the Lent liturgy each Sunday, then you will arrive at Easter Day familiar with the idea of letting go of things that hold us back, and being open to a renewed presence of God. This has sometimes been challenging, but with that challenge comes excitement and joy, especially as we reach the high point of Jesus' resurrection. This month we use words from the Methodist Easter Offering Service to focus on Jesus and the freedom that he brings in our lives: freedom from idolatry, control, scarcity, appearances, despair, violence and fear. In doing so we welcome God's Spirit; his abundance and focus on the inner person; gentleness, joy and "respair" (an old word resurrected: *respair is fresh hope; a recovery from despair*).



Lord,

We are your disciples, called by you to the work of the kingdom.

We come as Easter people, released by your resurrection to find life in its fullness.

We rejoice in your Pentecostal spirit, inspiring and empowering us to make real the freedom that you promise, for ourselves and for all people.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Amen

Our Church's Future Story

You will already be aware that we are currently gathering people's views on how far we've travelled since our last Vision Day 5 years ago, and where we feel God is calling us next. We are using a Methodist Church resource called *Our Church's Future Story* as a resource to support our reflections and subsequent plans. If you have not already been a part of this conversation, then do feel free to email your thoughts to louthmethodists@gmail.com (by 31st March at the latest).

We will also meet together on **Saturday 18th April** to talk with one another, discuss what we've heard, and pray through our ideas. This is an important day in the life of the church and we will be supported by Tim Annan (Connexional Learning and Development Officer) who will facilitate the day. Please make it a priority in your diary—there will be sign up sheets available from Easter onwards.

After this we will begin a decision-making process that culminates in the Church AGM on the afternoon of **Sunday 10th May**—again another important diary date.

Please set aside these dates in your diaries, and take time to pray and reflect on the church's activities. If you can't be there in person, do make your views known via the email above, or speak to me or a member of Church Council.

Every blessing Rev Margaret



What does the term 'Eco church' mean to you? Something about recycling or turning the heating down perhaps (brrrr!)?

The Eco church programme is run by A Rocha, a Christian charity which works to protect and restore the natural world and is committed to equipping Christians and churches in the UK to care for the environment. The charity provides a framework to support churches to take practical action on caring for God's earth through the Eco church survey. The survey doesn't solely look at the church building, but also our worship and teaching, community and global engagement as well as the lifestyle of church attendees.

Louth Methodist Church has registered as an Eco Church and we are now at the very beginning of a process; working out how this can be implemented.

If you are interested in getting involved and in shaping this project, which will ultimately impact upon us all, please speak to Kath or Nick.

This eulogy for Donna Needham who died last month is an edited version of that given by Rev Langley Mackrell-Hey and we thank him and Donna's family for allowing us to use it.

Donna Needham

I'm standing here because I have lost the most loyal friend I have ever had. Ever since we worked together here in Louth, she remained the same. She would ring me, ask how I was doing, listen endlessly — really listen. Donna became woven into the tapestry of our family. She became godmother to our children and she was our first emergency service. Suring difficult moments in our family life there became a phrase we used more than once: "Where's a Donna when you need one?" Because Donna was always there.

But of course Donna was far more than my friend. Donna was a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mum, and a nana. Donna was adopted as a young child, and perhaps that shaped something deep within her — a compassion and understanding for people who felt vulnerable or overlooked. She grew up surrounded by a broad and loving family, attending Cordeaux School, where she was a keen cross-country runner and even represented the district.

One of the most formative influences in her early life was joining the Air Cadets. There she discovered discipline, teamwork, resilience — and a sense of identity. That path eventually led her to serve as a reservist in the RAF Regiment of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force. The training gave her something unmistakable: a presence. Donna could raise her voice when needed but most of the time she didn't need to. The idea of answering-back to Donna never entered anyone's minds. Eventually, though, the pull of family life became stronger, and she stepped away from the reserves.

Donna was an intensely practical person. After leaving school she began care work through a youth training scheme at The Elms nursing home, later moving to Oakwood where she focused on dementia care. Then came her time as a youth and children's worker at Louth Methodist Church where she employed her extraordinary gifts with people.

One night at Nichols Youth Project, a lad managed to get up onto the roof. A group of adults gathered and were analysing the situation very carefully, but not doing anything. Donna appeared on the church steps holding a cup of tea in one hand and a bacon sandwich in the other. She looked up and simply said, "I don't know what's going on up there mate — but I've made you a cup of tea and a bacon sandwich. When you're ready, come down and we'll have a chat." And he did. That was Donna. She disarmed people. She brought peace. Whoever walked through the door — troubled teenagers, confused adults, awkward situations — Donna simply met them where they were.

Donna met her husband Shaun at My Father's Moustache pub and six months later they were engaged. They were married the day after Donna's 21st birthday on the 29th July 1995 and became inseparable.

Donna had two wonderful children - Jade arrived first, then Tanieka just eighteen months later— whom she loved fiercely. Family holidays involved camping trips, panning

for gold at Hemsby cliffs — usually discovering fool’s gold — and trips to Whitby, Scarborough and the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. More recently Poppy, Jade’s daughter, arrived, and Donna was immensely proud to be Nana.

