

Welshpool Methodist Church, High Street

“Celebrating and Sharing God’s Love”

“IN TOUCH” **issue 4** – continuing to stay in touch during this time of social distancing for us all, and enforced self-isolation for some.

News and Updates

1. **Congratulations** – 12th May is a very special day for two members of our church family. Leah Smith, our ‘matriarch’, will be celebrating her 98th Birthday and Rozel Kneale her 90th. We send our congratulations and good wishes to them, and also send greetings to Mildred Brown who will be 92 on 15th - and to all of you who will be celebrating birthdays this month. (If you know of anyone celebrating a ‘significant’ birthday, ending in 0 or 90+, please pass on the details so that they can be published in “In Touch” and we can remember them on their special day).

2. **Thanks** – Joan Corbett, who recently celebrated her 95th Birthday, and David Penrose his 80th, have both asked for their thanks to be passed on to all who contacted them with cards and good wishes, which were much appreciated. (Joan says her day was made even more memorable when she was surprised by a visit from the Town Crier who came to proclaim her special birthday on the doorstep of Dorothy Hughes House!)

3. **Condolences** – we extend our sympathy to Mair Dennett (member at New Street, supporter of our church and sister of Joan Langford) whose husband Geoff, aged 91, died on 25th April in the Rhallt, where he had been a resident for over 12 years.

4. **Sunday Worship in our ‘Church without Walls’** - Our Service Sheet for 10th May is being prepared by Graham Smith and for 17th May by Terry and Eileen Jobling.

5. **Provision of PPE** – some of you may have seen on the news Sam Monaghan, Chief Executive Officer for Methodist Homes, speaking about the current situation for residents and staff. MHA is one of the leading and largest providers of care in the UK, currently looking after over 6,000 residents in Homes around England and Wales. Sadly, over 200 residents and 2 members of staff have already succumbed to Covid-19. Sam has now sent out an appeal to all Methodist Circuits, for donations for the purchase of much needed PPE supplies. In response, Welshpool church, with the approval of the Superintendent Minister and members of Church Council, has sent a donation of £200 from the Sylvia Evans Legacy (from the portion set aside for Mission and Outreach). In addition, Council members agreed that a further donation of £100 from the Legacy should be made to Anne Smith (who is busy making ‘scrubs’) to help with the cost of purchasing the necessary materials.

6. **Christian Aid Week 2020** – 10th to 16th May is Christian Aid Week, but sadly, under the current circumstances, the service, lunch and street collection which Churches Together in Welshpool had planned cannot go ahead. However, Christian Aid Week is going online, with live streaming of worship each day, and a daily fun quiz. To find out more, go to www.christianaid.org.uk/news. (Those of you who were participating in the annual CA “Count Your Blessings” exercise during Lent please keep your resulting donations to hand in once restrictions are lifted. Thank you).

From Ruthie, who send good wishes for our physical and mental health during these strange times: "Some ways of coping with lockdown"

As the lockdown continues, we can sometimes begin to experience life as less of an interesting diversion to normal, and each day can become harder to endure without the regular daily and weekly occurrences in our diaries. Now is the time some may begin to feel anxious, depressed or lonely. What follows are some (fairly common-sense) suggestions for keeping up our spirits.

1. The most important activity we can do is to communicate. We are social species and we have a need for others. This "In Touch" Newsletter is doing a great job in keeping people connected. We can also write letters and telephone each other and in these days of technological advances, we can speak to each other via methods on the internet e.g. "facetime", "zoom" etc.
2. Keep to your usual routine times e.g. for eating, going to bed and getting up. Your day will feel less disorganised and haphazard.
3. Vary your activities between those that are active and those that are relaxing e.g. gardening followed by reading the paper.
4. Put variety into your day. Doing the same thing from getting up in the morning to going to bed can be too much of a good thing, even if it's an enjoyable hobby normally.
5. In the evening, plan something you will do (a chore or a hobby) at some point the following day e.g. cutting the grass, finishing that jigsaw or cleaning the windows!
6. If you so desire, learn a new skill now that you have the time e.g. embroidery, napkin-folding or bridge. There are lots of websites that can teach these and other skills, and eBay and Amazon can sell the equipment needed.
7. Make sure you have a laugh as often as possible – and making someone else laugh is "the best medicine". There have been many funny jokes, cartoons and videos being shared on the internet and Youtube, or check out sitcoms etc. on TV. Life is not all doom and gloom; try to see the funny side of things as well as sympathise with people in this situation.
8. Too much bad news is not good for the soul! If the national news 'gets' to you with its sad content, limit your watching to once a day, so still being aware of Government advice.
9. We will all have good and bad days, but during the bad days, know that there can be good days ahead and that eventually this strange environment will end and we will come through it, changed but surviving.
10. If you are on medication, remember to order repeat prescriptions a week ahead.
11. Doing something for someone else helps the world go round, and both parties benefit. Even if you are not able to go to the shops for someone who is self-isolating, or return to previous work, there will always be someone who will be glad of a phone call, a homemade loaf or other kindness.
12. Finally, the three things we need for our general good health, both physical and mental, are: eat sensibly, try to sleep well and do some daily exercise.

