

MEMO

Middlesbrough & Eston Methodist Outburst

**SEPTEMBER —
NOVEMBER 2024**

**Give Thanks
To The Lord
Psalm 103:1-5**



FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Dear Friends

As I write this Editorial it is supposedly summer!! but by the time you read this it will be approaching Autumn. How quickly time goes by.

September is the start of the new Methodist year, which means a fresh start for all of us. Maybe we are pleased that our social meetings are starting up again. Maybe we are pleased that our business meetings are resuming as they help us to plan and organise God's work in our churches and indeed the Circuit.

We have no new Ministers coming to our Circuit, but we should remember in our prayers those Ministers who are beginning new appointments. We have of course a new President. However we are very fortunate that the new Vice President is Carolyn Godfrey and we pray for her in the great work she is doing in this her year of Office.

We really hope Rev Charity is going to be back with us again. We have planned her to preach on the new Plan and there is a Commissioning service for her at Linthorpe Road on September 8th at 6pm. This will be a Circuit service. We do continue to pray for Charity that she will be well enough to resume her work in the Circuit.

It is often the case that we have a shortage of articles for 'Memo' I am so grateful to Elaine at the Circuit Office who puts 'Memo' together and finds articles to fill spaces from other sources, such as 'The Parish Pump' We are grateful to our regular contributors, they provide us with informative and thought provoking material.

However we are a Circuit, and the aim of 'Memo' is to share the work and events of every church. From the beginning I have been involved, and although the Parish Pump is good to read, it is not about our

Circuit, our churches, our people.

Please think of what you could offer to 'Memo' some words which could inspire or inform other people. I know some people are very modest and think what have they got to say? Yet we all have something to offer, have a think and a pray, and put pen to paper or fingers to keyboards and submit your offering to Elaine at the Circuit Office.

Lastly I am very pleased to welcome two new members of our Circuit who worship at Stainton. Rev Anne and Malcolm Coates have joined us and what is so special they have both gone on to the Plan, and that is much appreciated as our numbers of

Preachers is declining and they provide a welcome addition. We look forward to seeing them and hearing them in our churches.

God Bless

Dave on behalf of Anne and Elaine.

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 OBS**

**Or email to
mbrocircuit@gmail.com
by 1st October 2024**

The Superintendent's Letter

Dear friends,

Welcome to the beginning of a new Methodist year. This is a special year in the Godfrey household as my wife Carolyn takes up office as the Vice President (VP) of the Methodist Conference. In this extended letter, therefore, I will reflect a little on my experience of Conference this year, briefly explain the role of the VP and share some of the things Carolyn is doing in her new role.

Methodist Conference meets annually and is the governing body of the Methodist Church in Britain. Conveniently it took place this year at Leeds, between 28th June and 3rd July, in the conference facilities of the Royal Armouries. It is always a great occasion especially at the beginning when the President and VP are inducted on the opening Saturday and ordinands are presented and received into full Connexion on the Sunday. All of this takes place in the context of worship. I can only ask you to imagine the wall of sound when 800+ Methodist voices sing the hymns and songs, accompanied of course by a great band. Another moving thing about Conference is that it always makes me feel part of a big family. We see Methodist people from Britain and representatives from around the world all coming together. We may struggle at times in declining churches, but we are part of a Methodist family some 75 million strong today and growing worldwide.



(from the left): Carolyn, Helen Cameron (incoming president), Gill Newton (outgoing president) and Kerry Scarlett (outgoing vice president).

The highlight for me took place on the Saturday of Conference when Carolyn was inducted as Vice President. It was wonderful to share this experience with 40 family and friends who were specially invited for the occasion. Carolyn was presented with a silver cross which is passed on from one VP to the next each year, like a chain of office. She was also presented symbolically with a first edition Methodist Hymn Book which was a little fragile and was taken back almost immediately. The President and the VP then spoke in turn. This year their addresses were on the theme they have chosen for the year, based on a verse from Isaiah 1:17, 'Learn to do right, seek justice and defend the oppressed'. Their addresses were different, but both spoke very movingly. The whole event was videoed and you can watch the addresses on the Methodist Website. <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about/structure-and-governance/the-methodist-conference/conference-2024/conference-2024-watch-again/>. You will find Carolyn's address in session 1 at about 3 hours 7 minutes in, if you want to shortcut to it. If you are interested in the things that Conference discussed you can rewatch all the sessions at the above link. Alternatively you can request a Conference business digest (summary of Conference) from Elaine in the Circuit office.

One important anniversary which was marked at Conference this year, and which will continue to be marked throughout the coming year, is the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women in the Methodist Church. There will be a special service to mark the anniversary in our district on Saturday 14th September at 4:00pm at Elm Ridge Methodist Church in

Darlington.

The President of Conference is always a Presbyterian Minister and the Vice President is always a Deacon or a Lay Person. Both take on senior leadership roles in the life of the Church and both serve for a year before passing on their silver crosses to their successors. This demonstrates a central tenet of our theology and organisation, in that leadership and power is always shared between lay and ordained, who work together and hold authority at every level of Church life. Both took turns to chair the business sessions of conference. And both are elected to represent the Conference in their visits throughout the Connexion and overseas. In this sense they are special representatives for all of British Methodism, and are required to undertake District and Overseas visits on behalf of the Church.

