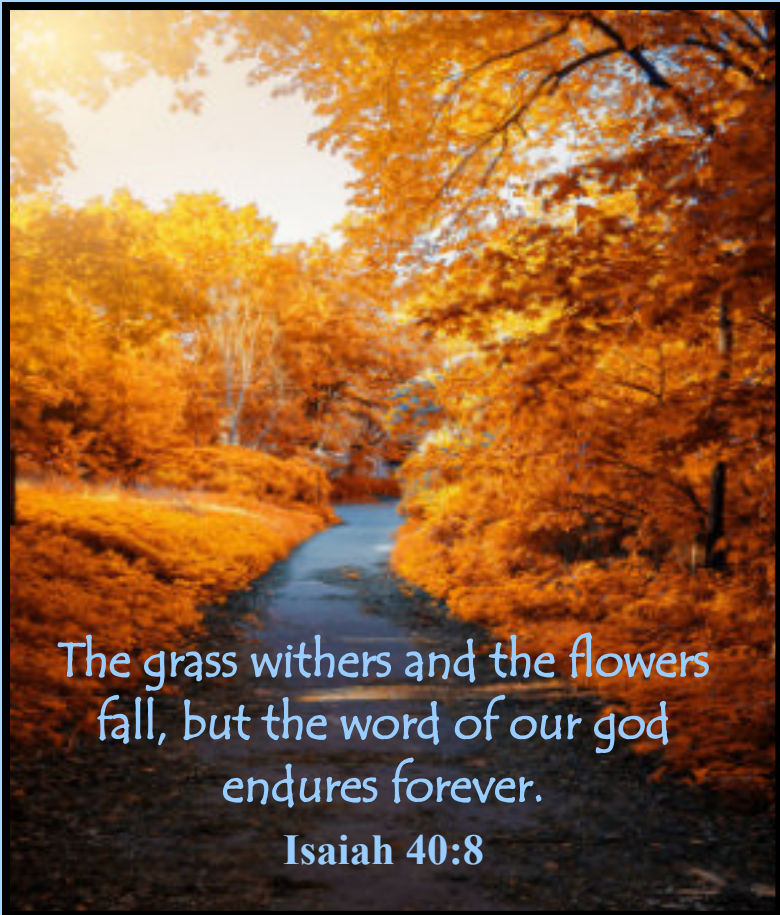


MEMO

Middlesbrough & Eston Methodist Outburst

**SEPTEMBER —
NOVEMBER 2023**



The grass withers and the flowers
fall, but the word of our god
endures forever.

Isaiah 40:8

FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Welcome to this edition of 'Memo'

We hope you find items of interest to you and maybe the inspiration for you to contribute to the next 'Memo' with your thoughts or concerns.

In this Quarter we have Harvest Festival services, a time to rejoice in the beauty of God's creation to say 'Thank you' and to think of others.

We have All Saints and a reminder of the great people some famous, some maybe just known to us, who reflect God's goodness in their lives.

There is Remembrance Sunday a time to reflect and be thankful for those who have given their lives and still do give their lives for a better world.

Advent comes at the end of the Quarter, preparing us for the coming of Jesus in our lives.

A very special time ahead of us when we are made to stop and reflect and be thankful.

Sometimes stopping and reflecting isn't always easy in our busy lives,

But we need to find time, in our daily prayers, readings and just being quiet. I pray God will speak to us all in the special times which lay ahead in these months.

Look after yourselves.

Thank you to all of you who have contributed to this 'Memo'

Best wishes

Dave on behalf of Anne and Elaine, the 'Memo' 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 October 2023

The Superintendent's Letter

Dear Friends,

I hope you have all enjoyed the summer season and are refreshed and ready for a new church year.

This summer has been significant for the Godfrey household. In June, my wife Carolyn attended the Methodist Conference in Birmingham as a rep from the Darlington District, of which we are a part. For those who are unfamiliar with Methodist organisation, the annual Conference is the governing body of Methodism in Britain. Reps attend from all over the country, to confer, to commission and receive reports, and to approve policy for the whole church. Each year a President is elected (who is always an ordained person) and a Vice President (who is always a lay person or deacon). The President and Vice President work together to chair conference and to represent the church at home and abroad. They effectively become representative figureheads for the church for their year of office. After much thought over winter, Carolyn agreed to be nominated for the role of Vice President. She was deeply honoured (and somewhat shocked) when Conference duly elected her in that post for the year 2024-25. It is a wonderful honour, but it is also an opportunity to visit districts and to see some of the best projects and initiatives that are going on. It is an entirely voluntary role for the Vice President which needs to be fitted around the day job, and many of the visits for Carolyn will take place at weekends. Please pray for Carolyn (and me) in this year of preparation. These are exciting and challenging times indeed.

Putting personal excitement to one side, the largest and perhaps most important report received at conference this year was called 'Walking with Micah'. This has been a two-year project helping the Methodist Church to explore what it means to be a justice-seeking Church. It draws on Methodist history, theology, current concerns and practice, and recommends a framework of principles for justice which underpin our understanding of God's justice and what it means to seek justice. The report recognised how much is being done in churches to tackle injustice and recommends a two-year programme to embed these principles, priorities and practices in order to support and encourage this work. The Conference commended the report for prayerful study and action throughout the Connexion. I suspect that we are already aware of many of the issues raised in the report and are already doing good work on this theme which goes to the heart of our faith. However, there may be things in the report that can further shape our practice. You can read more about the report, see an introductory video and find a three minute summary if you follow this link. <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/social-justice/walking-with-micah/> .