From Clive and Marilyn (*from the Berriew Newsletter*)

The Four Candles (author unknown)

The Four Candles burned slowly. Their Ambience was so soft you could hear them speak...

The First Candle said, "I AM PEACE, but these days, nobody wants to keep me lit." Then PEACE's flame slowly diminishes and goes out completely.

The Second Candle said, "I AM FAITH, but these days, I am no longer indispensable." Then FAITH's flame slowly diminishes and goes out completely.

The Third Candle said, "I AM LOVE and I haven't the strength to stay lit any longer. People put me aside and don't understand my importance. They even forget to love those who are nearest to them"

Waiting no longer, LOVE goes out completely.

Suddenly ... A child enters the room and sees the three candles no longer burning. The child begins to cry, "Why are you not burning? You are supposed to stay lit until the end!"

Then the Fourth Candle speaks gently to the child. "Don't be afraid, I AM HOPE, and while I still burn, we can re-light the other candles."

With shining eyes the child took the Candle of HOPE and lit the other three candles.

Never let the flame of HOPE go out of your life.

With HOPE, no matter how bad things look and are...

PEACE, FAITH and LOVE can shine brightly in our lives.

From Graham: "Not everything is cancelled"

Sunshine is not cancelled
Spring is not cancelled
Love is not cancelled
Relationships are not cancelled
Reading is not cancelled
Naps are not cancelled
Devotion is not cancelled
Music is not cancelled
Dancing is not cancelled
Imagination is not cancelled
Kindness is not cancelled
Conversations are not cancelled

HOPE is not cancelled

And two quotes sent in by Graham:

"The World is closed for Renovation – Grand Re-opening Soon!"

"If 2020 is telling us anything, it's telling us to enjoy the moments we have and not to take any day, or anything, or anyone, for granted."

From Rev'd Marian: Hope is...

There are times when I wonder how my mind has made a link between one thought and another – I was told, years ago, that I have a butterfly mind that flits from one thought to the next as a butterfly flits from flower to flower!

Last month, on Day 27, using the Methodist Church's Prayer Manual, I was praying for the Czech Republic and my thoughts went back to a book that I read some years ago. Obviously, I had to look for the book – I was easily distracted!

The book I was remembering was Vaclav Havel's 'Disturbing the Peace'. Vaclav Havel was an outstanding Czech playwright, humanitarian and dissident against the repressive communist regime. In the Velvet Revolution of 1989 he was a leading figure; he was often imprisoned and interrogated then, in December 1989, he was elected President of Czechoslovakia. He's an unsung hero who succeeded against all odds, holding fast when no-one thought he would or could win against the communist regime.

I never write in books, I can't. Instead, either I put a slip of paper between the pages that contain something I might want to go back to, or I make notes on a postcard and leave it inside the book's cover ... so I went back to 'Disturbing the Peace' and found this:

'I should probably say first that the kind of hope I often think about (especially in situations that are particularly hopeless, such as prison) I understand above all as a state of mind, not a state of the world. Either we have hope within us or we don't. It is a dimension of the soul, and it's not essentially dependent upon some particular observation of the world or estimate of the situation.

Hope is ... an orientation of the spirit, an orientation of the heart; it transcends the world that is immediately experienced, and is anchored somewhere beyond its horizons.

I think the deepest and most important form of hope, the only one that can keep us above water ... is something we get, as it were, from 'elsewhere'.'

So often, my 'butterfly thoughts' alight on something that I'd forgotten and need to remember!

V Havel, '*Disturbing the Peace*' (New York: Vintage, 1991) p 181

From "God's Little Book of Hope" (*Words of Inspiration and Encouragement: R. Daly*)

Let God mould you: As the potter is to the clay, so God is to our lives. However you might presently feel, remember, God has not finished with you yet.