To give you an indication of what this involves, by the time you read this Carolyn will have spoken: In the Liverpool District, at the Tolpuddle festival (in Dorset), and brought greetings to the Italian Conference in Turin (which is celebrating the 850th anniversary of the Waldesian movement.) She has already represented the Church in the Bahamas, Turks and Caicos district of the Methodist Church in May and brought greetings and encouragement to a number of Churches and projects there. Future visits include trips to Malta, to various districts including the Shetland Islands and the Isle of Man, to the 3 Generate Youth Event, and to the Irish conference. She may also be representing the Church at the Cenotaph in Whitehall for the Remembrance event in November, although this has still to be confirmed. Carolyn has also begun some extra governance work involved in her role and is now sitting on the Connexional Council.

The VP role is a great honour bestowed upon Carolyn by the Church and I know that she feels this very deeply. It is also a volunteer (unpaid) role which means that she needs an understanding employer. The Darlington and Newcastle Districts have been very accommodating. She will continue as Regional Safeguarding Officer in her VP year, albeit with cover for reduced hours. Please pray for Carolyn as she takes on these extra responsibilities.

I hope the above Summary is useful for those interested in wider Methodism and how it all works. I also hope you enjoy what remains of the summer and I look forward to seeing you around the Circuit in the new Church year.

yours in Christ, **Revd. David Godfrey.**

Nunthorpe Methodist Church

**Warmly invites all to our Wednesday Entertainment
Afternoons at 2.30pm**

SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER
11th - Bring and Buy	9th - Games Afternoon	6th - TBC
25th - Beryl and Friends	23rd - Eric and the Band	20th- TBC

**For further details contact
Denise (September / October) 07975753299
Ruth (November) 01642 315002**

AUTUMN

Which is your favourite season? Or do you like them all? I must admit that I love the Autumn.

One of the signs of God's wonderful creation is the way the seasons come and go every year. People often say that there isn't the distinction now between the seasons that there used to be, all to do with climate change?



However the Autumn brings such amazing colours, which always inspires me and makes going out into the countryside such a joy. My lads used to make fun of the fact that when we were out, I sang the praises of the wonderful Autumn colours and I still do that today. Those rich colours transform our countryside in a very special way.

I travelled to Redcar and back from 1983 to 2015 every school day. There was and still is, one tree just near to the turn off to Lazenby which starts to turn quicker than every other tree. As I travelled along the road that was always the first sign that Autumn was on its way.

I always think there can be a calmness about Autumn, although lately we have had some extreme weather at this time of the year. But there is most of the time that sense of calm. The summer is over and the temperature can start to cool, we wake to heavy dew covering grass and gardens. There can be mists blanketing the scenery giving a strange calm and quiet. Sometimes we can even have a frost towards the end of the season. Autumn is described as the season of mist and mellow fruitfulness.

There is of course the harvest being brought in. I always think it is a wonderful sight to see the combine harvesters working in our fields, especially on an evening with their headlights on as work must continue. My son John, who is a farmer, loves this time of year when he is busy bringing in the harvest, as does my grandson who at 13 years old is busy helping his dad at weekends.

Of course, Harvest Festival services are special, I do love the hymns and we only have chance to sing them maybe on that particular Sunday. My favourite, 'Hear us O Lord from Heaven thy dwelling place'. Sadly, a hymn not in 'Singing the Faith' I wonder why it has been missed out?

I have, I hope painted that picture of this special time of the year. As you read this 'Memo' look out and enjoy this wonderful part of God's creation. As church life moves back into gear after a summer break, as children and teachers go back to school, there are consolations, a landscape to be marvelled at as the seasons move on and God's purpose is worked for all to see.

Look up hymn 121 in Singing the Faith. The chorus says; *So I mustn't forget, to say a great big thank you.* This is not a bad way to look at all that God has done for us, at any time of the year.

Dave Elliott

Reaping and Harvesting

Sometimes a law of nature is very similar to a law of the spirit. Take the process of harvest, or ‘sowing and reaping’. The Bible tells us: ‘A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.’ (2 Cor 9:6)



It has been said that probably the most sensitive nerve on our body is the one that runs to our cheque book! Money represents our time, our security and our hard work. It gives us independence and power. So, when God begins to talk to us about giving more of our money to Him – sowing it in His service – we can feel very alarmed.

The seed a farmer sows in a field may sometimes be lost, but not the seed that we give to God. What we sow with regards to our time, gifts and money in service to others God will make sure we one day reap – in a harvest of spiritual riches that we can never lose.

Parish Pump

Big Harvest Breakfast

Along with many churches, we at Nunthorpe ceased door to door collection for Christian Aid even before the Pandemic. It was both hard getting able bodied collectors, also house-holders these days are less willing to give to strangers from charities knocking on their door. And we are becoming a cashless society!



Instead we decided we would advertise and hold a Big Breakfast before church with the entry-price proceeds going to Christian Aid. People could come for breakfast and, although they would of course be welcome, they didn't **have** to stay for the service. Bacon! Eggs! Hash browns! Sausages, vegan or pork! Tea! Coffee! Company! What's not to like?

It made money and was very popular, so popular in fact we are going to repeat it for our Harvest! So we won't have a traditional Harvest Supper, instead we will hold a Harvest Breakfast with the proceeds going to Food Bank. We will still bring some token canned and packet goods for the Harvest but cash is probably more useful to Food Banks. People enjoyed meeting and chatting before the service as they munched their sausage sandwiches. A big traditional breakfast is a treat we rarely cook for ourselves after all! And Jesus held a famous breakfast on a beach too, John 12:13 remember?



