

## Welshpool Methodist Church, High Street

### “Celebrating and Sharing God’s Love”

#### “IN TOUCH” issue 9

##### News and Updates

1. Belated Congratulations to **Glenys Evans**, who celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday on 21<sup>st</sup> June. We send good wishes to Glenys, and to those with July birthdays.

2. **Jennifer Platt** would like to thank you for cards and good wishes she received on the occasion of her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday. She enjoyed a socially distanced celebration with her family in the garden at Dorothy Hughes House.

3. We continue to think of **Richard Ballard** who has had three spells in hospital during lockdown. We are pleased to hear he is progressing well at home, and is keeping busy making Christmas cards! We wish **John Gordon**, who is somewhat battered and bruised following a fall, a speedy recovery. We are grateful to him for continuing to produce our publicity posters.

4. **Sunday Worship** – following the Welsh Government’s announcement of the easing of restrictions, allowing worship to resume when faith leaders feel it is safe to do so, we, with Revd Bob’s blessing and the consent of our Church Council, are in the process of preparing a Risk Assessment and working through all the guidelines from the Welsh Government and the Methodist Church, to ensure we fulfil all the requirements that need to be met before we can recommence Sunday services, which we hope to do at the end of the month. However, we need to emphasise that your health and safety continues to be our main concern, and we would advise any of you who are shielding, or are particularly vulnerable, or who may feel uncomfortable about leaving home, not venture out. We shall continue to produce our Home Worship Sheet.

For those of you who do wish to join us, you need to be aware that our worship will be somewhat different to that which we have been used to, with social distancing, hand sanitising, etc. and a one way system in place. There will be no singing or spoken responses. Services will last no longer than 45 minutes, and there will be no after-church fellowship or cup of tea as you will be required to leave the premises promptly at the close of worship.

Our first service on **26<sup>th</sup> July** at 10.45am will be conducted by Revd Marian, and will include Holy Communion, which will be distributed to you in your seats, using wafers and individual disposable glasses. Our maximum seating capacity, socially distanced, is 34, and on arrival, the stewards will direct you to a seat. Couples and those in the same social bubble may sit together. There will be receptacles to receive your envelope and cash offerings at points of entry and exit – there will be no collection during the service.

The church will continue to be open for **Individual Prayer** on Mondays and Thursdays until the end of this month, when opening times will be reviewed.

5. Our **Sunday Worship Sheet** for 19<sup>th</sup> July is being prepared by Eileen and Terry. Revd Marian will prepare the sheet for 26<sup>th</sup>, enabling those unable to get to church to be with us in spirit, and to be part of our worshipping community that day.

**From Revd Michael** (who will take his final service on 16<sup>th</sup> August)

A few days ago I received a letter from the President and Vice President of the Conference offering their greetings and the congratulations of the Methodist Conference as they had noted that at this time I will be celebrating the fiftieth anniversary, the Golden Jubilee, of my ordination.

50 years ago, in July 1970, I was ordained at the Methodist Conference in Manchester. The venue was the huge Macclesfield Methodist Church. The same month I received my London BD degree for which I'd studied as my probationer studies, and in August, June and I were married in Liverpool, so 1970 was a memorable year.

I left Southmoor Technical School, Sunderland, in 1960 at the age of 16, having been in one of two classes to sit the GCE for the first time, and started work with two 'O' levels to my name. I went 'On Note' on the Plan and became a Local Preacher on 'Full Plan' two years later in 1962 (the same year, incidentally, as Terry Jobling).

Having gained a further three 'O' levels by going to 'Night School', I successfully candidated for the Methodist Ministry, and in 1964 I began my training at Hartley Victoria College in Manchester. Thereafter I served as a Probationer Minister in Liverpool.