For further reflection: Jeremiah 18 v 6

Look forward with hope: 'No matter how dark and dreary the days may seem there is always something positive to look forward to that can become your beam of light. Just flick on the switch.'

For further reflection: Hebrews 12v 2

Don't let go: 'When you get to the end of the rope, tie a knot and hang on.'

(Franklin D Roosevelt)

For further reflection: 1 Thessalonians 5v21

Look to the light: No one ever damaged their eyesight by looking on the brighter side of life.

For further reflection: 2 Corinthians 4 vv 16-18

Be patient: Whether it's the best of times or the worst of times, remember there are other times to come.

For further reflection: Psalm 30 v 5

May 14th is St. Corona's Day! Yes, there really is a Saint Corona!

Little is known about her but she and Saint Victor lived (and died) during the reign of Marcus Aurelius – the second century AD – and they were put to death by order of a Roman judge named Sebastian for refusing to renounce their Christian faith. The 16 year old Corona was married to a Roman soldier who wasn't aware of her faith. When Victor was being publicly tortured, Corona went to him, knelt at his side and began to pray for him. Sebastian ordered her arrest and her torture, which led to her death. According to tradition, this happened in modern Syria.

In some places, St Corona is remembered on May 14th – and she is patron saint of epidemics and pandemics.

The present day virus is named coronavirus not because of St Corona, but because of its shape. Under the microscope, it looks like a globe, a corona, or crown, around it.

(Thanks to Marian for this information)

From John G: his thoughts on the present situation

One could describe this as World War 3, but this time we're all in it together,
Fighting to conquer a vicious infection
That's creeping around in every direction.

Steps have been taken to curb this movement which one way or other affects us all
And grateful thanks to NHS plus our voluntary Heroes
Who, in all sorts of ways, are answering the call.

Let us hope it will soon be over, but for awhile we will not "be in clover";
Righting economy is the next big battle,
A job that will really be hard to tackle.

From Pat P:

"In this present Lockdown situation I saw the following words and thought how appropriate for we gardeners!?"

Sow 5 rows of PEAS

Presence at church; Patience; Preparedness; Promptness; Perseverance

Sow 3 rows of LETTUCE

Let us be faithful to duty. Let us be loyal and unselfish. Let us love one another.

At any time of the year, sow TURNIPS

Turn up for meetings. Turn up for new ideas. Turn up with a smile.

Turn up with determination, to make everything good and worthwhile.

In hot weather, develop our own SQUASH

Squash gossip. Squash criticism. Squash indifference.

So make everything in the garden LOVELY - Wise words for us to ponder over today.

From Allan E: 'Fortune favours the brave'

Within living memory Welsh seafarers made up 40 per cent of the British Merchant Navy. Among them Llew Evans, formerly a submariner in the Royal Navy, was to become captain of a tiny steam trader working the coast of China.

With Japan about to enter the war, the Anhui was in Yokohama to embark an Australian diplomat and some Indian nationals. The ship got away some hours before the declaration and headed south. Captain Llew said he looked like a floating laundry with washing hanging from every available hook.

Because he knew the waters so well, he was able to navigate through the many islands dotted over the 2000 plus miles of ocean. Enemy destroyers were everywhere picking up and sinking all manner of craft.

Eventually he reached a friendly harbour and dropped anchor. When morning came a signal came by Aldis lamp. "Don't move, you are in the middle of a mine field".

Llew Evans was Helen's great uncle. Fortune favours the brave.

From Julia: "Where have all the flours gone?!"

With so little flour in the shops, I decided to use any spare slices of bread to make puddings.

For bread and butter pudding, although the recipe says 6 slices, I use 4, with 1 egg and ½ pt milk. I always remove the crusts (optional) and butter the bread lightly, cut into triangles, and layer in dish with sugar and dried fruit. Pour over egg & milk mixture and cook, about 1 hour, gas 4, 160-170C. (You could make baked custard at the same time if you have extra egg and milk. Beat egg and milk until frothy; add sugar. Sprinkle with nutmeg. Pour into dish.)

The other pudding I favour is Summer Pudding – choose an appropriate size dish/bowl/jelly mould (I use a bucket shaped bowl), but make sure you choose one which can take a saucer or other bowl to press down onto the fruit at the final stage. It's going to be a bit like a sandcastle, well firmed down. If you can't get soft fruits fresh, ask your shopper to bring a frozen pack of mixed summer berries.

Simmer the fruit and stir with sugar. I don't add water. The sugar encourages the breakdown of the fruit. When it has become hot and sloppy it is ready.

