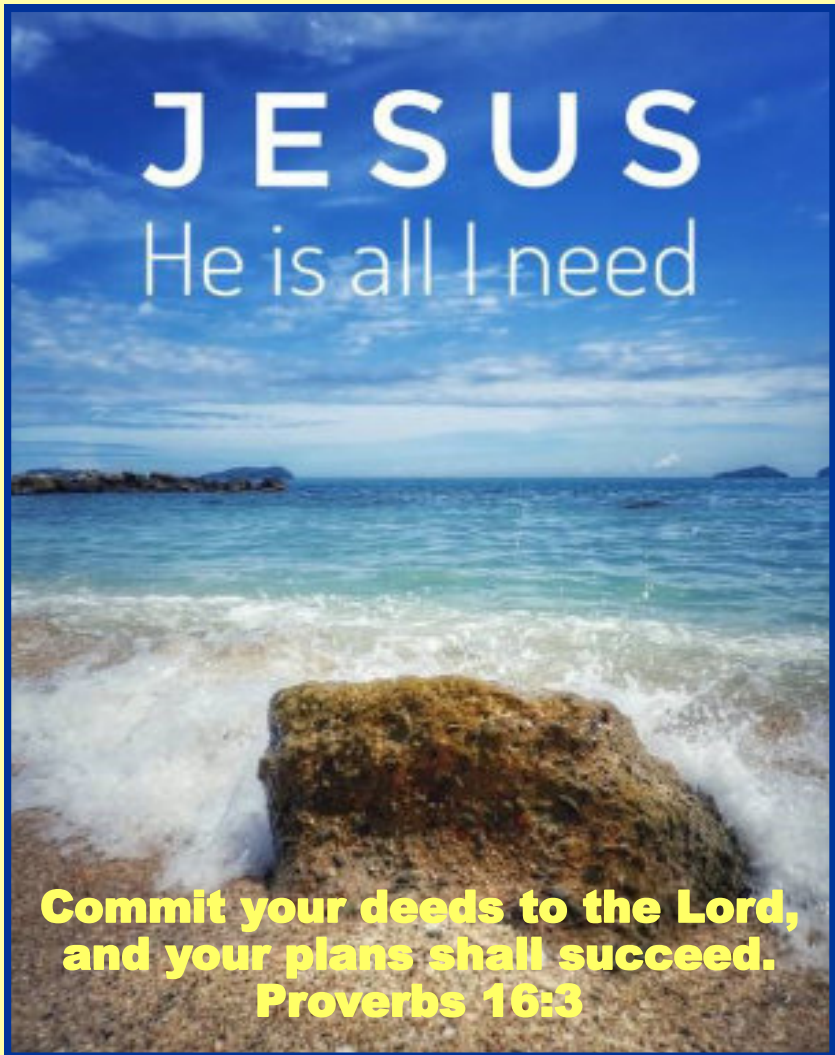


MEMO

Middlesbrough & Eston Methodist Outburst

JUNE — AUGUST 2023



JESUS
He is all I need

**Commit your deeds to the Lord,
and your plans shall succeed.
Proverbs 16:3**

FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Well here we are, coming into summer time. I'm writing this editorial at the beginning of May and today is bright and sunny but not particularly warm. I feel that the weather on the whole has not been very seasonal and have been thinking about past times when spring was a warming up time and summers were warmer and sunny; when autumn was cooler but a riot of colour and crunchy leaves, and winter was regularly cold and snowy.

It is so easy to look back and think of the 'good' times. Times when we knew exactly what was going to happen season by season, when life appeared much more settled and perhaps more repetitive or is that just wishful remembering? But life and our world is not like that – things move on. Times and values can change as our 'world' grows and we have to come to terms with different ways of getting on and moving forward. For some it is a challenge while for others it is exciting.

For myself, I find a lot of comfort in knowing that I believe in a loving caring God, am part of a caring church and worship in a church community which actively reaches out to the local area. I'm sure this is true across the circuit

(and beyond) so why don't you put pen to paper and tell us all about it?

MEMO finds its way beyond the church doors so we hope you will add to the content in future editions. We do rely on your input and even a very small item will be acceptable. Whether it is a poem, an experience, something that irritates you or makes you smile it will be welcome (as long as it not covered by copyright)

With best wishes from **Anne**,
on behalf of the Communication team.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT EDITION OF MEMO

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

Or email to
mbrocircuit@gmail.com
by 1st July 2023

The Superintendent's Letter

Dear Friends,

I wonder what rules you choose to live by? It may seem a strange question, but we all tend to make our own rules for how we live. Some of us live by a rule which says be respectful to everyone we meet. Other's have a rule about not eating cake or biscuits between meals. Our personal rules cover everything from the clothes we wear, to our use of money. We all have these rules to live by, whether we are aware of them or not.

In the Methodist Church the idea of having a 'rule of life' or developing a 'rule for daily living' has a long history. In 1743 John and Charles Wesley gave rules to Christians in the early Methodist Societies that were being formed. This early Methodist rule can be summarised as follows:

1. Do no harm by avoiding evil of every kind; especially that which is most generally practiced.
2. Do good as often as you can to as many as you can.
3. Practice the means of grace:
 - * Private and family prayer.
 - * Regular worship attendance.
 - * Bible reading and study.
 - * The Lord's Supper.
 - * Fasting or Abstinence.

At this point we should mention that the word 'rule' is often misunderstood. We tend to associate it with the word 'don't' and see rules as very restrictive of freedom. But this is the wrong way to look at it. A good rule for daily living actually enhances our freedom, it doesn't restrict it. In fact the word 'rule' is more positively understood in the sense of something we measure up to, rather than as something that beats us down.

