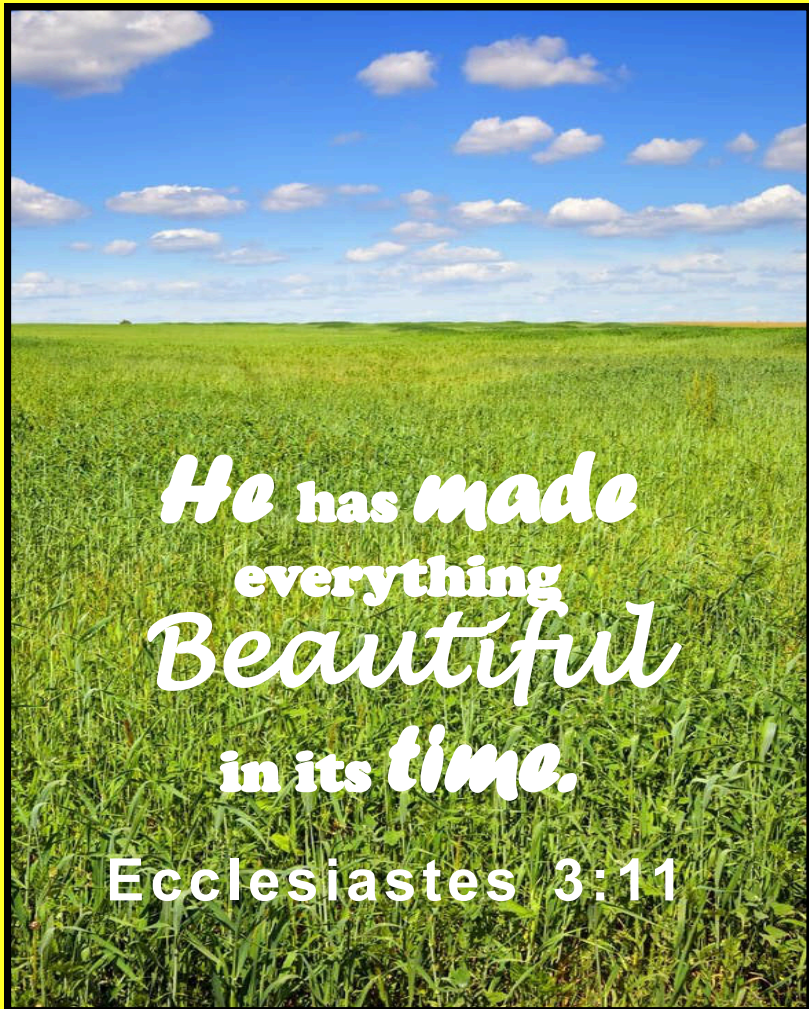


MEMO

Middlesbrough & Eston Methodist Outburst

JUNE — AUGUST 2024



*He has made
everything
Beautiful
in its time.*

Ecclesiastes 3:11

FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Dear Friends

The sun is shining, the sky is vaguely blue, the wind is blowing, the trees are coming into leaf, the magnolia is covered in pink flowers and the bottom end of my garden is like a paddling pool, plus it is due to rain (again) later in the day. What a variety in just a minute or snapshot of a day. On the whole this mixture is a reflection of what our lives can be like. Sometimes things are complicated and it is difficult to find a way through while at other times everything just goes along nicely.

By the time you are reading this we are nearing the start of the summer with the Summer Solstice this year on 20th June. The word solstice means 'sun standing still' and marks the start of astronomical summer and 'the longest day' of the year. It seems odd to think of the daylight hours shortening from then on! However, there are summer days and holidays to look forward to. For some it is a period to be celebrated and there are events world-wide, particularly in July including a Dragon Boat Festival in China, Independence Day in USA, Bastille Day in France and the Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia.

We also think of all those who will be sitting exams and then awaiting exam results in the coming weeks. Regardless of what your summer plans entail we hope you have a good time both at home and in your church life.

God bless,

Anne, Dave and Elaine

Nunthorpe Methodist Church

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

JUNE

5th June - Colin Warburton, Banjo Man
19th June - Billy Barnes from MAP

JULY

3rd July - Strawberry Tea
17th July - Talk on Nunthorpe & Marton
Knitters
31st July - Ron Marshall & Eric – Sing a
song of Teesside

AUGUST

14th August - Wade Tovey, Nunthorpe
Triangle Wood
28th August - Craft Afternoon

**For further details contact
Denise on 07975753299**

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 2024

The Superintendent's Letter

Dear friends,

One of the special Sundays in the Methodist Calendar is known as Aldersgate Sunday and marks the anniversary of John Wesley's conversion. It is usually celebrated on the nearest Sunday to 24th May, which is the actual anniversary, or on the preceding Sunday. John Wesley was the founder of the Methodist movement in the 18th Century and together with his brother Charles, studied at Oxford to become a Church of England Priest. They formed a little Christian society at Oxford which was known for being very rigorous and methodical in the way they went about their faith. It was here that they first got the nickname 'Methodist'. After ordination, the brothers travelled to the colonies in America where they undertook mission work and became quite disillusioned in their faith. When they returned home, John remained in this state of disenchantment, until one evening ... but we must let John himself tell us the story from his journal entry of 24th May 1738.

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

The words themselves are not much to look at, but they changed the Church for ever. John's ministry was transformed from this point on. This incident has always been known as John Wesley's conversion, but I'm not sure it was a conversion in the truest sense. John was already committed to the truth of the gospel and tried desperately to live it. What I think he describes in his journal is an encounter with God's Spirit, where he received the gift of faith, became convinced of God's love and was empowered to do God's work. To put it simply, in these moments his head knowledge became heart knowledge.

