

# Circuit Newsletter

## EXTRA! Autumn 2025

### Welcome to our new staff!

Some of our new ministerial staff introduce themselves.

#### Alex Middleton-Laing

Hello, I'm Alex. Essentially, I'm a Labrador: I'm good natured, partial to naps and snacks, and I need to be walked every day!

Before I became a minister I had a long career in teaching, being both departmental and pastoral heads in secondary schools. My main subject was Religion and Philosophy up to and including A Level. I absolutely loved teaching. However, I'd been resisting the calling to ministry since I was seven years old, and it was time to listen. I candidated for ministry, as it's called in Methodism, and then trained at Queen's, Birmingham on a not-for-credit basis.



I have always loved theology. My school had excellent RE teachers and I credit Dr Brown for giving me the desire to study Theology at Durham University. She made it fascinating, particularly the Roman context of the Gospels. I found I could connect with Jesus through studying. I wasn't raised in a Christian context and chose to attend the local Methodist Church as a teenager because I felt welcomed and valued. I'm so glad I did! After university I completed my PGCE at Cambridge.

Reading and studying has always kept me theologically curious and I had a wonderful year studying for my Master's in Theology at Manchester University. My dissertation was the catchily (!) titled 'Menopause and the conceptualisation of the female body in the Hebrew Bible', for which I was awarded the Brandon Memorial Religions and Theology Prize. In ministry, have enjoyed supporting women during perimenopause. My other area of interest is inclusivity, being neurodivergent myself. I wish for churches to be fully inclusive, celebrating what makes each of us unique and growing together. If we come as we are, we can worship in ways which are authentic. We don't have to be anything other than ourselves, which is how God loves us. I aim to make space for everyone to be themselves in church.

2025-26 is the year of my 55<sup>th</sup> birthday. I'm hoping to have 55 walks this Connexional year. If you would like to walk with me, please contact me. You define the walk (it doesn't have to be on two feet), the length and the location. For example, one of the loveliest walks I've had recently, was being carefully and slowly walked around a small garden, being shown a collection of solar lights. It was a beautiful time of sharing what was important. The thing I

love most about being a minister is being trusted with people's stories and it's something that I never take for granted.

When I'm not working, I love to spend time with my wife, Carrie, and our three adult children. And walking, napping and snacking!

*Alex will be working with churches in the north of the Circuit.*

## **Kate Paterson**

Hello, I'm Kate, and it's a joy to be here with you in the York circuit.

I was born in Cyprus, raised in a British Army family, and from a young age, I was nurtured with a deep appreciation for life, culture, travel, and diversity. My beloved late parents gifted me with a strong foundation in the Christian faith through the Anglican Church, a faith that remained central to my life well into adulthood. In my mid-twenties, I was welcomed with open arms by a small Methodist church community, where I truly found a spiritual home.



Since then, I have had the privilege of serving in various ways: as a Worship Leader, Youth Leader, Steward, Circuit and Synod Representative in my local church and circuit, and nationally as part of the Methodist Church's Candidates Selection Committee. These roles have helped shape both my calling and my deep love for the Church and its people.

I come into full-time ministry as a Deacon, following a 34-year career as a Research Microbiologist in industry. Science has always been a passion, one that continues to fill me with wonder and connects beautifully with my faith. Having lived much of my life in rural Cambridgeshire, I've spent a lot of time outdoors, where I experience both creation and Creator in vibrant, organic ways.

At the heart of my theology is a God who has loved and delighted in me from the very beginning. I believe deeply in the values of inclusion, diversity, dignity, and worth, values I try to live out in every aspect of my life and ministry.

I'm also what some lovingly call a bit of a geek! I enjoy Earping (I'm an Earper, that's a fan of the TV series Wynonna Earp), ComiCons, Sci-Fi, and board games, passions that have drawn me into some wonderfully creative and diverse communities. When I'm not serving or reading something theological or scientific, you'll likely find me crafting. Knitting is my latest obsession, but I also love watercolour painting, photography and anything that lets me be creative with my hands.

I'm excited to be part of this community, to walk alongside you in faith, and to see what God has in store for us together.

*Kate will be working in the city centre.*

Introduction from Revd Jill Pullan coming soon!