Which brings us neatly to 'A Methodist Way of Life'. This is a rule or ideal for Christian living which has been developed over the last few years. In many ways it is simply a modernisation, or re-invention, of what the Wesley brothers published 280 years ago. At its heart is a personal ethos that helps us to say, 'yes' to God as revealed in Jesus Christ. In following this rule we choose to live the Jesus way. The rule can be summarised in 12 headings, split into 4 sections:

As far as we are able, with God's help:

Worship:

- We will pray daily.
- We will worship with others regularly.
- We will look and listen for God in Scripture, and the world.

Learning and Caring:

- We will care for ourselves and those around us.
- We will learn more about our faith.
- We will practice hospitality and generosity.

Service:

- We will help people in our communities and beyond.
- We will care for creation and all God's gifts.
- We will challenge injustice.

Evangelism:

- We will speak of the love of God.
- We will live in a way that draws others to Jesus.
- We will share our faith with others.

I hope you may find 'A Methodist Way of Life' helpful. Some of the headings need thought and conversation with others about how to apply them. You can find out more on our national website www.methodist.org.uk I would also be willing to do an introductory session for your Church.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. David Godfrey



God - The Three in One

On June 4th we celebrate Trinity Sunday. The doctrine of the Trinity is one of the most important of the Christian faith, for it goes to the very heart of what God is like. The Bible is quite clear: there is one God, but He is revealed in three 'persons' – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Have you ever wondered at what point in the Bible God is revealed as being more than one person? Well, you don't have to read very far: only to Genesis 1:26, where God (Elohim – a plural noun) says: Let US make man in OUR image. (Gen. 1:26)

The Bible reveals a pattern: God the Father lives in heaven and has never been seen. God the Son became the incarnate Jesus Christ, who made known to us the Father, and God the Holy Spirit, who is unseen, has been sent to live within and to equip His people, the Church.

The Trinity is basic to our salvation – for these three persons in the one Godhead have combined to save us from our sins: it is the WILL of the Father, the saving WORK of the Son, and the indwelling WITNESS of the Holy Spirit. (John 14:16, 23-26).

The Parish Pump

God moves in a mysterious way

Although I can't see what path God intends me to take in the future, looking back I can see landmarks on the path he's brought me so far.

I went to various Sunday Schools when a small child - the Mission at South Bank, the Salvation Army at South Bank, once even to Grangetown Methodist but not as a regular thing. I can recall however always being interested in Bible stories, writing an essay about the events of Holy Week, telling Bibles stories to an empty room filled with imaginary children.

I became a regular attender of Sunday School at St. Enoch's Hogganfield Parish Church in Glasgow. and I responded to an appeal at a tent hall meeting in there. However when we left there and came back here, I couldn't find a church where I felt at home.- C of E. Grangetown Baptist (where I responded to another appeal!) until eventually I came to rest at Normanby Methodist Church. It was here that I was encouraged to join the Mission band by Mr. Will Sayer. But it is to Colin Brown that you owe the fact that I'm a preacher now (blame him!)

God moves in a mysterious way! It was a teasing remark made by Colin "Mr. Sayer wants you to do the sermon next time" to which I found myself replying "Alright - I'll do it. " Whereupon Colin informs Mr. Sayer that "Celia's volunteered to do the sermon"

Where did I get the nerve to do it? I knew I was fairly good at writing essays, especially make believe, and I enjoyed acting and verse speaking, but this was different, This was serious stuff. What could I tell people about the love of God?

I didn't realise what I was letting myself in for. Being part of a group in the Mission Band was nerve-racking enough, but then I was asked by Mr. Sayer to consider becoming a local preacher!, I still didn't know what it entailed but again I found myself saying yes.

It was Joyce Jones, (later Rev. J. Mobberley) who had the task of taking me out "on note" : introducing me to the discipline of producing an act of worship and then to years of study and training and sitting exams until I faced the last test - "THE TRIAL SERMON"

All I recall is that it was in a weekday service in Normanby Road church, in the evening. I have no idea what the content was but it must have passed muster because in 1964 I was recognised as a fully accredited local preacher in the Methodist church .

There are many different ways in which the call to preach may come, mine seems to have been the result of a dare!

The call may come from the most unexpected sources and to the least expected people. The call may be coming to you today - consider where God has been leading you in the past - perhaps He's pointed the way but you've hesitated -thinking He couldn't mean you, or that you were not good enough? We have all felt the same - no one feels adequate, let alone good enough, but God makes you capable for the job He has intended for you

God moves in a mysterious way - if He can use me - He can definitely use YOU.

Celia Shires



The Storm

When we set sail on the lake that day,
it was calm and still, a peaceful day.
Then a storm blew up out of the blue
and we struggled hard our jobs to do.

Trimming the sail, and heaving the oars,
we had no time to think or to pause;
We called out in our panic and fear
but Jesus, asleep, seemed not to hear.

Afraid, we asked him, "Lord, don't you care?
How can you lie there so unaware?
We are in peril, danger is near.
The storm threatens the lives we hold dear"

Jesus arose and held out his arm.
Just seeing him there stopped our alarm,
He said just those three words "Peace! Be Still!"
And we watched as the storm obeyed his will.

And so we sailed on the lake that day.
It was calm and still, a peaceful day.
A powerful sign we had received
and now in Jesus we all believed.

'Peace, Be Still, ' I tell my anxious mind.
God is merciful and God is kind.
When the storm clouds gather over me
enfolded in His arms I shall be .

Lord, take my fragile faith, make it strong.
Turn my feeble cry into a song.
Give words of faith and hope to inform
that you are still there to calm the storm.

Celia Shires 23/2/2022

Mark 4:35-41

News from the Circuit Meeting 8.3.23

Circuit Consultation – the process is ongoing and local churches are using the consultation documents to formulate their own ways of moving forward. An example of this is Marton and Nunthorpe looking at ways to work more closely together.

