

Stainbeck Church (United Reformed)

OUTLOOK

April 2026



Fifty great days of EASTER! Alleluia!

**Please worship with us:
Sunday Morning at 10.45am
Thursday Prayers on Zoom
at 7.30pm**

<https://stainbeckurc.org.uk>

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Resurrection Hope: Dawn will come

The Gospel writer, John, describes the first Easter over 2000 years ago: *“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark...”*

The first day of the week. The first day of something new. At this stage, Mary Magdalene, who arrives at the tomb, does not realise just how transformative that something new will be. *“While it was still dark”* – notice how the language points us to the bleakness of Mary’s grief and lack of understanding.

Let’s home in on Mary’s point of view: She was there at the foot of Jesus’ cross. She was there as his mother and the other women wept. I imagine she was there as the body was taken down, wrapped in cloths, and sealed up in the tomb. What did she feel as the stone was rolled into place? Can you imagine? Can you imagine the terrible darkness?

It is the darkness that eradicates hope. A suffocating, creeping darkness that erodes any belief in the future. It’s the darkness of death. It’s the darkness of illness. It’s the darkness of struggle. It’s bleak. It’s desolate.

And yet... there is a competition going on in, in this first line: *“Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark...”* Darkness dominates, but we are also alerted to the fact that dawn is coming – a powerful thought. Yes – darkness might surround Mary and each one of us at times – but with God, dawn will break through. Dawn always comes, following even the darkest, most desolate nights. Yes – the night hours are hard and long, but nothing can stop dawn.

Just as with Mary at the tomb, in our lives and across the world, there are many situations and experiences which are deeply painful and frightening. Ill-health, grief, isolation, poverty, racism, ongoing wars, the climate crisis, all can create darkness and despair.

And yet, God calls us to trust that even when we cannot see or feel it ourselves, God never, ever leaves us. God is right there with us, going through it all with us. God is with us, nurturing new life from the very seeds of pain and fear. This is an utterly transforming hope which we can hold onto, and share, in the darkest times and places, at Easter and beyond.

In peace, **Nicola**



HERE AND THERE

Looking back

The **Partnership Lent Course** written by Revd Dr Rosalind Selby continued throughout the month and Stainbeck friends followed it at St Andrew's or on Zoom. It has been a course which provided much scope for thought, for shared conversations and for developing relationships across the Partnership. We read of the various encounters Jesus had on his journey to the cross and considered our own faith journeys in the light of those encounters.

This year's **World Day of Prayer** services were written by the Christian women of Nigeria and told stories of the lives of three particular women whose circumstances are so different from ours yet with whom we share similar concerns. Services near to Stainbeck Church this year were held at St Martin's, Lidgett Park Methodist Church and Oakwood Church. All were friendly welcoming venues.

We were pleased to welcome **Alanna Hurman-Haddock** into membership and we look forward to sharing in worship and getting to know her and her husband Louie. Alanna has moved to Leeds from Sheffield and is serving on our Synod Ministries Committee.

The March highlight was the Churches Together annual **Lent Soup evening**. Once again it was held at Stainbeck – great soup! In spite of the wet and windy weather representatives from all our local churches gathered to enjoy a companionable evening of thoughtful friendly conversations.

This year the focus was on celebrating the joy of volunteering. **Volunteering** is a two-way process, in which those who give of their time and energies discover that they also receive. We are grateful to Nicola for putting together a series of video clips in which volunteers told of their experiences of volunteering in many different ways with young and old across community and churches. Ted Britton from the Methodist



church gave us an encouraging ‘Ted Talk’ in which he shared his experiences, in particular through Night Shelter.

<https://wydan.org/night-shelter>

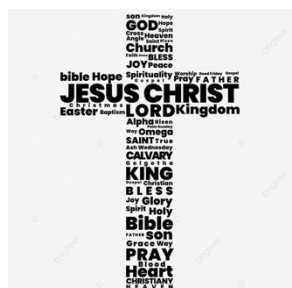
So much support from soup makers, cake bakers, furniture movers and those who cleared and tidied afterwards. To all – our thanks. This was an evening of Churches Together in action!

Further stories of working together were shared in **The Cabin** at the **AGM of Thrive**. It was so encouraging to listen to **Hannah Dey** and **Helen Greenwood** speak of the ongoing development of the weekly work with young people at Totally Tuesday and WOW, at the Thursday Drop In together with InterACT and at Messy Church each month. The work is expanding as links with local primary schools, some lost following Covid, are reconnecting. It was so encouraging to hear of all that the children and young people share. How fortunate we are to have such skilled and imaginative leaders to work on our behalf in this area. This is where and how Stainbeck’s youth work happens. Please do support it with your interest and prayers. Catch up with the Thrive Report – copies on the Church windowsill.



