

MEMO

Middlesbrough & Eston Methodist Outburst

JUNE — AUGUST 2026



**Today is a beautiful
day simply because
God made it!**

Psalm 118:24

FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Thank you once again to those of you who have submitted articles to this 'Memo'. It is always good to hear what is going on around the Circuit.

We have in this last Quarter celebrated the great festival of Easter. I hope this time has meant something really special to us all. We have also observed Ascension and Pentecost and Aldersgate Sunday. Each of our Christian festivals celebrates an event but also gives us a real boost of faith.

I hope you are able to include the Prayer Diary in your own personal prayers and if you are a Church Steward that the prayers can be used in Worship. I always feel privileged in preparing the Diary and try and include as many people as possible. Prayer is so important in our Christian lives.

You will also see the Plan as part of Memo. Please remember the people taking services each Sunday, we need your prayers please.

Thank you to Elaine for the excellent job she does in compiling the 'Memo'

I wish you all a happy Summer, a time to relax and to recuperate, ready to start our new Methodist year on September 1st.

God Bless

Dave and Elaine

The Editorial Team.

Songs of Praise

Trinity Methodist Church, 7th June 2026 at 2.30pm

Join us for an uplifting afternoon of music and fellowship as we celebrate a “Revivalist” themed Songs of Praise. Whether you grew up with these classics or are discovering them for the first time, all are welcome to lift their voices in song.

The outline planning for this event was a collaborative effort between Dave Elliott and Ron Mapplebeck before Dave’s illness. As we gather to sing, we keep Dave in our thoughts and prayers, wishing him well in his continued recovery.



The Superintendent's Letter

Dear Friends,

This May sees the 288th anniversary of the conversion of John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement. The events of that momentous day of Wednesday 24th May 1738 are recorded in his journal:

“In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.”

That description in Wesley’s own words may not seem very spectacular to modern readers and yet in its own way it was as significant as anything that happened in the entire century. The experience of the warmed heart gave Wesley an assurance of Christ’s love which empowered the rest of his ministry. Wesley, and those who followed him, went on to change the social landscape of Britain. That turning point in Wesley’s life is often referred to as his conversion. However, I’m not sure that this is the best description of what happened. Wesley was clearly an active Christian before the events of 1738. He had been to America to engage in mission and was known for his methodical approach to faith as well as for his energetic ‘enthusiasm’. I prefer to think of the warmed heart as an experience of the Holy Spirit, given to a disillusioned and jaded worker for the Lord. It was more a personal Pentecost than a conversion to a new faith.

This year the festival of Pentecost falls on Wesley Day itself, 24th May, (which means a double celebration). Pentecost is when we celebrate the gift of God’s Spirit freely given, not just to those who are special, or to the superheroes of our faith (like John Wesley), but to all people. We read the account of that first Pentecostal outpouring of God’s Spirit when fearful disciples encountered God and were empowered and encouraged to do his work of mission. It was a day that signalled the birth of the Church as a world wide movement. More than at any other time of year we remember that at the heart of Christianity lies, not a creed or doctrine, but an encounter with the living God. He comes to us often when we are most in need of him. He has the power to warm human hearts and set us off in a different direction of worship and service.

As we offer our work to God in the coming months, may we also seek that encounter with him which will inspire and empower our lives.

With every blessing, **Rev. David Godfrey**

News from the Circuit Meeting 10.3.26

Montpellier Manor - Barbara Robinson, the Chaplain, was welcomed to the meeting where she gave an update on her work. She sees her role as supporting people spiritually including people of all faiths and no faith, and signposting people to where they may receive support needed, and most importantly 'building community'.

Worship is held at 2pm on the first Sunday of each month and they are joined by members who worshipped at Stainton, but all are welcome and numbers have been growing. Every second Wednesday there is a cafe church led by the Anglican Vicar and every third Wednesday, a communion service led by Revd.s David, John and Charity. There is a cafe, also on Wednesdays, and open to anyone who would like to pop in.

Town Centre Mission - Networking continues (chaplancy, shops, community – continual building of connection)

Stars (approx 4000) were distributed with prayer cards across the town centre community and businesses in December as a gift from the Methodist Church and were well received. Other initiatives and ongoing work include VICAS (care advice service), renewed work with the police (work done so far is being piloted nationally), faith trails, MFC faith day, Building Bridges course Community course, Pub Theology.

TFFC (Trinity Family Friendly Church) - There are 3 projects, the Eco shop, the Cafe and the Garden Scheme and are all working well, and much used. An important part of the work is talking with the community about needs, and some people have been using the building as a safe and warm space which is a great community asset.