I have served in various Methodist Circuits. At Blaydon, I lived in Chopwell, an ex Pit Village that had the distinction of (a) one of their residents, an ex-pitman, becoming their MP and (b) of going on strike some time before the General Strike. Later I was to serve in Cockermouth in Cumbria, Marshfield, Missouri in the USA (a 12 month exchange with an American Methodist Pastor), at Threemilestone in the Truro Circuit, and Leadgate in the Consett Circuit before moving to Welshpool. I have had some wonderful colleagues, notably Gerald Burt in Truro, and Terry Hurst, who lives in my previous Circuit. Also, I have met some interesting 'characters' and been supported by some wonderful people in the course of a varied and fruitful ministry, for which I am grateful.

When sabbaticals were introduced, I had the marvellous opportunity to visit South India and experienced the CSI (Church of South India), the Mar Thomas Church (reputedly founded by St. Thomas), and a number of Christian Aid projects.

I retired from full-time ministry about 12 years ago. We are happily settled in Welshpool and I have continued occasional preaching in this and the Marches Circuit, as well as neighbouring churches, but the time comes when a Supernumerary Minister must 'hang up his boots' (I have struggled to find an appropriate phrase) before he gets old and boring and 'someone' decides to whisper in his ear .....

So, now in 2020, I have decided to retire from preaching after 60 years on the Methodist preaching 'Plan' and 50 years after my ordination. If, in this Covid-19 period, we will be allowed to resume worship services in our church soon, my last service will be held on August 16<sup>th</sup> at 10.45am. My grateful thanks go to everyone who has given me support and encouragement over the years.

Michael

**From Revd Bob:** Pastoral Care Cover

From 13<sup>th</sup> July until the end of August, Revd Bob has arranged that emergency Pastoral Care will be provided by Revd Phil Poole, Revd Richard Parkes or Revd Jenni Hurd. In the first instance, please phone Janice (850514) for contact details.

**From Revd Paul Donnison,** Mid Glamorgan Mission Circuit re: Evening of Prayer

"As we reflect on the way forward, Wales Synod Leadership Team has asked me to facilitate an Evening of Prayer on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> July from 8 to 9pm. We recognise that this may not be convenient for everyone but want to take the opportunity to connect for prayer across Wales before the end of the Connexional year, so I invite you to this scheduled Zoom meeting. There will be some worship but more time in prayer groups. There will be no restriction on numbers."

*(Details of how to join the meeting, the meeting ID and password from Janice)*

**From Terry J:** 'A Loyal and Faithful Servant'

"This relates to a Local Preacher in the north of England, who died in the 1880s. He showed great loyalty to the circuit preaching plan and he kept all the copies of the plans throughout his life. He requested that, on his death, these plans should be placed in his coffin to act as his pillow. His wish was complied with. This shows a remarkable loyalty and faith in the work".

**From Pat P:** Frances Havergal's 'Reasons for Going to Church'

Frances Havergal, well known as the writer of many lovely hymns including "Who is on the Lord's side?" left behind in her memoirs these reasons for going to church:

1. God has blessed the Lord's Day and hallowed it, making no exception for hot, cold or stormy days.
2. I expect my minister to be there. I should be surprised if he were to stay at home on account of the weather.
3. By staying away myself I may lose the prayers which may bring God's blessing, and the sermon that would have done me great good.
4. On any important business, rainy weather does not keep me at home, and Church attendance is, in God's sight, very important.
5. Such weather will show me on what foundation my faith is built; it will prove to me how much I love Christ. True love rarely fails to meet an appointment.
6. I know not how many Sundays more God may give me and it would be a poor preparation for my first Sunday in heaven to have slighted my last Sunday on earth.

**From Betty H:** A little piece from the 'Pause for Thought' book, from the radio 2 programme

A surgeon once had an argument with his gardener about religion.

"I've cut into hundreds of bodies," said the doctor, "and I've never seen a human soul."

"Well", said the gardener, "if you cut into a tulip bulb, you wouldn't have seen a flower."