It was also good to share in the **Community Action Day** when our local litterpickers were joined by children from Carr Manor, local councillors and other volunteers. We all gathered for lunch in the Church – big thanks to the Council who supported this financially and InterACT who enabled its smooth running.

Times of our EASTER SERVICES
are shared in the poster on the
back page of this
magazine. Please
join us as we
journey through
HOLY WEEK
together.



DIARY FOR APRIL

Elder on Duty – Claire Jones

Wed	1st	7.00pm	PRIDE CHURCH Service at All Hallows
Thu	2 nd	11-1pm	Community Café open for tea, coffee, sandwiches, toasties and friendship
		7.30pm	Maundy Thursday – Holy Communion round the Table (p12)
Fri	3 rd	10.30am	Walk of Witness – meet at St Matthew’s Church, Chapel Allerton
		9.00pm	Good Friday Tenebrae Service
Sat	4th	10.30-12.00 noon	Easter Coffee Morning at Headingley St Columba’s URC
Sun	5th	9.00am	Easter Day - Early Communion
		9.30am	Easter Breakfast – All welcome
		10.45am	Easter Day Celebration led by Revd Dr Nicola Robinson. Bring a flower to decorate the cross (p 12)
Mon	6 th	11-2pm	Lunch Club closed
Thu	9 th	11-1pm	Community Café open for tea, coffee, cakes, sandwiches, toasties and friendship
		7.30pm	Thursday Prayers led by Revd Dr Nicola Robinson
Sun	12th	10.45am	Hybrid worship for Easter 2 led by Revd Angela Hughes
Mon	13 th	11-2pm	Lunch Club re-opens
Thu	16 th	11-1pm	Community Café open for tea, coffee, cakes, sandwiches, toasties and friendship.
		7.30pm	Thursday Prayers led by Avril and Brian Bellwood
Sat	18 th	7.30pm	Concert at Stainbeck by Jo Yates and her friend Liam – performing a wide range of music to entertain you.

Sun	19th	10.45am	Hybrid Worship led by Revd Geoff Ellis
		3.30-5.30pm	Messy Church
Mon	20 th	11-2pm	Lunch Club
Wed	22 nd	10-12pm	COVID jabs at Stainbeck – see p 11
Thu	23 rd	11-1pm	Community Café open for tea, coffee, cakes, sandwiches, toasties and friendship
		7.30pm	Thursday prayers led by Karen
Sun	26th	10.45am	No service at Stainbeck as we join Headingley St. Columba to celebrate their 60th Anniversary – please join us! See p 7
Mon	27 th	11-2pm	Lunch Club
Tue	28 th	7.30pm	Elders’ Meeting at the home of Ann Coates
Thu	30 th	11-1pm	Community Café open for tea, coffee, cakes, sandwiches, toasties and friendship
		7.30pm	Thursday prayers led by Claire Jones

DIARY FOR MAY

Sun 3rd 10.45am Hybrid Worship led by Revd Dr Nicola Robinson

A reminder of the Stainbeck link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7019277749> (Meeting ID 7019277749).

Looking forward ...

There is a Partnership celebration on **Sunday 26th April** when we are all invited to share with friends at Headingley St Columba as they celebrate their 60th anniversary. If you are needing a lift please ask Avril.

There will be NO service at Stainbeck that morning.

MEET THE TEAM: *Last month it was Geoff's turn – this week it is mine. Apologies if this is 'old news' Stainbeck – but this is all part of our desire to get to know one another better!*

My first memory of Church was when I was allowed to join the Girls Life Brigade as a cadet at Stanmore Baptist Church, North London. I must have been 7 or 8. I loved it. The new friends, games, competitions, gymnastics and of course Jesus! A whole new world full of opportunity was opened up. Alongside this, my education at a Roman Catholic Convent widened my perspective and piqued my curiosity.

At 18 I was baptised as a believer in the Baptist Church and it was soon after this that I met Donald (a Baptist from Wales) on a Youth Club trip to Austria. A few years later, we were married in the Baptist Church with a Guard of Honour from the Girls Life Brigade. And that was 66 years ago.



Moving up to Leeds where Donald, a Medical Physicist, had a new job, we became members at Harehills Lane Baptist Church where Donald played the organ and I taught in the Sunday School. When we moved onto the High Ashes in North Leeds we became founder members at Wigton Moor Congregational Church – soon to become United Reformed. In due course we had 3 children Karen, Mark and Jonathan.

Establishing this new church on this new estate was challenging and I remember the sterling work done by Revd Constance Clark who became an extra Grandmother for our children. What a role model! I also remember the strong support for Wigton Moor from St Andrew's Elders at this time.