Nunthorpe - An initiative is being undertaken to make links with family and community and they have been developing the 'Play and Chat' playgroup. To progress this work, they are looking to appoint a family worker for 20 hours per week and working with the District to draw up a job description. To help with funding Nunthorpe will apply for a New Places for New People grant.

Local Preachers - Good news was shared with the meeting that Juliet Pasirayi is training to become a Local Preacher.

Communication - A poster has been prepared and distributed in all churches with QR codes and details on the Circuit website.

Appointments

Circuit Stewards: Julie Thomas, Dawn Harris, Lorina Malan

Circuit Leadership Team: Revd.s D Godfrey, J Howard- Norman, C Hamilton, TC Luk,

Stewards: Kay and Mark Braithwaite, Brian Glover, Bernard Nixon, John Hinton, Lesley Duffield, (Julie O'Key until Aug 2026)

Circuit Meeting Secretary: Pat Hinton

Circuit Invitation Committee: It was agreed that the CLT would undertake this role.

Synod Reps: Dawn Harris (Circuit Steward), Dave Elliott, Nigel Marsh

'Play and Chat' at Nunthorpe Methodist Church

For a decade now, the Play and Chat group at Nunthorpe Methodist Church in Middlesbrough has been a place where toddlers explore, parents take time to rest and grandparents can connect. What began as an idea from three recently retired speech and language therapists, Julie O'Key, Lorraine Herring and Judy Offiler, has grown into a thriving community that now welcomes around 40 children every week, supported by a dedicated team of volunteers, some of them from the church family.

Julie O'Key is a long-standing member of Nunthorpe Methodist Church; she remembers how the idea took shape. "We had this big space, experience of children and I thought it would be nice to run a playgroup," she recalls. The church embraced the vision, helped raise £29,000 and transformed the hall and outdoor area into a fun, child-friendly space.

Parents, grandparents and the occasional childminder gather each week for a mix of free-form play, crafts, dressing up, books, singing and stories.

"It's community outreach but it's also mission. We set the tone that this is a Christian environment. God is definitely here, having a good time," says Julie.

Some of the volunteers bring professional expertise from careers in speech, physio and occupational therapy. This has quietly become one of the group's most valued gifts "We make it known that parents can approach us," says Julie. "We've signposted a lot of children for developmental support."



Lorraine Herring is another of those who helped establish the group and continues to run the activities, "It's a big responsibility. Even though parents stay, there are a lot of people we have to take care of. We support the families and we support each other as volunteers."

Emotional support is another part of the group's work. "This is quite an affluent area," Lorraine explains, "but many young professionals move here away from family. They're lonely. By coming to the playgroup, they form a social network that's relaxed and friendly."

Rachel is one of those who treasures the friendships she has made, "All the mums, dads and grandparents are friendly. It's a really nice community. As soon as my daughter gets out of the car, she gets excited. She heads straight in and she always sleeps afterwards, which is great!"

The group can be the cornerstone of the calendar, confirms Gabby. "As a mum, it's probably the highlight of my week," she says. "Someone will get you a cup of tea, someone will hold the baby. It's good for the children and good for the

parents.”

Families who first arrive shy or isolated often return for church fairs, special services and seasonal celebrations. Others simply know that if life becomes difficult, someone at Play and Chat will listen.

The group has developed Praise and Play sessions that happen one Sunday each term, a Christian gathering with Bible stories, songs and creative activities. “We get ten or so families and focus on the relevant season and its stories,” says volunteer coordinator Kay Braithwaite. “God is very much in the work we do here.”



mums, babies and children.”

Play and Chat is more than a playgroup. It is a ministry, shaped by the hospitality of the church, the dedication of its volunteers and the everyday presence of God.

As Julie puts it, “I see God here every week. It’s an absolute joy; caring for

Ten years on, the group continues to evolve and welcome new families. At the heart of it all is a Methodist church offering its space, its people and its love to the community it serves.

From The Methodist Church website

Here are Summer Quiz Questions to get your brain working



1. An act passed in parliament August 1, 1833 – abolished what practice across the British Empire?
2. Which British seaside attraction is 158 metres tall?
3. Which feast day falls on July 15 every year?
4. By what other two names is the character Puck also known in the play A Midsummer Night's Dream?
5. On August 30, 1916 – Which explorer returns to rescue the last of his men stranded on Elephant Island, near Antarctica?
6. Which well known hymn has the phrase, “... pleasant summer sun”?