Finally, on a different but related subject, I draw your attention to the Peace Walk in Middlesbrough on 21st September. This has taken place in other cities and towns around the world in previous years and marks the international day of peace. The walk will visit places of worship of different faiths including the Methodist Church on Linthorpe Road. At the time of writing I have not yet seen a detailed timetable for the walk, but it seems likely that it will arrive at Linthorpe Road Methodist between 11:00am and 12:00 noon. More details can be found in the article 'A Pathway to Peace' in this edition of Memo (page 9). Everyone is welcome to join in.

Yours in Christ,

Revd David Godfrey.

CONGRATULATIONS

The Circuit sends congratulations to Carolyn and Revd Helen Cameron on their appointments as Vice and President of the Methodist Conference for the year 2024-25.

We hope they enjoy their time in office, in their representative role for the Methodist Church.



Methodist Women in Britain



MWiB DISTRICT EVENTS

AUTUMN DAY at Elm Ridge Methodist Church, Darlington on Friday 20th October. Coffee and tea served from 10.00am. Please bring a packed lunch, drinks will be provided.

ADVENT SERVICE at Zetland Park Methodist Church, Redcar on Friday 1st December. Coffee and tea served from 10.00am. Please bring a packed lunch, drinks will be provided.

Beryl Haggath

Stainton Village Big Sing



Once again we held our annual Village Big Sing in June. Unfortunately for the first time we had to make the decision to hold the event inside the Memorial Hall. All the chairs were set out side and then the sky darkened and rain drops fell.

Anxious band members were worried about the instruments and we didn't want all the upholstered chairs getting soaking wet. Of course after the relocation it didn't rain!



Nevertheless the Marske Brass Band were an excellent accompaniment for the variety of hymns we sang. Rev David and Rev Laura Wild, the newly appointed vicar for St Peter and St Paul's guided us through the singing, prayers, reflection and readings. It was a wonderful opportunity for villagers to gather together in song and fellowship and then chat over refreshments. Perhaps it wasn't quite the same having to be inside; it just seems to be extra special singing in the open air. Lets hope next year we are back outside welcoming, as we did this year, everyone to join us even 'creatures great and small'.



Claire Tate



80 years of MHA

In June, Methodist Homes for the Aged (MHA) celebrated 80 years of service.

It is one of the bright fruits in the family tree of Methodist inspired organisations and charities. Today MHA is the largest charity care provider for older people in the UK. It supports over 18,500 older people nationwide, 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, they inspire the best care and wellbeing at every stage of later life. With their 80 years experience, they put people at the heart of everything they do in all their homes, schemes and community services across Britain.

As one of the very few not-for-profit care providers, they have the privilege to reinvest any surplus to ensure the care and support they provide is among the very best in the UK.

If you or a family member is aged 55 and over and feel like you/they would benefit from any of the services they provide, 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 in this area, or to talk through what support is available.

GROVEHILL CENTENARY



This is another chance to remind you of the fact that this is being a special year for us at Grove Hill.

We invited Rev Martin and Sarah Ramsden to come and preach for us in June. They came along with their family and gave us a wonderful worship experience. They also reminded us of how special it had been with them as our Ministers and how in their time our church building had been transformed into the place it is today. It had been run down and in a bad place, with Martin's leadership we managed to make amazing things happen and a renewed ministry begin. We are seeing the harvest of that revelation in the life of our church today.

We also invited back Revd Christopher Wood- Archer. Once again we were challenged by Christopher's gift and passion for preaching. I always found his sermons stretched and challenged me and made me look at my own preaching.

I guess these three previous ministers, along with our three very special ministers in the Circuit today, remind us of the richness of Methodism. Yes, we do value the lay people, especially at Grove Hill where we have such a wonderful team. We also value how the Ministers have brought something special to the life of our church, and enabled us to look at different ways of mission and outreach over the years.

We are thankful that we now have Revd John who brings such a great pastoral ministry to Grove Hill which comforts us, and enables us to value his caring for every one of us.

I really hope that our Centenary Celebration Service at Grove Hill on Saturday September 16th at 2.00pm will be very well attended. We are not just a church but very much part of this Circuit so maybe this celebration will remember and rejoice in the value of being part of the Middlesbrough and Eston Circuit.

On a very sad note, we lost our dear friend Colin Bennison who passed away in July. It would have been wonderful if he had been able to be part of this Celebration service, as he had played the organ at the church for nearly seventy five years. He also contributed so much to the life of our church and had been attending for nearly ninety years!! We shall remember him in our celebrations as we sing together.

We have one more celebration event and that will be a Circuit Christmas Songs of Praise at Grove Hill at 2.00pm on December 10th.

Dave Elliott



The Tolpuddle Pilgrimage:

A Methodist Story of Social Justice

On Saturday 6th May, a group of pilgrims arrived at the village of Tolpuddle, Dorset, under a grey sky and drizzle. Their journey had started the previous Monday at John Wesley's New Room in Bristol. Over the following week, they walked along both busy and quiet roads, under sun and rain, passing through villages including Chew Stoke, Wells, Castle Cary, Sherborne and Hilfield Friary before arriving at Tolpuddle.