Ruth Lewis

Stainton Village Big Sing



After days and days of endless rain we were blessed with a wonderful sunny day for our annual Village Big Sing, in fact some would even say it was TOO hot.(We're never happy are we?) Nevertheless, after last year's threatened rain which moved us indoors for the first time, this year we were outside in Meldyke Square, singing songs of praise and outreach to everyone within earshot, even if it was inside their cottages with open windows!

There were probably over 80 people, not only from the village and around the Circuit but also from further afield. As is now customary we were accompanied by both senior and junior members of Marske Brass Band. Everyone was in good voice as Revd. David and Revd. Laura Wild (the vicar from the village parish church of St. Peter and St Paul) guided us through prayers, readings and reflections as well as hymns on the theme 'Stilling the Storm'.



We were grateful to the Memorial Hall committee for allowing us to use the hall where afterwards there was a welcome cold or hot drink and a lovely homemade treat available and of course plenty of friendly chat.

This year we asked for donations for the Unicorn Centre and were very grateful for the £123.00 which has been given to this very worthy organisation, Riding for the disabled.

We thank everyone who joined us or helped with this event in anyway and made it such a success.

Remember, roughly same time, same place next year!

Claire Tate

Methodist Women in Britain



MWiB DISTRICT EVENTS

AUTUMN DAY - Monday 28th October 2024 at Greens Lane Methodist Church, Greens Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 5HP.

Refreshments from 10.15am, service starts 11.00am. Afternoon session 1.30pm - 3.30pm. Please bring your own lunch, drinks provided.

Beryl Haggath



Farewell Revd. Mike Harland

We were sad last month, when Mike moved away from our church and circuit to be with family. It has been a long association. He and his beloved Jo agreed to come to our Circuit after stationing, when the views of the Cleveland Hills and Roseberry Topping was, he used to say, a clincher! An energetic and forward thinking Superintendent Minister Mike set up the Circuit Office, mainly with the aim to provide administration help/circuit resource help, for any of the 11 churches in the circuit at that time. He also speedily brought the production and printing of Memo and

Nunthorpe News 'in house'. The office opened with Linda Martin as the secretary in January 1995. What would we do without the Office and Elaine now? In 1999 was it? Mike left the circuit to become Hospital Chaplain at St. Luke's hospital, a lead in the Regional Mental Health Trust. He and Jo moved to Ingleby Barwick and joined Yarm Methodist Church.

As our minister in Nunthorpe he was a breath of fresh air. He introduced us to Iona worship, taught us John Bell songs using his hand to show when the tune moved up or down the scale. Some members joined him on a pilgrimage to Iona, an unforgettable experience, whilst Jo stayed at home to look after the dogs. His worship was often creative, inspiring, not reliant on the "sermon" and for Christmas morning he would organise a short drama. Who can forget Michael Mouse? We were delighted that he and Jo re-joined us when they downsized to a bungalow in Nunthorpe, and once more he and Jo could be seen regularly walking the dog[s] along Stainton Way. With family in London, Scotland and Beverly it was inevitable that when sadly he lost Jo, Mike would move away. We wish him well. He is much loved.

The Photo was taken in July, Mike holding a painting by Shirley Hinchley. It's Roseberry Topping of course!

Ruth Lewis



Here are six "Old" Quiz questions to get your brain working

1. Who wrote the hymn Amazing Grace?
2. What was Tom Jones' song to this feline creature?
3. Aldous Huxley wrote this dystopian fiction with a 3 word title?
4. Miranda said those words first in which stormy Shakespeare play?
5. From the New Testament which woman made purple dye
6. In which city is John Wesley's New Room, the oldest Methodist building in the world ?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 23



A SIGN FROM ABOVE

Spotted on a church notice board:

"Love your enemies; After all, You made them."

Trinity Community Garden

The Community Garden was started c 10 years ago and had been developed by a small, and changing, group of volunteers. We're currently supporting an elderly man with learning difficulties, who loves coming to the garden with his support workers.

We work with the youth offending service to support youngsters doing their community work.

The garden is split into different parts:

A vegetable garden, mainly on raised beds, a polytunnel (containing our own grape vine) and fruit trees.

A meadow area with mowed paths (we have bee orchids).

A prayer garden, or mindfulness, if that is what you prefer.

The produce is donated to our community café and hopefully to the community grocery, when it opens.

Visitors are always surprised by how beautiful the garden is. Community involvement hasn't really worked as I would hope, but I'm hoping that this will improve. Meanwhile we'd love any of you to visit us on a Tuesday (10 – 2) and enjoy refreshments in our Hope Café.

Sunflowers

I was helping with the town clean-up after the protests that took place in August, with my friend James from Middlesbrough Community Church. Both of us were upset about what had happened and struggling to understand it. We spent about twenty minutes cleaning up loads of rubbish on ground adjoining the Old Shipmate pub and my friend was upset about people dumping rubbish right next to a wheelie bin. We enjoyed cleaning the area up and then turned round to see some beautiful sunflowers right behind us.



Walking back through scenes of carnage was both upsetting and also encouraging because we met lots of lovely volunteers and were able to talk to locals and offer our sympathy. The sunflowers reminded me that we can either focus on the rubbish or look for the beauty around us.

Richard Cooper

As the autumn nights draw in and temperatures start to drop, habits change for a lot of our wildlife. Many species depend on extra food and shelter as they prepare for the cold and scarce winter months. The good news is, we can all take small actions to help. From your balcony or workplace to the local woods and beyond, here are some top tips.