Answers on Page 23



STANTON VILLAGE
Meldyke Square



BIG SING

with

Marske Brass Band

Led by

Revd. David Godfrey & Revd. Laura Wild

Sunday June 14th at 3.00pm

**Refreshments in the Memorial Hall
Come and join us all welcome**

**Summer Solstice or Midsummer's
Day June 21st 2026 at 9.24 am**



Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year, occurs in June each year. This astronomical event marks the official beginning of summer and varies slightly in date, typically falling on either June 20th or 21st.

During the Summer Solstice, the Earth's axial tilt is most inclined towards the sun, resulting in the longest period of daylight for the Northern Hemisphere and the shortest for the Southern Hemisphere. Across cultures, this celestial phenomenon has been celebrated with festivals, rituals, and gatherings for centuries, honouring the sun's power and the abundance of the summer season.

Celebrating Fathers

‘If you want to know how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much they make of the thought of being God’s child and having God as their Father.’ (JI Packer, Knowing God)



On the 21st June we celebrate the importance of fathers on Father’s Day. Unlike Mothering Sunday, this doesn’t have a distinctly Christian origin. However, it does provide an opportunity to celebrate God’s Fatherhood and what it means for us.

At His baptism, when Jesus came out of the water: ‘heaven was opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.’(Matthew 3:16,17). What do we learn about Jesus’ relationship with His Father, our relationship with God and the role of fathers?

The Father’s presence

When Jesus was baptised, the Father was present in the Holy Spirit. It’s the Spirit who enables us to address God as daddy (‘abba’, Galatians 4:6) in an intimate way. God is present with us and understands our joys and sorrows, fears and trials. Dads should relate to their children like this.

The Father’s love

The Father described His Son as ‘beloved’; like us, Jesus was the subject of God’s unconditional love. Dads should assure their children of their constant, undeserved love.

The Father’s pleasure

The Father tells Jesus that He is ‘well pleased’ with Him, as He embarked on His public ministry. We need to hear this as well, especially when we feel that we are disappointing God or letting Him down. We should also be aware of the effect of our words spoken to our children. Dads should be using every opportunity to demonstrate their pleasure in their children, especially when things go wrong.

Parish Pump

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 JULY 2026

ECO NEWS – Nunthorpe

Once again we at Nunthorpe adopted the policy of **No Mow May**. Our beautiful grass was left to grow for a month to boost biodiversity and strengthen the grass, which also helped provide vital nectar for bees and butterflies.



As part of its commitment to sustainability, Nunthorpe's Wednesday Afternoon group invited speakers from Middlesbrough Council to "Explain the New Bins!" It was well received and the speakers were pleased with the friendly audience reception. Of course, getting used to the new and initially complex system of waste recycling is going to be challenging, especially for us older members.

However we recognise that our society's practice, especially with food waste needs to change so future generations are not blighted by our carelessness. We are after all Stewards of God's Creation: Earth. Our church has also agreed to be publicised as a hub where people can come to obtain replacement food waste bags. **Every little helps!**

Methodist Women in Britain



SUMMER AFTERNOON EVENT – Treasured Memories.
Monday 29th June 2.00pm - 4.30pm at Norton Methodist Church

Enjoy a time of fellowship and revisiting treasured memories. Everyone is welcome to come along. Tea, coffee and scones will be served.

Beryl Haggarth

I wish to thank all our Circuit churches for raising over £500 through this year's Easter Offering envelopes in support of **MWiB World Mission Fund**. This was an excellent response to the appeal.

The Individual amounts raised were:

Grove Hill	£37.00
Marton	£77.00
Normanby	£168.00
Nunthorpe	£132.50
Trinity	£100.00
TOTAL	£514.50

Anne Mapplebeck Chair MWiB

Worship at Home: Possible Changes Ahead

Since its launch on March 28th during the 2020 lockdown. Worship at Home (WaH) has been a vital digital resource for our Circuit. Created by Webmaster David Everitt and supported by then-Superintendent, Revd Sue Greenwood, it combined prayers, readings, commentary, and hymns to keep our community connected when church doors were closed. A very popular item was the well chosen YouTube recordings of congregations or choirs, singing hymns which complemented the themes. Usually David would find vibrant pictures as well. Ministers and LPs would make voice recordings of prayers and messages which David would transfer to the WaH page. You cannot imagine how tricky it is to make voice recordings without extraneous sounds of washing machines, street roadworks and random coughing fits creeping in. Thank goodness David, our Webmaster is able to make us sound good, even when we stumble over our words on recordings.

Quite a few of our elderly congregation cannot access the internet through smart phones and certainly not ipads and computers. Many are housebound anyway and cannot come to church even though Lockdown was lifted. The project expanded to include a paper version for housebound members and those without internet access. Here the prayers, message and hymn numbers as well as bible reference were printed on one sheet of paper and had delivered by church members or posted to those in their own own home or Care Homes who tell us they really appreciate receiving them.

