

**“...to be a pilgrim...”**



**A weekend conference at Cliff College, Derbyshire**

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

Thanks are expressed to Rev. Ashley Cooper, Cliff College principal, and to the staff of Cliff College for their support and hospitality.

## Welcome to the pilgrim band!

I am delighted to welcome you to Cliff College this weekend for our exploration of pilgrimage together.

Over the past five years, pilgrimage has played a very significant part in my own spiritual development as I have led groups on pilgrimage to Lindisfarne and to Israel-Palestine as well as spending time on new pilgrimage ventures in Scotland and to Rome.

I have become convinced that pilgrimage also has much to offer to the wider church and to our mission. During this year as President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, Rev. Loraine Mellor and I have been focussing on the theme “Day by day – exploring the rhythm of mission and discipleship”. Pilgrimage fits well into this theme, both as a spiritual discipline and as an approach to life, which we take “day by day” or “step by step”.

This weekend we will look at many different aspects of pilgrimage, and we have some expert practitioners to help us do that. I am thrilled that Rev. Michaela Youngson has been able to find time to share with us as our keynote speaker during this busy year of preparation to serve as the President of the Conference 2018-19. We hold her in our prayers.

More information about all the presenters and planning team can be found in these pages, along with the programme for the weekend, the outline for our worship material, following a “rhythm of prayer” and a map of the Cliff College grounds – we don’t want to lose any pilgrims!

Blessings as we journey together, *Jill*

Vice-President, Methodist Conference 2018-19

## ...to be a pilgrim... speakers and presenters

**The Rev’d Michaela Youngson** is one of the Chairs of the London District, having served in ministry in Lancashire, London and as Secretary for Pastoral Care and Spirituality in the Connexional Team of the Methodist Church. She is an author and a glass artist and a contributor to BBC Radio 2’s Pause for Thought slot. She and her daughter, Tamsin, walked part of the Camino pilgrimage in 2016 and Michaela is interested in helping people to be pilgrims spiritually, even when they are not able to set off with their boots on! She is President Designate of the Methodist Conference and looks forward to journeying with fellow pilgrims in her year of office.

**The Rev’d Dr Stephen Skuce**, an Irish Methodist presbyter, is currently Director of Global Relationships for the Methodist Church. He has previously served as Director of Scholarship, Research and Innovation of the Methodist Church as well as principal of Cliff College and, prior to that Academic Dean of the College.

**The Rev’d Graham Sparkes** is a Baptist minister who after serving in two pastorates in Bristol and Kings Langley, he went on to lead the work of the Faith and Unity Department at Baptist House, included ecumenical engagement and work on justice issues. In 2011 he became President of Luther King House in Manchester, an ecumenical partnership for theological education, where he teaches Christian Spirituality as well as offering leadership to the partnership. Graham has developed a particular interest in the relationship between art and faith, and has co-authored ‘God and the Art of Seeing: visual resources for a journey of faith’. He is one of the Patrons of the Retreat Association.

**Deacon Lorraine Brown** supports smaller, vulnerable churches within the boundaries of the Peak District National Park. Her post is unique in that it not only serves three Methodist Districts which include parts of the Peak District but is also ecumenical. Lorraine served on a farm in Wales for eight years prior to this appointment, and she has extensive experience in rural ministry. Amongst other things she has established an “open-the-door” project to enable walkers and tourists to experience the history of a small isolated chapel. She has walked the full Camino de Santiago and beyond to Cape Finisterre, and has developed two pilgrimages and has a third in the pipeline.

**John Cooper** currently works for a church based international development agency. He has served in other church based charities working justice, and has been involved in mixing faith, politics and walking for the last fifteen years. He has been part of walks against war, has walked from a protest camp to a coal-fired power station and most recently has been part of a pilgrimage to Paris ahead of the 2016 global climate negotiations. He. He enjoys exploring the human side of the religious life, and what it means to live a life of social holiness today.

**Fiona Fidgin** is a member of the Methodist Church’s Learning Network team in the Yorkshire Plus region. She is a member of the Iona Community and is a Veriditas trained Labyrinth Facilitator

**Sarah Friswell** has a keen interest in heritage and pilgrimage. She was Pilgrimage and Visits Manager at St Edmundsbury Cathedral for many years, organising walking pilgrimages in East Anglia. Until recently the Chair of the Methodist Heritage Committee, Sarah’s love of heritage has now led her to take up the role of Chair of Trustees of Epworth Old Rectory.