Young Sunday – Anne Smith and Kay Braithwaite keep in touch with the young people on the register and will next meet at Easter time.

It was noted that 24 young people had been attending the Chinese church recently.

Treasurers – Normanby are looking for a new treasurer and to date no replacement has been found. Consideration is being given to the possibility of employing a bookkeeper which may prove useful for other churches who may find themselves in similar circumstances and wish to buy into a paid treasurer.

While there is no one at Normanby in a position to become treasurer, it is possible that a member of another church may be willing to take on the role. If you may be interested in assisting please contact Rev David.

Appointments

Circuit Stewards

J O Key 'retires' at the end of this connexional year.

Dawn Harris and Neil Mapplebeck were re-appointed to serve as Circuit Stewards.

Two new stewards are required for September – if you feel this is something you could undertake please contact Rev David

Circuit Leadership Team comprises Circuit Ministers, TC Luk, Circuit Stewards, Circuit Treasurer, co-opted church members, currently B Nixon, B Glover, J Hinton, K Braithwaite, P Barrett.

Circuit Invitation Committee – agreed that CLT would also fulfil this role

Reps to Synod - K Johnson, D Harris, R Lewis (sub C Shires) - all re-appointed

Social Justice

In connection with the governments announcement (08.03.23) dealing with the immigration policy, it was felt that as representatives of a Christian society we should take some action to voice our concerns. It was agreed that a letter be sent to our MPs and also to Synod to bring our concerns to the whole Methodist Church and encourage them to take up the issue.

Learning and Development

Mental Health First Aid training course. Posters and information distributed to churches.

Rev David noted two training courses which were necessary for Local Preachers, Circuit Stewards and Local Church Stewards

Unconscious Bias Course

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) course,

Both are on line courses and should be completed by the end of this connexional year.

Good news

MAP - funding has been secured for the next three years.

Hamid, the welcome co-ordinator at MAP has recently received British citizenship

LRRC - Andrew Glazebrook has been employed to do the admin and look after the property at Linthorpe Road

TRINITY RAMBLERS

Dalegarth House, Portinscale.



On Monday, 27th March after a beautiful drive along the A66, ten “Ancient” ramblers met at the Rheged Centre, near Penrith, and enjoyed coffee together, then continued to Keswick for a ‘linear’ walk along the railway line. I’ve never seen the mountains looking so clear – the weather was wonderful. A linear walk was decided on so that at any stage, depending on mind or limb one could turn back without any worry, as the path was quite busy with walkers. Cloudless skies, terrific company, very special scenery – what could be better.

Four real enthusiasts completed the 5km walk, intending to get the bus back to Keswick, they saw the bus and waved and the driver waved back but carried on driving, so unfortunately they had to walk the 5km return journey to Fritz Park on foot.

In the Park the others were getting a little concerned as the senior member had apparently ‘disappeared’. He had turned back before the others but had not been seen by them. Eventually he was found by his very worried wife, sitting in the car changing the clock to British Summer time, after taking a short cut.

Whilst having our evening meal at Dalegarth Hotel the same worried wife was very distressed as she had “lost” her jewellery. Sympathetic suggestions from the other ladies of possible places to find it were suggested. Les disappeared for a while and when he came back there were smiles all round – he had found the ‘missing jewellery in her underwear!

On Tuesday morning, you couldn’t see the hills – it was already raining and again a linear walk was planned, for the same reasons as before, from Dalegarth along the lake to Grange. Coffee stops on the way, good paths, good idea!

Then Craig, our host suggested that the local bus had just started running this week, and the time of leaving was very convenient – so to the bus stop the ten of us went. From Grange, in heavy rain, we set off. But Les’s cunning plan of turning back when we felt the need, didn’t quite work out. As we had started off from Grange it meant either turning back there or doing the 5 miles back into Portinscale and the hotel. After a wet, but very enjoyable walk beside the lake, we were ready for our coffee at Nichol End – sorry, it was closed – but we managed to make it to the coffee shop in Portinscale which was excellent – but very busy.



Wednesday, Bill the leader couldn’t lead his planned walk along Langstrath Beck, again a linear, but Les and Keith did set out in rain for a walk. The rest of us decided to get the bus into Keswick – which is a 1 mile walk. Wow, two and a half hours later we did arrive in Keswick after a fantastic bus journey along the side of the lake to Grange, over Honister pass, by slate mines down the other side (Jean said that her brakes were

not working), by Buttermere, Crummock Water, Whinlatter Pass, Braithwaite and into Keswick. Two and a half hours of beautiful scenery where there were more waterfalls than we've seen before. (Next year we'll do it the other way round). We stayed in Keswick for about three hours shopping, coffee etc.

At our evening meal the two walkers told their story, they had an enjoyable walk, but when they tried to get into the café for a drink, where three of our ladies were, they were refused entry as the café was now closed. When Lillian explained that it was her husband trying to get in – it made no difference. It does make you wonder why!! Although this year the group was much smaller than in the past twenty odd years we have been visiting the Lakes, we had a wonderful time of fellowship, laughter and quizzes and we've provisionally booked again for three nights next year.

As a postscript, instead of bringing back the traditional Kendal Mint Cake, six of us brought back Covid!!

Bill Reeve

STAINTON VILLAGE

CORONATION YEAR

BIG SING

with
MARSKE BRASS BAND

Sunday, June 25th at 3pm

MELDYKE SQUARE, STAINTON

Memories or a 'blast from the past'

this article was originally in Memo in the 1980's

SAVED BY THE CROSS

If you were walking along Cleveland Street Normanby, and saw a cross of wood poking out over the backyard wall of Normanby Methodist Church, you might be forgiven for thinking it was a new approach to spreading the Word in this Decade of Evangelism. If there had been a towel attached to the top of the cross, you may have recalled how Jesus took a basin and towel to wash the disciples feet. How symbolic you might have thought! How wrong you would have been.