'Well, so what?' You may ask. He may well be the founder of Methodism, but what has one man's spiritual journey nearly 300 years ago got to do with us? The point is that today we still worship the same God. This is the God who still gives the gift of his Spirit and who still transforms the human heart. There may be times when like Wesley we struggle with our faith, or when failure, conflict or the hard circumstances of life threaten to overwhelm us, but God is still the same God. Our experience may not be exactly the same as John Wesley's, but God is still quite capable of warming our hearts and implanting within us the assurance of his love and the gift of faith. He may even encourage us towards important life changes, or towards new forms of Christian mission and service. We may become influential in encouraging others and enabling them to have similar encounters with God too. The important lesson to take from Aldersgate Sunday is that God is still active in his world, and he comes to those who seek him, often when they least expect it.

yours in Christ,

Revd. David Godfrey.

Family

Last night our wifi stopped working, so I had to spend a few hours with my family.

They seem like good people.



It has been over 80 years since the Methodist Conference grasped Rev. Walter Hall's vision and supported the founding of MHA. During that time we have worked together with our friends in the Methodist Church to meet the changing needs of people in later life.

They have supported MHA by generously fundraising, volunteering and praying for our work.

They offer continued support through one special Sunday each year, **MHA Sunday**. This year it will be on **Sunday 9th June**, or any day that fits with individual churches.

We are delighted to announce that our long-standing patron and friend, TV and radio presenter Pam Rhodes, is fronting our campaign and has supported us by presenting our 2024 video.



Our focus this year follows Mark 4:30, the Parable of the Mustard Seed, and uses the growth of God's Kingdom to highlight the impact a small gesture can have, especially on those in later life.

We're proud to be the UK's largest charity care provider and are dedicated to enabling older people to live later life well.

Through specialist care homes, thriving retirement living and vibrant community groups and befriending, we inspire the best care and wellbeing at every stage of later life.

With faith and kindness we are stronger together.

With every blessing,

Abby Ogier
Head of Chaplaincy

Celebrating Fatherhood – 16th June 2024

'What is a Christian? The richest answer I know is that a Christian is one who has God as Father. If you want to know how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child and having God as his Father.' (J I Packer, *Knowing God*)

The month we celebrate fathers on Father's Day. Unlike Mothering Sunday, this doesn't have a distinctly Christian origin. However, it does provide an opportunity to celebrate God's fatherhood and what it means for us.



At His baptism, as Jesus came out of the water: *'heaven was opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.'* (Matthew 3:16,17).

What can we learn about Jesus' relationship with His Father, the role of fathers and our relationship with God?

The Father's presence

When Jesus was baptized, the Father made His presence real by the Holy Spirit. It's the Spirit who enables us to call God *'daddy'* (abba, Galatians 4:6). God is with us and knows our joys and sorrows, fears and trials. In this way, dads can relate to their children.

The Father's love

The Father described His Son as *'beloved'*, who like us, is subject to His unconditional love. Dads should be constant in assuring their children of their love.

The Father's pleasure

The Father tells Jesus that He is *'well pleased'* with Him. We also need to hear this, if we feel that we are disappointing God or letting Him down. This can arise with harsh words spoken by our parents. Fathers should use every opportunity to demonstrate their pleasure in their children, especially when things go wrong.

The Parish Pump

Methodist Women in Britain



MWiB DISTRICT EVENTS

PRESIDENT'S SUMMER EVENING - Thursday 18th July
from 6.30pm to 8.30pm at Great Ayton Methodist Church, High Street, Great Ayton,
TS9 6NE.

Beryl Haggath

TWO SISTERS

Martha was so busy, she had a load of care
she couldn't understand why Mary just sat there.
These people needed food and this was her duty.
so she said to Jesus, "Tell Mary to help me!"

Jesus did not do that, He said she was just fine,
She had chosen wisely to hear His words divine.
So Mary gets the praise and Martha gets it wrong.
but I don't think its right I've said that all along.
Martha feeds the body while Mary feeds her soul.
This is just what's needed to make a person whole.

But Martha bless her soul Is the first to perceive
He is the Son of God. "Master I do believe"

So she must have listened to Jesus in her way
or else she would not know the words she said that day.

So cheers for Marthas' and also Marys' too.
One without the other in life would never do.

Celia Shires 17.6.22



Puppy

I arrived home from work to find all the windows and doors wide open. Apparently, our new puppy had had an accident. "Yeah, it was awful," my daughter told me. "In fact, when we first walked in, I thought you had come home early and were cooking dinner."

The Parish Pump

Brian Brook Coldwell OBE - Obituary

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Brian Coldwell in February this year. Brian was a longstanding member of Marton Methodist Church and held many offices in the Church through his long life. He knew the strange workings, structures and organisation of the Methodist Church inside out, an achievement which earned him the nickname 'Mr Methodism'. People were genuinely in awe of his knowledge of Methodist systems and practice, and also in awe of all he contributed to the Church.

Brian had considerable management skills which served him well in his professional life, but also in Methodist Connexional and local office. It may be informative to list the things he did in the Church. What follows is not an exhaustive list, but merely a summary of the things of which I am aware. Nationally, Brian served on the board for Methodist Homes for the Aged (MHA) for a number of years and also served on the Methodist Council, even chairing it for a time. More locally, Brian chaired the committee which brought Methodist Conference to Middlesbrough in 1967. He trained to be a Local Preacher, but work responsibilities prevented him from becoming fully accredited and coming on to full plan. Instead he became a worship leader in the local church. He and Pat started the monthly afternoon service at Martondale Court. He held the office of a Circuit Steward for a number of years. He was an accompanist for the Ministerial Development Review, which was the Methodist Ministers version of continuing professional development. More recently, he chaired the Linthorpe Road Resource Centre Board.