At its peak, WaH reached over 100 people weekly across the globe, serving as a “digital soapbox” that continued to thrive even after in-person services resumed. It has, thus, been an effective form of mission continued under our current Superintendent, Revd David Godfrey. The internet became the highway where, like Wesley and the early Methodists, we preached the gospel. Even after the Pandemic when people could come back to worship in church, we continued with WaH on the web and on paper. The numbers were holding up. Many church members commented on how they liked to listen to the on-line Worship, and home, driving their car or on a walk. The hymn recordings were very popular.

However, as other services and worship on the web have become available on-line, the numbers of people accessing and sticking with our WaH has dropped. Local Preachers are considering this and although they enjoy producing and recording WaH, are beginning to wonder if this quarter might be the last. It will be discussed over the summer.

Maybe our congregations with Internet, can access other examples of worship. However for many, the paper version is a weekly direct link with churches and very much appreciated. So we will probably continue this paper version using and adapting the material produced by Vine at Home, sending it out each week for as long as it is needed. On the other hand maybe we should continue the digital WaH on the webpage still using the Vine at Home which is after all a Methodist Resource. Ministers, Local Preachers and David our Webmaster would be interested in what you think about WaH continuing.



“We’ve had a tip-off that the sermon is going to over-run again.”

River

A minister had been preaching on the dangers of alcohol. He concluded by thundering: “And that is why, if I had all the beer in the world, I’d take it and pour it in the river. If I had all the wine in the world, I’d take it and pour it in the river. And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I’d take that as well, and pour it in the river.” Satisfied that he had made his point, he sat down.

The music leader then stood up, and with a sheepish grin announced: “Our closing hymn is on page 238: ‘Shall We Gather at the River’.”

Encore!

The new curate had visited the local prison and taken along his electric guitar. He was so pleased with the applause that he responded: “Thank you very much for your appreciation. I so hope that I will see you all back here again next year.”

Amazon

Beware of the new Amazon scam. I asked my husband to order me some expensive jewellery, but motorcycle parts came instead! Thankfully, they fit his bike.

Wrong water

A mother was watching her four-year-old son playing in a small plastic pool half-filled with water. He walked back and forth with an expression of great concentration on his face, while making big splashes. Suddenly, with a look of disgust, the little boy stepped out of the pool and began to scoop the water out with a bucket. “What’s wrong, dear?” called the mother.

“On Sunday the minister said Jesus walked on water, but this water doesn’t work,” he replied.

Golf

There was a clergyman who as an avid golfer. One Sunday was a picture-perfect day for golf, and the minister could not resist the temptation. He rang his assistant and told him he was too ill to attend church. Then he packed up the car, drove 30 miles to a golf course, and began to play. But an angel watching the minister was quite perturbed. He went to God and said “Look at the minister, he should be punished for what he’s doing.

God nodded in agreement as the minister teed up on the tenth hole. He swung, and the ball sailed effortlessly through the air and landed right in the cup, 350 yards away. A perfect hole-in-one. The minister was overjoyed. The angel turned to God and said “Begging your pardon, but I thought You were going to punish him.” And God smiled. “Think about it, who can he tell?”

The garden is changing its dress

White alyssum still clusters thickly in the gaps between the paving stones,
But in the terracotta pots the colours are fading quickly.
A lone foxglove rears its browned head competing with the mottled brown and pink of the geraniums.
Among the faded bushy stems of the lobelia some blue, white and purple flowers sway in the chilly breeze.
The winter pansies lift their yellow and purple faces to the grey sky.

Celia Shires

Staring at beautiful objects really does spark inspiration



Next time you see something beautiful – pause for a moment and simply enjoy it. Especially if it counts as ‘art’.

For recent research has found that contemplating beautiful works of art can inspire you. Research at the University of Cambridge have found that beautiful art can induce ‘psychological distancing’. This is the process of zooming out on your thoughts, in order to gain better clarity on your life.

One professor at Cambridge put it this way: Many philosophers throughout history have suggested that engaging with aesthetic beauty invokes a special kind of psychological state.’

So, visiting an art museum “is not just a pleasant way to spend an afternoon, it may actually change how we think about our lives”. Beauty appreciation seems to “help people detach from their immediate practical concerns and adopt a broader, more abstract prospective”

“Admiring the beauty of art may be the ideal way to trigger the abstract cognitive processes increasingly lost in a world of screens and smartphones”

Researchers say this shows the importance of public art venues. The findings were published in the journal Empirical Studies of Arts.

