

Welshpool Methodist Church, High Street

“Celebrating and Sharing God’s Love”

“IN TOUCH” issue 14

News and Updates

1. **Happy Birthday** to all who will be celebrating birthdays this month – no notifications received!

2. **Morning Worship** - continues each Sunday at 10.45am. As the Cefn chapel is unable to reopen for worship at the moment, we have invited the congregation to join us at High Street. Revd Jacquie will be leading her first service at Welshpool next Sunday 27th – we welcome her and all who will be able to worship with us. We will be able to relay the service into the Meeting Room if we fill all the available seats in the church. Please be aware that it is now a requirement for attendees to wear a face covering. You may also need to dig out those thermals or wear an extra layer as church doors have to remain open during worship to aid air circulation. While we appreciate that one of the things you miss most while restrictions are in place is being able to socialise with your friends after the service, may we respectfully remind you that you should leave the building promptly without lingering to chat, as current guidelines dictate. You could mingle for awhile outside, but please ensure that you continue to practice the 2 metre social distancing rule.

3. **Meetings** – our understanding of the latest Covid-19 regulations from the Welsh Government and Cytun is that we are now permitted to hold “church governance meetings” (church Committees, Church Council, Circuit Meeting etc) as long as a Risk Assessment has been undertaken and those attending observe the regulations re: social distancing and the wearing of face coverings. We are awaiting guidance on other meetings normally held on church premises.

4. **Harvest Celebration 2020** – Sunday 7th October led by Kat Bond. Because of the current situation this year’s Harvest Festival will be a little different to previous years. While the team of ladies will still be decorating window ledges, we will be unable to accept any fresh fruit or vegetables as we are unable to hold a stall to sell produce the following day. However, we are inviting donations of tins, jars, packets of food items and toiletries which will be passed on to the Food Bank – the current need is greater than ever. We are told that there is a particular demand for milk powder, tinned meats, coffee (small jars), jam, fruit juices, and custard (all with long use by dates, please) - and all toiletries. (The Food Bank has plenty of baked beans!) A box will be placed in the Foyer from 27th September for your donations.

You may be interested to know that the world’s first **food bank** was established in the US in 1967. In the UK, the majority of food banks, including that of Welshpool, are co-ordinated by **The Trussell Trust**, a Christian Charity based in Salisbury. It was founded by Carol and Paddy Henderson in 1997 based on a legacy left by Carol’s mother, Betty Trussell. The Trust’s initial project focused on improving conditions for the 60+ children sleeping at Central Railway Station, in Bulgaria. In 2000, Paddy received a call from a mother in Salisbury saying: “My children are going to bed hungry tonight – what are you going to do about it?” Paddy investigated data on

poverty and deprivation in the UK and found that significant numbers of people faced going hungry as a result of sudden crisis. So Paddy started Salisbury Food Bank in his garden shed and garage, providing three days' of emergency food to local people in crisis. The Trust now supports a network of over 1,200 food banks across the UK. In the last 5 years, Food Bank use has increased by 74%. In the year from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 1.9 million 3-day emergency supplies had been distributed to people in crisis (an 18% increase on the previous year).

As winter approaches and the effects of coronavirus continue to trap people in poverty, food banks in the Trussell Trust network are forecast to give out a staggering six emergency food parcels every minute. New research carried out by Herriot Watt University estimates that 846,000 parcels will need to be provided to people in crisis during October to December 2020, a 61% increase on last year. Over 50% of people using food banks at the start of the pandemic had never needed to before and 72% of people at food banks this summer live with someone who is experiencing mental health issues. Nearly 2 in 5 households now need to use a food bank. (See *the Trussell Trust website*).

Usually at this time of Harvest, we have an envelope collection for “**All We Can**” (the Methodist Relief and Development Fund) and a Harvest Lunch, the profits from which benefit the same appeal. We cannot do either of these things this year. However you may like to donate to one of their current appeals:

Appeal 1: Emergency Coronavirus Appeal “Pray – Give – Save Lives”

Many people are facing Coronavirus without access to running water and soap, living in cramped and unhygienic conditions, where social distancing simply isn't possible. This is the reality for the world's poorest communities. All We Can, the Methodist Church in Britain, and World Development and Relief Ireland have launched an Emergency Appeal to help equip vulnerable communities across the globe to combat coronavirus. For communities with weaker healthcare systems or who lack access to clean water and hand washing, the impact of coronavirus is catastrophic.

Appeal 2: ‘Change Begins with a Bicycle’ – 2020 Harvest Appeal

All We Can is working with a local partner organisation FABIO (First African Bicycle Information Organisation) in Uganda, and specifically in an area of rural Uganda around Jinja. FABIO has existed since 1994 as a bicycle workshop and has steadily evolved into a fully fledged charity that advocates for and champions the development of inclusive non-motorised transport in Uganda. FABIO seeks to use bicycles as a means to change lives by empowering people living in poor households. All We Can has been working with FABIO since 2018. FABIO works to make bicycles for both rural and urban situations, and also makes bicycles adapted for specific purposes – bicycles for people with disabilities, cargo bicycles, bicycles adapted for carrying water and even an ambulance bicycle!