Your bowl should have a lining of dried bread without crusts. Pour in hot fruit mix. Place a slice of bread half way up or if making a small portion just cover top. Now you need to put saucer on it and press down with a heavy weight. (I have a large quartz stone in my kitchen window). It should be in fridge for 24 hours as the fruit seeps through and sweetens the bread. Instructions for turning out can be omitted if it's awkward – just get that serving spoon in and divide it up. Eat with cream or evaporated milk, or ice cream if it's hot.

Both these and other non-flour recipes can be found in cookery books or on line.

Happy Eating! Julia

(Both SR & Plain available Wednesday this week at Sainsbury's – but shop early! JR)

QUIZ TIME!

Place Names – each answer is a place name to be found in the UK and/or Irish Republic. The clues are mixed; some general knowledge, others are cryptic or anagram; not every answer is a single word.

1. Friesians, for example
2. Rich Fruit Cake
3. Westernmost venue of Three Choirs Festival
4. Fortified wine but definitely not vintage
5. Morris Motors named one of their models this
6. Artesian – this one is in Somerset
7. Internationally renowned flautist
8. Bactrian confronting a shallow water crossing
9. Birthplace of the inventor of shorthand
10. Famous for its tart, or as many locals insist, pudding
11. Fifth century Greek marbles
12. June 24th – perfect day for a ride on a classic motorbike
13. Welsh garment
14. Bottle stopper
15. Quick snack on day out in Kent
16. Found on beaches – just change one letter
17. Perfect for a spot of relaxation
18. High? Church? (Nearly every place has at least one, including Welshpool)
19. Staffordshire vegetable
20. Prefixes cream, milk and blue
21. Dark pond?
22. Best place for sole?
23. Mint cake
24. Its towers attract thousands of thrill seekers
25. Coloured conduit
26. Were some Soricidae interred here?
27. Abraham's place?
28. Not false exercise on water
29. Ecstasy, a win!
30. Where duke marched men up and down

Answers to Puzzles in Issue 3

Books of the Bible, in the order they appeared in the paragraph:

Amos, Mark, Luke, John, Joel, Judges, Job, Hebrews, Esther, Acts, James, Ruth, Romans, Titus, Matthew, Genesis, Hosea, Lamentations, Revelation, Timothy, Samuel, Numbers, Malachi, Peter, Kings.

Drinks

Answers in numerical order:

Cordial, Mocha, Lemonade, Peppermint Tea, Latte, Coffee, Cocoa, Espresso, Barley Water, Americano, Cappuccino, Ginger Ale, Smoothie, Squash and Hot Chocolate.

Laughter is the Best Medicine!

Two stories sent in by Leah (from a Circuit Magazine, submitted by Ian Waugh)

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six year olds.

After explaining the commandment to 'honour' thy Father and thy Mother, she asked "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?"

Without missing a beat one little boy (the oldest in the family) answered; "Thou shalt not kill".

The children had all been photographed, and the teacher was trying to persuade them each to buy a copy of the group picture.

"Just think how nice it will be to look at it when you are all grown up and say 'There's Jennifer, she's a lawyer', or 'That's Michael, he's a doctor'."

A small voice at the back of the room rang out, 'and there's the teacher. She's dead'.

From Pat P: Church notices don't always get it correct!

For those of you who have children and don't know it, there is a nursery downstairs.

The minister will preach his farewell message, and then the choir will sing "Break Forth with Joy".

Jane Brown and John Smith were married in the church last week. So ends a friendship that began in their schooldays.

We would like all parishioners to know that the cost of attending the Fasting and Prayer Weekends includes all meals.

And finally, **a Prayer from Christian Aid in the time of Coronavirus:**

God of heaven and earth,

In these times of isolation, apart from loved ones, distant from friends, away from neighbours,

Thank you that there is nothing in all creation, not even coronavirus, that is able to separate us from your love.

And may your love that never fails continue to be shared through the kindness of strangers looking out for each other, for neighbours near and far, all recognising our shared vulnerability, each of us grateful for every breath, and willing everyone to know the gift of a full and healthy life.

Keep us all in your care. Amen.

Thanks to all of you who have been 'in touch' with contributions for this issue. Please send your news, messages, thoughts, poems, prayers, quizzes, funny stories etc. for issue 5, which will be out on 20th May, to rhodes4144@gmail.com, or by phone 01938 850514, or by post to "Brynteg", Castle Caereinion, Welshpool, SY21 9AS, by 17th May. All contributions welcome. (For Cake orders: Gwen 555988 or Janice 850514).