

MEMO

Middlesbrough & Eston Methodist Outburst

MARCH — MAY 2021



FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Well, who would have thought that we would still be under the cloud of Covid 19 one year on? It has been a nervous, worrying time but also a time of much positivity. We have had to adapt, be courageous, and do things we didn't think we could or would! We are thankful, on the whole, for Zoom, Jitsi and similar platforms which means it is still possible to see each other, worship together and do the business of keeping the circuit and churches running as best we can even though it is nowhere near as good as meeting in real time. It isn't all-inclusive but is better than nothing, I suppose.

In this edition we have a quiz to keep your brain active, some Easter related items and a miscellany of other articles. Who knows when we will be able to meet for face to face worship but in-church services and alternatives have been planned as you will see. We are thankful for all leaders of worship who have provided a range of material since March last year. It is very much appreciated.

It would give the editorial team much pleasure if you are stimulated to submit an article for our next edition. Perhaps you are moved to share experiences, thoughts and outcomes of your Covid time, or

something non-Covid if you are fed up with hearing about it! What may seem very ordinary to you may just be the thing that someone wants or needs to read (see page 7 for some ideas) If you don't have computer access just send your hand-written article to any of the team and we will do our best to publish it.

With best wishes for a Happy Easter in the knowledge that Jesus was risen for us.

Anne, Dave and Elaine

(Communications Team)

DEADLINE FOR NEXT EDITION OF MEMO

**Please send all contributions
to the
Communications Team
C/O the Circuit office,
Nunthorpe Methodist Church,
Connaught Road, Nunthorpe,
Middlesbrough TS7 0BS**

**Or email to
mbrocircuit@gmail.com
by 1st April 2021**



The Superintendent's Letter

Dear Friends,

I write this letter as we approach the season of Lent, the traditional time when Christians focus on the spiritual disciplines of retreat, prayer and fasting. However, after our third lockdown in the space of 12 months, many will be thinking that the whole year has been austere and very much like Lent. While traditional disciplines are important, perhaps we have retreated, self-isolated and practiced abstinence enough already. What we really want in Lent this year is something which will draw our focus away from ourselves and our own problems. We want to look outwards with a discerning eye, rather than inwards, and see the world as it really is.

One option is to look at our faith from the perspective of the poor. When Jesus says "Blessed are the poor" we tend to view his pronouncement as being rather quaint. But for those who have nothing, in our own land and overseas, Jesus words are electrifying. It is a joyful proclamation for these "little ones" who will be first in the kingdom of God. We tend to view ourselves as people who give to the poor, but what we often fail to appreciate is that the poor have much to give us. We can learn much about the evil in our world that exploits the poor and about the kind of faith which endures come what may.

There are many resources which will help us to discover more, but in this letter I simply highlight the work of the Churches Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT). Their website (<http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk>) contains material to inform our prayers and our action and is a great resource for Lenten study.

In all of this there is a curious kind of freedom to be found in getting away from 'me and my problems'. Faith is always the kind of journey that is best undertaken in the company of others and with a focus away from ourselves. Kathy Galloway of the Iona community put it very well when she wrote a Lenten hymn. One verse goes like this:

**To seek your soul it is a precious thing,
But you will never find it on your own,
Only among the clamour, threat and pain,
Of other people's need will love be known.**

Lent is a good time to open our eyes and look outwards examining the ways in which other people live and the problems they must face. As we do this then so we grapple with the real nature of the kingdom of God and ask questions of our own faith. We might also ask what is the work that Christ is calling us to do?

With every blessing,

Rev. David Godfrey.

The Gathered Church

Doesn't the simple pleasure of going to church and exchanging the peace at Sunday worship seem long ago now? These days, we are not even allowed into our churches!

But we can take comfort when we think back to the Apostles who were commissioned to build God's Church. After the first Pentecost, what did they do? They didn't rush out and build church buildings. No! Rather the people gathered together, in their own homes.

Clearly, we can't physically 'gather' just now, but we have the technology to 'gather' together, both in real time and at a later time. And it is important to do so. There is something powerful when we pray together rather than alone. Try phoning a friend with the same written prayer and saying it together. How does that feel? Any different from saying it on your own?

So, THE Church, which is alive and well in you and me, will find new ways to be together. After all, the early Christians had the added complication of being persecuted, often to death, for their faith. And yet they persisted.

Perhaps we could each sit at our dining table at a set time, with one or two items before us, such as a small glass of wine, a lit candle, stones, and a cross. Indeed, anything that reminds us of our Risen Saviour. We could then 'share' this time in praying the same prayers and knowing that we are part of an eternal fellowship that is only temporarily divided.



The Parish Pump



Circuit Easter offering Service 2021 (Covid 19 permitting)

**This will be held at Grove Hill Methodist Church (or on Zoom)
on Sunday 25th April at 6.00pm**

This service is prepared by Methodist Women in Britain on behalf of the World Mission Fund. In this act of worship, we shall dedicate our Easter Offering and hear stories of how the world Mission Fund supports God's mission in different parts of the world.

Everyone is invited to share in this service.

Methodist Women in Britain

Incorporating Women's Network and British unit
of the World Federation of Methodist and
Uniting Church Women



Circuit Network meetings

There are no meetings planned for the immediate future.

MWiB Darlington District

Easter 2021 at Elm Ridge Methodist Church Darlington on 30/3/21. (This will be reviewed nearer the time.)

Project news 20/21

It was decided that the project for 2019/20, COCO, should be carried forward for another year in view of the difficulties in fundraising. COCO, Comrades of Children overseas, believes that all children, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity or economic circumstances should have the opportunity to receive an education.

Our focus is on raising money for much needed new classrooms at Mercy Primary School in Mbita, Kenya. The District organised a fundraising event for the month of October 2020 when we were all invited to "Count Our Blessings" each day. Some of our groups took part and the sum of £392 was raised. This was sent off to the District Treasurer along with further donations of £453.55 which had previously been held back during lockdown. The total raised for the District from the Count Your Blessings appeal is a little over £2000, a very welcome boost for the funds.