This symbolic act was an S.O.S from "two old ladies locked in the Vest-er-y" (spelled so it will scan)

It happened like this... The church was empty except for the two lady stewards counting the morning's offering. The Minister advised them that he would lock the Church door in order that they would not be disturbed by unauthorised callers!



The recording done, the safe locked, the ladies prepared to leave. The keyholder inserted a key into the lock and turned it - it stuck. It was the wrong key! Consternation.

The back door seemed the solution - Unlocked, it led to the backyard door. No key to open it. Panic sets in. Dinner in over, etc. Windows unopenable! "Break one," suggests the key holder.

"No" replies the other, finding it all a big joke. "Attract attention of someone" Problem, voices not loud enough (**Oh really?! - Ed**) Idea! "climb on chair and over wall" suggests the key holder. "on your bike" thinks the other. Inspiration!

Normanby Church uses the trunk of the Christmas tree as a cross for Easter Worship. - cross in backyard: Cross held up above wall with towel attached to attract attention.

Situation now - panicker is hysterically laughing whilst sitting on backyard loo. Pulls herself together and bangs on backdoor while cross is being waved about.

It works - someone comes to door and is promptly dispatched to nearby church member's home - problem, she is not in.

Urged to phone Minister who arrives singing " Oh dear, what can the matter be"..... !

When advised of situation, he informs them where spare key for side door is kept. Find a chair and retrieve key. Attempt to open door - would you believe it? Lock stuffed with chewing gum! Find a knife and clear lock - door opened - FREEDOM!

Minister applies brute force (sorry, logic and great knowledge) and opens original door. Offending key thrown in bin!

We can all say that it is through/by the cross we are saved, but have you been saved by the cross in such a situation?

Names have been omitted to save Joan and Celia embarrassment.

Update from your Methodist Council (MC) representative.

This report updates on matters subject to debate/decisions at the January 2023 Council meeting.

Chaired by Revd. Sonia Hicks (Past President of Conference) discussions took place on a wide variety of subjects using the Zoom platform. There were 54 attendees from across the connexion from Shetland to Devon and Lincolnshire to Wales – one of the many benefits of today's on-line era and contributing in no small part to our eco-credentials as well as savings in time and travel etc...

Given that day 1 of the Council took place on 25th January, Doug Swanney (Connexional Secretary) took a lead from the poet Robert Burns introducing various of the Council papers with well thought through lines from the Scottish bard's work.

Using the intro ... '*Dare to be honest and fear no labour*' in his report from the Connexional Team, Doug updated Council on the completed relocation from 25 Marylebone Road to the new 'Church House' premises in Tavistock Square that took place on 18th January and was a significant undertaking for all members of the connexional team.

Doug went on to summarise the team's work towards Methodist Council Objectives under the following headings:

- Proclaiming the gospel through worship.
- A church for all people/The inclusive church.
- God's church in God's world/Striving for Justice and Peace.
- Evangelism/God for all.
- Resources for the church/the use of God's gifts.

Responding to the gospel in partnership.

The report was (as always) comprehensive and the respective updates warmly received by Council members.

An updated Risk Management Policy and Corporate Risk Register was presented under Burns line '*The best laid plans of mice and men*'. Amongst other relevant matters the report outlined the responsibilities associated with the various accountable bodies (The Methodist Council, The Strategy & Resources Committee, The Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and the Senior Management Group of the Connexional Team) and although this area proved challenging and complex, Council were assured that appropriate processes and governance structures were in place.

Although consultations touching on reviews of District structures were still acknowledged to be ongoing, a significant discussion took place on a paper proposing the amalgamation of the four (4) Districts of Bolton & Rochdale, Cumbria, Lancashire and Liverpool. A significant amount of work had clearly been put into this proposal, one that sought to free up time and resources for mission as its primary driver. The Council received the report update with interest noting that further consultative work

required to be carried out with circuits and Synods before any final proposal was brought to Conference. The hope of those presenting was/is that whatever the final approved structure might look like, it could take effect from September 2024.

In relation to Safeguarding within the Methodist Church a paper was presented touching on updated resources for the Advanced Module of Safeguarding training that are to be rolled out after Easter. Council was reminded that everyone in a role for which attendance at Advanced Safeguarding training is mandatory is required to refresh their training every four (4) years and that these roles include:

- All ministers (unless they have a formal exemption).
- All Local Preachers and Worship Leaders.
- Safeguarding Officers and trainers.

Anyone in **paid employment** or **voluntary roles** which include leadership within the Methodist Church, involving direct work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Day 2 began with a lengthy and comprehensive session on finance, pensions and financial planning. Connexional Treasurer Rev Tim Swindell, Director of Finance Matt Tattersall and Chair of the Audit & Risk Management Committee Alan Kershaw provided detailed overviews of each area to assure the Council (as Trustees responsible for all aspects of finance for the Methodist Church in Great Britain) that all necessary financial structures and controls are in place. Their work had been subject to both internal and external scrutiny by independent auditors that added a further layer of assurance for Council/Trustee members.

In brief, the Methodist Church is in numerical decline with an associated reducing income stream. Given the current inflationary pressures, costs have gone in the same direction as everyone else's – **up!** and income from investments is down significantly – this due to an '*ethical investment strategy*' that adopts a lower risk profile (e.g. the MC no longer invests in Oil & Gas companies that recently have declared huge profits and shareholder dividends).