Plant trees

Add colour and life to your outdoor space with native trees and shrubs. Autumn is the perfect time to plant as trees are dormant and less likely to suffer damage. Native species like holly, hawthorn and rowan are all suited to small spaces and provide vital food and shelter for birds, insects and small mammals through the colder months. Choose carefully and you can enjoy other benefits too - admire fantastic displays of spring blossom or fiery autumn leaves, capture carbon, create a shady spot and much more.

Put your Halloween pumpkin to good use

Feeding woodland wildlife with leftover Halloween pumpkins might seem helpful and eco-friendly, but it does more harm than good. Pumpkins take a long time to break down and as they rot, they damage delicate woodland ecosystems, attract rats and can be fatal to animals like hedgehogs. Please don't leave pumpkins in our woods.

Make a pumpkin bird feeder

Take the lid off your jack-o'-lantern, or if you have a fresh pumpkin, cut the top off and scoop out the insides.

Push strong sticks through so that they jut out to create perches for the birds.

Fill with bird seed and place on a bird table, or tie strings to the sticks and hang from a sturdy branch.

Keep it clean and add it to the compost heap when it starts to rot to avoid harming the birds.

Offer clean nest boxes for birds

Nesting season may be over but birds can benefit from nest boxes all year round. Autumn is the ideal time to put up a new one or clean out any you already have – chicks have safely fledged and boxes will instead offer valuable shelter for our feathered friends as temperatures drop. Birds will also be checking out potential breeding sites for next spring - if you're lucky, they might decide to adopt your box to rear their next brood.

Help hedgehogs prepare for hibernation

Autumn is a crucial time for hedgehogs as they need to build up fat reserves to see them safely through their winter hibernation. Leaving out a small amount of food can help them do that when other sources may be growing scarce. You can also help by leaving a small pile of leaves and twigs in a quiet corner for them to use as a winter sanctuary - a 'hibernaculum' - or even build or buy a hedgehog house.



Be selective with secateurs

Autumn gardening often involves cutting everything back and having a good tidy up as

plants die back and lose their flowers and leaves. But a few seed-heads, hollow stems and low-lying foliage can provide important habitat with extra food and shelter for lots of animals in autumn. It doesn't have to be untidy or on a grand scale – you could cut back some species but not others, leave a small area untouched or put small bundles of natural materials at the back of borders or behind a shed. Keep an eye out in the coming months to see how many species are appreciating your efforts.



Build a bug hotel

As the weather turns cooler, give minibeasts like bees, ladybirds and spiders a safe and cosy space to shelter with a bug hotel. Autumn is a great time to find lots of natural materials for your construction too, including pine cones, dried twigs and fallen leaves. They don't have to take up much room - try your hand at one of our ideas, from a log pile lodge to a pinecone palace.

Keep bird baths and feeders topped up

As temperatures plummet, birds use a lot of energy to keep warm and food becomes difficult to find. Putting out nuts, seeds and other energy-rich food can be a welcome extra meal in leaner times. Bird baths can be a lifeline too when other water sources may have frozen over - help keep yours ice-free by floating a small ball on the surface to disturb the formation of ice sheets.



Let ivy thrive until the new year

Ivy's nectar, pollen and berries are an essential food source for insects and birds in the autumn garden, so leave any pruning until after the last fruits if you can. Flowering from September to November, ivy is one of the last garden nectar sources for late-flying insects. Birds feast on its fruit from November to January too - the high fat content is nutritious for birds like thrushes, blackcaps and blackbirds. The plant also offers shelter for insects, birds, bats and other small mammals.

Sunday 22nd September 2024 is Peace Sunday

For many years, the United Nations has encouraged the observance of 21st September as the International Day of Peace.

The World Council of Churches calls on Churches to make this a day of prayer for peace, and to include prayers for peace this year in their services on Sunday 22nd September. It is a chance for Churches to pause and reflect on what it means to follow the Prince of Peace on that day

The theme for this year 'vine and fig tree'. We'll think about what the world needs to enable all to live in peace and we'll be challenged to think about our role in bringing that to life. There will also be space and opportunity to lament the presence of war and conflict in the world today.

The Methodist Church





Off to school

Mother to young daughter after first day at school: "Well, dear, what did they teach you today?"

Daughter: "Not much. I've got to go back again tomorrow."

Don't mention it!

As part of his annual talk to our local Town Council, our minister told some funny stories. Since he planned to use the same anecdotes at the forthcoming Harvest Dinner at church, he asked the young reporter covering the event not to include them in his report.

Reading the newspaper on the following morning, he noticed that the well-meaning reporter had ended his story on the banquet with the observation "The minister told a number of stories that cannot be published."

"Er... Minister—does the church have a position on the donation of GM (genetically modified) vegetables for the Harvest Festival?"

Died in the services

Little Alex was staring up at the large brass plaque that hung on the side wall of the church. The plaque was covered with names, and it seemed to fascinate the seven-year-old. "All those names," he said to the minister. "Who are they?" "Well, they were people who used to go to this church," explained the minister. "This is a memorial to all the young men and women who died in the services."

Soberly, they stood together, staring at the large plaque. Little Alex's voice was barely audible when he asked, "Which service, the 9 o'clock, or the 11 o'clock?"

Prove it

The biggest joke on mankind is that computers have begun asking humans to prove they aren't a robot.

What would Jesus do?

While waiting in line to check out at a Christian bookstore, a man in front of me asked the clerk about a display of hats with the letters WWJD on them. The clerk explained that WWJD stands for 'What would Jesus do?', and that the idea is to get people to consider this question when making decisions.