The school in Mbita had been able to complete one classroom in haste and made it secure before the lockdown in March due to the Covid 19 pandemic. This interrupted learning for students who missed more than 6 months of formal learning.

The Government announced that the school could re-open on 12th October with a limited number of pupils. They then had to ensure the safety of the pupils and teachers and needed to buy washable face masks. They also needed to purchase 100 desk and chairs (to achieve social distancing), hand washing stations and liquid soap. The total amount needed was £2,200 and we were able to send a cheque to cover this.

Hopefully, fundraising will continue in some form until August 2021 to enable Mercy Primary School to achieve their aim of building more classrooms to make a safe, secure learning environment for all their students.

Kath Smithies

Circuit Methodist Women in Britain (Network) Secretary

The First Easter – a robin's tale



A robin remembers the events of the first Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday

I must have travelled hundreds of miles following the man they called Jesus. Flying just close enough to hear his words and watch all he did. He puzzled me at times but mostly my heart ached as I longed for the Kingdom he talked about – a Kingdom that started here on earth with love and compassion. With justice and healing.

You might think a man of his gravity would be all work and no play – but he liked a party too and met with all sorts of folks. Not that I minded. I've feasted on many a crumb from under his table in my time! He made you marvel at him but he was a mystery too. You would just think you had the measure of him and he would surprise you again and again.

It's the last few days I remember the most. I'm an old robin now and it was many summers ago. But I remember what happened as if it was yesterday and I still shed tears sometimes as well as being filled with the joy of that morning in the garden.

The night in Gethsemane was hard. I perched on a branch just behind where he was sitting and watched him sob. His pain wracked my little body too. His disciples slept and I couldn't help but fly down closer onto a stone. I know he saw me and I was glad to be able to do something for him. Even if it was such a tiny thing as just staying beside him. I tried to sing but no tune would come. It was as if the weight of all he was carrying had drained the music out of his breast and mine.

But there was worse to come. Oh my dear ones, I can hardly bear to tell you what they did to him on that hill the following day. Nature can be harsh and I have seen many birds killed brutally and tragically but I have never seen anything as brutal as the sight that ripped my heart in two that Friday.

There were three of them: Jesus and two men they called thieves. They banged nails in their feet and hands and Jesus had a crown of thorns on his head too. His back was bleeding from the scourging and I wondered again about human beings and what they were capable of. He had healed so many and yes, he had done some things people didn't like, said some things that stung. But why oh why could they not see his goodness. How could they not see that he was different? I stayed as close as I could but I just couldn't bring myself to fly up onto the cross they had nailed him to. I wasn't afraid, I was just defeated and my wings had no flight in them.

I watched him die as I had watched him being jeered and abused and It felt as if the breath of all creation was slipping away. That night and the next day were a bit of a blur but I remember waking on the third day and feeling different. I can't explain it really but my song was back and I sang my heart out. I heard other birds singing too and the lambs on the hills seem to be skipping and playing in the grass with new

energy and joy.

I flew over to the tomb where they had put him after his death and I knew. I knew he wouldn't be in there. I'm not one for 'experiences' or 'premonitions'. I was and still am a very ordinary little bird. But as I flew into the garden and saw the trees in blossom and the flowers vibrant and bright and the woman I knew to be Mary in conversation with a figure. I knew it was him and I sang. Oh how I sang and then it happened. He saw me and winked. He winked at *me* a tiny robin and my red breast swelled with joy and I think I blushed too!

So you see, even as I prepare for my death. I'm not sad. Even as I share my story with you, I'm not afraid. I didn't see him again after that morning but it didn't matter. Wherever I flew, wherever I sang my song. He sang with me.

It's time to say Goodbye now but think on my story and Happy Easter.

www.rootsontheweb.com/robinstale



What can we share with each other right now?

‘A day in my life under lockdown’? - 100 words on how you are spending your time at home, and what you actually like about it? Or why not send in 100 words on ‘The three things I most want to do when coronavirus is over.’

Below is what 100 words look like. We would love to publish your 100 Words – sometimes a few words can have more impact than a lot. **The Editorial Team**

It was a sad day when we knew that Trinity's Unity Café would have to close under Lockdown. Not only did we miss the people coming in, but we missed each other. Some action was needed. On 27th March 2020 a WhatsApp group was set up and each day, if possible, we share a bible verse or two on a rota basis. To date this is 254 different pieces and it is amazing the number of times a verse speaks to you. A simple but effective use of social media. You should try it if you can
Anne Smith

I really value and love my church family. We don't have many people who have I.T. We do have lots of people who love their telephones and put them to good use, to care and to chat and to listen and to console and to cheer. Some are really good at writing letters to say you are not forgotten, you are in my thoughts, here's news and maybe a funny story to make you laugh. We all have prayers; one says she prays to the whole church family every night. We love to share. Thank God for each other.
Dave Elliott

Christ is Alive StF 297 H&P 190

Brian Wren: Tune Truro by Thomas Williams LM

I love the words of this relatively new Easter hymn. With only few of the usual Good Friday/Easter tropes, just Palestine, an empty cross and maybe the words “throned” and “conquer” it’s a complete contrast to a much-loved older hymn *When I survey*. Watts’ words take us back in time to the crucifixion, Wren’s hymn trumpets the Risen Lord. Alive. Here. Now.