"This pilgrimage began as a piece of youth work trying to engage young adults with the Methodist Church's history", states the Revd Richard Sharples, minister at Victoria Methodist Church in Bristol. And it worked. A few years ago, they had only two young people joining them, there were four this year. "It's important for the Church to recognise that what matters to young people is not the Methodist Church per se, but the difference the Methodist Church and people are making or can make", adds Richard Sharples.

The group of pilgrims was dynamic, some staying a while, some leaving the group for a few days before coming back and some joining on the last day. Some are Methodists, some from other denominations, and some who belong to no denomination, but they all came together to walk and discuss their interest and commitment to social justice. Jack, one of the young pilgrims, says, "It's been a really good week but challenging at times. In this time of industrial turmoil, I felt it was important to learn about the Tolpuddle labourers and those people who previously stood up for workers' rights."

The journey, as well as the destination, are equally important in this pilgrimage: six labourers from Tolpuddle – four of them being Methodist – created a Friendly society in 1833 requesting fair wages, which resulted in their arrest, trial and transportation to Australia before they were pardoned.

The Revd Simon Topping, Superintendent Minister and Minister for Bath, Bathampton and Box Methodist Churches, commented, "Learning about that story through a pilgrimage is a great way to reflect together on what happened and on issues to do with social justice, economic justice and inequalities, struggles that we still face today to make the world a more equal and fairer place."

Traditionally the pilgrimage would happen in July to coincide with the Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival organised by the Trade Union Congress (TUC). This year, Richard and Simon decided to set out on 1 May "to make a link with the living wage and the cost-of-living crisis", adds Richard Sharples. They were also the first Methodists to set foot in the Tolpuddle Old Chapel, since it was recently refurbished.



Built in 1818, the chapel was used for 'non-Conformist' worship before falling into disuse in the mid-nineteenth century and being replaced by a new Methodist chapel.

Tolpuddle Old Chapel Trust purchased the Grade II* listed building in

2015 and have worked hard to raise the funds to renovate it creating a quiet place in the heart of this historic Dorset village, for visitors, and to provide the location for activities, exhibitions and community use’.

The Methodist Church website



Throughout September and October, churches across the country will be having Harvest Festival Services. These often involve bringing food donations and sometimes toiletries to give to food banks or homeless charities. Often there will be hymns and songs to say ‘thank you’ to God for all that He provides, every day.

Here are some simple ways to say ‘thank you’ to God at home, too:

Say a Thank You prayer.

A line in the Lord’s Prayer asks God to ‘Give us this day our daily bread.’ When we say that line, we’re asking God to provide the basic things in life that keep us healthy and happy. It can start with the food we need to eat each day, but for lots of different reasons, not everyone has enough.

So saying thank you for our food is important – we might thank the person who cooked it, and we might go back further and think of the people in the shops where we bought the ingredients, and even trace it right back to the farmers who grew the crops in the first place.

Saying grace before a meal is a way of saying thank you to God for making the earth and everything in it – all good things come from God, and it’s up to us to use them in the very best and most generous way.

Try singing this grace:

***One, two, three, four, five, thank you God that I’m alive.
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten, thank you God for food. Amen!***

One of the most traditional graces goes like this:

‘For what we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful and keep us always mindful of the needs of others.’

Some families hold hands while they say grace – this reminds us that we are thankful not only for our food, but that we can share it with people we love.

Parish Pump

A Pathway to Peace

This September will see the inaugural Peace Walk in Middlesbrough, which will involve ecumenical and inter faith groups across the area, coming together to promote peace and reconciliation.

The International Day of Peace is observed around the world each year on 21st September. Established in 1981 by a unanimous United Nations resolution, Peace Day provides a globally shared date for all humanity to commit to peace, and to contribute to building a Culture of Peace.



The Peace Walk is being planned by the Local Authority and representatives from the interfaith community in Middlesbrough. Religious places of worship will be visited along the route to renew and commit to our understanding of all faiths and none.

Bishop Terry has stated: “I am delighted to support this new initiative, which hopefully will become an important date in the ecumenical and interfaith calendar. Pope Francis has spoken of the importance of the International Day of Peace: “The time has come for religious leaders to cooperate more effectively in the work of healing wounds, resolving conflicts and pursuing peace. We must be peacemakers, and our communities must be schools of respect and dialogue, with those of other ethnic and religious groups...” This is also my message to those involved in planning the inaugural event in Middlesbrough, and with a hope that our own faith community will walk with others in September.”

Through the Voice, we will keep you up to date with developments. In addition, if you would like to serve on the working party, therefore supporting our diocese in a very practical way, then please let me know.

John Hinman

Member of Peace Day working group

Telephone: 01642 700075. Email: jnhinman@gmail.com



**British Summer Time ends on
Sunday 29th October 2023**

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

Come Ye Thankful People Come StF 123

Harvest time approaches, and we can look forward to singing the old favourites, including *Come Ye Thankful People Come*. In school assemblies, as part of the orchestra, I used to scratch its tune *St Georges Windsor* on the cello! Fond memories: we loved singing and playing it as it's a rousing tune with a lovely descant. But can we really "raise the song of harvest home" anymore?