The man pondered a moment, then replied, "I don't think He'd pay £17.99 for that hat."

Did Noah fish?

A Sunday school teacher asked, "Johnny, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the Ark?"

"No," replied Johnny. "How could he, with just two worms?"

The Parish Pump

The Organist



I think all my life, as long as I can remember, I have loved the organ. Going to church even as a child I so admired the sound of the instrument and was in awe of those able to play the organ.

In my young days I attended St. Sepulchre Street chapel in Scarborough, a lovely church with a balcony and a three manual pipe organ. My friend's Dad, Eric Appleby, was organist and played twice each Sunday and I remember he only had two Sundays off each year. There was weekly choir practice and an anthem at every service. When that chapel closed down in 1967 the organ was moved to its present home the Roman Catholic church in Newby in Scarborough.

We then moved to worship at Queen Street Central Hall with one of the best organs in the town. Again a very big church with balcony and a very powerful but versatile instrument, it even had a bell stop. Leslie Sturdy was organist and was a brilliant musician. I went to his concerts with Sue for many years.

Moving to Grove Hill, a smaller but still melodic organ played by the very talented Colin Bennison. Sadly our pipe organ had to go when we refurbished, but Colin and I spent an interesting day at Shaw in Lancashire choosing an instrument which was the very versatile Johannus that has given so much joy to us over the years. Colin played the organ at Grove Hill for 70 plus years and was an excellent musician. He played for services each week, but also for concerts which I enjoyed organising, it was a joy working with Colin as he just did whatever I asked him musically. I guess we were all very sad when Colin stopped being able to play and even sadder when he passed away a year ago.

We are so fortunate that we have Geoff Foxall but not as our own organist. We have to share him with Trinity and as their organist he also comes to us when their service finishes. Geoff would not call himself an organist, although I happen to think he is an excellent organist.

When Geoff is not available then Lilyan plays the piano. We have also had the pleasure of Ruth Astbury, from Marton, playing maybe a couple of Sundays when Geoff is on holiday. We enjoy her skills and the way she plays our lovely organ. Of course we do have a problem in our Circuit in that we have few organists. Years ago every church in the Circuit had an organist and possibly more than one on the list. Sadly there are no new, young organists around ready to take over the vacant organ stools. It is a real problem and it makes us even more grateful for those organists we have in the Circuit.

Geoff often finds himself asked to play at other churches for funerals which he does willingly, but he and I have discussed the real problem of the lack of organists.

I guess fewer people going to church and fewer younger people taking up music especially the piano or organ. I remember not so long ago when we had Richard Nimmo a very talented young organist, but like so many young people he moved away from the area.

Anna Lapwood the organist at the Royal Albert Hall is really making the organ a much more popular instrument for the younger generation. She has played along with Pop

groups and Jazz musicians at the Albert Hall.

As a lecturer at Oxford University she is trying to encourage her music students to look at learning the church organ.

I hope that we won't allow this King of Instruments to disappear from our churches. I know the younger generation in our churches enjoy the use of different instruments, guitars, brass etc. but I do believe the organ still has an important place in worship. So if we want the organ, we need organists, do you know anyone who plays?

Are you interested? I play at the start of worship quite often, but I certainly am not an organist.

Please think about this situation, pray about it and appreciate the talented organists we have in our Circuit.

Dave Elliott



In Your embrace

Though I don't see you face to face
I know I'm held in your embrace.
Amazing Love! Amazing Grace!
You died to save the human race.

I sing the hymns, I read your Word
and many sermons I have heard
which tell me how much you have cared
and with your blood we sinners spared.

How can it be that I should gain
redemption through my Saviour's pain?
A mystery it must remain
My Saviour now with God does reign.

In your embrace I am set free.
Lead me, Lord, to where I must be.
Together, Lord, oh let us be
Now and throughout eternity.

Celia Shires 16.4.23

Remembering the faith of Eric Liddell — 100 years ago at the Paris Olympics



I am sure most of you will have watched and enjoyed the 2024 Paris Olympics (26th July – 11th August). It was 100 years ago, also at the

Paris Olympics, that a young science student at Edinburgh University, Eric Liddell, ran an astonishing race that caught the imagination of millions worldwide.

Liddell had been born in China in 1902, to Scottish missionaries there. Early on, he had made a deep commitment to Jesus Christ, and sensed he was being called to spend his life in serving others. But Liddell was also an outstanding sportsman, playing rugby for Scotland before settling on athletics.

When he was chosen for the Paris Olympics, he expected to run his preferred 100m. But then came the news that the race would be run on a Sunday, and Liddell refused. Quickly, he trained for the 200m and 400m. He took bronze at the 200m, but no one expected much from him at the 400m. Instead, he won, and even broke the world record in the process.

After the Olympics, Liddell felt God calling him to his life's work. He went back to China, to teach in a Christian college. As the Second World War loomed, he sent his wife and children home, but stayed on himself. By 1943 Liddell was confined to a brutal prison camp, where he shone among the fellow prisoners – encouraging them, teaching Bible classes, and praying for both his fellow inmates and the prison wardens. Deeply malnourished, his health failed and in 1945, just months before the war ended, he died, aged only 43.

In 1981 his story was made into the Oscar-winning film *Chariots of Fire*.



Parish Pump

Nunthorpe Methodist Church

In July a brilliant Vintage Afternoon Tea was held at Nunthorpe! To a background of palm court style piano music from John Summerville, homemade sandwiches, cakes, scones, meringues were served on dainty china plates to over forty five guests. Tea was poured out expertly with a smile by Revd. David Godfrey!