Wren sees Christ’s suffering not just as an event in a different country, in a different time long gone, but daily, in “every insult, rift and war”. Have you ever endured words of insult or scorn from others? Ageism, racism and sexism can be found everywhere. Our children especially can be taunted in the playground about anything: glasses, wrong trainers, being a swot, ginger hair, seeming “gay”, being different. Bullies aren’t fussy. Maybe you have experienced rifts within your family and are saddened when your sons and daughters fall out. Christ shares in all these pains, Wren writes, yet “loves the more”. And war? Well obviously, violent conflict between nations is one place where Christ is found, but this “war” against a virus is another and Christ suffers with us as millions over the world die or are disabled by Covid, and Drs, nurses and para-medics exhaust themselves caring and dealing with the Pandemic. Christ saves, heals and touches us now proclaims the hymn. And we still can see this. He lives where even hope has died.

Wren, a prolific hymn-writer and theologian, wrote this in part as a response to the assassination in April 1968 of Martin Luther King, to give Easter hope after that terrible event. This year, Easter Sunday is the anniversary of that day. Always a strong proponent of the view that hymns are poetry and theology, instead of simply music, he writes “a hymn is a poem, and a poem is a visual art form. The act of reading a hymn aloud helps to recover its poetry and its power to move us—the power of language, image, metaphor, and faith-expression.” If you have both a StF and a H&P hymn book handy you might notice Wren later revised it to use language inclusive of women and oppressed or subordinate groups. Try reading this hymn aloud and see if it moves you without the music.

Of course when I had a voice I used to love singing, so for me a tune is critical too. I confess I am not that stirred by the designated tune in the hymn book: *Truro*. It’s another anonymous folk tune, this one collected by Thomas Williams in the 18th century and named by him after the Cornish cathedral city. Despite the repeated positive exclamation: “Christ is alive”, and although pretty and easy to sing, I find *Truro* a bit too “upbeat” for the real experiences of “suffering” in the hymn. *Truro* doesn’t move me. There are 34 other LM Long Metre alternative tunes in the hymn book. Although there are some organists who say we should sing hymns to the set tune and no other, I would prefer *Fulda* by William Gardiner 1770-1853. An early promoter in the UK of Beethoven, Gardiner claimed that his tune was inspired by one of Beethoven’s. Named after a cathedral in Germany, *Fulda*, the climbing phrases in a minor key, of *Fulda*’s last two lines touch my heart and match the power of Wren’s poetry. Wren believes the Passion and Resurrection should not be a

distant event ghettoed into the few days before and after Easter but used regularly to celebrate the Christian response to the many difficult events and situations we encounter and know about, from the daily news and our own experience. We have Easter hope. Christ is alive!

Ruth Lewis

Nunthorpe's Women's Hour

Women's Hour started at the same time as our Contact group, being its Sister Fellowship group (as my dear departed Friend Betty Yolland would always put me right) The idea being, that when Young Wives became Old Wives, they would transfer down to Women's Hour.

This never happened, loyalty to Contact prevailed, so now some Contact Ladies are as old or older than Women's Hour Ladies, with no downward flow. Soon our numbers dwindled, Gone to Glory, or Popped ones Clogs. To stem the flow or stop the rot, we decided to invite friends family neighbours (use it as an Outreach Facility) Anyone I met I invited, not all are Methodist, some not even Christian, but we have become a great group of about 30 ladies.

We have a small service to start with, followed by a speaker/ entertainment, and close with the Women's Hour Anthem or we say The Grace together. Then tea and biscuits, cake if we are lucky. Women's Hour is now much longer than an hour, people come early and go late due to enjoying the chat, we had a great programme fixed for 2020/2021. This of course was cancelled, due to Covid 19, included visits from Kirkleatham Owl Centre, Stokesley U3A Ukulele Group. The Good News is as they were being cancelled, all agreed to come back for the 2021/2022 season if Covid allows of course. So except for clarification of dates, 2021/2022 is sorted.

Please Come And Join Us, Meetings are Wednesdays at 2-30pm, every 2nd and 4th weeks of the month.

For further details contact

Rose Ghosh contact number 01642 318551

I know Godwon't give me more than I can handle.
I just wish Hedidn't trust meso much. (*Mother Teresa*)

The Association of Church Editors

EASTER THOUGHTS.

I wonder what our lives will be like by the time you read this edition of 'Memo' Will we be still in the midst of the crisis as we are as I write this on January 9th, or will there be a more hopeful scenario as more of us receive our vaccines?

Last year of course, our churches were closed and we were unable to access them for Lent or Easter services which I am sure was a great sadness to us all. Maybe this year will be different.

I look back over so many Easters and remember the inspiration of that exciting message of the Resurrection and for me, being privileged to preach on that day, for many years.

I remember the joy of worship at Grove Hill on Easter Sunday, beginning with Holy Communion, followed by Easter Breakfast and quite often I would be leading the Family Service with our children and young people. This would have been the climax of our work and discussion over many Sunday mornings with the Senior Sunday School, or 'Strides' as they later became.

What a joy the music was at Easter, both on Good Friday services which we used to have, and on Easter Sunday.

I also remember the Agape meals we shared with our friends at Central Methodist church which I think would possibly have been on Maundy Thursday. We would have a faith meal together and enjoy good conversation, then towards the end the Minister would ask us to be quiet and prayerful. He or she would then ask us to share the Grace and leave in silence and the Minister would do all the washing up! I also used to find the Linthorpe Road Maundy Thursday services so special as we had a supper, followed by Holy Communion. We have attended some of the Holy Week services at Trinity and were so inspired by those who led the services. I look back even further to 1971 when I was still at college and some of us attended an MAYC conference in Birmingham. On Easter Sunday we attended a special service at Coventry Cathedral starting in the ruins of the bombed building and going through to the new Cathedral, what a great sense of Death and Resurrection. It was also a special new start for me as I met Herbert Hopper and members of Woodlands Road young people who I would meet again later in the year when I moved to Middlesbrough and who were such a help to me as I settled in to my new life.