Harvest home conjures up jolly scenes from films of Thomas Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd*: of barns bulging with produce and hard-working country folk enjoying a harvest feast under the benign gaze of the landowner. However, this summer the man-made global climate crisis means that fires raging across southern Europe, America and Asia have consumed not only weeds but also the fruitful ears. What's more, as I write, the war in Ukraine, "the breadbasket of Europe", has led to Russia refusing ships permission to carry much needed grain to north Africa. Russia's callous decision to annul the Black Sea grain export deal is reckless. Ukraine has exported 30 million tonnes of grain since February 2022. Millions of people in Africa and the Middle East depend on this trade for their daily bread and for political stability. There will be a lot of desperate people migrating northwards in the search for food.

Who knows too, what the British harvest will bring, hit by the twin crises of a burning planet and now a shortage of farm workers. You and I are unlikely to starve but in the nineteenth century when Henry Alford wrote his hymn of praise, starvation for rural populations was not unknown. Following the potato blight, there were after all appalling famines in Ireland and Scotland, leading to thousands emigrating to America. No wonder that when it was first sung it will have been heartfelt; the thanks and praise will have been visceral not theoretic. The life of a rural village depended on the harvest. This the writer of the hymn, Henry Alford knew. A renowned scholar, Alford himself was born into a family of clergy. Educated at Trinity College Cambridge he was ordained in 1833 and became dean of Canterbury Cathedral in 1857, a position he held until his death in 1871

Yet Alford's hymn is more than a paean of praise for the harvest of fruit, vegetables and corn. It is also a hymn about us, about salvation. Alford takes the harvest metaphors from the gospels' parables and uses them in his hymn. So WE, you and I, are grain too. The hymn asks "grant that we wholesome grain and pure should be" and looks forward to the end-time when Christ will return and take his harvest, that's us, home. How are we doing with that harvest? We might well wonder as we see the empty pews, and closed churches of all denominations around us. Like Alford, this year at Nunthorpe we are combining our Harvest celebration with our Church Anniversary service. It will be a time of praise and thanks for what we have, our food and salvation, yes but also a time to share our gifts with others, renew our mission and maybe advocate and support greener policies to protect not only future harvests but the very existence God's creation, planet Earth itself.

Ruth Lewis

Gardening could save your life—but only if you really get stuck in



A recent study has found that just an hour a week of digging and shovelling could be enough to cut your risk of dying. Such 'muscle strengthening exercises' has been found linked to a 10 to 20 per cent lower risk of death from all causes.

The study, recently published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, also found that if you combine that hour a week of strength-training with regular aerobic exercise, you may even reduce your overall risk of an early death by as much as 40 per cent.

So brisk walking and cycling are great – but add in a bit of muscle building, too. Sadly, the growth in online shopping means we are not even carrying our shopping bags home from the supermarket as much as we used to do.

The Parish Pump

The Easter Offering from the Circuit

The Easter Offering Service which was prepared by Methodist Women in Britain on behalf of the World Mission Fund, and entitled “No Borders to God’s Love,” took place at Grove Hill Methodist Church on Sunday 16th May at 6.00pm.

It was presented by Methodist Women from the churches of our Circuit, and a total of £776.86 was raised.

Grateful thanks for all your contributions.

Beryl Haggath

SEPTEMBER TO NOVEMBER, EVENTS FROM OUR PAST

2nd September 1666 - The Great Fire of London began in a bakery in Pudding Lane near the Tower. Over the next three days more than 13,000 houses were destroyed, although only six lives were believed lost.



3rd September 1939 - Britain and France Declare War On Germany

11th September 2001 - Attacks On World Trade Centre, New York and Pentagon

13th September 1959 - First man made object (Luna 2 rocket) crash lands on the moon

15th September 1975 - Inflation hits 26% in the UK

28th September 1928 - Alexander Fleming Discovers Penicillin

1st October 1908 - Henry Ford's Model T, a "universal car" designed for the masses, went on sale for the first time.



12th October 1492 - After a 33-day voyage, Christopher Columbus made his first landfall in the New World in the Bahamas. He named the first land sighted as El Salvador, claiming it in the name of the Spanish Crown. Columbus was seeking a western sea route from Europe to Asia and believed he had found an island of the Indies. He thus called the first island natives he met, 'Indians.'

13th October 1884 - Greenwich was established as the universal time from which standard times throughout the world are calculated.

24th October 1945 - The United Nations was founded.

4th November 1922 - King Tutankhamen's tomb was discovered at Luxor, Egypt, by British archaeologist Howard Carter after several years of searching. The child-King became pharaoh at age nine and died around 1352 B.C. at age 19. The tomb was found mostly intact, containing numerous priceless items now exhibited in Egypt's National Museum in Cairo.

14th November 1666 - The first experimental blood transfusion took place in Britain, utilizing two dogs.

14th November 1994 - The first paying passengers travelled on the new rail service through the Channel Tunnel linking England and France.

17th November 1869 - The Suez Canal was formally opened after more than 10 years of construction.

18th November 1477 - William Caxton printed the first book in the English language, *The Dictes and Sayengis of the Phylosophers*



22nd November 1963 - President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas.

24th November 1859 - Charles Darwin's book *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* was first published, theorizing that all the living creatures descended from a common ancestor.