## From Julia: Sing Praises!

*Julia continues to choose hymns for us to sing on Mondays when Jubilate would usually be meeting*

For Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July: **Be Thou My Vision** (545 in StF)

This is a very beautiful hymn, asking for the greatest of all graces, that we may be accepting of the challenges within ourselves as individuals, and made greater and more glorious by an indwelling which we long for as Christians when we read that He is come to us. 'Emmanuel, God with us.' We can take any and every line and pray for the ability to be just this excellent in our faith and growth. The opening words encourage us to look forward, not as we did in the past, with a tendency to be critical, judgemental and impatient, but with that vision of goodness which Christ displays and which would make us so much better citizens of the kingdom. Our hymnbooks have a 20<sup>th</sup> century translation of this traditional Irish monastic hymn, attributed in part to a 6<sup>th</sup> century Irish writer (known as St Dallan, famous for his eulogy of St Columba) although this is disputed, and it may possibly be from an 8<sup>th</sup> century collection. The melody, Slane, is a traditional Irish tune. "Lord of All Hopefulness" is also sung to this tune.

For Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July: **Lord for the Years** (470 in StF)

This was penned by Timothy Dudley-Smith, a former Bishop of Thetford, with music composed by Michael Baughen, former Bishop of Chester. I knew both – Bishop Michael was chair of the Central Readers Council when I joined the executive body, and previous to this, I went to a conference where I sat next to Bishop Timothy. Both were encouraging of Lay Ministry at a time when the Anglican churches were exploring new ways for mission and evangelism in the latter decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the hymn we are taken on a journey, looking at how God is at the centre. Look at the subject of each verse – years, Word, land, world, ourselves, bringing our thanks for his presence along the way. So again, we are brought to the vision of who we would want to be: "Lord for ourselves, in living power remake us. Past put behind us, for the future, take us..to live for Christ alone."

*Join us on Mondays, and pray for both those who would normally be giving that gentle and welcoming ministry at our Coffee Morning and for the shoppers and visitors not able to enjoy being with us at this present time. God bless you all. Julia.*

## The Nation's Top Ten Favourite Hymns (Poll conducted for 'Songs of Praise' in 2019)

1. And did those feet in ancient times (Jerusalem) William Blake (1757-1827)
2. How Great Thou Art Russian hymn tr. Stuart Hine (1899-1989)
3. In Christ alone my hope is found Keith Getty (b.1974) & Stuart Townend (b.1963)
4. Dear Lord and Father of Mankind John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)
5. Abide with me Henry Francis Lyte (1793-1847)
6. I vow to thee my country Cecil Spring-Rice (1859-1918)
7. Guide me, O Thou Great Redeemer W Williams (1717-1791) & P Williams (1727-1796)
8. Amazing Grace John Newton (1725-1807)
9. Be still, for the presence of the Lord David J. Evans (b.1957)
10. I the Lord of sea and sky (Here I am, Lord) Daniel L. Schutte (b.1947)

*What? No Charles Wesley?!!!*

*How does this list compare with your Top Ten? Why not let us know?*

*(There are only 3 of my favourites here! Some of you will be able to guess which they are!)*

## A new hymn from Andrea

## I Turn to You

When life's so rough, I might just drown  
Before my feet find land;  
I turn to you, the Saving One  
And you will take my hand.

When all is gloom, I cannot find  
A star to pierce the night;  
I turn to you, the Mighty One  
And you will make things right.

When all seems lost, I feel alone  
With only pain and fear;  
I turn to you, the Loving One  
And you are always near.

When life's tide turns and all is good,  
Bright sunshine gilds the days,  
I turn to you, Eternal One  
And thank you with my praise.

*Andrea Davies July 2020*

*Sing to Capel, English traditional melody, harmonised by Ralph Vaughan Williams: StF 164*

**From Helen E: "The Starfish"**, a meditation from John Bell's "He was in the World".

In the morning early, I saw the folk from the village combing the sand for starfish,  
which the waves had washed up and left vulnerable.

These, the villagers would collect, kill, and sell for profit.  
That was their way.