If you would like to make a donation to one of these appeals, please place your gift in an envelope (cash, or cheque payable to 'All We Can'), mark your envelope with the chosen appeal, and place it in one of the donation boxes in the foyer.

Alternatively, if you are unable to get to church, post your envelope to us at Welshpool Methodist Church, High Street, SY21 7JP, or direct to All We Can, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.

Sing Praises! Julia's choice of hymns for Mondays 28th September and 5th October

“Angel Voices, ever singing” (StF 39) has words by Francis Pott. I have chosen this to coincide with the feast of St Michael and All Angels, 29th September. I'm aware that many of the feasts of the Anglican Church are not necessarily noted in the Methodist lectionary, however a short biography of Francis Pott featured in the Illustrated Methodist Hymnbook 1866. The hymn has such a lovely feeling about it, bringing into our praises the host of Angels and Archangels around the throne of God (Rev. 7:11). The verses remind us of the vast majesty of creation in which humankind is only a part and each individual a very tiny portion. Yet we are rejoiced over as every wonderful thing is – “Lord, we know that thou rejoicest o'er each work of thine.” Today, we feel the impact of humankind and the disregard for its behaviour upon the rest of creation. Perhaps it's an idea to use this hymn in our prayers for those conserving and stewarding the natural world and aiming to hold back the tide of our mistakes and their consequences. Interestingly, Francis Pott insisted that when it was printed in hymn books it should not be coupled with a tune by Arthur Sullivan which he criticised as being 'twee'. We sing it to the tune by Edwin G Monk, which Pott approved. I love the bright lively way in which the tune and the words lift our spirits. Each second line has a longer note, but the dotted 3 beat which holds our voice in the last line really gives us that uplifting joy.

“Your Hand, O God, has guided” (StF 692) has words by Edward Hayes Plumptre who was another Victorian scholar and priest. Basil Harwood who wrote the tune Thornbury was a director of music and organist. The tune really brings out the stature of the words, especially the refrain line, “One church, one faith, one Lord” (and you can harmonise here along with the organ as the sopranos hold the last note). This hymn takes us through a story about how challenges to faith have been overcome. At this time of Covid 19 restrictions, verse 5 is especially relevant:

*Your mercy will not fail us, nor leave your work undone;
With your right hand to help us, the victory shall be won;
And then, by all creation, your name shall be adored,
And this shall be our anthem – one church, one faith, one Lord.*

Shall we be faithless? Shall hearts fail and hands hang down? Shall we evade the conflict and cast away our crown? Not so - in God's deep counsels, some better thing is stored, and we will maintain, unflinchingly: One church, one faith, one Lord. I hope that encourages us to continue planning for a future in which we can once again open wide the doors. The hymns I present in each issue I hope link us joyfully together and help in keeping our vocal cords exercised. *Best wishes, Julia Francis.*

The Feast of St. Michael and All Angels (Michaelmas) is celebrated on the 29th September every year. As it falls near the equinox, the day is associated with the beginning of autumn and the shortening of days, and is one of the “quarter days”, on which, in the past, servants were hired, rents due or leases begun. It used to be said that harvest had to be completed by Michaelmas, almost like marking the end of the productive season and the beginning of the new cycle of farming.

Traditionally in the British Isles, a well-fattened goose, fed on the stubble from the fields after harvest, is eaten to protect against financial need in the family for the next year, and as the saying goes:

“Eat a goose on Michaelmas Day. Want not for money all the year”.

Sometimes the day was also known as "Goose Day" and goose fairs were held. Even now, the famous Nottingham Goose Fair is still held around 3rd October. Part of the reason goose is eaten is that it was said that when Queen Elizabeth I heard of the defeat of the Armada, she was dining on goose and resolved to eat it every Michaelmas Day. Others followed suit.

In British folklore, Old Michaelmas Day, 10th October, is the last day that blackberries should be picked. It is said that on this day, when Lucifer was expelled from heaven, he fell from the skies straight onto a blackberry bush. He then cursed the fruits, scorched them with his fiery breath, spat and stamped on them and made them unfit for consumption! An Irish proverb goes:

"On Michaelmas Day the devil puts his foot on blackberries."

Pause for Thought:

The Sculptor's Attitude *(author unknown; submitted by Graham)*

I woke up early today, excited over all I get to do before the clock strikes midnight.

I have responsibilities to fulfil today. I am important.

My job is to choose what kind of day I am going to have.

Today I can complain because the weather is rainy or...

I can be thankful that the grass is getting watered and fed.

Today I can feel sad that I don't have more money or...

I can be glad my finances encourage me to plan my purchases wisely and guide me away from waste.

Today I can grumble about my health or...

I can rejoice that I am alive.

Today I can lament over all that my parents didn't give me when I was growing up or... I can feel grateful that they allowed me to be born.

Today I can cry because roses have thorns or...