At Marton Methodist, Brian was regarded as something of a father figure. When he spoke, people listened and valued his wisdom. He was held in high esteem and his faith and integrity were greatly valued. We will all miss his singing voice at Marton, which was loud and powerful in all the hymns. He loved singing hymns and used to support Pat in the past when she played the organ.

On a very personal note, I will miss his encouragement. Whenever I took a service at Marton, Brian always had an encouraging thing or two to say about it at the end. I will miss his living faith and the conversations we had about it. I will also miss his prayers for he was a man of deep faith in Christ. His faith was his compass, his inspiration and very much at the centre of his life.

Brian's funeral service was held at Marton Methodist on 23rd February. A large number of people attended, many of whom were Methodists from around the circuit or from further afield. Our thoughts go with Pat, his Children and all his wider family as they continue to adjust to their loss. We also think and pray for his friends at Marton Methodist who loved Brian dearly, and miss him greatly.

Rev. David Godfrey

News from the Circuit Meeting 7.3.24

Appointments – The Meeting welcomed Revd. John Howard Norman. After consultation with the Stationing Advisory Group, the President of the Methodist Conference appointed JHN at .8 using his powers. The Circuit expressed their pleasure at this appointment.

The Meeting congratulated Carolyn on her appointment as Vice President of Methodist Conference. Her inauguration will be at Leeds Armoury.

EDI Training – (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion) The meeting was reminded that this is compulsory for Circuit and Church Stewards, Local Preachers and Ministers to do this training. Previously it was online, but JHN has agreed to run the Face to face EDI training.

Safeguarding - It was agreed that TC Luk will be trained to become a Trainer in Safeguarding using Mandarin.

GDPR - Regarding Data Protection, it was highlighted that people should not share multiple email addresses in communications. As this lays people open to scams and hacks.

Trinity Redevelopment – Approval was given to put up a glazed screen to give more space in the café. They plan to investigate opening an Eco Shop. They will apply for a Seed Corn grant from the District

Marton & Nunthorpe – Helle Sewell Community and Development Enabler from the District has held three meeting with Marton and Nunthorpe. It was felt the Circuit should be made aware of these on-going conversations.

LRRC – will cease to be a Ltd Company and instead will become a Project of the Circuit Meeting. Liability and reporting would rest more closely than previously with the Circuit Meeting. Great thanks to all who have worked on this, especially Stephen Sutcliff from MAP.

Eston Grange – The Meeting was informed that the Ironstone Mining Museum in Skinningrove might take the Stained Glass Window from Eston Grange. Work is continuing to be done around the Covenant to enable the building to be sold.

Avenue – The Covenant at Avenue is not as restrictive as the one at Eston Grange. Stewards will work with Middlesbrough Planning Department, to get a pre-planning inquiry/meeting.

Welcome - The Meeting welcomed Revd. Ann Coates, a Supernumerary who has moved into our Circuit.

And Can it Be? StF 345 H&P 216



This, the “Methodist Anthem”, is a firm favourite. How we love singing it ! Yet these days our increasingly sparse congregations can barely do it justice. A goodly number sang it enthusiastically last year at Grove Hill’s centenary anniversary service. Recently Dave also chose it for us to sing at Nunthorpe when we had a guest organist. We revelled in it, but whether we had enough numbers of bass and baritone to come in echoing the phrases in the repeated refrain effectively... I doubt it.

The particular combination of tune and the words contribute to its popularity. Today the tune we love is *Sagina* composed by a Yorkshireman, Thomas Campbell. In 1825 he had written and published *The Bouquet* a collection of 23 tunes to Wesley hymns, all with botanical names. *Sagina* is a plant, pearl wort, a small white flowering moss, you might put in your hanging basket or patio pots!

The tune has melismas where we sing two or more notes to one syllable. For example a 2 note vocal run for the syllables “I” and “should”; also “in...trest”. In the last line of each verse there’s always a 3 note run “ro-oh-ose” went “for-or-orth” Get it! It’s wonderful to sing, as those three notes climb up the scale which automatically gives a positive feeling to those singing it. And of course, the tune repeats the last two lines wonderfully, and traditionally in the last verse, congregations with or without organist, repeat the repeat. Striking, especially if you’re new to the tune!

But of course it’s the words which are notable too. Wesley starts his hymn dramatically, maybe uniquely, with the word “And”. And I expect many of you were taught [unnecessarily] never to start a sentence with the word “And”.. Well, Charles Wesley did it in the 1730s. It is part of a series of 4 rhetorical questions where the narrator/singers ask how they benefit from Christ’s death if they are the cause of it. The powerful first person words “I” and “me” “my” are used throughout. Those who know their bible will appreciate the references to dramatic prison rescues of Paul and Silas whose “chains fell off” but in the hymn that is linked to the personal metaphorical chains of sin and death from which Jesus frees the individual singer. The hymn is full of vivid images: of angels wondering, of Jesus “emptying himself” ; dark imprisonment and finally the triumphant soul approaches the eternal throne to claim the crown. Here in the last line, Wesley again starts his sentence strikingly with the word: “**Bold**”. Despite all the sinner has done, experienced not only he/she is entitled to be **bold** coming towards the “eternal throne” because of all Christ has done, but will also receive a crown. Why wouldn’t you sing the last verse with hearty enthusiasm? Although maybe verse 3 and 4 need to be sung quietly, until that wonderful line when the “chains” fall off.