In the late 1980's I became an Elder and Church Secretary (Moira's predecessor), one of the first representatives on Mission Council and active on other national committees. A great overview of *'how the*

United Reformed Church works – no hierarchy - conciliar at every level. Meanwhile at home, following a very brief career with the Medical Research Council in Mill Hill, I oversaw the running of a small publishing company which specialised in scientific publications – a hobby for Donald, and a job for me.

And then I had what I often call an ‘aha’ moment. In spite of my involvement in church life, I was conflicted. Faith and action - personal salvation and social justice. How did I reconcile the two?

It was a time of reading, thought and prayer. Encouraged by Revd Andrew Francis, our Minister, I went with him to the Leeds Anabaptist Group and shortly after this I committed, similar to Geoff, to the WORKSHOP Christian Discipleship Course. This was life-changing. Faith to be real involved action – personal salvation surely led to social justice. ‘*Just as I have loved you,*’ says Jesus, ‘*you also should love one another.*’ (John 13:34). Ecumenically, theologically, spiritually I felt I had come home. It was this peace – shalom – that I felt called to share with others.

Following four years at Northern College, I was ordained in 1997 as a Non-Stipendiary Minister and inducted into the Leeds District Council. I spent time at St Paul’s Harrogate setting up a Team for their Youth work, I moved to The Church in Cottingley where I discovered the joy of community ministry and estate mission. And then I moved to Stainbeck where I was charged with establishing an ecumenical community project now InterACT. But that is all another story!

Following the establishment of the project, Stainbeck called me to pastoral ministry and I was inducted as their Minister in 2005. I was Synod Pastoral Elder before Sheana and tasked with the job of forming a partnership of the Leeds churches.

Then in 2022 it was all change. At last! I moved on to become part of the current Ministry Team for the evolving Leeds Partnership.

Although sadly we lost our son Jonathan in the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami, our family has grown over the years – we have three grandsons

and two greatgrandchildren. Nine years ago we down-sized to a retirement flat in Roundhay – not an easy move but in retrospect one for which we are now thankful.

We look back over great family holidays; seaside, mostly wet until we discovered camping in France. Donald's work took us over the pond to Minnesota in the United States where we managed some holiday to travel down to Los Alamos and New Mexico – taking an over-active two year old daughter. We spent time in Iran and Hong Kong – good memories but so long ago. We went to Thailand and out to the little island of Phi Phi Dom to see where our son had been on that Boxing Day morning in 2004

Why am I still 'working'? I can only say because I enjoy what I do and still feel that call. I still feel passionate about community, ecumenism and the ongoing possibilities of new beginnings and change and if there is a useful role for me at enabling this to evolve – count me in! Alongside this I know that I must be very aware of the right time to step back and that I must listen to the words of others and to that inner voice which is of God.



I have also discovered that age brings perspective and a degree of peace about the future. And that is new. Confirming my trust that I will know what to lay down and when to do it.

Angela



LEEDS
UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
PARTNERSHIP

OPPORTUNITY at STAINBECK



**Spring Booster
COVID-19 VACCINATIONS**

Stay Protected, Stay Healthy

Wednesday 22nd April 2026
Stainbeck URC Church, Chapel Allerton, LS7 2PP
10:00-12:00

NHS Eligibility Criteria:

- 75+** Anyone aged 75 before 30/06/26
- Residents of Adult Care Facilities
- Immunosuppressed Individuals

Not eligible?
Private service available
for £79

Halton Pharmacy

NHS

BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT
www.tinyurl.com/vaccinationsSTAINBECK
07882 432914

Scan to book



A REMINDER



A reminder that **CHRISTIAN AID WEEK** this year is from **May 11th–15th** and focuses on the people of Burundi where 70% suffer from hunger and poverty.

AN UPDATE

Stainbeck has renewed its commitment as a Fairtrade Church, using Fairtrade products wherever possible (at least tea, coffee and sugar) and sharing this information with our members and friends. Look out for more ways that we can encourage one another to support this agreement. Did you know that Leeds is a Fairtrade city?

Views expressed by individuals are personal and not necessarily those of Stainbeck Church.
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Avril and Brian Bellwood, Church Secretaries: 0113 293 5847

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

AT STAINBECK CHURCH

MARCH

29

**PALM
SUNDAY**
10:45AM
WORSHIP



**MAUNDY
THURSDAY**
7:30PM COMMUNION
AROUND THE TABLE

APRIL

2

APRIL

3

**GOOD
FRIDAY**
9:00PM TENEBRAE,
SERVICE OF SHADOWS



**EASTER
SUNDAY**

9:00AM COMMUNION
FOLLOWED BY EASTER
BREAKFAST
10:45AM CELEBRATION

APRIL

5



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