

June 2020 (2)  
Issue 123

# The Next Step

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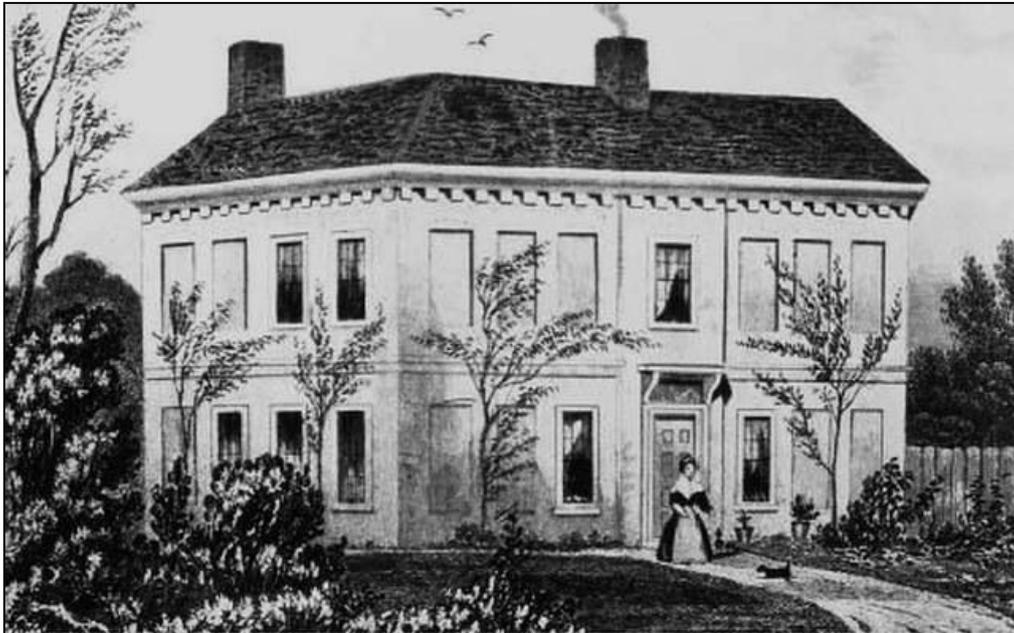
## Canberra Aboriginal Church

Canberra Christian Fellowship  
(in the Methodist Tradition)



### Old Jeffrey

John Wesley grew up in the St. Andrew's Church rectory as his father Rev. Samuel Wesley had been appointed to the parish there in Epworth. For a short period starting in 1716 until January 1717 there was apparently an extra resident there besides the Wesley family - Old Jeffery.



At first noises were heard by servants of the family in the attic and later family members also heard noises. Susanna, John's mother, reported "there was such a noise in the room over our heads, as if several people were walking, then running up and down stairs that we thought the children would be frightened". Initially believing it was cruel neighbours playing pranks or their elder daughter's suitors up to no good, searches were unsuccessfully made for the culprits. Samuel Wesley also recorded a detailed account of what he and his family experienced noting that when prayers were said for King George, Old Jeffrey, as daughter Hetty had named him, reacted with increased banging and knocking.

A superstition of the time was that such haunting signalled the imminent death of whoever did NOT experience it. Samuel was the last to hear the noises and fears were held for him. He remained unharmed and the fears transferred to the three Wesley sons, Samuel jnr., John and Charles who were all living away from home at school. Each of them responded to prove they were alive and well.

Old Jeffery had made his presence known over just a short period of time and ceased his activity just as abruptly.

<https://um-insight.net/perspectives/old-jeffrey/>      <https://wesleyanarminian.wordpress.com/2011/10/26/the-ghost-at-epworth/>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old\\_Rectory,\\_Epworth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Rectory,_Epworth)      <https://hauntedhistoryoflincolnshire.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/surrounding-areas/epworth/>

While I am skeptical of many practitioners who claim to be in touch with the spirit world, I do believe there is a world just beyond our experience and understanding. Some things do occur that we cannot yet explain.

As Christian people we do have interaction with that world. The Holy Spirit has come to us and acts to help us live out our faith and guide us to the next world. The Bible also speaks of angels and they are rarely apparent in the world we know.



The spirit world is not all good. Ephesians 6: 12 warns us **"our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."**

We can think of the spirit world as one inhabited by comic character 'Casper, the Friendly Ghost' type beings or by the subtle deceivers we find in C. S. Lewis's "The Screwtape Letters". Casper is good as an imaginary comic book character but it would be dangerous, to my mind, to imagine he represents any sort of spirit world reality. I can recognise Screwtape and Wormwood's deceitful persuasion in the reality of life readily enough.



I certainly claim no special knowledge of or insight into the spirit world but I am wary of potential dangers. The Bible provides warnings but also reassurance.

1 Timothy 4: 1,2 **"The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron."**

1 Corinthians 10: 13 **"God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."**

Romans 8: 38,39 **"I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."**

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### Central Hall Westminster

A recently screened 'Songs of Praise' TV program came from the Central Hall Westminster. The Methodist Central Hall, as it was previously known, was built to mark the centenary of Methodism founder John Wesley's death. No person was permitted to contribute more than 1 guinea (£1-1-0 or £1-05 in today's British currency) to the fund that paid for construction.



1,024,501 guineas were contributed. The hall opened in 1912.

One piece of trivia learned from the program was that the very first General Assembly meeting of the United Nations was held there on 10 January, 1946.

Andrew Lloyd Webber and brother Julian attended Methodist Central Hall services as children as their father William was Musical Director and organist there for 24 years. In 1968 the first public performance of Andrew's musical 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat' was held there.

The hall is today still home to a church in the Methodist tradition and central London's largest conference venue.

<https://www.c-h-w.com/about/history/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methodist\\_Central\\_Hall,\\_Westminster](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methodist_Central_Hall,_Westminster)

### Canberra Christian Fellowship services

No definite decisions have been made yet concerning restarting our normal services.

In conversations I've had, most favour a cautious approach to resuming as it is winter and so many of our people could be classed as in a higher health risk category. We will wait until late June and then reassess the situation.

Perhaps Prayer times, Bible Studies or get togethers can be arranged informally before then for those really hankering to meet together. If you would like that, ring around a few others and invite them to join you.

When we do resume we could meet an hour earlier during winter if people would like, so reducing the problem of cold and darkness. The Lutherans have indicated the church would be available then.

### Chaplains

Please pray that as coronavirus restrictions are gradually lifted, the chaplains we particularly support will be able to follow the new paths You have set before them. - Mr. Owen Chadwick - Universities chaplaincy, Rev. Bob Prior - Racecourse chaplaincy, Rev. Paul Tabulutu - N.S.W. / A.C.T. Fijian churches



#### Devotional material



Prayer



#### Contacts

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#### Bible Reading



Fellowship by Phone

Canberra Christian Fellowship and Canberra Aboriginal Church - Worship Services SUSPENDED due to COVID-19 coronavirus threat