**Jo Hibbard** is Director of Engagement for the Methodist Church, which means she manages the Connexional heritage, marketing and fundraising teams. Telling our good news story is key to all the work Jo and her team do. Previously, Jo was the Methodist Church’s heritage officer (2009-2015) and before that tourism and marketing development manager for Coventry Cathedral.

**Edel McLean** is a learning and development officer working in the North West & Mann region of the Methodist Church’s learning network with a particular commitment to spirituality. She worked previously at the Loyola Hall Jesuit Spirituality Centre. Edel has experience in spiritual direction and retreat giving and a commitment to demystifying prayer. She also lives with chronic pain

**The Rev’d Richard Sharples** is a Methodist presbyter currently serving in Bristol, following a ten year spell in North Wales. He is a Member of the Iona Community, and continues to seek ways of weaving his interest in gardening, pilgrimage and the arts into his ministry.

**Ruth Sprague** has, since childhood, had an interest in colour and texture. When her husband Patrick died in 2011 she turned to stitching, spinning and weaving to process her grief. Her installations and workshops share her continuing journeying of life and faith. She is mum to Sam and Hannah who are old enough to be spreading their own wings. She is the nursery department lead practitioner an Infant School.

**Deacon Lynne Tonge** is the chaplain at Cliff College. Her passions in ministry are pastoral care and creating opportunities for quiet spaces as a way to rediscover God’s still, small voice in the clamour of life’s busyness. Lynne is married to Gordon, a Methodist presbyter and together they enjoy music, the theatre and walking with their two dogs.

**The Rev'd Dr Simon Topping** is a presbyter in the Gloucestershire Methodist Circuit. He was a leader of the Jubilee 2000 march to Cologne in 1999, calling for poor country debt cancellation and the "Make Poverty History" march to the G8 in Scotland in 2005. He also organised the Tolpuddle Martyrs Pilgrimage in 2015. For his PhD he studied the impact of revolutionary Christianity in Latin America.

### **Planning team for the weekend:**

John Cooper, Sarah Friswell, Simon Topping (all as above) plus:

**Jill Baker** is a local preacher and tutor in the Strathclyde circuit, Glasgow. She has led a number of pilgrimages, to Lindisfarne and Israel-Palestine and is planning more routes in Scotland and to Rome. Jill is currently Vice-President of the Methodist Conference.

**Lynne Ling** is recently retired from a varied career most recently working as Managing Editor of Magnet magazine and as an associate of Shoreline Conversations who produced the CTBI Lent course on pilgrimage in 2016. She quite likes walking on bright sunny days and has an active interest in many aspects of spirituality, but has yet to be persuaded to undertake a pilgrimage of more than a couple of hours.

**Deacon Marlene Skuce** enjoys life and ministry on the Basingstoke and Reading Circuit. Other pastimes include exploring new steps in crochet and playing the melodeon – though not at the same time.

**Tony Moodie** is Discipleship Development Coordinator for the Methodist Church and associate Cliff College lecturer. He worked previously in teacher education and a theological college principal.

### **...to be a pilgrim... rhythm of prayer**

We gather over this weekend exploring what it means to be pilgrims journeying through life today. During the weekend a rhythm of prayer will be offered at different points during each day. These will primarily be led by Deacons Marlene Skuce and Lynne Sylvester-Tonge.

*"Pilgrimage is far more than making a physical journey; it is being prepared to allow that **restlessness** which is in every human soul to entice us away from our security in search of something deeper, a clearer vision of the God who calls us to his service."* (Canon Stephen Shipley)

**Friday** – Are we aware of a restlessness which may lead us to journey? Setting out on a journey involves leaving some things behind.

**Saturday** – Travelling the Pilgrim Path is an experience of transition, or liminality. The journey will bring many experiences, we may struggle at times. In all our wanderings, we do not travel alone.

**Sunday** – Pilgrimage is transformational. As we reach the end of our journey together, how have we changed? How can we be agents of transformation and resurrection? Are we ready for the next journey?

Prayers from the "Day by Day" booklet (included in the pilgrim bag) can be interwoven into this rhythm, which follows the "Five-A-Day" shape.