I have always found Easter so special and although we are sad as we remember Jesus going to the Cross we know the joy of his Resurrection on Easter Sunday. The contrast is so dramatic even though we know the story so well, it isn't just the story for me, but the experience, the personal sense of sadness and then joy. Every year the hymns mean so much to me, as I have said before, music in worship is so special for me. It is in singing 'When I survey the wondrous cross', with that crescendo in the last verse; 'Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small, love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all' I also love our Easter Sunday hymns, especially 'Low in the Grave he lay' with that



rousing chorus 'Up from the grave he arose!' so contrasting with the mood of the verse and underlining for me part of the great story which is Easter.

So where will we be this Easter, what memories will we have of this special time of our Christian year? Whatever happens I hope and pray that it will be a time of great revival of faith in our own lives as we celebrate the joy of resurrection as we accept the gift of eternal life here and now, a gift which death can never take away. Alleluia!!

Dave Elliott

EASTER EVENTS AROUND THE CIRCUIT (not on the Plan)

Please note that advertised services in Holy Week may be affected by the ongoing Covid 19 pandemic. Church Councils will consider the risk nearer the time and may decide to move the advertised services online for safety reasons.



Marton

Thursday 1st April - Maundy Service at 7:30pm or on Zoom.

Nunthorpe

Friday 2nd April - Good Friday Reflective Service at 10:00am or on Zoom

Trinity

Reflective Services during Holy week - 6.00pm Monday to Thursday led by the Worship Leaders

Good Friday Service at 11.00am led by the Worship Leaders or on Zoom

Circuit Service

*25th April Easter Offering Service
at Grove Hill 6.00pm or on Zoom
(see page 4)*

Young Sunday: A Young Person's Perspective

I am writing to tell you what goes on in *Young Sunday*.

Young Sunday is a group of young people from the circuit who share their beliefs and point of view on our faith. *Young Sunday* has given us new activities to help us to express our relationship to God and Jesus. *Young Sunday* also offers different activities for us; from talking to the Mayor to doing fun activities. You name it *Young Sunday* has influenced us. We have adults who have supported us from the beginning to now and without them *Young Sunday* would not be the same.

Before we meet we get a pack delivered to us with everything we need in it for the session, including hot chocolate and biscuits. Every time we meet we always have a theme for the week for example once we were doing about the “nativity” and we made plasticine models of it, one week we did about God being with us and we made paper boats and talked about Jesus calming the storm. Before doing anything we all ask if we're OK because as *Young Sunday* we show love and care to one another. Then we will talk about what we are doing. We focus on our faith and read the Bible from the New Testament to the Old Testament and we were given special Bible markers so that we know which book is where in the Bible. When we all read we all have our ears open and take care to listen to one another as it's what God wants us to do. There is never a wrong answer when being part of *Young Sunday* and we each have a huge amount of respect for each other and so we are all willing to speak up. If one of us struggles then we always ask for help no matter what it is.

We've learnt through *Young Sunday* that there is always someone who can support us in the same way that God supports us and people will always help you. We always express our thoughts and what we believe in God and Jesus and the views we have. As we physically can't see each other in person we have used Zoom to keep in contact and meet together. Even though we can't meet together physically we still feel that *Young Sunday* is with us, we still have the same experience if we are open minded and the adults are still supporting us as they would in person. We still have activities from important people like the Mayor who taught us about Middlesbrough's experience of never forgetting. You can still experience God and learn about Jesus whatever is happening. Finally without *Young Sunday* we would not be able to have fun through this time of lockdown.

God bless u all, thanks and stay safe.

Ryan Banks (aged 15, *Young Sunday*)

supportive
disciples fun activities
friendship bible amazing adult faith
young sunday god jesus
enjoyable

Young Sunday

Young Sunday is the circuit youth discipleship group.

It's open to any young person of secondary school age.

We currently have 10 young people from across the Circuit engaged in the group.

We meet twice a month on a Sunday evening.

Our focus is faith based activities and our hope is that our young people will grow in their faith.

If you would like to know more please contact Revd Charity, Kay Braithwaite or Anne Smith.

If you would like to contribute financially to the twice monthly packs, we give each young person please contact Kay Braithwaite.



Switched on



A housewife was helping her aged mother get up the stairs on their brand-new stair lift when the minister telephoned her. He was horrified to hear her say: "I'm so sorry, but I'll have to ring you back. I can't talk right now because I've finally got Mother in the electric chair and I'm eager to press the switch and see if it works!"

The Parish Pump

Linthorpe Road Methodist Church & Resource Centre

Springtime



I love springtime, after a cold grey winter there is something incredibly uplifting and hope-filled about seeing the colours come back into the world, bulbs pushing their way up through the soil and the skies turning more regularly blue.

I feel like Linthorpe Road Methodist Church & Resource Centre is on the cusp of a 'springtime'... even in the midst of Covid-19. I'm full of hope and excitement about the future of the space, the place, the people.

After a really difficult time for the Resource Centre, financially and in terms of figuring out our role in the centre of Middlesbrough we are beginning, slowly and cautiously to move forward. We have new a newly shaped Board of Trustees made up of Harry Collett from the congregation, Steve Sutcliffe from the District, Jonny Munby from the university, Lieutenant Chris Kelly from the Salvation Army, Lesley Duffield from the Circuit, David Godfrey the Superintendent and myself... and there are more names coming on to the board too in the next three months. The two shop units have recently been rented out and AA have joined the community of room-users meeting three evenings a week in the café space. Obviously Covid has affected the user groups and organisations that would normally use our building and we are looking forward to welcoming them, and new groups back like the colours of spring in the future. Peter our cleaner works really hard in the few hours he has with us to make sure the building is clean and safe. The Board of Trustees and the congregation are being asked to think about where they see us heading, what kind of shape they can dream of for the mission and ministry of the Resource Centre, and one common theme is coming through so far - that of a space of sanctuary, a holy ground for the community. It's fabulous to see the story of God unfolding in this place, I'm so excited for the next chapter.