One morning I rose earlier, and walked on the sand by the water's edge.  
There, in the distance, I saw a solitary figure. He was also looking for starfish.  
Whenever he found one alive or even just alive, he would lift it, kiss it, and lay it  
back on the blue water, there to be revived and to swim again.  
That was his way.

Now I get up every morning, earlier than the villagers, early as the man.  
I, the strong, no longer stretch to survive: I kneel down to restore the weak.  
And I have found, though some might mock me,  
That even far from the seaside, there are starfish on every street.

**From Pat P:** the following words were on a wall plaque in a garden centre

The Lord is our Head Gardener,  
He shows us where to plant the seeds of kindness,  
And he gives us the power to help them grow in strength.

If you want the seeds  
You can find them in your heart.

Plant some today for 'Early Flowering'

**From Graham:** *"When I was just a little girl"*- Sarah Morris Armer, 2018

When I was just a little girl we didn't have a lot;  
My mother kept the lights on with some silver in the slot.  
The TV was a rental one; that too was on a meter,  
But when I cast my mind back, life back then seemed so much sweeter.  
The larder wasn't always full of tasty things to eat  
But we didn't notice hunger as we played outside in the street.  
Our clothes weren't always bought from new; quite often worn before,  
But we didn't follow fashion; never thought to ask for more.  
My mother's purse was empty except of course for dreams,  
But she always found some pennies to buy us both ice creams.  
Our shoes were always measured. Our hair was always neat,  
I remember she insisted you must take care of your feet!  
School uniforms were granted, given by the state,  
We looked as smart as anyone when we walked through that school gate.  
In summer we picked berries from the hedgerows in the field;  
Our fingers stained with purple, we delighted in our yield.  
No games consoles to keep us quiet; our joy was climbing trees,  
With grubby grass stains on our knees.  
We'd nick the Fairy Liquid tub to have a water fight,  
And on the baking concrete our names we'd always write.  
We shared bikes and we shared footballs, used our sweater as the goal,  
And when the bitter winter came, we'd fill buckets up with coal.  
Every single chimney cast a plume into the sky;  
We huddled by the fire with a meat and tatty pie.  
Scratched your name on the frosty pane before the curtains shut,  
Tucked under a heap of blankets; no choice but to stay put.  
We never took a holiday, certainly not abroad,  
A day out to sunny Blackpool was all we could afford.  
We'd paddle in the Irish Sea and sit down in the foam,  
Ride a donkey on the beach and wish we could take it home.  
Our kitchen was always full of steam from the endless pans of spuds,  
And we volunteered for washing up, playing games with the suds.  
We made toast on the open fire – I can taste it to this day  
Dripping in salted butter – it seems half a world away.  
In and out of houses up and down the street  
Borrowing cups of sugar, we helped each other make ends meet.  
Life back then was infinite, you never could grow old.  
There was nothing to be frightened of with your mother's hand to hold.  
Death was never mentioned – too young to understand.  
It seemed that life would just work out the way you had it planned.  
But the years passed in minutes, there was no time to spare;  
Overnight, it seems, the silver threads adorned your mother's hair.  
Your endless days were over as time raced away at pace,  
And the happy days of innocence disappeared ... without trace.  
Don't waste a single minute of this life with which you're blessed;  
Things change in just a heartbeat, the ride can come to rest.  
Good times become just memories, faces fade and smiles are lost;  
Don't wish away a second; hang on ... at any cost.  
When I was just a little girl, we didn't have a lot,  
But one day... all of that nothing will be the greatest gift I've got.