Maybe he needs a new apron!

Ruth Lewis



Photograph taken by Kim



British Summer Time ends on Sunday 27th October 2024

*Don't forget to put your clocks
back one hour.*

All Saints and All Souls Days

When planning for this edition of MEMO Elaine came across All Saints and All Souls days which take place annually on November 1st and November 2nd respectively. I have to admit that I don't really know much about either of these days so it was an opportunity to find out more, hence this article! I hope you find it interesting.

Both of these days are recognised feast days in the Catholic Church. While doing some research I found out that people often ask what the difference is between the two. Both are different 'feast days' with All Saints day commemorating and remembering all the saints that are in heaven whereas All Souls is remembering all those who have died whether they have reached heaven or not.

All Saints Day is the day after Halloween (All Hallows Eve) and has been celebrated by Anglicans and Catholics around the world since the 4th century. It is an opportunity to remember all saints and martyrs throughout Christian history and it is expected that people will attend church that day. In the USA children go around the streets on All Hallows eve much like trick and treating here. In Spain, Portugal and Mexico offerings are left on graves, in Western Europe graves are visited and flowers left, candles are lit on graves at night in Eastern Europe and in the Philippines the graves of loved ones are repaired and painted.



All Souls Day has been an annual tradition since medieval times, particularly in the Catholic Church, for all who have died. In Martin Luther's time protestants generally opposed this on theological grounds and it was the debate over the souls of the departed that started Luther's heresy. This in turn led to his omission of all reference to prayers for the dead in his protestant translations of the bible – hence the reason for fewer books in the protestant bible than the catholic bible. All Souls is particularly celebrated in Latin America with the origins going back to European folk lore and related customs around the world like the Mexican Day of the Dead and the Chinese Ghost Festival. To remember the departed, many cultures prepare meals for the souls of the dead, light candles and leave flowers on relatives' graves.

Anne Smith

Our Circuit's Webmaster

In our present day and age, communications are different to what they were a few years ago. We therefore have a Circuit Website and many of our churches have their own websites.

I want to commend our Circuit Webmaster, David Everitt. He does an excellent job of ensuring the Circuit website is always up to date, not an easy task as we are continually sending things to him to go on to the site.

David also ensures the weekly Worship at Home service is on the website along with the appropriate hymns we may have chosen. It always amazes me how many people go on to the site to view the Worship at Home. It is this outreach through worship that is beyond the number of people who attend our church services. In this way David is really creating mission and outreach via the internet which reaches all around the world. He is our evangelist and we are grateful for his technical ability. In many other ways David enhances communication around our churches and for that we are grateful.

On a personal level, for those of us who preach at Nunthorpe, David sits at the back of church and controls the sounds. It means we don't have to worry about how loud or soft we are speaking it is all done for us and it does make the life of the preacher so much easier.



Lastly thank you to David for helping us out some times when we have IT problems, he seems to be able to fix things so easily.

Dave Elliott.



The GRASS WITHERS *and*
the FLOWERS FADE, BUT
THE WORD *of our* GOD
stands FOREVER.

ISAIAH 40:8

One more step along the world I go

StF 476 H&P 746

September! A time for new schools, new classes, new ministers for some Methodist Churches! So, here is a strange little hymn. It is strange because it does not have the words God, Jesus or any of the usual vocabulary associated with our faith instead it refers to “you”. Who is this “you” we might well ask. We assume the undefined “you” is the divine, yet that ambiguous, vagueness may be the hymn’s strength. It can appeal to and be sung by anyone, of any faith or none..

Words and tune written in 1971 by Sydney Carter [1915-2004] for a service at the end of the summer term in Southwark Cathedral School, when children will have been moving on, it became a firm favourite in schools as shown by it being the most cited in copy-right returns from schools. Its lack of specific theology will explain the roll of the eyes you might see from some clergy and church members, but having been sung in schools, it is at least KNOWN by large numbers of the public. It is often the choice of non-church going folk and sung without any hesitation, for christenings, weddings and I recently heard it at a funeral. Indeed it is suggested on a Funeral Director’s website as a hymn/song which celebrates all the stages of life’s journey. Certainly death is another stage! And as the new Methodist year starts in September it is another stage for us Methodists which is why I have chosen to write about it.

Carter himself called it a “hymn”. Historian, poet and songwriter he graduated from Balliol College Oxford and as a committed pacifist he registered as a conscientious objector, serving in the Friends’ [Quaker] Ambulance Unit serving in Egypt, Palestine and Greece during WWII. As a folk musician he worked with, among others, Donald Swann [Mud Glorious Mud] , Martin Carthy, another famous folk musician, and the Mike Sammes Singers! His tune *Southcote* is simple, and folk-like with its catchy chorus. A bit too simple for some tastes maybe.



However the simplicity of its words, are deceptive. At any time in our lives we are on a journey, one step at a time, having new experiences and remembering the old. Its appeal is universal. To use a cliché: we have “all been there” but this hymn is insistent that the undefined “you” will be with us all the way there. For us Christians, who else can “you” be but God/Jesus/ Holy Spirit ? The hymn in verse 3 cites the times when we are perplexed, in verse 4 possible times when our situation is “tough” or “rough” and, as we get older, those tough times come more frequently. The world is a rough place these days. Yet as John Wesley himself wrote: **best of all is God is with us**, which is after all what the hymn says, without using the “God” word.