The beautiful people of the congregation have equally struggled through the 'winter' of Covid-19 we, like many others, have been unable to meet regularly together for our worship and activities, the health of some of our members has deteriorated and sadly our 'greeter' Dennis Rainbow died at the end of last year and his wife Marjorie has moved down to Chester to be closer to their daughter. We've struggled to fill all of the roles that we need to fill as a congregation and so after approaching the Superintendent under the relevant standing orders the Circuit have stepped in and are supporting the congregation in those roles for the next twelve months which is really brilliant and is already making big differences. We did meet just before Christmas for an act of worship with the help of a team of folk from across the circuit who made sure we were 'Covid-safe' and it was just wonderful to worship together and see each others faces. We keep in touch on the telephone, email and by letter but the main thing is we keep praying for each other. Every member is named before God each day in my prayers and I know each member is praying also for each other. It continues to be a privilege to be a minister alongside this congregation and I don't exaggerate when I say that I am bursting with thanks each and every day for the people of Linthorpe Road Methodist Church and for God putting me here with them. We may sometimes be fragile but in our fragility we are resilient and in that fragility and resilience is the story of God. That story is one of a God who loves this congregation made up of wonderful, beautiful

people and the story tells of how they reflect the love and light of God in the living of their lives and through the mission of Linthorpe Road Methodist Church and Resource Centre. Spring is springing.

Rev. Charity Hamilton

Crossword Clues

Across

- 1 Relating to the whole universe (6)
- 4 The disciple who made the remark in 8 Across (John 20:24) (6)
- 8 'Unless I see the nail marks — — hands, I will not believe it' (John 20:25) (2,3)
- 9 He urged King Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll containing Jeremiah's message (Jeremiah 36:25) (7)
- 10 Baptist minister and controversial founder of America's Moral Majority, Jerry — (7)
- 11 'Look, here is — . Why shouldn't I be baptized?' (Acts 8:36) (5)
- 12 Repossessed (Genesis 14:16) (9)
- 17 Port from which Paul sailed on his last journey to Rome (Acts 27:3-4) (5)
- 19 'Moses was not aware that his face was — because he had spoken with the Lord' (Exodus 34:29) (7)
- 21 Roonwit, C.S. Lewis's half-man, half-horse (7)
- 22 Grill (Luke 24:42) (5)
- 23 'The lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the — apostles' (Acts 1:26) (6)
- 24 'I was sick and you looked after me, I was in — and you came to visit me' (Matthew 25:36) (6)

Down

- 1 Coastal rockfaces (Psalm 141:6) (6)
- 2 Academic (1 Corinthians 1:20) (7)
- 3 Publish (Daniel 6:26) (5)
- 5 For example, the Crusades (4,3)
- 6 11 Across is certainly this (5)
- 7 He reps (anag.) (6)
- 9 Liberator (Psalm 18:2) (9)
- 13 Man who asked the question in 11 Across was in charge of all her treasury (Acts 8:27) (7)
- 14 They must be 'worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine' (1 Timothy 3:8) (7)
- 15 The human mind or soul (6)
- 16 'O Lord, while precious children starve, the tools of war increase; their bread is — ' (Graham Kendrick) (6)
- 18 'We played the flute for you, and you did not — ' (Matthew 11:17) (5)
- 20 Bared (anag.) (5)

Answers on Page 21

Trinity and me

Trinity has always been part of my life. We have grown and changed together. One of my earliest memories is being with my adopted Grandpa “Daider”, a Methodist local preacher with whom we lived. A walk down Cambridge Road from home to Whinney Banks Chapel to take fruit for the Harvest Festival display has remained with me. At two and a half I have a vivid memory of the small leather case containing oranges being opened with the strongest smell.

Chapel celebrations at Whinney Banks were well prepared for - Sunday School Anniversaries meant practicing to be word perfect and taking your place on the tiered staging erected in the Chapel (now our Small Hall) - how I hated being placed up high at the back! The Minister “flapped” his way to the front his robes giving the appearance of an enormous black bat amongst the array of colour from the crowd of children dressed in their “Sunday best.”

Sunday School was held each Sunday afternoon and as we progressed through the departments we moved into an enormous “hut” now where our Main Hall is, which was accessed through the Chapel kitchen past gas cookers and sinks. Health and Safety was unheard of!



Throughout my Sunday School life we were taught and cared for by the most wonderful “Teachers”, grown-ups from all walks of life, wonderful folk who gave us a “stepladder” to Faith which we climbed at our own pace.

My family life was shattered by my Father’s death when I was twelve. Folk at Church nurtured me through my teenage years. I was encouraged to join the ranks of Sunday School Teachers at the age of sixteen starting with the “Beginners”. The department was led by a tiny, beavering retired District Nurse who drove a Mini like a Demon!

Our Sunday School Superintendent was a builder by trade and when, eventually, a new Church was built he was Foreman of Works. A kindlier man would be hard to find and eventually when I left home to study “Religious Knowledge “ at Newcastle he wrote to me regularly - a Trinity Star!

In 1969 I returned “Fully Fledged” to teach RE at a school in Stockton and home to Trinity where I again joined the Sunday School Staff. And I’m still there loving every minute.

Our Sunday Club at Trinity today has changed dramatically to that of Whinney Banks and it’s multitude of children arranged in rows and circles.

Today there are only a small number of children who stretch from toddler to teenager - each one precious and included. But dedicated teaching abounds and help just as freely given.

To date we have sent out a regular number of “To do” packs covering Bible themed activities.

We wait for the day when we can meet together again and grow in the Faith that Trinity gives to its family of children.