## **Laughter, the best medicine!**

**From Fiona:** *the following statements about the Bible were written by children. They have not been retouched or corrected – incorrect spelling has been left in.*

1. In the first book of the bible, Guinness, god got tired of creating the world so he took the sabbath off.
2. Adam and eve were created from an apple tree. Noah's wife was Joan of ark. Noah built an ark and the animals came on in pairs.
3. Lots wife was a pillar of salt during the day, but a ball of fire during the night.
4. The Jews were a proud people and throughout history they had trouble with unsympathetic genitals.
5. Sampson was a strongman who let himself be led astray by Jezebel like Delilah.
6. Samson slayed the philistines with the axe of the apostles.
7. Moses led the jews to the red sea where they made unleavened bread, which is bread without any ingredients.
8. The Egyptians were all drowned in the dessert. Moses went up to mount cyanide to get the ten commandments.
9. The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.
10. The seventh commandment is thou shalt not admit adultery.
11. Moses died before he ever reached Canada then Joshua led the Hebrews in the battle of geritol.
12. Solomon, one of Davids sons had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.

**From Terry and Jane:** *sentences from church bulletins or from announcements in services*

1. The Fasting and Prayer Conference includes meals.
2. The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on Water'. The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'
3. Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
4. Don't let worry kill you off – let the Church help.
5. Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again', giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.
6. For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
7. Next Thursday there will be try-outs for the choir. They need all the help they can get.
8. Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their schooldays.
9. A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the Church Hall. Music will follow.
10. At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.

*More to follow in the next Issue!*

## Answers to Puzzles in Issue 8: Find the Animals

1 Reindeer 2 Badger 3 Buffalo 4 Lynx 5 Hyena 6 Lion 7 Horse 8 Bison 9 Zebra 10 Seal  
11 Gopher 12 Fox 13 Hare 14 Otter 15 Hedgehog 16 Antelope 17 Bear 18 Ferret 19 Cheetah  
20 Panda 21 Ape 22 Polecat 23 Chipmunk 24 Tortoise 25 Baboon 26 Mongoose  
27 Bush baby 28 Dingo 29 Porcupine 30 Wolf

**Quiz Time:** *(two quizzes courtesy of Oswestry Methodist Church's weekly quiz sheets)*

### From the Supermarket

1. Not a couple - with the best of the best? (6, 5)
2. Saying it will please the photographer (6)
3. Gaggles er! Scrambled! (5, 4)
4. Born, or could be sliced? (5)
5. On your own with elevating agent added, will bloom? (4-7, 5)
6. Mates too, for love fruits? (8)
7. Sounds like a child's plaything, allowed, and rotates (6, 5)
8. Eastenders or Emmerdale, for example. It helps to keep you clean (4)
9. In the scullery – don't throw it in (7, 5)
10. Maybe a wheelie, drum or tin, make sure you get some to put rubbish in (3, 4)
11. Hold on to the movie (5, 4)
12. Some long to get on this kind of train, with seasoning (5, 4)
13. Golf, Romeo, Alpha, Papa, Echo, Sierra, initially (6)
14. Canine glue to keep them clean and white (9)
15. Fowl bits, maybe legs or thighs? (7, 6)

### Desserts

1. Time of year for a second course? (6, 7)
2. Fruit you could slip on and break apart? (6, 5)
3. See (2) from the Supermarket above – feeling fed up? (6, 5)
4. Oven cooked, I'll enquire of her? (5, 6)
5. Rattle crate, differently (7, 4)
6. Sounds like part of the weekend (6)
7. Espied Richard (7, 4)
8. Cook nicely but rather sour, in Derbyshire? (8, 4)
9. Type of square + weapon (6)
10. Sounds of one being educated? (5)
11. New Yorker 'trews', gain fame (13, 5)
12. Nonsense talk, we might say, falling apart (7, 7)
13. Sounds like our little princess with a clever trick? (9, 5)
14. Verbose but aimless talk? (6)
15. Bean, baby or fish (5)

**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 10, which will be out on 29<sup>th</sup> July, to [rhodes4144@gmail.com](mailto:rhodes4144@gmail.com), or by phone 01938 850514, or by post to "Brynteg", Castle Caereinion, Welshpool, SY21 9AS, by 25<sup>th</sup> July. All contributions welcome. (Cake orders: Gwen 555988 or Janice 850514).