The last verse is particularly subtle and mysterious. “You are older than the world can be”. .This implies a creator surely? “You are younger than the life in me” Deep! One could puzzle about what that means. “Ever old and every new”: What a paradox! It’s above all, a hymn teasing us about life’s pilgrimage. Who knows what this new Methodist year will bring for us, for our new President of Conference and for Carolyn Godfrey our new Vice President? Once thing is certain, our God will be with us, and with them, every step of the way.

Ruth Lewis



How to Deal with Enemies

In the season of Remembrance, we consider those who have heroically given their lives in war. However, Jesus calls all of us to a radical heroism in our daily lives: *'You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.'* (Matt 5:43-45).

Love Your Enemies:

Our 'enemies' are rarely life-threatening; they can simply be impatient, judgmental, self-righteous or just plain disagreeable! Whether the conflict is with a family or church member, work colleague or neighbour, our attitude toward them should be one of love. We will naturally want to retaliate, but Jesus commands us to love!

Pray for Your Persecutors:

It's only when we are ready to pray for someone whom we find difficult, that God can soften our attitude towards them. Like us, they are those in need of God's forgiveness and grace. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German pastor executed by the Nazis at the end of World War Two, wrote: *'This is the supreme demand. Through the medium of prayer, we go to our enemy, stand by his side, and plead for him to God. For if we pray for them, we are taking their distress and poverty, their guilt and perdition upon ourselves and pleading to God for them.'*

Become More Like Jesus:

When we start loving our enemies and praying for our persecutors, we become more like Jesus Himself. He willingly laid down His life for us, prayed for His persecutors and gives us the power to love our enemies as He did.

At a time when we recognise that we all need heroes; how will we respond to this call to radical heroism in our own life?

The Parish Pump

Trinity Ramblers Coffee Afternoon

**On Saturday 2nd November
2024 at 2.00pm**

Cake Stall, Book Stall etc.

All welcome



Elizabeth Fry, Prison Reformer

Died 12th October 1845



Elizabeth Fry had endless compassion and endless energy – and together with a steadfast determination to do God’s work, this outstanding philanthropist became one of the foremost promoters of prison reform – not just in Britain, but in all of Europe.

She was born in 1780, far from any prison. The family lived in Norwich, where her father was a wealthy Quaker banker and

merchant. In 1800 she married a London merchant, Joseph Fry.

Elizabeth could have spent her life safely at home, raising her many children. But instead, she felt compelled to help the desperate social needs of the time.

There was a good reason for this. Back in 1798, when she had been attending a Quaker meeting in Norwich, someone had spoken what Elizabeth felt was a prophetic word for her life. As she noted in her diary at the time:

‘Deborah Darby then spoke... she addressed part of it to me; I only fear she says too much of what I am to be. A light to the blind; speech to the dumb; and feet to the lame; can it be? She seems as if she thought I was to be a minister of Christ. Can I ever be one? If I am obedient I believe I shall.’

And she was.

Elizabeth was accepted as a Quaker ‘minister’, and her good works in London began. But it was not until one day in 1813, when she visited Newgate Prison in London, that Elizabeth’s life changed forever. That day she witnessed such horrors of the circumstances in which women and children were kept, that she knew she had found the focus for her life’s work.

Soon her daily visits to the prison, where she read the Bible and taught the women to sew, grew into a campaign to achieve basic rights for the women prisoners. She fought for the classification of criminals, the segregation of the sexes, female supervision of women, and some provision for education.

In 1817 she created the Association for the Improvement of Female Prisoners, and then lobbied Parliament. By 1818 Elizabeth had raised such a storm that she was called to give evidence to a Parliamentary Select Committee who was examining conditions in prison. They accepted many of her proposed reforms.

In 1820 Elizabeth tackled the huge problem of destitution in London. She opened a ‘Nightly Shelter for the Homeless in London’, which became the first of many. She founded a society to help released prisoners with rehabilitation. And she was certainly a ‘hands-on’ sort of lady; it was said that for the next 20 years she personally inspected

every single ship containing women convicts before it sailed to Australia.

Between 1838 and 1842 Elizabeth visited all the prisons in France, reporting to the Interior Minister. She then inspected prisons in Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Scotland and Ireland.

Elizabeth also founded schools for poor girls, soup kitchens for the hungry, better housing for the poor, and also investigated mental asylums. She even established a nursing school, which influenced her distant relative, Florence Nightingale.



By the time Elizabeth died in 1845, she had helped tens of thousands of helpless people to find some relief from their suffering. She had indeed lived her life as a 'minister of Christ'.

Parish Pump

DISCUSSION FELLOWSHIP AT GROVE HILL



An important part of our life together at Grove Hill is our Discussion Fellowship. It came about because after Lock Down was over I spoke to the Annual Church meeting and put out the challenge that we need to grow our church family in numbers and in faith.

David Lyness suggested that we need to have a chance to meet to discuss our faith as a way of moving forward. I suggested that he should be the person to make it happen. David quickly went ahead and put together a programme for us.

We decided to meet on the third Friday of each month at 1.30pm to 2.30pm, so if people needed to pick up children from school they could do so. Our first series of Discussions were based on Methodist Way of Life. We then moved on to using the book 'I still haven't found what I am looking for' by Rev Paul Walker. This has made very interesting reading and helped us to share together on the themes in the book.

In September we begin to study the Gospels, their background, the writers, their audience and their teaching.

I highly commend these sessions, because they do two things, they help us to discuss faith issues and they also teach us about faith. I also commend David, a highly knowledgeable and well-read Christian, who is also an excellent teacher I can say on behalf of the people who attend the sessions, that something very special takes place when we meet together.