On Saturday and Sunday morning, prayers will be offered communally in the chapel and in an outdoor venue (Saturday: rooftop of Broadbelt/Eagles; Sunday: at the cross) or can be followed privately in bed, using the ideas which follow:

## ...to be a pilgrim... rhythm of prayer

### Give Thanks:

- Saturday morning: *for a new day; for the paradoxes in life: laughter & lament; waiting & wondering.*
- Sunday morning: *for the joy of weary pilgrims finding an empty tomb and meeting Jesus.*

### Read & Reflect:

- Friday evening: Exodus 3:1-5 & Isaiah 43: 1-3a
- Friday night: Jonah 1: 9- 2:2
- Saturday morning: Romans 8:31- 39
- Saturday noon: Isaiah 45: 2-7
- Saturday night: Psalm 139: 1-18
- Sunday morning: Matthew 28:1-10
- Sunday noon: Luke 24:3-35

**Keep silence:** seek God without words

**Pray:** Using prayers from “Day by Day” as appropriate

*... prayer is practicing being present to the presence of God...*

**Act:** What action might you take as a result of your prayers?

## Weekend programme

### FRIDAY

From 2:30pm  
5:00 – 6:30pm  
5:30 – 6:30pm  
6:30 – 7:30pm  
7:45 – 8:30pm  
8:30 – 9:20pm  
  
9:20 – 9:30pm  
9:30 – 9:45pm  
10:00pm

### SATURDAY

7:30am  
8:00 – 9:00am  
9:15 – 10:45am  
  
10:45 – 11:15am  
11:15 – 12:30pm  
12:30 – 12:45pm  
1:00 – 2:00pm  
1:15 – 5:15pm  
2:15 – 6:00pm

Tissington Village Pilgrimage  
Arrivals at Cliff College and Registration  
Market place open  
*Evening meal*  
Opening worship and introductions  
To be a pilgrim? Conversations with  
Michaela Youngson & Stephen Skuce  
Reflecting back 1: Rev. Graham Sparkes  
Pilgrim Prayers  
Late-night option: Candle-lit labyrinth

Pilgrim Prayers (Chapel; Rooftop or bedrooms)  
*Breakfast*  
Keynote Address, ‘Lost in Wonder’  
– Rev. Michaela Youngson  
*Coffee/Tea* and Market Place open  
Aspects of pilgrimage – 4 short presentations  
Reflecting Back 2: Rev. Graham Sparkes  
*Lunch*  
Peak Pilgrimage  
Ongoing activities available:  
Walk the Labyrinth  
Authentic Journeying  
Pilgrim Prayer Cell

2:15 – 3:30pm	Workshops: Pilgrimage and Heritage: Jo Hibbard Pilgrimage and Mission: Richard Sharples
3:30 – 4:00pm	<i>Tea/Coffee</i>
4:00 – 5:15pm	Workshops: Stitching into silence: Ruth Sprague Pilgrimage and pain: Edel McLean Cliff College Prayer Walk: Sarah Friswell
5:15 – 6:00pm	Free time – Market Place open
6:00 – 7:00pm	<i>Evening meal</i>
7:30 – 9:00pm	Pilgrimage on a larger map
9:00 – 9:15pm	Reflecting Back 3: Rev. Graham Sparkes
9:15 – 9:30pm	Pilgrim Prayers
10:00pm	Late-night option: Film – Selma
<b>SUNDAY</b>	
7:30am	Pilgrim Prayers (Chapel; the cross or bedrooms)
8:00 – 9:00am	<i>Breakfast then clear rooms</i>
8:45 – 9:15am	Market Place open
9:30 – 10:45am	Workshops: Creating a pilgrimage: Lorraine Brown Stitching into silence: Ruth Sprague Pilgrimage and mission: Richard Sharples Pilgrimage – a journey to justice: Simon Topping & John Cooper
10:45 – 11:15am	<i>Coffee/Tea</i>
11:15 – 12:00noon	Quiet space for personal reflection/activities
12:00 – 1:00pm	Closing worship with communion (including final Reflecting Back 4: Rev. Graham Sparkes)
1:00 – 2:00pm	<i>Lunch</i>

## Description of workshops and other activities

**Pilgrimage and Heritage – Visitors as Pilgrims?:** Pilgrimages to the sacred and historic places that tell the story of our faith can be epic journeys, crossing the globe, anticipated for a lifetime. However, we believe that the key principles of making a pilgrimage are scalable and apply equally well to welcoming visitors to your local church or religious historic building. Moreover, that is true whether it is a ‘new build’, opening for the first time, or it is 300 years old. You have a story to tell about this place and want to help others encounter God – that is using your heritage for mission. In an interactive and practical session, Sarah Friswell and Jo Hibbard will help you to explore how, in your setting, you can help visitors to become pilgrims.

