

THE RIVERFOLD NEWSLETTER



*Growing Disciples
with
Compassion, Confidence
& Courage*

A Letter From The Riverfold: Growing Together in Faith

BY THE REV. LIZ MACK
OSWALDBECK BENEFICE



Hello to all in the Riverfold on this beautiful spring morning; I'd like to introduce myself for those who don't know me yet- I am Revd Liz Mack, the Priest in charge and Mission Associate for the Oswaldbeck family of churches, covering Misterton, Gringley on the Hill, Clayworth, Beckingham, West Stockwith and Walkeringham.

Having just passed my 6 months in post mark, and about to go off on retreat, I am in reflective mood and wanted to share something of this with you.

After attending a meeting of the 2 other clusters and their leadership teams last week, it was startling how much our initially small teams have grown over the past months.

There is a tangible sense of how God is adding to our number, bringing people into new roles from a diverse range of backgrounds, all seeking to get involved with this adventure He is calling us into despite the path ahead being very much unseen and unknown at present. What is clear though is that whatever He is leading us into, it's going to continue be with one another.

This may sound obvious, but sadly, over the churches history, and possibly fostered by a parochial system of governance, it's rare that individual churches work well and flourish together across parish boundaries, other than maybe the odd joint service or such like.

To me, God's church is at it's most beautiful, and most reflective of the relational three in one God we follow, when we become one- not the same, not uniform, but unified.

The reading for last Sunday, Acts 2:42-47, was the evocative picture of God's heart displayed amongst his image bearers – a diverse range of people from many backgrounds having all things in common, spending much time together- all who believed were together. Unity, not uniformity, and in doing so, they had the goodwill of all the people. More importantly, day by day, the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. Praise God!

I am greatly encouraged that as we seek to support one another across the Riverfold, as we break bread together across parish boundaries, as we serve one another as any have need, the goodwill of the communities we serve will grow as they witness God's heart for all people and His church's generous hearts living out our true calling- to love God and love our neighbour, wherever and whomever they might be.

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*They devoted themselves
to the apostles' teaching
and to fellowship, to the
breaking of bread and to
prayer. Everyone was
filled with awe at the
many wonders and signs
performed by the
apostles. All the believers
were together and had
everything in common.
They sold property and
possessions to give to
anyone who had need.
Every day they continued
to meet together in the
temple courts. They broke
bread in their homes and
ate together with glad
and sincere hearts,
praising God and enjoying
the favor of all the people.
And the Lord added to
their number daily those
who were being saved.*

Growing Disciples Among Our Children: Seeds of Hope This Easter Season

BY LUCY MCCANN, CHILDREN & FAMILIES LEAD

Since the last edition, a wonderful wave of Easter joy has flowed across The Riverfold. Rev. Liz brought the Easter story to life in fresh ways with The Rhyming Bible and an ‘Eastingle’ (complete with chocolate!). On Good Friday, no less than four Messy Easters offered fun, fellowship and importantly, plenty of talk about Jesus. We also welcomed new families to Blyth for coffee, cake and ‘mini’ Easter gardens.



St. Mary and St. Martin’s provided an ‘egg-cellent’ (sorry) backdrop for an Easter Story picture trail through the magnificent Priory Church. The joyful buzz of children in our churches has undoubtedly blessed many, with one particularly special moment when a child spontaneously began to play the piano during her church visit.

Our schools joined the celebrations too. School Collective Worship has focused on Lent, Prayer and ‘Big Questions’, and we hosted many of our primary schools and their families for Easter services. Through balloons, mystery gifts, storytelling, artefacts and sensory experiences, the Easter message of hope and resurrection was shared with young hearts and minds. We were thrilled to join our first time of fellowship with a St. Peter’s School in Gamston. We look forward to joining more schools across the Idle and Sands in the near future. We were also fortunate to welcome Bishop Paul at many events across the Oswaldbeck this Lentern and Easter season.

Our ‘Growing Disciples’ mission continues to be made possible through a team of volunteers that give their time unreservedly to serve wherever needed. This awesome group of individuals are figuratively working as the ‘Body of Christ’ within our mission . Each person has a heart for service and brings unique talents and strengths to bless all our families — thank you!

Looking ahead, we remain committed to building strong relationships between our churches, schools and communities. We are prayerfully listening, discerning next steps, it is our mission aim to create spaces where children and families can encounter Jesus for themselves, places where God can be at work.

If you would like to pray into our continuing mission for discipleship please place these words on your heart. “Let the little children come to me.” Matthew 19:14. A short verse that reminds us of the power of a childlike humility, trust and dependence on Jesus.

Every blessing until the next edition.

Let the little children come to me.