It is an amazing experience singing this hymn, in parts, with a large congregation. It is so exhilarating! I sometimes wonder if despite the efforts of our great organists and musicians, if we’re small in number, for this “Anthem” we mightn’t be better singing along to a CD or recording of a large congregation singing it... just to get the full experience! One’s heart could be gladdened to be part of a great choral response to salvation.

Ruth Lewis

STANTON VILLAGE **BIG SING**

with

MARSKE BRASS BAND

Led by

Rev. David Godfrey & Rev. Laura Wild

Sunday, June 23rd 3pm



**Come and join
us in the open
air**

MELDYKE SQUARE

**Refreshments in
the Memorial Hall**



Graduation?



There were so many graduates waiting to receive their degrees that day, that speed was of the essence. Presenting their diplomas, therefore, the Chancellor simply smiled and said: “**Congratulations, keep moving.**”

Actually, that is good advice for all of life, and for your Christian life as well.

If you’ve discovered the reality of God’s love for yourself, you deserve congratulations, for in a very real sense, you have arrived...**but keep moving!** – there is so much more that God has in store for you! St Paul in 2nd Timothy said: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. **Now there is in store for me** the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day....”

So, wherever **you** have reached in your own faith pilgrimage, **congratulations, but keep moving!**

June, July and August Events from our past

1st June 1946 - Television licences were issued in Britain for the first time; they cost £2.00.

10th June 1829 - The Oxford team won the first-ever Oxford and Cambridge University Boat Race. Two eight-men crews raced each other along the River Thames in a contest of rowing power nicknamed simply “The Boat Race”.



13th June 1944 - The first V1 flying bomb, or “doodle bug” was dropped on London.

14th June 1982 - The end of the Falklands War. After a ten week conflict and nearly a thousand deaths, the Argentine Army surrendered. The war was triggered after troops from Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands, a South Atlantic archipelago that is a colony of the UK.

3rd July 1996 - It was confirmed that the Stone of Scone, the symbol of the Scottish nation taken by Edward I of England in 1296, was to be returned to Scotland from Westminster Abbey where it has been used in the coronation of 30 British monarchs.



8th July 1822 - Leading romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley drowned in the Bay of Spezia, when his boat sunk in a storm.

2nd July 1910 - British pilot Charles Stewart Rolls, 33, died after his French built biplane crashed at a flying competition in Bournemouth, Dorset. He was a partner in the Rolls-Royce car manufacturing company.

26th July 1978 - The worlds first test-tube baby is born in Oldham General Hospital near Manchester. Gynecologist Patrick Steptoe and physiologist Dr Robert Edwards are credited with this pioneering work.

22nd August 1485 - Richard III becomes the last English king to die in battle, killed at Bosworth Field in Leicestershire.

23rd August 1940 - The first night of the Blitz as German planes bomb the city of London.

24th August 1875 - Matthew Webb (Captain Webb) started his attempt from Dover in Kent, to become the first person to swim the English Channel. He reached Calais, France at 10.40 am the following morning, having been in the water for 22 hours.



Anne Smith



“It’s not a stained-glass window - the Youth Club put its skateboard ramp too close to the church’s west wall!”

Best position for effective prayer

Three ministers sat discussing the best positions for prayer while a telephone repairman worked nearby. “Kneeling is definitely best,” claimed one minister.

“No,” another contended. “I get the best results standing with my hands outstretched to Heaven.”

“You’re both wrong,” the third insisted. “The most effective prayer position is lying prostrate, face down on the floor.”

The repairman could contain himself no longer. “Sorry,” he blurted out, “but the best praying I ever did was hanging upside down from a telephone pole.”

Swim?

If a lot of swimming is so good for your shape, then why do the whales look the way they do?

Grandmothers

Becoming a grandmother is wonderful. One moment you’re just a mother. The next you are not just all-wise, but also prehistoric.

Forgiveness!

Late for a meeting and unable to find parking, I pulled into a spot behind a church. It was only after I’d gotten out of the car that I spotted this sign: “No parking. Forgiveness is our business, but don’t make it harder than it already is.”

This next one...

A local DJ was introducing a record at our annual church party. “This next one,” he said, “is for Charlotte, a choir member, who is a hundred and eleven! Hey, Charlotte, congratulations on a ripe old age!”

There was a short pause and then the DJ said in a somewhat more subdued voice, “I’m sorry, I got it wrong. This next one is for Charlotte, who is ill.”

Water

My friend was working at an amusement park when a couple stopped him. “Excuse me,” said the woman, pointing to a pond.

“What is that water made out of?”

Bemused, my friend replied, “Two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen.” “See?” she said to her boyfriend. “I told you it wasn’t real.”

Gardening

Overheard at my gardening club meeting: “I never knew what compost was until I met my husband.”

The Parish Pump

Parable: The Strength of a Seed



At this time of year, we enjoy the fruits of our gardens, fields and hedgerows: vegetables ripen, crops are harvested, and berries begin to show bright among the leaves. Much of this growth started with a few seeds in spring: the miracle of life coming from small dead looking things. There is a league table of long-lived seeds. The winners so far are from the narrow-leaved campion, buried by squirrels in the Siberian permafrost over 30,000 years ago. When those seeds finally germinated, they became healthy plants that flowered and produced seeds of their own.

The Bible contains many links between seeds and spiritual growth, and the parable of the Sower is the most famous (in Matthew 13). A person may hear or experience something of God which has the potential to germinate into a life of following Him, resulting in the fruit of others coming to know God too. But things can happen that snatch that seed away, killing it before it has finished germinating, or choking its growth.