Donna had many interests over the years: jewellery making, mindfulness and holistic therapy, Reiki and singing, joining the Caritas Community Singers choir. She loved 80s music, Emmerdale and baking . She volunteered regularly with Cancer Research UK and Unique Kids, because helping people always mattered to Donna.

In 2019 Donna’s health began to change dramatically when she developed ME. Some days she had energy, other days she had none and for someone whose calling was helping others, that unpredictability was incredibly frustrating. She also faced cervical cancer, which she fought and recovered from, and the challenges of facing Covid as a vulnerable person. In those years she struggled more with her mental health. Yet in the last couple of years she gradually found her way back into church life through the Lighthouse coffee mornings, Purple Cow, the morning service, and Messy Church. Quietly, faithfully, Donna put on a brave face, but she carried more than many realised.

Then in January came the shock diagnosis. After experiencing numbness down one side she was admitted to hospital, where it was discovered that a slow-growing lung cancer had spread to the brain. Our family gathered around her bed and she told us something very simple—Love each other. Make the effort to love each other, and tell each other you love them every day.

Later, conversations slowed because she had to write in a notebook. She wrote that she was sad she wouldn’t see Jade, Tanieka and Poppy grow up. She also wrote about knowing she was loved, and more than that — feeling the love of God even in that hospital bed. She wrote down two things that sustained her: Psalm 23, “The Lord is my shepherd” and the hymn “Trust and Obey”.

One of our final conversations was about communion. I realised too late that I hadn’t brought bread and wine and we agreed that I would try and get the Chaplain to visit the following morning. Donna was OK with that, but in her notebook Donna wrote something unforgettable:

“Last communion = last meal = Bailey’s cheesecake ice cream and pumpkin spice latte.” After Shaun made a heroic search around Scunthorpe Donna eventually got her taste of pumpkin spice latte and cheesecake, and we joked about the heavenly banquet. I said to Donna, “Please save me a place.” And by the way — the cheesecake was mine.

We end with Donna’s own message. Love each other. Make the effort. Tell each other you love them every day. And perhaps also this—put your trust in Jesus. Life doesn’t always give us fairy-tale endings, but Jesus did promise something else, “I will never leave you or forsake you.” Donna held onto that promise, and one day we will see her again. Donna — save me a place. And remember—mine is the cheesecake.

Gifts in Donna’s memory can be made online at donnaedham.muchloved.com and will benefit Cancer Research UK



Ladies Group Reminder

During British Summer Time the group will usually meet at 7.30pm on 1st Wednesday of month and at 2pm on 3rd Wednesday. Please remember these evening meetings from April to October

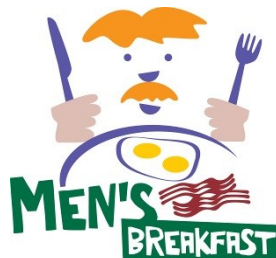
CHURCH AGM and Annual Reports

The Church AGM will be held on Sunday May 10th *AFTER THE CHURCH FAMILY LUNCH*.

We would like all reports to be included in the May Newsletter so **please can** leaders of all Church Groups send their annual report to Catherine Rolph by April 20th.

Men's breakfast meet - Saturday 11th April

The next Men's Breakfast will be on Saturday 11th April at 9am (or just after) at Alfredos on Eastgate. As before, there's no agenda - just a menu - but come and see where our conversations take us! If you want any further information, please contact Nick Adams.





Please bring a flower to decorate the cross on Easter Sunday. Thank you!

REGULAR CHURCH ACTIVITIES—APRIL

Sundays: Services—see front page

Mondays: **Young at Heart** from 1.30pm (formerly Darby & Joan)

Tuesdays: **Women's Fellowship** 2pm. *NO MEETING on 7th April.*
Meetings as usual, 14th, 21st & 28th in Hall 2. Bring yourself, your ideas and your friends, all welcome.

Wednesdays: **Open Lighthouse.** 9.30am to 12.30pm. Light refreshments and a chance to chat.



Prayers 11-11.20am Pray for yourself, the church, our town and the world. All Welcome.

Ladies' Group 1st April at **7.30pm** 'Folk Tales, Myths & Some Imagination' with Lesley Castledine. 15th April 2pm 'Lincolnshire Rural Support Network' with Emma Billings

Thursdays: **TT4A** Table tennis for all at 7pm

Fridays: **321 Extra** 9.30am to 11am. Under 5s playgroup on the 17th & 24th April.



321 NO 321 this month because of Easter.

Lighthouse 10am to 1pm. Food, friendship and a free lunch.

Messy Church - *WILL NOT BE RUNNING IN APRIL.* Instead we are holding our coffee, craft and puppet morning on Easter Saturday—see earlier advert.



The Purple Cow: 7pm. 17th April—The NEW Bible Course.
24th Apr Worship in church.