In relation to pensions the situation was reported to be better than anticipated. This has been due to two principle factors – the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the turmoil in the UK economy following recent political events that has resulted in an increase in the return on government gilts.

Methodist properties continue to be sold and looking to the future it is envisaged that between 50% and 75% of church properties may become surplus to requirements over the next decade. Over the last ten (10) years the number of churches has reduced from 5,000 to 4,000 and the number of Members currently at circa 165,000 (this figure was circa 1 million when the Deed of Union came into effect in 1932) is estimated to fall to circa 100,00 by 2032. It follows that the MCiGB has entered a phase of profound transition and creative thinking by everyone at Church, Circuit, District and Connexional level is required to determine what the church will look like and what its mission capacity will be able to deliver in a few years from now.

Council acknowledged the challenges ahead, received the financial updates provided and approved both the financial planning parameters and the amended budget setting

processes proposed.

Other ‘staple diet’ topics included reports from the Strategy & Resources Committee, the Forces Board; the Justice, Dignity & Solidarity Oversight Group and items taken en bloc covered equality, diversity & inclusion data analysis as well as appointments to various Methodist bodies.

The final session of the Council was introduced by the Secretary of Conference Rev Dr Jonathon Hustler with an interesting presentation setting the scene for the centenary of the Methodist Deed of Union that sits on the horizon in 2032. 100 years since Primitive, United and Wesleyan Methodists amalgamated to form the Methodist Church of Great Britain that we know today.

Jonathon’s presentation was designed to stimulate conversation about if and how this centenary might be celebrated. Council moved into smaller discussion groups and applied their thinking to the question ‘*What sort of a church do we hope to be in 2032?*’ with an acknowledgement that the world has changed in the last 100 years and will change again.

There were lots of suggestions about what could be done, where and how but with an acknowledgement that contributions to this topic needed to be broadened out to Districts, Circuits and individual churches for them to consider how they might like to respond perhaps in similar creative fashion to how many churches and areas responded in celebration of HM the late Queen Elizabeth’s Platinum Jubilee. Although all of the suggestions made by members of Council are to be collated and considered, Council was keen that Jonathon’s presentation slides (there are only a few of them but they are very thought provoking) should be circulated more widely so that creative contributions from across the connexion might be harnessed for consideration of development over the next few years as the 2032 countdown gets underway (watch this space).

I hope this summary serves to inform churches across our circuit about the work of the Council – if more detailed information is required, the Methodist Council web-site is the go-to place in the first instance where all Council papers are published (see [Latest Council papers Methodist.org.uk](#)). As your Darlington District representative to the Council I am content for anyone to contact me direct. I would welcome comments on any of the topics currently under discussion so as to properly discharge my role and ensure that communication and consultation across the Connexion is as good as it might be.

Mark R. Braithwaite

Darlington District Methodist Council Rep.

Email – markbraithwaite@btinternet.com Phone – 07771 771360

Married

How many women can one man marry? A little boy who attended his first wedding worked that one out pretty quick: the answer is 16. It is easy, if you think about it. Four better, four worse, four richer, four poorer. Comesto 16.

JUNE TO AUGUST EVENTS FROM OUR PAST

1st June 1935 - Compulsory Driving Test is introduced for all drivers in England.

9th June 1870 - The nation's best loved author Charles Dickens died of a stroke at his home in Gad's Hill Place, Kent. His sudden death is being blamed upon his punishing work schedule, including tours of England and the USA.

21st June 1675 - Construction work starts on Sir Christopher Wren's St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

30th June 1894 - Tower Bridge in London was officially opened by H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. After the ceremony the bascules were raised to allow a flotilla of ships and boats to sail down the Thames.



9th July 1877 - The inaugural Lawn Tennis Championship was played on top of the croquet lawns at Wimbledon, Spencer W. Gore taking the men's singles title.



21st July 1969 - The Eagle lands on the moon and US astronaut Neil Armstrong is the first man in history to walk on its powdery surface.

30th July 1966 - England win the Jules Rimet trophy, Association Football's World Cup, at Wembley Stadium in London after beating Germany 4-2 in extra time.

3rd August 1926 - Britain's first set of electric traffic lights appear on the streets of London.



7th August 1840 - Britain bans the employment of climbing boys as chimney sweeps.

8th August 1963 - Britain's Great Train Robbery – £2.6 million stolen from Royal Mail.

25th August 1919 - World's first international daily air service begins between London and Paris

27th August 1740 - Britain's first long distance bus service begins between London and Leeds. The journey time being 2 days!



31st August 1900 - Coca Cola is sold for the first time in Britain. It was named in 1885 for its 2 medicinal ingredients extract of coca leaves and Kola nuts. Just how much cocaine was originally in it is hard to determine. Coca-Cola didn't become cocaine free until 1929.

Anne Smith



“Due to our failure to secure a holiday-relief organist, the next hymn will also be sung to the tune, Chopsticks”

U.S. Holiday

A couple with three young children went on holiday to America, and eventually ended up waiting in line at San Francisco’s Pier 41, to purchase tickets for a boat trip to Alcatraz. Others watched with varying degrees of sympathy and irritation as the young children fidgeted, whined, and punched one another. The frazzled parents reprimanded them, to no avail.

Finally they reached the ticket window. “Five tickets, please,” the father said. **“Two round trip, three one way.”**

Raise

I told my boss that three companies were after me and therefore I wanted a raise from him. My boss asked what companies wanted me. **“Gas, water and electricity.”**

The lady who wanted three hymns

One Sunday a minister announced that the church needed some extra money. He asked the people to prayerfully consider giving a little extra, and as an enticement, added that whoever gave the most would be able to pick out three hymns.