Parish Pump.

**Painting Woman with a Parasol – Madame Monet and her Son
Claude Monet 1875 – courtesy of the National Gallery of Art**

LOOKING AT EASTER TIME

This is a very special time of our Christian year as I write this article. Easter comes to us with the sadness of the Crucifixion of Jesus and the wonderful news of his Resurrection.



I think there are two words which come to me at Easter and indeed at all times and it is when Jesus says 'I am the Resurrection and the Life' (John 11 v 25)

The Resurrection reminds us of the joy of Jesus being alive in our lives. He is no longer limited to a place or a time but is here with us all the time and in every situation in which we find ourselves. This resurrection also gives us the better secure knowledge that when our loved ones pass away they are in a better place; Jesus says where he goes we will go also. It gives us that comfort in the knowing we too will have the gift of eternal life.

Jesus also says he is The Life. I think this is a very challenging claim for us to follow. Jesus is saying that if we are to have life in all its fullness then we follow him for he is the Life. We follow his teachings, we follow his example, the way he lived and how he treated people. We follow his teachings, we follow his example, the way he lived and how he treated people. We follow his love which he took to the ultimate point, giving his life on a cross for us..

This following Jesus should make a difference to our lives, but also others should see that we have something special in our lives, by the kind of people we are, and that in itself is a challenge.

I have to say that being involved in the life of our Church is part of that following Jesus the life. When I attended the March Circuit meeting I was really elated to see all the great things going on in our Circuit. Every aspect of that meeting was showing that we in our Christian journeys together as churches and Circuit, and as individuals, are making a difference in our communities and in the wider community of Middlesbrough and Eston. I hope you will be encouraged when you read the report of the Circuit meeting in this 'Memo'. (See page 4)

Also in our Church Council meeting we were able to rejoice on what God is doing through our church.

None of us can afford to be self satisfied there are still so many challenges and we meet those with the power of the Holy Spirit. Yet we thank God for what we have achieved in his name.

So let us be Easter people all the year round, people of the Resurrection and people living the best life following Jesus.

Dave Elliott

The Unlikely helper of Red Squirrels

Red squirrels have found a surprising friend in their fight to survive against grey squirrels. It is the elusive pine marten, who is a natural predator of all squirrels.



Now a recent study by Queen's University, Belfast, has found that pine martens are increasing, and that they kill more grey squirrels than red squirrels. This is because red squirrels are naturally wary of pine martens and so avoid them. Grey squirrels, on the other hand, do not know to fear pine martens, as they are not native to the UK.



It is good news for the beleaguered red squirrels, who have been nearly wiped out since their larger North American cousins arrived in the late 19th Century. Most red squirrels these days are confined in small populations in Scotland, Anglesey and the Isle of Wight.

The Parish Pump



A Prayer for July

Lord, in this month, we, your church, remember Thomas. Thomas, who asked questions and doubted when he didn't see You with his own eyes. And Lord, You walked through those locked doors of his questions and doubts specifically to meet his needs.

Help us to come to you, honestly, with our questions and doubts, knowing that You understand and will meet our needs too. Help us to recognise You with eyes of faith – the only One who can help us.

May we declare, with Thomas, in humility, devotion and thankfulness, 'My Lord and my God!'. We pray in your powerful name, Lord Jesus. Amen

Daphne Kitching

THE BOOK ROOM

Tucked inside Hathersage Methodist Church, a quiet revolution is taking place – one made not of noise, but of pages turning.

'The Book Room', a second-hand bookshop inspired by John Wesley's publishing house, has quickly become a beloved stop for locals and visitors wandering through this Peak District village.



Part of the church's wider open-door initiative, the space has welcomed more than 10,000 people in just 8 months. That's around 42 curious wanderers a day stepping inside to explore Methodist history, pause for prayer, let children play, tackle a communal jigsaw or browse the ever-changing shelves of pre-loved books.

Open daily from 9.00am to 5.00pm, the church has become a gentle hub of hospitality.

The Book Room operates on trust: every book costs £1, paid via an honesty box or card reader. More than 3,000 books have already found new homes, with every pound reinvested into the project. Visitors are also encouraged to donate their own books, keeping the shelves fresh and allowing the stories to live on.

Monthly themes guide the displays, ranging from literary anniversaries, such as the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen, to topics reflecting the church's values, including Black History Month and environmental awareness.

Dave Fisher, Lead Volunteer for the Open Church Project, said the idea is rooted in Methodist tradition. "John Wesley established The Book Room because he believed reading supported spiritual growth and helped sustain the early Methodist movement. That principle still resonates and we wanted to revive it in a way that serves the community today.