**Pilgrimage and Mission:** As well as personal 'spiritual benefit', pilgrimage is a great way of doing mission. In this workshop 'worked examples' illustrating how this has been done will be shared: walking the bounds, following a recognised route, working with schools, using labyrinths and creating your own pilgrimages to and from holy places. The hope is that there will be something about which you think, 'Yes, we could do that in our context.'

**Stitching into Silence:** This workshop will introduce the idea of journaling with stitches. Ruth will share how she first came upon the idea of free stitching to mark either a moment in time or a longer journey. Participants will be encouraged to prayerfully reflect on moments in their own lives and engage quietly in a piece of free stitching of their own. All materials will be provided and it's important to say that no previous experience of stitching is needed!

**Pilgrimage – A Journey to Justice:** Simon and John will draw from their experience to reflect on the difference between a Christian march and a pilgrimage; how we hold together our emphasis on both personal holiness and social holiness in a Methodist pilgrimage; ways in which Methodism's history of commitment to social justice can frame and inspire potential future pilgrimages (e.g. the Tolpuddle Martyrs' story); how community is built through these shared endeavours; and being part of a global pilgrimage.

**Creating a Pilgrimage:** Participants of this workshop will be encouraged to engage in methods and reflections used to create a Pilgrimage. Lorraine will introduce the methods she used and show how they linked to her own experience of pilgrimage on the Camino De Santiago. Taking part in this workshop will hopefully encourage the participant to develop pilgrimages in their own locality.

**Pilgrimage and Pain:** Pilgrimage and Pain: Pilgrimage involves purposeful journeying with God, whether through physical landscapes or through the landscapes of our lives. How do we integrate the lived awareness of journeying with God into every aspect of our lives? Those who live with pain, in whatever form, find themselves navigating a challenging landscape, often unseen by those around them. How can the language of pilgrimage be useful to those for whom physical journeys may be difficult? How can we broaden our understanding of journeying with God to include the daily experiences of living in pain?

**Authentic Journeying:** "Walking the Way" is Ruth's reflection on pilgrimage using weaves and words. It stems from a week walking the St. Cuthbert's Way from Melrose to Holy Island but also has, at its heart, a desire to travel through life in real relationship with a God who

wishes to walk with us through the mundane everyday as well as what we view as our successes and failures.

**Walking the Labyrinth:** During medieval times Christians were encouraged to undertake pilgrimage to Jerusalem but the Crusades made it too dangerous for many to travel, so the Church created labyrinths for people to 'walk to Jerusalem' within the safety of their own cathedrals. Come and walk a replica of the medieval Chartres Labyrinth and rediscover an ancient spiritual tool that is being re-discovered for today. In a busy driven linear world the Labyrinth enables us to quieten the outside world and listen to the inner world. It provides space that allows clarity. It does not engage our thinking mind but invites our intuitive mind to come forth. To enter the Labyrinth is to choose to walk a spiritual path.

**Cliff College Prayer Walk:** a chance to experience a prayerful walk through the grounds of Cliff College, with pauses to reflect, pray and sing focussing on key aspects of our Christian journey. The walk will last approximately 45 minutes. Afterwards, for those who are interested, there will be a chance to discuss creating prayer walks in your own location.

**The Pilgrim Prayer Cell** is laid out in the Broadbelt-Eagles lounge, with interactive opportunities for personal prayer. Take some *step-by-step* time to consider your pilgrim calling. Weather permitting there will also be some outdoor prayer stations nearby, including at the sundial adjacent to Annie Douglas House.

### **...to be a pilgrim... rule of life**

- Pilgrimage is another way of talking about our journey through life. Following a Rule of Life is a 'way' of living that helps keep a balanced rhythm in our relationships with God, others and ourselves.
- It is not legislative religious regulation – instead it offers a way to experience the accountable shaping of our lives through the knowledge of God's love for us.
- *'Look how the Lord in his loving kindness shows us the way of life'.  
St. Benedict.*
- **...to be a pilgrim...** is God's gift to us, at this time, for this 'short stay in an away place'.
- We offer 'A pilgrim's rule' (please see the separate bookmark) as a way of opening, and sharing in, a gift that has all the possibility of being a gift that keeps on giving, as we walk on in love, with Jesus and with those we encounter the rest of the way.
- **'Anam Cara'** is the Celtic understanding of having a soul friend who accompanies us in our journey of faith.
- You may wish to approach this weekend as an opportunity to engage in this open sharing with another pilgrim, let us be attentive to those around us with whom we are journeying as fellow-pilgrims.

**[BACK COVER]**