Anne Smith



“Never mind, let’s just be happy that Baz came to church in the first place”

Border control

Flying home after visiting her daughter in England, a woman arranged to have her husband meet her plane in Vancouver. This meant a stop at the border crossing between the United States and Canada, where her husband was asked, “What is your reason for entering the country?” and “How long are you planning to stay?”

He replied that he was picking his wife up at the airport after her trip to England and would come straight home again. Without missing a beat, the guard asked two more questions in the same business-like tone: “And is the house clean? And are there fresh flowers on the table?”

How well do you know your spouse?

At a seminar on Marriage, the minister was stressing how essential it is that couples discern what is important to their partner.

He challenged the men: “Can you even name your wife’s favourite flower?”

Baffled silence followed, until one husband nudged his wife with a hopeful smile and hazarded: “It’s MacDougall’s Self-Raising, right?”

Hearing is not believing

A wise schoolteacher sent this note to all parents on the first day of school: “If you promise not to believe everything your child says happens at school, I’ll promise not to believe everything he or she says happens at home.”

Deliver us

I had been teaching my four-year-old daughter the Lord’s Prayer. Then one evening at bedtime she attempted it solo.

I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer. “And lead us not into temptation,” she prayed, “but deliver us some e-mail. Amen”

Henry Ford’s secret

When the late Mr and Mrs Henry Ford celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary, a reporter asked them:

“To what do you attribute your fifty years of successful married life?”

“The formula,” said Ford, “is the same formula I have always used in making cars – just stick to one model.”

The Parish Pump



Nunthorpe Methodist Church No-Mow-May

In May the church grass cutters decided to let the grass grow, daisies, buttercups, dandelions, speedwell, vetch and even orchids grew. It looked lovely, especially with the blue carpet of speedwell.

We hope that the insects and bees appreciated it, and the mowers had a well earned rest.

Jillian Lambert

A PRAYER OF HOPE

God, we come to you and you welcome us. Some of us are tired and others are bristling with energy. Your love upholds each one of us.

God, we come to you and you welcome us. Some of us exploring doubts, and others filled with certainty. Your love inspires each one of us.

God, we come to you and you welcome us. Some of us at peace, and others itching with anxiety. Your love calms each one of us.

God, we come to you and you welcome us. Some of us knowing joy, and others in pain. Your love reaches out to each one of us.

God, we come to you and you welcome us. You search us, and you know us. Each of us fearfully and wonderfully made. Each of us bearing your image. Each of us celebrating your love!

Thank you God. Amen.



Miscellaneous observations from modern life

During a heartfelt chat with her friend about relationships, my wife sighed and said, “You know, if something happened to Lloyd, I don’t think I could ever marry again.”

Her friend nodded sympathetically. “I know what you mean,” she said. “Once is more than enough.”

Back to school



September is that time of year when we get back to school after the summer break, along with our other routines. As disciples (lit: *learners*) we are all called to learn from Jesus and live like Him. God wants us to make a difference as disciples in our school and workplace, family and friends. As Paul writes: *‘And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.’* (Colossians 3:17).

‘WHATEVER you do’: God is at work in every aspect of our lives. He can use whatever we do to make a difference to those around. Do we believe this? Our lives shouldn’t be like an orange, segmented into the sacred and secular, but more like an apple, in which the whole is available to God.

‘Whatever YOU do’: God wants to use us to share God’s love with the people around us, wherever we spend time. We can trust Him for the resources we need hour by hour, day by day, year by year. What do we need from Him?

‘Whatever you DO’: Our work is for God alone, as a response to God’s love for us. How does this perspective make a difference when what we do seems hard, unrewarding, or unappreciated by others?

A man standing on a train platform was asked one day: *‘Who are you?’* He replied, *‘I am a Christian thinly disguised as an accountant.’* If we were asked the same question I wonder what we would say. As disciples of Jesus Christ, our identity is rooted in God and His call upon our lives. For each of us, September represents going back to school with Jesus, to learn how we can live for Him.

The Parish Pump

Reflections

I saw God on Iona this morning.
She was carrying food to the sheep.
They saw her approach and were happy.
Some ran to her eagerly, pleased to be fed.
Others waited so patiently, secure
in the knowledge there was food for them all.

I saw God at Poole Hospital one evening.
As I looked through the window.
He came in response to a ram's cries for help,
Caught by its horns in the fence.
It struggled hard and it was a difficult task.
But He persevered and set it free.

I saw God in the Jordan Valley one day.
As He walked alongside of his sheep.
Not driving, not pulling, just walking
beside them the whole of the way.

God giving, God rescuing, God walking beside.
God, provider and saviour, companion.
God the homemaker, the fireman, and Alf.
God in three persons, Blessed Trinity?
God in all people, at all time and all places
God of many faces, God within me.