What about the knowledge of God that gets trampled, churned too deep in the mire of life to receive the warmth and light it needs to develop into faith? Buried seeds don't always die, but they can lie dormant, remaining alive but inactive until the earth is turned over. The possibility of that moment of connecting with something divine, scrap of knowledge, or snatch of conversation resulting in a changed life may seem infinitesimally small, but it's not zero. The seed may be incredibly tough, just waiting for a chance to grow.

The Gospel narrative plays on the fact that it took a long time for the disciples to understand the full implications of Jesus' teaching: a germination process that took many of them three or more years. They could have been discouraged, but Jesus was not. I don't think it's too much of stretch to draw out of the parable of the Sower to include the observation that it can take a long time, sometimes decades, for people to work their way through the various barriers, sticking points, and phases of forgetfulness that may keep them from following through on their spiritual experience. When we finally receive – or are open to – the encouragement, challenge, or experience that helps our faith in Christ grow, we can experience the rich fruit of a transformed life.

The Parish Pump

Adam and Eve

Adam and Eve had an ideal marriage. He didn't have to hear about all the men she could have married, and she didn't have to hear about the way his mother cooked.

Today's Street Corner is Virtual: memc.uk

In the New Testament the apostles travelled around, city to city, telling the good news to individuals in their homes or more publicly on streets and highways of the Roman Empire: their Acts. Centuries later, in the earliest days of Methodism, John Wesley travelled the roads of England preaching and worshipping, sometimes in peoples' homes, sometimes on street corners. Today we Methodists have the information super highway: the internet and world wide web through which we can reach people, people from all over the world, in their homes and tell them about our faith and churches and share worship in WaH. I spoke with David [Everitt of course] about some issues arising from Middlesbrough & Eston Methodist Circuit and its webpage **memc.uk** which you can visit by googling on your smartphone or other device.

Ruth: I understand you are changing our website. Why is this and what does it mean?

David: I have built the circuit website since taking over and foolishly promised to learn how to do it! There are currently over 1000 items, stories, timetable and pictures and unfortunately it will all need to be rebuilt on the new system.



Ruth : Why rebuild?

David: The first reason is to make it easier for the next person or persons. Always a good idea to plan your own obsolescence!

The second reason is to make the site more appealing. When I was a child you searched in the yellow pages and then the local library. Today smartphones, smart speakers and computers are the first choices. The current system was designed long before these options were considered and I need to create a page for each screen type and size. The new system will be one page design that automatically adapts.

Ruth: What does the site get used for?

David: Our website is accessed from all over the world and by 100s of devices each week. Visitors search for the location of the churches and the activities each location makes available. Keeping this church information accurate and up-to-date has recently been taken on by volunteer from each church throughout the circuit so if you are leading an activity or event remember to let us know via your church's Website link.

As well as the magazine type of entry the weekly service named Worship at Home [WaH] is accessed more than 17000 times since we started in the COVID lockdowns. Each week a Minister or a Local Preacher creates a short service and records their thoughts for me to edit. The 30 minute service takes about 2 to 3 hours to edit and make available on line. I get to edit out the sounds of doors closing, misspoken phrases and adjust timing so it ends up sounding quite professional. After all... more people listen to WaH than attend our church services each week!

Ruth: Yes, as someone who creates these WaH services, I wonder if people realise just how much time it takes! Both your time as web editor to make us sound good, and the other challenges for LPs and Ministers which are different from preparing an in-person church service. Any prayers and thoughts need to be succinct, much shorter than in an

actual service, and stopping oneself from rambling yet focusing takes time!!! As Mark Twain once wrote: "I have written a long letter because I didn't have time to write a short one."

Another issue is the YouTube hymns. Feedback tells us they are very popular, people like to sing along. One of our "fans" told us recently we had to make sure we have at least THREE, not just two! Yet it is time consuming, first the usual one of finding hymns suitable for the reading and message, and then finding lively interesting versions which YouTube allows us to share. One also should consider a finding a variety of types of church music and diversity of singers. Personally I don't want our on-line worshippers to only see elderly white people singing!!! It all takes time.

Could you explain why we use YouTube clips and not our own recordings?

David: Copyright and licensing cost are the obvious reasons.

Recording and making our services available on line will require a significant outlay to both fund the equipment installation and the licensing that would be needed. There will also need to be a consideration made that some hymns simply cannot be broadcast for copyright reasons and that would mean the broadcast would stop unless another hymn is chosen in advance.

Ruth: I'm not sure that singing from our own increasingly thin congregations would be good enough to broadcast. It might put people off! What about Social Media? Facebook, Instagram and all that? A lot of people say we should be moving into that.

David: Many groups around the Circuit have their own Facebook group. At present we are investigating the options to better engage with Social Media. Sure, it is a fast and mass way of communicating with contacts but the various platforms have weaknesses that could cause issues for the church as an entity.

Social media is very good for disseminating information about events in real time and upcoming events. To do it justice the Methodist Church Media course recommends you plan posts a year in advance [!] and update 3 x a week at least! This raises issues for churches of time, commitment and skills. Another issue is whether churches or the Circuit operate what is called a "Closed Group" this would allow members of the public to find the page, but they would need to ask permission read the content of the page. This would require someone to monitor, give permission and reply within 24 hours at minimum. In any form of publication, print or social media Safeguarding and Data Protection would need to be considered too.

Ruth: Do you think all this web based communication is going to be the way of our churches in the future?

David: Modern life is so busy and many working families find it impossible to attend already, so giving them an opportunity to dip in to a service anytime, anywhere is a spiritual lifeline I feel we need to build.