If you would like to join us then you are very welcome to do so.

Dave Elliott



Trinity Family Friendly Centre aka TFFC

I am delighted that TFFC have received £20,000 funding from the Community Lottery Fund, this will help the community we serve by supporting those hardships

affecting people; food poverty and loneliness. This year we are planning to set up an Eco shop, and also have plans to develop the garden project further.

TFFC supports families throughout the year and also during school holidays by offering food parcels and also through a range of appropriate family activities. We also hope to build a sense of wellbeing by offering healthy-living sessions as well as gentle exercise sessions.

Hope Café will continue to offer support and a space for people to come together on a regular weekly basis.

It is amazing to see the hand of God on this project. He has continued to supply our every need, even when the cupboards seem bare....He does it again! In Matthew 21:21 Jesus said, *'I tell you the truth, if you have faith and don't doubt, you can do things like this and much more.'*

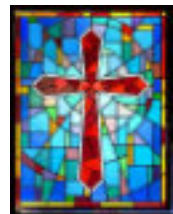
What is faith? I believe that faith is having the reassurance that something will happen, based on spiritual conviction rather than proof.

When I came to Trinity Methodist Church five years ago, I was ready to put my hand to the plough and knew God had led me here, and something was going to grow. In Mark's gospel 4:31 it says *'Then He asked, 'To what can we compare the kingdom of God? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds sown upon the earth. But after it is planted, it grows to be the largest of all garden plants and puts forth great branches, so that the birds of the air nest in its shade.'*

What a beautiful description of the kingdom of God, offering places of sanctuary for those lost and isolated, needing support of refreshments. This is how I visualise TFFC, it is a place where community is the key.

Sharon Sewell
Project Co-ordinator

People are like stained glass windows. We glow and sparkle when it is sunny and bright outside. But it is only when the sun goes down that our true beauty is revealed – and then only if there is a light deep within us – the light of God.



Nunthorpe Methodist Church's

Christmas fayre

On Saturday 23rd November

at 10.00am - 12.30pm



Quality Bric-a-brac, Books, Christmas Gifts,
Knitted Goods, Crafts, Cakes,

Father Christmas, Tombola, Jams & Pickles
and lots more ...

Seasonal Refreshments

Signs found outside churches

Church carpark sign...FOR MEMBERS ONLY. Trespassers will
be baptised.

No God – No Peace. Know God – Know Peace.

Free Trip to heaven. Details Inside!

Searching for a new look? Have your faith lifted here!

Outside one church is a picture of two hands holding stone tablets on which the Ten
Commandments are inscribed. A headline reads: 'For fast relief, take two tablets.'

When the restaurant next to a church put out a big sign with red letters that said,
'Open Sundays', the church reciprocated with its own message: 'We are open on
Sundays, too.'



Answers to Quiz on Page 8

1. John Newton;
2. What's new pussy cat?;
3. Brave New World;
4. The Tempest;
5. Lydia;
6. Bristol.

PRAYER DIARY

September 1st At the start of this new Methodist year, we pray for all our hopes and plans for our churches as we seek to serve God in the coming months. Pray for Rev David and Nunthorpe.

September 8th Pray for the Preachers' meeting being held on Monday and for our shared Holy Communion. Also pray this week for the Circuit Meeting being held on Wednesday. Pray for Rev John and for Normanby

September 15th Pray for Trinity and the TFFC for Sharon Sewell and all the team. Pray for Rev Ann Coates and for Stainton

September 22nd We pray today for all those young people returning to universities and for some going for the first time. Pray for our ministry to students attending our churches who attend Teesside University.

Pray for Rev Charity and the Town Centre ministry, and for Andrew Glazebrook the Project manager at Linthorpe Road Resource Centre.

September 29th Pray today for churches celebrating Harvest Festival celebrations during these weeks, that we may praise God for all his goodness. Pray for Rev Mike Harland and for Marton

October 6th Pray today for all who are unwell in body, mind or spirit. Pray for those who care for the sick in their own homes and in hospitals and Residential Care homes. Pray for David Everitt our Circuit webmaster for helping to share the good news we celebrate. Pray for Grove Hill

October 13th Pray today for all the various meetings held in our churches, some Business, some social and some devotional. Pray for MHA Communities Teesside, for Montpellier Manor, and for Tom Ward the Communities Manager.

October 20th We pray today for all who work with children and young people in our churches. We pray too for Christian teachers and Governors in our local schools. Pray for Mark Braithwaite, our Circuit Safeguarding Officer.

October 27th Pray for those who may be awaiting God's call to become Worship Leaders, Preachers or Ordained Ministers. Pray for all who preach God's word week by week in our churches. Pray today for the Chinese Church.

November 3rd Pray today for those who are homeless, those who feel rejected and for all who care. Pray for the work of the Methodist Asylum Project MAP for Bill Barnes the Project Manager and all the volunteers.

November 10th On this Remembrance Sunday we pray for peace in such a troubled and divided world. We pray for all who have given their lives in the cause of peace and freedom and for those who continue to make those sacrifices. Pray today for World Leaders that there may be hope for a better world. We pray too for all who are sad today as they remember loved ones who have given their lives in the service of others. Pray for all services of Remembrance whatever their faith or denomination that people may be made aware of the need to work and pray for peace.

November 17th Pray today for all who are involved in Mission, especially churches in our Circuit beginning mission projects.

November 24th We pray today for all the church families in the Darlington District. Pray for Rev Richard Andrew our Chair of District.