"The church's central location makes it well-placed to welcome passers-by and with the high number of visitors to Hathersage, we wanted the church to be a place people felt able to step into.

"None of this would be possible without the support of hard-working volunteers and community support. A bookshop only works if people keep it alive, and The Book Room has become a shared effort for the whole community."

Dave added: "Books have a way of opening doors; all we've done is make sure one of them is unlocked."

From The Methodist Church website

Action for Children Sunday - 12th July

Action for Children is the children's charity of the Methodist Church. It was founded in 1869 by Methodist minister Revd Thomas Bowman Stephenson in response to the poverty and danger faced by vulnerable and destitute children and young people living rough on the streets of London.



Today, Action for Children, (formerly, NCH - National Children's Homes) has grown to become a leading children's charity running over 500 projects and working with more children and young people affected by poverty, disability and abuse than any other UK charity.

Action for Children Sunday is held on the second Sunday of July. It is the anniversary of the opening of the first children's home and a chance to celebrate the work of Action for Children and its partnership with the Church at services and activities throughout the country.

The Action for Children Covenant (to be said together)

Every child has the right to live, to be safe and to be loved. Every young person has the right to be housed, to have enough money to live in dignity and to have enough support for the future. Every young person has the right to justice, to realise their potential and to be given the space to become independent. In an often cruel and imperfect world, we uphold the work of Action for Children with children and young people in danger, in need and at risk. We support the growth of this work and the pursuit of all these rights for the young, the discounted and the vulnerable. We make this covenant with Action for Children for the sake of all God's children. Amen

The Methodist Church website

Speeding

A speeding motorist was caught by radar from a police helicopter in the sky. An officer pulled him over and began to issue a traffic ticket. "How did you know I was speeding?" the frustrated driver asked.



The police officer pointed soberly toward the sky. "You mean," asked the motorist, in awed confusion, "that now even God has installed speed cameras?"

The Parish Pump

MONTPELLIER MANOR

CHAPLAINCY NEWS



Hello from Montpellier Manor.

As I write this we are enjoying the Spring Days and now getting out into our garden. We have been planting herbs and vegetables and flowers for the Summer.

We are establishing a garden that will reflect our commitment to Green care and creation by providing a wildlife habitat in an increasingly urban setting, whilst creating a space for humans to just “be” and enjoy nature.

We have had a busy start to the year with Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Good Friday Easter and Mother’s Day worship services.

Our Sunday services on the first Sunday of the month continue to grow and we love welcoming people from Stainton Community.

Our regular Communion services are looked forward to by our residents, and we are thankful to Revd’s David, John and Charity for their continued presence

Our café Church is also very popular and is lead by Revd Vanessa Kirby and Revd Laura Wild, from Stainton C of E on the second Wednesday of each month. Thank you to them for this time of joyful and creative worship.

We have also introduced Sensory Worship fortnightly on a Tuesday, this s lead by Revd’s Laura, Vanessa and myself, starting as an initial “taste and see” it has become evident that this is most welcome and enjoyed by those attending.

We have MHA Music festival from 21st June -27th June with a “Songs of Praise” type service on Wednesday 24th June at 2pm, it would be lovely to see and welcome some folk from the circuit.

We also have a Wellbeing Day planned for Monday 15th June. The morning will be a time to have a massage of choice, hand, head or face by qualified therapist, whilst enjoying a healthy beverage. The afternoon will be a Tai Chi session with Terry Doyle, this will be 45 minutes and will suit any ability.

Lastly but not least, we have MHA Sunday fast approaching and I will be out chatting with congregations about MHA and our work as Chaplains.

Wishing everyone a blessed and bright Summer.

Barbara (Chaplain, Montpellier Manor)

STF 59 Shine Jesus Shine

(Lord the light of your love)



Here's a hymn for the summer months when the sun [hopefully] shines. Last year this was voted the country's most popular School Assembly hymn. I well remember the enthusiastic gusto with which it was sung by 300 Y11 leavers at their final assembly in the C of E school where I taught. They had voted for it to be sung. It may be clappy happy, because, yes there are important claps in between the last line's two "shine on me" phrases, but it's a great belt-er of a hymn with theology too.

Written in 1987 by the prolific Graham Kendrick, who has 19 hymns listed in StF alone, had you ever noticed the four notes of its chorus tune echo the catchy hook in Neil Diamond's popular song, Sweet Caroline? 'Shine Jesus Shine' has been sung at numerous high-profile occasions such as: 30 years ago, The Dunblane Memorial Service, Tasmania massacre memorial service – broadcast live nationwide, Prom Praise, Billy Graham crusades, and the largest ever open air mass in Manilla where the Pope "swung his cane in time to the music"!! Kendrick has explained it was inspired by a study of the holiness of God, who "dwells in unapproachable light" (1 Tim. 6:16). The verses were written first and the catchy chorus a few months later.