The pandemic made us all adapt. Sue encouraged me to start the online service. We now have zoom meetings and outdoor carol services. The innovative ways of evangelising that the Circuit's churches have developed show even the oldies can make things work.

The problem is going to be making sure we provide a consistently good service.

Ruth: Any final comments?

David: If there are people who would like to contribute by reading for our on-line services, taking photos to go on our website or writing articles... please let me know. Don't worry about the technical side... I've been playing with technology for 55 years and I'm well familiar with covering my own mistakes besides, it's fun!

Ruth Lewis



Sunday 14th July

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

It is the children's charity of the Methodist Church. It was founded in 1869 by Methodist minister Revd. Thomas

Bowman Stephenson in response to the poverty and danger faced by vulnerable and destitute children and young people living rough on the streets of London.

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

We protect and support children and young people. We do this by providing practical and emotional care and support. We make sure their voices are heard, and we campaign to bring lasting improvements to their lives.

What we've achieved In 2022/23 we helped 765,905 children, young people and families. This was only possible with your support.

- Since 1869 we've helped more than two million children and young people.
- 88,689: the number of people reached with mental health support in 2022/23.
- 539,842: the number of people reached by our online parenting advice service, Parent Talk, in 2022/23

The Action for Children Covenant

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

Action for Children website



Update from MAP

Since last writing we have maintained our numbers at all our Middlesbrough events and have indeed seen a steady growth and development at Thursday music café, where we now have a regular Red Cross presence as well as visits from other agencies. So, Thursday welcome hub is thriving. We have a women's craft group, a regular barber service meditation and Tai-Chi.

On Wednesdays we continue our work of providing clothing and household goods (not electricals) At the Avenue Church, and donations are always welcome. We travel to Redcar on Wednesday for English sessions in the Baptist church, numbers had dropped a little during the Autumn but are now rising again following a canvassing campaign, recently begun.

Part of the reason that our numbers can fluctuate is due to many of our service users gaining confidence through our efforts and activities many then signing on to college courses; this is a good thing, and we adapt to changing circumstances.

Friday's 'come and chat' English at Linthorpe road continues to be strong, followed by the meal prepared by our chefs Bob and Belle. We finish Fridays with singing which so lifts the spirits. David and Emily work extremely hard with great enthusiasm to be inclusive and creative for the whole group.

MAP has recently formed a joint choir with Northeast Opera to open the Stokesley music festival at Stokesley Methodist Church. It was a warm and welcoming event full of joy and good cheer, we were so well received by the church and fed a wonderful meal before starting. Two weeks later on 29th February the same group joined by many local musicians performed at the My Great Folk festival at Middlesbrough town hall and again went down a storm.

Our Christmas party, which saw the main hall filled to bursting with service users and volunteers, we had carols, a nativity and a very substantial meal with Santa and We are constantly evolving to changing circumstances for asylum seekers. We now have an established presence on Tuesdays in Middlesbrough college and are looking to return to the western end of Redcar and Cleveland in partnership with the Saabat Gallery in South Bank this will complement our work in Redcar.

As ever I am deeply grateful for the efforts of our wonderful volunteers across both boroughs in which we operate, without them we could not function, and the gift of their time is unbelievably precious to us.

Billy Barnes Project Manager

MAP Middlesbrough

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Beware of what are you drinking?

Cold drinks in hot weather are great, but if you head for the high-sugar fizzy drinks, you are putting yourself at risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Fizzy drinks are full of sugar, but no vitamins, minerals or antioxidants. Instead, try serving water with ice and pieces of fresh orange, lemon or lime to add flavour. Or dilute a pure fruit juice with sparkling mineral water. Or go for herbal tea or fruit tea.



Water makes up over half (60%) of your bodyweight and fluids are critical for good health and heart health. Hydration is when you drink more fluids than your body loses. Being hydrated helps your heart pump blood more easily through the blood vessels and to your muscles. This means that your muscles, including your heart don't have to work as hard to achieve the same results.

On average an adult needs 6 - 8 glasses or 1.5 - 2 litres of fluid a day. If it is a hot temperature or you carry out physical activity, you'll need more. Drinking water is the best way to remain hydrated. Food such as fruits and vegetables can also help to hydrate you, with around 20% of your bodies water intake per day coming from foods like these.

Heart Research Uk



Here are seven “Old” Quiz questions to get your brain working

1. What is the name of Manchester United's Football Club's ground?
2. Where/what is “Old Reekie”?
3. In the Old Testament, through which animal did God speak to Balaam ?
4. A 1944 comedy film starring Cary Grant about old spinsters poisoning male lodgers?
5. A TV variety show [1953-1983] where both audience and performers dressed in costume?
6. What other “Old” animal is in the title of TS Eliot's Book of Practical Cats?
7. What's the name of that famous agricultural smallholder with some very vocal animals?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 23

The Methodist Church

A new Methodist Church website has been launched, designed for individuals exploring faith and seeking to deepen their spiritual journey. The site features a contemporary, user-friendly design, improved functionality, and easy access to essential resources to assist visitors in their exploration of faith. The website is available at the normal address, methodist.org.uk.

Whilst the website was launched on Tuesday 19th March, we wanted to take a moment to apologise to people who were not made aware of the change. We understand that this change could have been surprising, confusing and also frustrating for many and want to address that. We are sorry if this negatively affected you and hope that the updates we are currently making will help your navigation and use of the new website.

We want the website to be a place that Methodists can use to help share the good news, so we are very happy to hear how we can improve things.

Thank you for your patience

Celebrating 50 years of Women's Ordination



On 2nd July 2024 we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first ordinations of women as presbyters in the Methodist Church in Britain.