Janice Lawson



Faith on the Radio

I'm an avid fan of BBC Radio Tees, listening to it everyday. With local news and information it's good to know what's going on where and when, be it traffic issues or local news and events, as well as national and international happenings. The presenters are very good at keeping things upbeat with their friendly, caring and sincere approach to whatever the

situation. With varied and sometimes quirky personalities they are good company throughout the week

All through the pandemic they have been proactive in sharing information about where and how to get help, have had uplifting stories to tell and interesting people to listen to as well as giving advice. I've learned how to deal with garden issues, listened to some great music and even kept up with how the Boro are doing. However my favourite programme is on Sunday morning *particularly between 7.45 – 8.30*. Mike Hill hosts the programme which among the usual 'radio' things includes faith issues. There is a half hour slot from 8 a.m. when a different person prepares and takes a service. They are from different faiths and denominations, backgrounds and professions ranging from bishops, presbyters to worship leaders and hymn/song writers. The latest one was with Matt Redman, a prolific hymn writer and musician (my 'at the moment' favourite, 10,000 Reasons, is one of his) helped out by his wife and children. But prior to the service there has been a time slot dedicated to Faith. Each week someone has talked about their faith, for no longer than 10 minutes, sharing their thoughts and explaining how their faith has helped through the pandemic. It is very interesting to hear their stories which in turn gives an insight into what their religion is about. It set me thinking how my faith, among other things has helped me.

I have, for most of the time, felt at peace with what has been happening, have tried not to worry or get upset about things I can't do anything about and have tried to keep busy with only one daily session of news or covid related 'stuff'. The morning prayer sessions, run by Christopher, have given a good start to the day and are a daily discipline and reminder that God is always present no matter how difficult things may seem. I've loved reading the Psalms and other pockets of scripture some of which are long forgotten!

I am sure that you will have a much more interesting story to tell. Why not share it with us, it will not be long until the next edition of MEMO is published!

Anne Smith



“...and we used to grumble about not understanding archaic church language!”

Prayers

When my daughter was young, she was glad to say her prayers, but she always worried whether God would know which little girl she was. One night after the usual ‘Amen’, she dropped her head upon her pillow and closed her eyes. After a moment she said, “Lord! This prayer comes from 203 Seldon Ave. I’ll get you the postcode tomorrow.”

British Summer Time starts on Sunday 28th March

Don't forget to put your clocks forward one hour.



The Parish Pump

‘Quarantine’ – the 2020 word of the year

The Cambridge Dictionary has named ‘quarantine’ as its ‘word of the year’ for 2020. Apparently, it was the word most looked up between January and October of last year. ‘Quarantine’ even beat ‘pandemic’ and ‘lockdown’.

The Cambridge Dictionary has now added a new meaning to the word ‘quarantine’. It runs: ‘A general period of time in which people are not allowed to leave their homes or travel freely, so that they do not catch or spread a disease.’ The editors are also considering some possible new words for the dictionary. These include ‘Quaranteam’ (a group of people who go into quarantine together), Lockstalgia (a feeling of nostalgia for the lockdown period), and Coronial (someone born around the time of the pandemic).

Good and Kind

The retiring **sidesman** was instructing his youthful successor in his Sunday morning duties. “And remember, my boy,” he said, “that we have nothing but good, kind Christians in this church – until you try to put someone else in their pew.”

Smart money

“Dad,” said the son, “what is a financial genius?”
“A financial genius,” said his harassed father, “is a man who can earn money faster than his family can spend it.”

Worth Remembering

A man felt he was overloaded in the ‘trouble shooting department’ of his office, until he found this memo on his desk. “Be thankful for the problems, for if they were less difficult, someone with less ability would have your job.”

Outreach During Lockdown.



At the end of March 2020 the doors of Unity Café were closed. I felt saddened in my heart, as we were starting to see the fruits of this ministry. I had never heard the words ‘Lockdown’ or ‘Coronavirus’, I never even imagined that this could be possible in our generation. However, I felt a surge in adrenaline, I wanted to proactively help in any way possible. I managed to secure some funding from the National Community Foundation, which enable TFFC to have the resources available to serve our community. Jesus showed us when he washed the disciple’s feet, that we are called to be servants. In doing so, we share the love of Christ our Lord and Saviour. This pandemic has been an opportunity to be disciples, to rely on our faith and draw closer to Him. He equips us to do good works, and the community we serve will experience the love of Christ through us.

By working closely with Citizens Advice Bureau and Safer Families, families and individuals were identified throughout Middlesbrough who were in crisis, impacted by food poverty or due to the Covid 19 pandemic. I delivered food parcels to families who were self-isolating, individuals who were living on their own and had the virus, who had no family able to respond to their need. This was particularly heart breaking to see many individuals who had no family or friends to help them during the pandemic. TFFC will respond to Jesus’s commandment, to love our neighbour as ourselves. Unemployment was at an all-time high, and people were not able to get through to the Universal Credit helpline due to overload of calls. Citizens Advice receive large proportions of calls from people in crisis and I receive referrals explaining exactly what the family/individual needs. Some needed nappies/wipes, toiletries and weekly shopping until their Universal Credit claim came through, which was up to 6-8 weeks. Safer Families identify families in the community who need practical support, preventing children from entering social care services. These families need food parcels and activity packs for children to help keep them occupied during pandemic because they have little or no outside space. Many are single parent families; the stress and strain of home-schooling children has taken its toll on mothers/fathers. TFFC are helping to support parents, keeping in touch through social media and regular texts/ phone calls. We are also meeting parents for walks, when allowed under lockdown rules, helping to increase mental health, promoting physical activity which supports healthy living.

When the government allowed us to open safely in Tier 1, Unity Café opened our doors. Throughout lockdown, TFFC delivered food parcels throughout our community, covering the whole of Middlesbrough. Relationships were established in that period of uncertainty, fear and food poverty, and people connected to Trinity church as a lifeline. As Christians we know that Jesus Christ is the anchor of our souls. No matter what we go through, the storms we face, if we have a personal relationship to Jesus our Saviour, we are safe. We know that death has already been overcome by Him, we have eternal life in Him. ‘To die is gain’, said Paul, however we live to further the Kingdom of God. We are His hands and His feet, we take ground on earth for Him. He works through us, to share the gospel, to see blind eyes open, the deaf to hear, the captives set free. Jesus is coming back for a spotless bride, without spot or wrinkle. He doesn’t care about our programs, our degrees, our man-made organisation we call the church. This is a time to

start over 'I Am doing a new thing' declares the Lord. 2020 is the year that will be remembered for Covid 19, but let 2021 be the year of turning back to God, the church repented and began letting the Holy Spirit build His church, God said 'not by might, nor by power but by My Spirit, declares the Lord.'