Celia E. Shires

written in Iona Abbey in the 1990's



Pick Up The Baton

Do you remember that moment when you first believed in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, that He died on the cross for YOU, for your sins and sickness. This was the day you became part of the body of Christ. I remember that song I use to sing as a child (at Scared Heart School on Ayresome Street, Middlesbrough) *'I belong to the family of God, I belong to the family of friends, I belong to everyone, its great to know, to know that I belong'*. That song has been ingrained on my brain since I was 4 years old, but I did not know Him, and had never heard the gospel. It was late September 2008 when I heard the Good News that would change me from the inside out. Jesus shed His blood for me on that cross, he gave His life so my sins were wiped away, a clean slate, and my place in eternity was guaranteed because He came to reside in my heart. I was a new creation, who like a caterpillar, had been walking around this life with my eyes shut. I was blinded by the material things of this world, consuming things that were doing me more harm than good. A bit like the hungry caterpillar who ate and ate until he could eat no more, he then went into that dark place, the cocoon. I was broken inside, I needed a Saviour, I gave my life for His life, this divine exchange is worth more than the winning lottery ticket! I emerged from the cocoon a new person, I was ready to tell the world! And I did, I shared the gospel with my family, friends, mothers in the playground, and it worked, others came to know Jesus Christ as Lord and their lives were transformed. I was on the mountain top and never felt that I would come down. I was doing everything I knew to stay full of the Holy Spirit, I read my Bible, attended church, listened to preachers and worshiped the Lord in song and dance.....**I had been given the baton** and was prepared to run with it, I felt like I had faith that could move mountains!

Seven years later, my dad got cancer, I stayed as close to the Lord as I could, sometimes holding the hem of His garment. My dad gave His life to the Lord, He was saved but he was just a babe in the Lord and was afraid of facing death head on, this was crushing to my soul, to see my dad fight to stay in His body.....finally he was released. My heart broke, **I dropped the baton** at this point. Even though we are Christians we are still in an earthly body, with a soul that feels all the emotions, pain and heartache. It is healthy to grieve, however we must not stay in grief. We have the reassurance that our loved ones are in heaven, the most beautiful place in the universe, full of love, joy and peace, imagine such a place! Even though we are Christians we will still suffer at some point, but we have an anchor, who is Jesus Christ. No matter what you are going through in your life, remember who you are, you are His beloved, His body, His family, part of the kingdom of God. **Pick up that baton**, hold onto it tightly, get back to your first love, recovery is there, growth and transformation is there. Remember that day when you first believed, recommission yourself to Him. Ask Him into your heart, walk in the light of the Lord, become a disciple, as He commanded in Matt 28:19-20,

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'.

Sharon Sewell
Project Co-ordinator

***Remember, remember The fifth of November
Gunpowder, Treason and Plot
I see no reason Why Gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot***

Guy Fawkes Night makes an annual appearance in the English calendar every November, inviting revellers to light bonfires and fireworks across the nation as the Autumn officially kicks in. But the roots of this centuries-old tradition is much more than an evening of sparks and illumination.

In this article, we'll explore everything you need to know about Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot to the story of how Bonfire Night has changed over the centuries. It's a story of rebellion, religion and riot – so grab a toffee apple and a sparkler, and settle down to find out more.



On the night of the 5th of November 1605, thirty six barrels of gunpowder were discovered hidden behind a pile of firewood in a storeroom beneath the Palace of Westminster. With them, guards found a man calling himself John Johnson. They found fuses in his pockets, and swiftly arrested him. He held out for days under the pain of intense torture, but eventually he confessed. His real name was Guy Fawkes and he, along with his fellow plotters, hoped to spark a Catholic uprising by blowing up Parliament and everyone in it – including King James I and many of his leading nobles.

Every 5th of November, we celebrate Guy Fawkes Night or Bonfire Night. Even though most kids associate fireworks displays and big bonfires with this night, there's a lot of interesting history behind this day. Here's some interesting facts you can teach them about Guy Fawkes Night.

- 1) The celebration marks the anniversary of a plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament in 1605, otherwise known as the Gunpowder plot. The attack was planned by a group of thirteen young men, led by Robert Catesby.
- 2) Guy Fawkes was born on April 13th 1570 in Stonegate in York. He was an experienced soldier and even though he didn't fight for his country, he did fight for the Spanish against the Dutch in the Netherlands. This is where he gained experience with explosives and gave himself the nickname Guido.
- 3) The authorities discovered Guy Fawkes guarding the explosives below Westminster Palace after being tipped off by an anonymous letter.
- 4) The gunpowder would have completely destroyed the building and caused severe damage to buildings within a one-mile radius of it. Ironically, the cellar where the gunpowder was stored, and the Houses of Parliament were later destroyed in an accidental fire in 1834.
- 5) Shortly after being discovered, Fawkes was taken to the King's bedchamber to explain why he wanted to kill him and blow up Parliament. Fawkes said that he

regarded the King as a disease since he had been excommunicated by the Pope.

6) Under torture, it took four days for Guy Fawkes to admit to his part in the Gunpowder Plot and give names of other people involved in it. Fawkes and the others involved were tried on the 31st of January 1606 and then hung, drawn and quartered in the Old Palace Yard in Westminster.

7) As Fawkes awaited his punishment on the gallows, he leapt to his death and actually died from a broken neck. Contrary to popular belief, Fawkes wasn't thrown onto a bonfire.

8) The Houses of Parliament are still searched once a year by the Yeoman of the Guard to make sure there are no conspirators hiding with explosives, usually just before the State Opening of Parliament.

9) Guy Fawkes has an island named after him. To the north-west of Santa Cruz Island in the Galapagos Islands, a collection of two uninhabited, crescent-shaped islands are named Isla Guy Fawkes, or Guy Fawkes Island.