The offering plate was passed around, and to the minister’s amazement, someone had put in a cheque for £1,000. He shared his joy with his congregation and said he’d like to thank the person who’d given the cheque. A very quiet, elderly lady shyly made her way down to the front of the church. The minister told her how wonderful it was that she gave so much, and asked her to pick out three hymns. Her eyes brightened as she looked over the congregation. She pointed carefully to the three handsomest men in the building and said: **“I’ll take him, and him, and him.”**

Weight

Signing the register at a wedding, the groom had difficulty in making his ball-point pen work. “Put you weight on it,” said the minister. So the groom complied: ‘John Smith (12 stone, four pounds)’

Everything is wonderful

My face in the mirror isn’t wrinkled or drawn.
My house isn’t dirty, the cobwebs are gone.
My garden looks lovely and so does my lawn.
I think I might never put my glasses back on.

The Parish Pump

Sleep Well: Praise to the Lord the Almighty H&P16 StF 88



When I was a very little girl, after my bed time story, my mum used to sing me to sleep. Of course she did. I used to like *There's a friend for little children*, and *God sees the little sparrow fall*, and *Jesus wants me for a sunbeam*. I am sure many of you were sung to or have sung your own children or grandchildren to sleep. I wonder what songs or rhymes you sang, to encourage them to drift off. Once, when mum was out gadding ... at a prayer meeting probably and it was my father's turn to put me to bed, he wondered what on earth my mother had been singing to me. As a pianist, chapel organist and a hands-on dad he was ready and able to sing anything I wanted, but what did I want? What did mummy sing? I want "All my tea" was the toddler's request.

He began: "*Tea for two and two for tea...*" No!

"*I like a nice cup of tea in the morning...*" No!

Racking his brains: "*When I take my sugar to tea!*" "NO! I want ALL my tea"... This did not end well. He only found out when my mother got back, and even she had to think for a bit about what I meant, that she had been singing a hymn: *Praise to the Lord the almighty*.... If only he'd known.



It's a lovely hymn and in some ways could be said to have words appropriate for a bed time song in that it praises what the Almighty can do. It tells a child in a dark bed room, that the Almighty, God "sheddeth light" and God "chases the horrors of night" and "like a mother" God will "nourish thy life and restore thee". But it is old fashioned, written in German in the late 1600s, and translated into English later. Its audience is certainly not toddlers. Probably my mum liked singing it, with its irregular but instantly recognisable tune *Lobe Den Herren*. And I liked the tune. I still do.

My father had his own repertoire of bed time songs. Proud of his Scottish heritage, *Donald where's ya trewsers* was one, another favourite was *I had a sausage a bonny, bonny sausage and I put it in the oven for ma tea* But the last song he sang was always: *Jesus tender shepherd hear me ... Bless thy little lamb tonight*. He had even composed his own tune for it on the piano.



I used to sing all those songs and hymns to my children and grandchildren but our quiet one was *I see the moon, the moon sees me*. *God made the moon and God made me...* Stars, wind, rain, and God's love featured too. What bed time lullabies can you remember? And maybe, if you find you can't sleep at night, try and remember some old hymns to sing in your head. It just might work.

Ruth Lewis

My mother liked to watch the seabirds in her town house: she produced this poem, submitted by E. M. King

MIDDLE TOWN SEA BIRDS

Kittiwakes bring me from a dream
As they wheel and scream, wheel and scream
Louder and louder now they seem
In this middle town near the sea.

Where the lakes attract birds we see
From northern shores thrashed by the sea
Kittiwake townies for you and me
Eternally wheel and scream

To food from town, now they switch
supermarket trash brings the itch
seabirds exchange treats from the beach
filling their beaks with town bread each.

This food may shorten their life span
Still who's to worry life goes on
More seabirds ever wheel and scream
To wake us again from a dream

Gladys Thompson 1918 – 2005

Methodist Women in Britain



MWiB DISTRICT EVENTS

MID-SUMMER EVENT - 21st June, 6.30pm - 8.00pm

Guisborough Priory Prayer Walk led by Mrs. Pamela Stenson, MWiB Darlington & District President. As this is an outdoor event, please wear appropriate footwear and clothing. Cold drinks will be available.

Parking nearby (free after 6.00pm) next to St. Nicholas Church, Church Street, TS14 6HG.

SUMMER AFTERNOON at Danby Methodist Church on Thursday 20th July

Service at 2.00pm to be led by Rev. A Coates followed by Afternoon Tea in the village Hall. All welcome.

Beryl Haggath



Who are we and what do we do

We are a local charity at the heart of the Teesside Community, that strives to enable older people to live later life well. Currently we do this by running three weekly social groups which focus on building meaningful and lasting friendships, promoting activity and tackling social isolation.

We run these sessions at, Normanby Methodist Church Mondays 13:00-15:00, Marton Community Centre Wednesdays 13:00-15:00 and Fridays at Trinity Methodist Church 13:00-15:00.

In addition to this we hold regular one off activities to celebrate occasions such as Christmas, Easter and National Tea Day to name a few. We also organise days out for our members to enjoy and this year we plan on doing day trips to the Emmerdale Studios, a day trip to Whitby, a visit to the Hippodrome Theatre to see a matinee performance, a visit to Beamish Museum and Christmas shopping at Dalton Park. Finally we offer a telephone be-friending service.



This Sounds Great how do I, or a loved one join

If you or a family member is aged 55 and over and feel like you/they would benefit from our service please contact Tom (Communities Manager) at tom.ward@mha.org.uk or by phone on 07568 612034 to arrange a free taster session at any of our groups or to talk through what support is available .

Spotted in Church Notices

The 'Over 60s Choir' will be disbanded for the summer with the thanks of the entire church.

A cookbook is being compiled by the ladies of the church. Please submit your favourite recipe, also a short antidote for it.



Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our Church and Community."