For the first time in two years, the café was full! People stayed for the bible study; it was like a passage taken from the book of Acts. Anne Smith and I were overjoyed, we had a vision that this would happen but to finally see it was amazing. Everyone listened intently as I lead the bible study and shared the gospel. One lady said she believed and wanted Jesus in her life. Which is exactly what we should be doing as disciples, sharing our faith. If we fail to share, connect and grow then the church stops growing. Unfortunately, due to Tier 2, we had to close and this was disappointing after seeing the need of connection in the community. Food parcels, food stamps and activity packs have continued throughout. During December Trinity Methodist Church members were asked if they would like to make up hampers in a Reverse Advent Calendar way i.e. every day during Advent we would put an item in a box - the reverse of taking a chocolate out of the Advent Calendar window. All who took part were each given a family in need over Christmas and the thought and consideration that went into each hamper was a testament to the love among this congregation. They bought presents for each family member; the hampers were overflowing with treats.

One lady shared, "I would not have known what to do if it wasn't for the church". Another parent shared, "I can't believe how generous the person is, who made this hamper for me, my husband and kids, it made our Christmas".

I personally want to thank each person who took the time, and generosity to put together a hamper for families in poverty in our community. A massive thank you to Bernard Nixon for arranging this each year.



Cash For Kids TFM campaign enables TFFC to provide Christmas presents to children in our community who might wake up without a present on Christmas morning. Families could not contain their joy when they saw the perfectly wrapped presents.

Most of our volunteers had to self-isolate due to the pandemic, but there was always one person ready to serve and that was Anne Smith. She represents the Fathers heart, she has taught me so much about faithfulness, perseverance and servanthood. I want to say a massive thank you to her for her support to the vision of TFFC.

The future of TFFC will focus on getting our community back on its feet, focusing

on mental wellbeing, exercise and learning. Food poverty will be one of our main priorities, as hospitality shows compassion, building relationships. Through focusing on these areas, we aim to develop genuine community, sharing community meals and eventually leading onto discipleship. John 4:45 tells us “Do not say It is still four months until the harvest comes? ‘Look, I say to you, raise your eyes and observe the fields and see, they are white for harvest”.

Please can I ask that you pray for TFFC ministry, prayer points are for a move of God, a revival, that we are prepared and equipped when the harvest comes. Pray that we continue to have the resources for this ministry and volunteers who have a desire to serve tables and share the Good News. Also, pray for my health as on Jan 5th 2021 my family suffered with Covid 19. My husband tested positive at first, he was in bed for 6 days. I had symptoms but nothing major, I carried on looking after my husband Tom and two children Ruby aged 11 years and Thomas aged 8 years. However, as the rest of my family got better, I began feeling terrible, I had a test on 18th January which was positive. I had numbness in my fingers and felt symptoms very similar to vertigo. It was very heavy and dark, as if all my strength was depleting. I now have pleurisy in my left lung and am on a course of antibiotics, and Praise God I feel much better. Thank you to everyone who prayed for me and those who contacted me, Judith Bowmen brought me some beautiful flowers which was so kind.

It really brings it home when the virus is knocking on your door, so I am extra vigilant now, wearing gloves when shopping, taking my own spray to wash down trolleys etc. I am feeling well enough to start connecting safely with community and responding to any needs.

Sharon Sewell.

Community Outreach Worker at Trinity Methodist Church

Crossword Answers from Page 15

ACROSS: 1, Cosmic. 4, Thomas. 8, In his. 9, Delaiah. 10, Falwell. 11, Water. 12, Recovered. 17, Sidon. 19, Radiant. 21, Centaur. 22, Broil. 23, Eleven. 24, Prison.

DOWN: 1, Cliffs. 2, Scholar. 3, Issue. 5, Holy war. 6, Moist. 7, Sphere. 9, Deliverer. 13, Candace. 14, Deacons. 15, Psyche. 16, Stolen. 18, Dance. 20, Debar.

Methodist Theology

At the beginning of this year I have been thinking a good deal about Methodist theology. And it has not been just me, a number of us have been meeting online (as we now must) to reflect on Methodist theology, and what it might have to say about subjects like the church, politics, wealth and poverty, relationships and human sexuality, and race. But the question we have to start with is: what makes a theology Methodist? Which is nearly the same as asking how do Methodists talk about God and why do they talk that way?

Modern British Methodism has a foundational document. When the Methodist Church as we now know it was formed in 1932, from the unification of the Wesleyan, Primitive and United Methodist Churches, it did so on the basis of the Deed of Union. This document explains how those three earlier denominations come together as one. It contains a very significant sentence which defines the character of the Methodist Church. But more than that, I think, it demonstrates what and how Methodists think about God. That is, it is a one sentence summary of Methodist theology. The sentence, which is attributed to Samuel Peake who was a leading figure in the Primitive Methodist Church, a Local Preacher and the Professor of Divinity at the University of Manchester, is this:

“. . . it (the newly formed Methodist Church) ever remembers that in the providence of God Methodism was raised up by God to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land by the proclamation of the evangelical faith.”