Although it seems deceptively simple, Kendrick writes with vivid poetry in this hymn, using antithesis, contrasting "darkness" with "shining," and "shadows" with "radiance." There is also a lot of alliteration. For example, there are three "l" sounds in the opening line. In lines five and six of the chorus, there are three "f" sounds in succession with "Flow, river, flow, flood the nations." Then lines seven and eight contain alliteration with the "l" sounds again with "Lord, and let there be light." The statements "Shine, Jesus, Shine," "Blaze, spirit, blaze," and "Flow, river, flow" are all a form of repetition which contributes to a feeling of earnestness.

The text is also filled with biblical allusions and themes. The first stanza draws significantly from the gospel of John. The second line alludes to John 1:5, which states, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." Jesus calls himself the "Light of the World," (John 8:12), and Jesus said, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). Kendrick masterfully connects Genesis 1:3 ("Let there be light"), Psalm 43:3 ("Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me"), and 2 Corinthians 4:6 ("For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"), in the two final lines of the chorus. It's not just happy clappy: there is theological, biblical substance to this worship song.

It fits in so many different places in services: It can be used as an opening hymn of praise, a hymn of illumination before the message ("Send forth your word"), or as a commissioning hymn as a closing prayer before the church goes out to be lights in the world. It can be used during many seasons of the liturgical year. Transfiguration Day,



the Sunday immediately before Lent, because of its many references to Jesus's glory and brilliance. Any service where we want to Compare darkness with light. It is also easy to sing. With its melodic "hook" and strong melody, which can be sung by upper and lower voices in unison, it is equally powerful with a strong organ, or vibrant worship band and of course simply a piano in a school.

It is a wonderful hymn to sing with a positive hopeful message for congregations who, if it is played and sung well, will leave services feeling they have maybe experienced God's "awesome presence" and that Jesus has indeed shined/shone on them. **Ruth Lewis**

In early June the world of leaf and blade and flowers explodes, and every sunset is different.'

John Steinbeck, The Winter of Our Discontent

METHODIST CONFERENCE 25TH JUNE – 1ST JULY 2026 IN TELFORD

The Conference is the governing body of the Methodist Church. Meeting once a year, it provides a forum for prayerful reflection and decision-making on issues that shape the life of the Church, as well as matters that impact the wider community, the nation, and the world.

The ordination of new presbyteral and diaconal ministers has become a highlight of the Conference week. After been received into full Connexion during the Sunday morning worship service, presbyters, deacons, family and friends travel to local places of worship to be ordained in three churches in and around Telford.



Trinity Redevelopment update

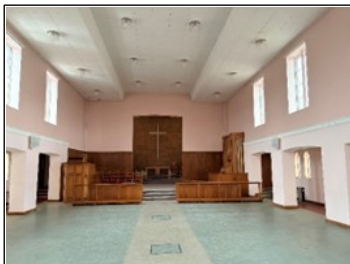
As mentioned in the last Memo, the construction which began on 12th January 2026 is now complete. We held worship in the amended space on Sunday 26th April 2026 and the space will be in full use from Monday 4th May 2026. We have decided to call the new room ‘The Foyer’

The Foyer has a sound system which can play music and has a radio microphone. We can open the three sets of double doors and extend the sound from the worship space for a larger event. The Foyer is a self-sufficient thermally and sound insulated, and therefore can be let out individually from the worship space. We have laid new vinyl flooring in the whole area and replaced the carpet near the altar.

Before



After





We had a dedication of the newly created rooms during worship on Sunday 17th May 2026, led by Revd John Howard-Norman.

The cafe and Eco shop will be open on Tuesday 10.00am – 1.00pm and everyone is welcome.

This redevelopment is not simply about bricks, glass, and doors. It is about making space for people, for conversation, for community, and for God's work among us. We look forward to sharing the renewed space with all who enter it.

Bernard Nixon

Nunthorpe Easter Toddler Crafternoon

The Toddlers Play and Praise group had an Crafternoon on Palm Sunday where they heard the Easter Story and made various craft items connected with the story. They decorated lollipop sticks with paint and “jewels” which were arranged into this very striking Resurrection Cross, by Dorothy and Jillian.

Revd David then took it to Montpellier Manor to illustrate his service there.





Some reflections on Trinity Ladies Circle

When we moved to Acklam we settled happily,
We went to the Methodist Church it was named Trinity.
It was a friendly, active church with a mixed congregation,
Families from the new estates joined with jubilation.