Although women were permitted to become deacons in the Methodist Church from 1890, they were not allowed to become presbyters. The first seventeen women were ordained at the Methodist Conference in Bristol on 2nd July 1974.

This was the climax of many years of discussion and controversy. It indicated a growing appreciation of the place of women in the life of the church. The theological objections had been carefully considered and rejected before this final step was taken.

To date the Methodist Church has roughly an equal number of male and female ministers.

Happy

Never miss an opportunity to make others happy, even if you have to leave them alone in order to do it.

10 WAYS TO HELP WILDLIFE IN SUMMER

Summer can be glorious with our longest, warmest days of the year to enjoy. It's a great time for nature spotting too, with butterflies in abundance, young birds discovering their wings and rainbows of wildflowers everywhere. But extreme hot and dry conditions can make it a perilous time for wildlife. Shelter, food and especially water are as important as ever in summer. Check out our top tips to make a difference for nature in your outdoor space this season.

Make a bee drinker

This two-minute task will fit anywhere, even a windowsill, and can be a lifeline for bees and other insects. Fill a simple dish with water and add some pebbles to create different levels that will help visitors drink safely without falling in. Place in a partly shady spot, keep water topped up and clean regularly.

Offer bathing water for birds and mammals

Dehydration can be a huge issue for wildlife in summer, especially in times of drought or heatwaves. Natural water sources may dry up and juicy worms and insects are harder for birds and hedgehogs to reach in dry solid ground. An ornamental bird bath can brighten up a garden, but any container of water will likely be well-used for drinking as well as washing. Just be sure to keep it clean and full with a safe route for visitors to get in and out.



Create shade with native shrubs and trees

A nice shady spot can offer welcome respite for wildlife and people. Shade will help avoid over-heating and dehydration, especially for cold-blooded animals like frogs, lizards and newts. Food and water will last longer out of the sun's strong rays too. Plenty of shade-giving trees are suitable for gardens and smaller spaces can often squeeze in a shrub like dogwood, holly or guelder rose that can be pruned to retain size. Native plants are best for UK wildlife as they evolved together and support each other most effectively. They're more resilient and easier to grow and maintain too.

Organise a nature highway

Healthy wildlife populations need room to roam with sustenance and sanctuary at regular intervals to avoid wasting too much energy. Co-ordinated corridors of wildlife-friendly features can have real impact, so encourage neighbours to add to your efforts. Offer welcome respite and replenishment with a watering hole and smorgasbord of natural foods. Plant pit stops for pollinators. Trees or shrubs can be a much-needed breather for birds on long journeys or a resting place safe from predators. And shortcuts through your outdoor space can lend hedgehogs, frogs and toads a helping hand too. All they need is a gap of around 13cm x 13cm to bypass fences and walls so common in urban areas.

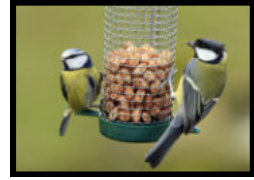
Grow a continuous supply of nectar-rich flowers

Interest in growing plants for pollinators is increasing, but does your nectar provision have any gaps? With careful planning you can create a bumblebee buffet that lasts from March to October – their whole active lifecycle. Try early bloomers like blackthorn and

bugle for March followed by red clover, aquilegia, dog rose and many more through the summer months. Add the likes of corn marigold, poppy and achilleas for October flowers to end the season with a flourish.

Feed the birds

Our wild birds can benefit from supplementary feeding all year round and in summer, new parents will welcome support to nourish their hungry broods. A blue tit chick can eat up to 100 caterpillars in a day and with 7-14 eggs laid at a time, that's a lot of food for the adult birds to find! Take care as some foods can be hazardous to chicks, so be sure to soak dehydrated mealworms in warm water to rehydrate them for example, and use feeders to make sure peanuts are pecked out in smaller pieces rather than taken away whole.



Embrace wildlife in landscaping plans

With more time spent in the sunshine, summer is peak season for sprucing up our outdoor space. If wildlife isn't your main priority, at least try to consider how any new features might impact nature. Could more wildlife-friendly options still achieve your desired results? Choose a hedge over a fence or wall. Perhaps a new patio or path could have pockets for planting, leaving valuable spaces to absorb rainwater as well as providing for wildlife. If you're ditching grass, avoid an artificial lawn at all costs. It's made of plastic and actively forces biodiversity out – nothing can live in, on or under the impermeable manufactured surface. Opt for gravel dotted with plants, a no-mow wildflower patch, shrubs or another low maintenance alternative.

Think wildlife when you're out and about

Helping wildlife doesn't have to be confined to your own space. When enjoying days out in nature this summer, be mindful of how your actions could impact the plants and animals around you. Simple actions can make a difference, like sticking to footpaths and keeping dogs under control to help protect ground nesting birds and delicate plants. Be especially wary of wildfires at this time of year – in hot, dry conditions, barbecues can quickly turn to flames that spread and devastate vast areas. Keep everyone safe by enjoying a picnic instead!

Limit outdoor lighting

Sitting out until late on balmy summer evenings is one of the joys of the season, but did you know your lighting could disturb the wildlife you're making efforts to help? Some animals take cues from light levels and can be confused by artificial illuminations. Moths and amphibians are attracted to bright lights, whereas most bats avoid them altogether which can impact their hunting success. In strongly lit areas, birds have been recorded singing in the middle of the night. Keep lighting after dark to a minimum where possible by using softer bulbs, downlighters rather than uplighters or motion sensor security lights instead of an always-on option.