Matthew 19:14

Voices of Feedback from Our Children & Families

*‘Faith is trusting something you can’t see’
Pupil, Blyth School*

‘Why didn’t the animals on the ark eat each other?’ Pupil, Gringley - Bishop Paul gave a fantastic hypothetical answer to this one - great question.

*‘Watching the growth of our young children across The Riverfold has been truly amazing. The way they are encountering God is deeply inspiring. My daughter especially loved learning about the Easter story at school and was able to recount it word for word’
Parent, Bawtry School*

*‘We want to hear more of the Rhyming Bible!’
Pupil, Blyth School*

Hello from Laura, The Riverfold Operations Lead: Powered by Coffee, Faith & a Four-Year-Old

BY LAURA KORCZYK

OPERATIONS TEAM LEAD FOR THE RIVERFOLD



For those of you who don't know me yet, it feels like the perfect moment—alongside the release of our third issue of The Riverfold Newsletter and six months into my role—to step out from behind the scenes, say hello, and properly introduce myself!

My name is Laura Korczyk, and I'm usually found in the background at The Riverfold, helping things run smoothly and supporting our wonderful team with the operational side of things. I also have the joy of putting together The Riverfold Newsletter—so if you've been enjoying it, I'll happily take a little bit of the credit (and maybe the blame too!).

So what does my role involve? At its heart, it's a servant-hearted position—supporting our churches, leaders, and teams so that together we can continue growing disciples and nurturing faith across our rural communities. I work closely with our Lead Mission Enabler, Mission Associates, Children & Families Lead, and the Diocese, all with a shared hope of seeing God's work flourish in every corner of The Riverfold.

If we haven't met yet, or if there's any way I can support you or your parish, please do get in touch—I'd genuinely love to hear from you.

If you're curious to know a bit more about my story and journey of faith, you can watch my Living Hope Story here:

<https://southwell.anglican.org/coming-back-home-lauras-living-hope-story/>

On a more personal note... life is wonderfully full! I have a very energetic four-year-old, Bella, who keeps me on my toes. During the week she's at Mayflower Primary School in Bawtry, and on Sundays she can usually be found joyfully bouncing around St Nicholas Church (and occasionally everywhere else too!).

When I'm not working or being outpaced by Bella, I love to run—most mornings you'll find me exploring routes around The Riverfold, especially towards Ranskill. Last month, I even completed the Retford Half Marathon, which felt like a real milestone (and a reminder of what perseverance—and a little faith!—can achieve).

Outside of that, I'm a loyal Spurs fan (please be kind!), I have a well-known sweet tooth that I try—sometimes unsuccessfully—to manage, and I love spending time in the garden. I'm especially looking forward to the Gringley-on-the-Hill Garden Show in June.

Above all, it's a real joy and privilege to be part of what God is doing across The Riverfold. I truly believe He is at work in both the big and small moments, and it's exciting to play even a small part in that story. I'm always happy to connect, support, or simply say hello—so please don't hesitate to reach out!

SHARE YOUR RIVERFOLD FAITH STORY

The Riverfold is looking for people of faith in the benefices to share short video testimonies for Living Hope Stories on the Diocesan website. Your story could encourage others and help them explore faith.

Contact Laura Korczyk at laura@theriverfold.com or 07802 480 869

The Riverfold Churches in Focus: Our Journey Together

In March, at St Nicholas Church, Bawtry we celebrated the baptism by full immersion of four individuals, joyfully welcoming them into God's family and marking a significant step in their journey of faith. It's been amazing to see how we are also growing in discipleship across the Riverfold, with a deepening desire to follow Jesus and live out our faith together as a strengthening and vibrant community



We are incredibly fortunate to have the Traquair murals at one of our churches in The Riverfold, St Peter's Church, Clayworth. For those who may not know, they were created in 1904-05 by the Scottish artist Phoebe Anna Traquair and cover all four walls of the chancel with richly coloured scenes of angels, saints, and symbolic figures in the Arts and Crafts tradition.



We are truly blessed to have such beautiful artwork in our church, and if you haven't yet visited them, please do make sure you find the time. We pray that the recent application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund will be successful—thanks to the dedication and hard work of everyone involved, especially Davina Gull.

Not-to-miss news: *Welcoming Bishop Andy to The Riverfold!*

We are We are delighted to share some wonderful news with our community! Bishop Andy will be visiting St Barnabas Church, Ranskill, on Sunday 17th May at 9:30 am, and we warmly invite you to be part of this special occasion.

This promises to be a meaningful and uplifting time of worship as we gather together, joined by Bishop Andy, to celebrate faith, fellowship, and community. Whether you are a regular member of our congregation or visiting for the first time, you will be made very welcome.

Come along, bring your family and friends, and be part of a joyful morning filled with worship, reflection, and togetherness. We look forward to sharing this special service with you!



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