Ladies, don't forget the Jumble Sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.

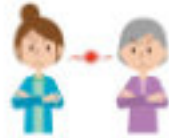
Notice on Church Door 'This is the House of God.
This is the gate of Heaven.'
(This door is locked in winter months.)

What is love?

The following words were written by a teenager many years ago but only found by her mam earlier this year while clearing out some books. It is still relevant today.

To be able to talk on a subject one needs to understand it, and that's where I found a problem. I agreed to talk about love and what it means to me but I can't say what love actually is. I can't prove love, or pick it up. It's something tangible to see, but that's part of its beauty. It's a feeling, a moment, an attitude. One of the things the dictionary says is "an intense emotion of affection, warmth, fondness and regard towards a person or thing"

The dictionary doesn't mention anything about pain, and yet from my observations the people we hurt the most are often the people we claim to love. My family loves me, and I love them yet I cause them great pain. I say things without thinking and I know I've hurt someone worse than if I'd hit them. I also find it harder to say "I'm sorry" to people who I love.



I know God loves me, I always know he's there, I can open the Bible and read that he loves me, I can pray and know he is listening. I can see his love in the things around me. Yet I know how much I hurt God, the times I forgot him, or even worse God, the times I forget him, or even worse, the times I push him into second place, but I can also read in the Bible that he will forgive me.



The Hebrew word for forgiveness is 'Chesed' which literally means 'loving kindness', I know I should show this more. I also know I should tell the people close to me that I love them. Those three words can often be enough, yet how little people use them.



I like to think when my mother tells me she loves me, it gives me reassurance and a feeling of peace, but I know I don't tell her it enough. So next time you're in disagreement with someone in your family stop before you begin shouting and tell them you love them. Even differences of opinion can't change that. It might be easy to say but you never know what it'll mean for someone to hear it.

The poem by Helen Steiner- Rice entitled 'What is Love?' helped to answer some of my questions

Lynn Foster

Trinity Methodist Church

Miscellaneous observations from modern life

Wouldn't it be great if we could put ourselves in the dryer for ten minutes?
Come out wrinkle-free and three sizes smaller!

I accidentally went grocery shopping on an empty stomach, and am now the proud owner of Aisle 4.

Update from Linthorpe Road Resource Centre

My name is **Andrew Glazebrook**, and since November 2022, I have had the privilege of serving as the Administrator of the Linthorpe Road Resource Centre (LRRC) in Middlesbrough Town Centre. I can hardly believe that it has already been almost half a year since I took on this role, time flies.

I come from a varied background, having worked in video stores in the 80s, spent twelve years at the Odeon Middlesbrough as a Projectionist until its closure in 2001, and worked in the computer games industry and computer graphics for TV and music video productions. In my 40s, I decided to go back to both art college and university, where I obtained a diploma and a degree. I also have a studio space in Middlesbrough's Dundas House, where I create artwork and work on film productions as a make-up fx, prop maker, set dresser, and miniature builder. Now I also work part-time at the LRRC, where I help with the running of the building.

The LRRC is home to several groups/organisations, including Millenium Meals, MAP (Methodist Asylum Project), Connect, the Chinese Methodist Church, and Boro Angels. My job involves liaising with these groups, keeping a general eye on the building, and dealing with enquiries regarding room hire. I also handle maintenance issues such as changing strip lights, fixing tables, and unblocking toilets (not the most glamorous of tasks). Recently, I was able to push forward the clean-up of the alleyway between the LRRC and the next building due to renovation work of what was once the old Methodist Sunday School building.

My shifts at the LRRC are on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays between 9.00am and midday. I prefer to make my hours in the building count, and I always find something to occupy my time, even on quieter days. My last ten minutes of each shift are spent saying a prayer or two in the chapel set aside for use on the second floor. The building is something I take great pride in, and I am grateful to be part of a team that is dedicated to making it a welcoming and hospitable space for all who use it.

As someone who has worked in the town centre for almost thirty five years, I have seen many changes, both positive and negative. It is heartening to know that the LRRC has been able to survive and thrive despite the challenges that it has faced. Rev Charity Hamilton has exciting plans for where she wants to take the building in the future, and I look forward to following her lead and continuing to work towards making the LRRC a place that the community can be proud of.

Despite my fairly newfound faith, I often feel like an imposter, wondering if I truly belong within this community of believers. Nevertheless, every Sunday morning, I eagerly anticipate attending the Trinity Methodist Church, my local place of worship. There, I have met an abundance of kind-hearted individuals whom I now consider close friends. Although some have been devout members of the church for several decades, I have come to realize that it does not matter if one has followed the path of

faith their whole life or if they are merely taking their first steps into a church, like I did last June. For God and Jesus welcome all into their house, as does the loving congregation at Trinity Methodist. The warmth and acceptance I receive from this community reaffirms my belief that faith is not only an individual journey, but also a collective one, which my Minister Charity would say is built upon the foundation of love and inclusivity.

In closing, I want to express my gratitude for the opportunity to work at the LRRC and to be part of a team that is making a positive difference in the community. It is an honour to be able to contribute to a place that has so much history and so much potential, and I look forward to seeing what the future holds.

How your friends may be keeping you alive



Take care of your friendships, and they will take care of you. A recent study has found that if, in later life, you enjoy your friends on a regular and frequent basis, then the joy that they bring you may even halve your risk of death within five years.

The book of Proverbs (27:9) compares the balm of ointments and perfumes to the soothing effect of a good friend, and an analysis of the research would seem to confirm this. People in their later years who socialised every day were healthier than those who didn't. Even those who saw their friends only once a week were healthier than those who saw no friends on a regular basis.