We joined the Trinity Ladies group and fitted very well,
We found friends and companionship it is true to tell.
We had a varied programme in which we all took part
Of course, the Good News of Jesus at the very heart.

We had quizzes and demonstrations, games and music too,
With an interesting group of ladies, we found many things to do.
But now empty chairs remind us of dear friends we miss
Anecdotes flash through our minds when we reminisce.

We may be growing older, and slower with the years,
But we are still a happy group and overcome our fears.
So why not come and join us, share our fun and laughter,
Assured by trusting in God's love of a happy ever after.

If you decide to try us out, we'd give you an ovation,
We await you with friendliness and glad anticipation.
Perhaps a cup of tea would help and a biscuit too,
As you must have gathered we really do need you!

Our Ladies Circle meets weekly at Trinity on Mondays at 2.00pm. Can you spare an hour to come, we would love to see you!

Please check in our Year Book as sometimes we have breaks. We fit in with School Holidays, child minding overtakes.

Norma Arrowsmith

Answers to Quiz on page 6

1. Slavery
2. Blackpool Tower
3. St Swithin's
4. Robin Goodfellow
5. Ernest Shackleton
6. All things bright and beautiful



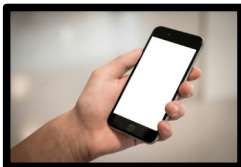
Give Him a Call!!

The phone was a great invention. How easy, to press a few numbers on our small devices and speak to someone the other side of the world.

Once a phone was a luxury item; now we take it for granted that this gadget in our pocket enables us to contact anyone, at any time, in any place.

However, how many times have you rung someone, only to be given a recorded message giving a variety of options? Then you must wait in a queue for ages before your call is answered. A voice informs you that 'your call is important to us' ... but meanwhile you are left waiting, listening to endless music.

Yes, a phone may be useful in all kinds of circumstances, but they can also be very frustrating! So, it's good to know that God can be contacted immediately we need Him.



There is no celestial call centre where our messages are delayed or referred. With prayer we can call on God directly. This service is free, with no charges. He hears our every call, and we can be confident that our Creator will answer us in ways which are only for our good.

'When you pray, I will answer you. When you call to me, I will respond.' (Isaiah 58:9)

The Parish Pump

PRAYER DIARY

June 7th Pray today for the Circuit Songs of Praise service taking place at Trinity at 2.30pm on the theme of 'Revival'. Pray for Revd David Godfrey, Dave Elliott and Marton.

June 14th Pray today for all students taking exams and those seeking employment once their time at school or college is finished. Pray for Revd John Howard-Norman and Normanby

June 21st Pray for all who are attending the Methodist Conference in Telford from June 25th to July 1st. Pray for all the important decisions which will be made on our behalf.

June 28th Pray today for the Methodist mission to Middlesbrough, for Revd Charity Hamilton and her team. We thank God for this important work being done and are so pleased that our church has a real presence in the town and surrounding areas, spreading the Gospel.

July 5th Pray today for all Preachers both Lay and Ordained. We pray for those who may be responding to a call to preach. We pray for all those people training for Ordained Ministry. Pray today for Revd. Anne Coates and for Grove Hill.

July 12th Pray today for the work of Methodist Homes for the Aged Communities in Teesside and for the caring work at Montpellier Manor. Pray for their Chaplain Barbara Robinson. Pray for Nunthorpe.

July 19th Pray today for school children and teachers breaking up for the summer holidays. Pray for all people going away on holiday in the coming weeks and for our various church activities taking a break for the summer. Pray for Trinity church and also the Family Friendly Centre.

July 26th Pray for all who are unwell at this time, in body, mind or spirit. Pray for those who care for them in their own homes. Pray for all who care for the sick professionally; doctors, nurses, surgeons and specialists. Pray too for those who research cures for illness. Pray for those we know to be ill at this time.

August 2nd Pray today for the work of Methodist Women in Britain, for their activities and their mission and outreach, pray for Anne Mapplebeck their coordinator.

August 9th Pray today for Christian people in public office in our town and country that their faith may make a difference to our communities. Pray for Mark Braithwaite our Circuit Safeguarding Officer.

August 16th Pray today for the outreach work of our churches. Pray for the Methodist Asylum Project and for Billy Barnes and his team.

August 23rd Pray today for David Everitt our Circuit Webmaster and Elaine McIntosh our Circuit Administrator. Pray for Revd Rachel Williams.

August 30th We pray for the Darlington District for the many different Church families meeting and worshipping. Pray for Revd Richard Andrew our Chair of District.