10) Did you know that it was actually illegal NOT to celebrate Bonfire Night? This was until 1959 when that rule was scrapped. The only place that didn't have to celebrate it was St Peter's School in York. This was the school that Guy Fawkes went to!

During the wars, no one was allowed to set off fireworks or light bonfires. However, as it was still illegal not to celebrate, people had to celebrate indoors.



We're lucky that fireworks even exist! They were invented by accident in China in the 10th century when a Chinese chef accidentally mixed three common cooking ingredients - charcoal, sulphur, and saltpetre (a substitute for salt) together and set it alight. It burned with colourful flames and exploded! The first recorded fireworks display in England was at the wedding of King Henry VII in 1486.

I have to admit I have always enjoyed bonfire night. I grew up with Catherine wheels – that never seemed to go in the right direction, rockets and sparklers in the back garden and a bonfire that had grown in size over the previous weeks. My grandma's bonfire toffee kept the local dentist in business and Parkin, a northern speciality dark treacle ginger cake, were some of the delights we shared. We would make a guy out of old clothing stuffed with newspapers. We didn't go trick or treating, but we paraded around our guy (sometimes in an old pram or go-cart) and asked for "a penny for the guy" to spend on sparklers or better rockets! The story behind bonfire night is of course rather sinister and cruel, dating back to the time when men and women were burnt at the stake.



Fire, however has always fascinated people. It brought the earliest humans the ability to cook, to keep warm and to be secure. Fire is seen as powerful and purifying. It is used to smelt precious metals, to make steel, to cauterise wounds even today.

In the times of the Old Testament Moses experienced God in a totally unexpected way, a bush that was burning with real flames yet was not consumed by the fire; and in the New Testament the Holy Spirit was seen as “..tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit..”



And so whether it is burning the garden rubbish, or sitting by a cosy log fire, remember the flame of the Holy Spirit warms our hearts, filling and empowering us to live with new purified hearts, the old ways have been cauterised, and may be open to God speaking to us even in the most unexpected ways.

Anne Smith

References: Wikipedia

Saint Andrew's Day



St Andrew's Day is the feast day of Andrew the Apostle and is celebrated every year in Scotland on the 30 November. In 1320, St Andrew officially became the patron saint of Scotland when the country's independence was declared with the signing of The Declaration of Arbroath. Saint Andrew is the disciple in the New Testament who introduced his brother, the Apostle Peter, who is traditionally thought of as the first Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, to Jesus the Messiah. Andrew, along with Peter, James and John formed the inner circle of Jesus' twelve apostles. Andrew was a disciple of St. John the Baptist prior to becoming a follower of Christ.

- Not a great deal is known about his early life other than he is mentioned in the Bible as taking part in the 'Feeding of the Five Thousand'.
- Andrew met a tragic fate as a martyr for his beliefs as Romans decreed that he be crucified. However, the apostle did not believe he was 'worthy' to die in the same manner as Jesus.
- Therefore, Andrew was crucified on a diagonal cross on November 30, 60AD, and this X-shaped cross is the symbol of Scotland's Saltire flag which commemorates his final day.



One story says that in the 9th Century, King Angus in Scotland was preparing for a battle against the English. St Andrew appeared to King Angus in a dream promising him victory and on the day of the battle, an X symbol appeared in the sky, which was the symbol of St Andrew. He vowed that if they won, St Andrew would be made the patron saint of Scotland - and that is exactly what happened.

Anne Smith

The Two Minutes Silence on Remembrance Sunday



On 12th November we think about those who have given their lives in war, the Two Minutes Silence is a significant act of remembrance.

The silence provides an opportunity to remember those who have suffered in war and how we can work for a peaceful world. However, we can also find ourselves thinking about lunch or whether we've switched off our phone?

Victor Frankl, a victim of Auschwitz, suggested that the most intolerable of all human conditions is not imprisonment or hunger, but lack of meaning. The two minutes of silence enables us to connect with Jesus' message, which offers true meaning to our lives and world. He spoke of giving ourselves in love for each other and the world, 'Love your enemies and pray for those that persecute you' (Matthew 5:44). He also demonstrated such love in sacrificing His own life, 'Greater love has no-one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends' (John 15:13). When observing the silence, let's use it to reflect on this sacrificial love, as we call to mind those who have laid down their lives.

In our busy lives, where so much clamours for our attention, silence gives us an opportunity to reflect on our priorities and rediscover true meaning in our lives. This is not just for Remembrance Sunday, as Jesus often withdrew to find silence to seek God (eg: Luke 5:16). Let's use silence in our lives as space to seek God's will and offer ourselves to Him, just as those who gave themselves in conflict through the years.

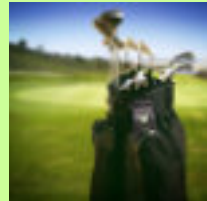
'They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old: Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them.'

The Parish Pump



Long ago when people cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft.

Today it's called golf



Church bulletin notices that didn't turn out quite right....



Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7.00pm to 8:30 pm. Please use the back door.

Due to the Minister's illness, Wednesday's healing services will be discontinued until further notice.

Next Sunday Mrs Vinson will be soloist for the morning service. The minister will then speak on 'Terrible Experiences'

The congregation is asked to remain seated until the end of the recession.