Use your buying power for good

Regardless of your outdoor space, you can help wildlife when you shop for summer supplies and throughout the year. Where possible, choose eco-friendly products that don't harm the planet and its living creatures. You can send a message with your spending by opting for companies with good causes too, supporting their work with every sale.

Miscellaneous observations on daily life

You can learn many things from children. How much patience you have, for instance.

There are only two things a child will share willingly – a communicable disease and his mother's age.

In order to keep a true perspective of one's importance, everyone should have a dog to worship him and a cat to ignore him.

Getting older is just one body part after another saying, 'Ha ha, you think that's bad? Watch this!'

My boss calls me 'The Computer'. Nothing to do with intelligence; I go to sleep if left unattended for 15 minutes.

I hate it when I see an old person, and then realise we went to school together.

The Parish Pump



NEW YEAR

As we approach the end of this Quarter we are heading for the start of the new Methodist Year. Having the opportunity for a new start is special.

I have been in Education all my life, and still am, so September is also the start of a new Academic year.

When I was teaching, I loved my job, I was so lucky to have that kind of successful and happy career. I still didn't like the start of September. I would suggest to Sue that maybe I should change jobs, so much did I dislike the thought of being back at work. Yet once the first week was over, I was enjoying being at school and the challenges of a new year.

In our Methodist Church, September is important as in some Circuits, new Ministers will be arriving and that can be a challenge to all concerned as well as a joy and a new start for all. We are very fortunate as thankfully our wonderful ministers are not going anywhere and for that I am very grateful. My hope along with many of you is that maybe this new Methodist year will see the return of our special friend and minister; Charity. That would complete our special ministerial team and will be a great new start.

I guess as a Circuit we have new plans and hopes for this new year. I think for us as a Circuit, closing churches has happened probably more often than we would have liked, let's hope a new year brings life and hope to our churches. At Grove Hill one of our priorities is Mission as I know it is for some of the other churches in our Circuit. We are doing well at our church with lots of new people coming along to join us in worship. Our challenge for the future is to be the place which is relevant to the people living in our neighbouring community. To that end we are taking this business of mission very seriously and Revd. John is very much inspiring us and leading us forward, with the help of a colleague of his from the District. We have plans and in May we will have had chance to meet with Heller so she will have spoken to our church family about our way forward. That is one of our New Year hopes, beginning as soon as possible. We have lots of other plans, but that is the main one.

So New Year and all new beginnings can be a little nerve wracking, as well as feeling exciting.

We thank God not just for new starts on certain dates, but for a new start every day as we dedicate ourselves to his service in whatever challenges he leads us into so that our renewal comes from that faith and that dedication.

Dave Elliott

Answers to Quiz on Page 18

- 1. Old Trafford;**
- 2. Edinburgh;**
- 3. Donkey;**
- 4. Arsenic and Old Lace;**
- 5. The Good Old Days**
- 6. Possum;**
- 7. Old Macdonald.**

PRAYER DIARY

June 2nd Pray today for the Circuit and our Superintendent Minister Revd.

David Godfrey, and for Nunthorpe

June 9th Pray today for all those students in schools and in universities who will be taking important exams at this time. Pray for Revd. John Howard-Norman and for Grove Hill.

June 16th On this Father's Day, we pray for all Fathers, those who are no longer with us and whose influence still affects our lives. Pray for Fathers separated from their families and the sadness this brings. We think of God as our loving Heavenly Father. Pray for Revd. Charity Hamilton, that she may be getting better and may soon be back with us where she belongs. Pray for Trinity and the Trinity Family Friendly Project and for Sharon Sewell the Project Co-ordinator

June 23rd Pray today for the Stainton Big Sing, for the great opportunity that this event brings for witness in the village. Be with all who will attend and enjoy the sense of rejoicing as we sing and hear God's word. Pray for Stainton and for Revd. Anne Coates

June 30th Pray today for the Methodist Conference taking place at this time. Today will also be the Ordination service, as new Ministers are brought into their vocation. Pray for Carolyn Godfrey starting her year of office as Vice President of the Conference. Pray for Normanby.

July 7th Pray today for all who lead our communities, those on the Local Councils and those who work in the Police, Fire and Ambulance teams who keep us safe and look after us when we are in need. Pray for Elaine at our Circuit Office and David our Circuit webmaster. Pray for Marton and for Revd. Mike Harland.

July 14th Pray today for our troubled world, for peace where for so long

there had been hate and division. For most of us prayer is the way we can work for peace, although we are reminded of the words; 'Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me' We pray for the work of Methodist Women in Britain, and our Chinese Church.

July 21st Pray today for children, and teachers as they break up for the summer holidays that it may be a time of joy and recreation. Pray for the young people in our churches and those who work with them. Pray for Andrew Glazebrook and the work done at Linthorpe Road Resource Centre

July 28th Pray today for all who are ill in body, mind or spirit. Pray for those who care for the sick in their own homes and in our hospitals, and for all who research into the cures for so many illnesses that they may find success. Pray today for our Circuit Safeguarding Officer, Mark Braithwaite,

August 4th Pray today for all who feel unwanted those who are new to our country and for all who may feel anxious. Pray for the Methodist Asylum Project, for Billy Barnes the Project Manager and all who support this work
August 11th Pray today for MHA Communities Teesside and for Montpellier Manor, Tom Ward, the Communities Manager, the staff and the residents.

August 18th Pray today for young people receiving important examination results this month which will affect their futures. We pray for those who are disappointed and feel sad about their outcomes and for those who rejoice in their success.

August 25th Pray today for the Darlington District of our Methodist church, for the many church families in the District. Pray for Revd. Richard Andrew Chairman of the District.