There is a lot to unpack there. One of the things that is different about Methodism is our sense of ourselves and our origins as a denomination. Uniquely we point to a particular time in history and declare that what we see there is God at work. We look at the revival that began in the 1740s as well as some other later revivals and see the hand of God providing for the needs of people. We were “raised up by God.” Immediately we see that Methodists are people who believe that God is at work in the world. But also quite unusual is the sense of vocation that that memory gives to us. We don’t see ourselves as a replacement for all other churches. Rather we have been given a quite specific task, “to spread scriptural holiness.” In a way scriptural holiness is the Methodist two word summary for the whole point of the gospel and of the church.

We have inherited from John Wesley what might be called a theology of grace. We believe in a God whose love towards us is an unmerited free gift, grace. Wesley would put no limit on the possibility of that grace. It is a free gift that is available to all and there is no limit to what it can do for those who receive it. Grace reunites us with God. But grace also transforms us more and more into the likeness of Christ. For Methodists it is not enough to be “saved” or even to know that we are saved. As Methodists we are looking for the transformation of our lives by God’s grace, even to the point of perfection. That “perfection” is perhaps the most controversial aspect of Methodist theology. But it is quite simply a refusal to put any limit on what God’s grace might do for us.

The method of Methodism in the completion of its task is “the proclamation of the evangelical faith.” For John Wesley, his brother Charles, along with George Whitefield and some of the other founders of Methodism, this “proclamation” was quite literal. They stood in fields and church yards and at market crosses and announced the Good News. But a broader sense of “proclamation” is also implied. Methodists have always been a people who believed that Christianity needs to be seen to be believed. That “scriptural holiness” embodied in the lives of ordinary people is the best proclamation of the gospel which is available. It is in ordinary, every day deeds of kindness and in the persistent work for justice that the gospel is proclaimed. We are always meant to be a dynamic movement. We look for a virtuous circle. We trust that proclaiming the Good News will spread scriptural holiness, but scriptural holiness itself proclaims the Good News.

That sentence from the Deed of Union shows us what Methodist theology is. We are a people with a mission, a task. Having received God’s free and gracious gift and having been transformed by it, we proclaim that as Good News by our words and most of all by our lives. Methodist theology grows out of a belief in a God who is at work in the world, a God whose love is a free gift offered to all, and with whom there is not limit to the good which may be done in and for and through us.

Revd Christopher Wood-Archer



Your daily walk should be a sacred ritual

Under lockdown, millions of us who rarely walked around our immediate locality are now well acquainted with every nearby driveway, every crack in the pavement, and every pothole in the road. We have developed views on our neighbours’ gardens, on their oddly coloured garage doors, and on their dogs, children and cars. If we go out at the same time every day, we may even be saying hello to the same people we don’t know every day.



For many of us, that daily walk has become the high point of our day. After all, it is one of the few liberties we have left. Some of us go early, to enjoy the relative peace and quiet. Some of us go midday, to at least see other people, even if we can’t talk to them. Others of us opt for dusk, the dark comfort of a street with lit houses and stars in the sky.

Whatever time you most enjoy, make sure you do make the time to go for your walk. Your mental and physical fitness can only improve!

The Parish Pump

PRAYER DIARY

March 7th We pray today for Rev David Godfrey, as Superintendent we think of the great responsibility he has for our Circuit in these strange times. We pray he may be guided by God's Spirit in all his decisions. Pray for Stainton church family.

March 14th On this Mothering Sunday, we pray for all mothers. We thank God for family life and ask a special blessing today on mothers who are separated from their families because of the Pandemic. Pray today for Rev Christopher Wood-Archer and for Grove Hill.

March 21st We pray for all who lead worship, in our churches, but as is so often the case, those who lead worship online and through our 'Worship at Home' services. Pray for Rev Charity Hamilton, for Linthorpe Road and for the University Chaplaincy.

March 28th At the beginning of Holy Week, we remember how Jesus rode into Jerusalem to face all who opposed him and who would eventually put him to death. We pray that during this week we may understand more about the last days of the life of Jesus and find strength and courage when we have to face up to difficult times. Pray for Rev Len Karn and for Nunthorpe

April 4th On this Easter Sunday, we hope and pray that we may be starting to see new life as we begin to emerge from this terrible crisis. As we read again the story of the resurrection we see the love of Jesus, in going to the cross for our sins and rising victorious. May we be sure that he offers us the gift of eternal life. Pray for Elaine at our Circuit Office and for David our web manager who enables the Word to be spread beyond our churches. Pray for Normanby church

April 11th As we journey on through the challenges life has thrown at us in past months and into possible continuation of difficult times, we pray we may find comfort in the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in the fellowship of our Church and Circuit families. Pray for

Sharon Sewell and all involved at the Trinity Family Friendly Centre and for Trinity church.

April 18th We pray today for children and young people. We pray too for all those whose exams have been disrupted and who must feel a sense of worry and concern about their futures. Bless all who work in our schools and colleges. Pray for the Avenue Community Project and for Marton.

April 25th We pray today for all who are suffering the sadness of bereavement at the loss of loved ones. Be with those who comfort them in their time of great sadness that they may find hope in their faith. Pray for the Chinese Church and Rev Lawrence Law.

May 2nd We pray today for all those people who have responsibility in our local communities. We think of those who look after our safety, the Police, Fire service and Ambulance service. Pray today for Rev Mike Harland and Eston Grange.

May 9th We think this week of Ascension day and we pray we may strive to understand again the meaning of this special time. Pray for all who are lonely and feel ostracised by society. Pray too for MAP and for Ailsa Adamson and her team.

May 16th We pray today for all who hold positions of responsibility in our Churches and Circuit for those who attend the Circuit Meeting and Synod. Help us all to take our part in the life of our churches.

May 23th On this Pentecost Sunday we think of the coming of the Holy Spirit to those disciples who were so afraid, yet suddenly found the power to preach. Help us to believe in the power of the Spirit enabling us to share our faith. Pray for all who seek the faith yet sometimes find difficulty in finding it.

May 30th Today we pray for all the many different churches in the Darlington District and for Rev Richard Andrew the Chair of the District.