Bible Sunday - 29th October 2023



This special Sunday in the church's calendar is an opportunity to stop and consider the enormous blessing that the Bible has brought to people down the centuries. Without it, we would know nothing about God our Father, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit. It is God-breathed – full of His love and guidance to us. World history would have been radically different without it.

Nunthorpe Methodist Church's Christmas fayre

On Saturday 25th November
at 10.00am - 12.30pm



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

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

Seasonal Refreshments

ADVENT

As I write this it is July 31st and Advent seems a long way off.

Yet in many ways as we head through August we see so much of the person of Jesus and at the moment lots of teaching about the Kingdom.



Yesterday when I looked at the Gospel in Matthew ch 13 it was that set of Parables describing the Kingdom. A mustard seed, Yeast, Pearls Buried treasure. Advent reminds us of the coming of the Kingdom in all sorts of ways.

Advent is often seen as the precursor for Christmas and as such is often not known as having its own identity

We at Grove Hill are going to look at themed preaching during Advent this year, I will be sharing those four Sundays with Rev John and using material called 'Out of the Ordinary'

I haven't seen it yet, but I look forward to working with John but also of making Advent special at our church so we have a chance to think about what it may mean for us.

Sue and I went with friends the other day to Bishop Auckland to visit the castle and the Palace to learn about the Bishops of Durham.. We learned a lot of history but we also learned how much many of the Bishops had been involved with issues appertaining to the lives of ordinary people in the area, especially the Miners and one Bishop in particular enabling a previous Miners' strike to be resolved by getting both sides together. He brought the Christian faith into ordinary life issues and turned them into extraordinary solutions. This to me was the way the church was trying to work for the Kingdom, not just in Advent but every day.

I often use the expression Kingdom Builders, because that's what I believe we are about. I don't know when the Kingdom will come or when the final Advent will be realised. I do believe we have a responsibility to work for God's people to turn what we may see as our ordinary lives into extraordinary witness for the coming of the Kingdom. Christmas is about the Incarnation, God becoming human in the person of Jesus. Advent helps us each year to prepare for that, to celebrate it in our prayers our Bible study our preparation for this extraordinary miracle.

So why not make the effort this year to turn Advent into the Extraordinary, use the material that the Methodist church is producing or your own fellowship.

This Memo will be out in September the start of the new Methodist year a new calling to serve God as the people called Methodists.

Dave Elliott

PRAYER DIARY

September 3rd We remember today the start of our new Methodist year, we pray we may prayerfully embrace this new beginning. Pray for the Preachers' meeting taking place tomorrow. Pray for Rev David and for Nunthorpe

September 10th We pray today for children returning to school and for their teachers. Some will be going to new schools with fresh challenges. We pray for School Governors and also for parents and carers. Pray today for Rev John Howard Norman and Normanby

September 17th We pray today for this Centenary weekend at Grove Hill. Bless all connected with this church as they celebrate God's goodness over all these years and as they seek his presence in the years to come.

September 24th We pray for this season of Harvest, when in our churches we celebrate all God's good gifts around us and as we seek ways of sharing with those who have too little, when often we have too much. Pray for Trinity and for the Family Friendly Centre, for Rev Charity and for Sharon Sewell. Pray especially for Charity as hopefully she gains the health and strength to come back to the life of our Circuit.

October 1st We pray today for all the groups in our churches which bring people together in friendship and fellowship. Pray for Marton and for Rev Mike Harland. Pray for the Linthorpe Road Resource Centre.

October 8th We pray today for all the groups of children and young people who meet in our churches. Bless and inspire those who lead them and who teach them. Pray for Elaine at our Circuit Office.

October 15th We pray for Church Council meetings, for Circuit meetings and for Synod and the Circuit Leadership Team. Pray for those who are members of these important groups in the life of our churches. May they be guided by the power of the Holy Spirit in their

decision making. Pray for the Avenue Community Project.

October 22nd We pray today for all those people who are sick in body, mind and spirit. Be with those who care for them at home and in Hospitals and Care Homes. Pray for those people who may feel ostracised from society, those just settling in to our communities. Be with Methodist Asylum Project and for Billy Barnes the Project Manager.

October 29th We pray today for those people involved in the lives of our Communities, those in local Politics, those in caring organisations, all who take their faith into the lives of our communities.

Pray for MHA Communities Teesside for Montpellier Manor and for Tom Ward the Communities Manager, and Stainton

November 5th We pray today for those who are unemployed and who are seeking work. Pray for those who are finding the cost of living crisis hard to cope with. Bless the work of Food Bank and for all the ways we, as Christians, can offer help and support. Pray too today for the Chinese Church and all involved in the life and mission of this church.

November 12th On this Remembrance Sunday we think of, and thank God for all who gave their lives in two World Wars and those who continue to give their lives in the service of Freedom and Justice and a better world. Be with those for whom today is all about painful memories. Pray for peace in our troubled world.

November 19th Pray for those in training for Ministry or to become Local Preachers or Worship Leaders. Bless and inspire those who train them. Pray for Methodist Women in Britain.

November 26th We pray for the time of Advent as we prepare ourselves to understand more about our faith and the coming of Jesus. Bless all the churches in the Darlington District and also Rev Richard Andrew the Chair of our District.