In fact, the team reported having found a 'dose response', with the greater the frequency of socialising, the greater the likelihood of living longer. As one doctor put it: "The more frequent the social activity, the more prolonged the survival time."



It is thought that having regular contact with friends encourages healthier thinking, better personal habits, increased physical activity, and reduces stress.

Yet according to Age UK, more than two million older people in England live alone, and more than a million older people can go for a month without speaking to anyone.

The study was published in the *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*.

The Parish Pump

SUMMER HOLIDAYS.

Do you remember in your childhood days the magic of the summer holidays? What did it feel like on the day you broke up from school, six weeks to have fun.



I remember that living in Scarborough it was very special, on the beach, in the sea, in the North Bay swimming pool. When I got older I would spend the summer holiday in Hull with my mother. I would cycle from Scarborough I was fit in those days. My pal Dave would cycle through to spend the last week of the holidays with me, then we would tackle the journey home together.



Eventually summer holidays were spent cleaning railway carriages at Scarborough and in my last summer holiday before coming here and starting to teach, I was a bus conductor with United. Do you remember the red buses?

I suppose I have been lucky that as a teacher I have had summer holidays all my working life. I still had jobs, before we had our children. I worked as a Summer Play leader at Beechwood youth club. I drove a furniture wagon for my good friend Peter Darby. Eventually when the lads arrived, we started to enjoy summer holidays again.

So the one thing I do remember was the week before we went back to school. In my later years of teaching I would be in school from results day onwards. I used to really feel anxious about going back to school and would say to Sue that I wanted a different job!! I was fine once the term started.

So cast your mind back to your summer holidays. Who did you spend them with? Where did you go? What did you do? How did it feel when you broke up, that first night when you knew you had all those weeks stretching ahead?



What are your summer holidays like now? For some of our readers I guess the summer can be a lonely time. Church meetings stop, those times of fellowship disappear and possibly there are many who long for September, to get back to normal.

We have to remember too, that in the these days of the cost of living crisis, for many parents, feeding their children without the free school meal is a demanding and worrying time. Not all families can afford the luxury of going away on holiday.



I remember the week of activities we used to provide at Grove Hill the first week of the summer holidays, it was a great time. My sons were always a bit annoyed, because

they couldn't win anything or I would have been accused of favouritism!! I remember the magician we hired for the Friday party, he turned up drunk and he had to be asked to leave!!



So as you read this I hope you are having a lovely summer maybe the sun might shine. You might have time to be with your family, or see more of your friends, or just relax. If you do sense someone is lonely, go and see them, invite them to your activities, let them know you care.

God gives us so much, including holidays, to relax and re-create ourselves, to make us ready to start all over again.

Holiday, Holy day, holy means special, I hope your holidays are special and really enjoyable.

Dave Elliott

Prayer for August

Dear Heavenly Father,

In this month of August, thank you for your presence. Whether we're at home or on holiday, in one place or travelling, working or resting, happy or sad, young, middle-aged or elderly, you are with us.

As we journey through the different stages of this life on earth, help us to know that wonderful assurance of your presence, by putting our trust in Jesus now. No matter what ups and downs come our way, we will never be alone. You are with us, sharing it all day by day – and leading us home.

Thank you, Lord of all our journeys, In Jesus' name. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching

The Parish Pump

PRAYER DIARY

June 4th We pray today for all students involved in the pressure of examinations at this time and for their family and friends who will be supporting them. Pray for Rev David Godfrey and Nunthorpe

June 11th We pray today for the Preachers' meeting taking place on Thursday, for all who preach and those who are Worship Leaders. May we always appreciate their calling and their ministry amongst us. Pray for Rev John Howard Norman and Normanby.

June 18th We pray today for the Centenary being celebrated at Grove Hill this year. We pray for those involved in trying to make this a special year of celebration and mission. Pray for Rev Mike Harland and Grove Hill

June 25th We pray today for the 'Big Sing' being held at Stainton, which will be, weather permitting, a great opportunity of witness. Pray for the work of Stainton and for Rev Charity, especially praying for her recovery and hoped for return to our Circuit.

July 2nd We pray today for all the work which will have been done at the Methodist Conference, for important issues which may come to our local churches. We pray for all who represent our churches at Circuit meeting and at Synod.

July 9th We pray today for all who are ill at this time in body, mind or spirit and for those who care for them in their homes or in hospital and hospice. Pray for Marton. Pray for Elaine our Circuit Administrator.

July 16th We pray today for all the caring work done by our church families in their churches and beyond. Pray for Trinity and also Trinity Family Friendly Centre and for Sharon Sewell and all who work with

her.

July 23rd We pray today for all forms of mission, for all who live out the teaching of Jesus. Pray for David Everitt our Webmaster and for those people who preach through Worship at Home which reaches people who maybe don't come to our church services.

July 30th We pray for all who are involved in caring for people who may feel rejected in our society. We pray for the caring work of Methodist Asylum Project, for Billy Barnes and his team.

August 6th We pray for all those churches which might be running holiday activities and for the work of Young Sunday. Bless all who work with children and young people in our churches and in our communities. Pray for the work of MHA and for all involved in caring for residents at Montpellier Manor.

August 13th We pray for all who are enjoying being on holiday, for any visitors to our churches that they will find a warm welcome. Pray for the Avenue Community Project, the Chinese Church and Andrew Glazebrook at Linthorpe Road Resource Centre and all who are involved.

August 20th We pray for all those Ministers moving to new appointments, that they may be blessed and inspired by their new mission. We pray for all who are in training for Ordained Ministry and those who are maybe seeking guidance about their calling.

August 27th We pray today for the Darlington District, for all the many church families who are part of our District and for God's work being done through us in so many diverse ways. Pray today for the Chair of the District Rev Richard Andrew, in his important role, both in administration and in mission.