I can celebrate that thorns have roses.

Today I can mourn my lack of friends or...

I can excitedly embark upon a quest to discover new relationships.

Today I can whine because I have to go to school or...

Eagerly I can open my mind and fill it with rich new tidbits of knowledge.

Today I can murmur dejectedly because I have to do housework or...

I can feel honoured because the Lord has provided shelter for my mind, body and

Today stretches ahead of me, waiting to be shaped. soul

And here I am - the sculptor who gets to do the shaping.

What today will be like is up to me. I get to choose what kind of day I will have.

What will YOU choose to do with today? Will you spare a little time for living?

....and to ponder....

"There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle." *Albert Einstein*

"Grow old along with me – the best is yet to be." *Robert Browning*

"Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when it is dark before the dawn" *Rabindranath Tagore*

From Betty H: 'Three Wise Words'

In these uncertain times which seem to swing back and forth like a pendulum, I'm reminded of a story of an Oriental monarch who had a very wise silversmith.

One day the monarch sent for the silversmith and said:

"Make me a ring and on it engrave for me words that will remind me of the need for humility when I seem to prosper, and that will sustain me when despair threatens."

The silversmith went away and a few days later returned with the ring.

The monarch found engraved on it just three words:

"It Will Pass."

'Value the Present!' (Source unknown)

Imagine there is a bank that credits your account each morning with £86,400.

It carries over no balance from day to day. Every evening it deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use during the day.

What would you do? Draw out every penny, of course!

Each of us has such a bank. Its name is TIME.

Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds.

Every night, it writes off, as lost, whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose.

It carries no balance. It allows no overdraft.

Each day it opens a new account for you.

Each night it burns the remains of the day.

If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours.

There is no going back. There is no drawing against the 'tomorrow'.

You must live in the present day's deposits.

Invest it so as to get from it the utmost in health, happiness and success!

The clock is running. Make the most of today.

To realise the value of ONE YEAR, ask the student who failed an exam.

To realise the value of ONE MONTH ask the mother who gave birth to a pre-mature baby.

To realise the value of ONE WEEK, ask the editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realise the value of ONE HOUR, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.

To realise the value of ONE MINUTE, ask the person who just missed the train.

To realise the value of ONE SECOND, ask the person who just avoided an accident.

To realise the value of ONE MILLISECOND, ask the person who won the silver medal in the Olympics.

Treasure every moment you have!

And treasure it more because you have shared it with someone special, special enough to spend time with.

And remember, time waits for no-one.

Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery.

Today is a gift.

That's why it's called the present!

(First heard as a meditation during devotions on a Christian Guild holiday)

'An MOT for the soul' (*Dr Pauline Webb from BBC "Pause for Thought" compilation*)

There used to be an old hymn that asked the question 'Is it well with your soul?' and I reckon that's the most important question of all if we're to be really healthy.

For an MOT for the soul I suggest just three tests:

1. How often do we say "Thank you" – not only to other people but also to God who gives us the precious gift of each new day?
2. How often do we say 'Sorry' - not just to anyone but to God, who knows even our secret faults?
3. How often do we give ourselves a few moments each day to be quiet and relaxed in God's presence and to be reassured by the message of God's love and forgiveness?

(Dr Pauline Webb, 1927-2017, was a former Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, and a regular contributor to "Pause for Thought". She was Director of Religious Broadcasting for the BBC World Service from 1979 to 1987)

TAKE A MOMENT

Marvelling at the beauty of a recent autumn morning as I enjoyed my short pre-breakfast amble up the lane, with the intricate spiders' webs in the hedgerows, the stubble in the fields, and the sunlit hills rising out of the mist, I was reminded of this lovely poem by Andrea:

I stand with God upon the hill,
His gentle presence fills the air.
Soft sunlight shreds the morning mists,
Reveals His glories ev'rywhere.

So bright the dew on ev'ry web,
Stretched taut from blade to spiky blade.
Above, a skylark thrills the blue
With bold and joyous serenade.

Sweet chestnuts burst their spiny shells,
A haze of berries sparks red gems.
Surrounding fields are stitched with gold,
Green pastures patched with stubble stems.

In all this space I know such peace,
Uplifted by this sun-drenched day.
Autumnal colours blush the trees,
To live this moment is to pray.

I stand with God upon the hill,
His gentle presence fills the air.
My mind is cleared, my soul refreshed,
I offer up myself in prayer.

Andrea Davies, October 2014

To make you smile – Laughter, the best medicine

From Graham: *(not a personal recollection!)*

Several days ago as I left a meeting at our church, I desperately gave myself a personal pat down. I was looking for my car keys. They were not in my pockets. A quick search of the Meeting Room revealed nothing.

Suddenly, I realised I must have left them in the car. Frantically I headed for the parking ground. My wife Diane has scolded me many times for leaving the keys in the ignition. My theory is that the ignition is the best place not to lose them. Her theory is that the car will be stolen.

As I burst through the doors of the church, I came to a terrifying conclusion. Her theory was right. The parking ground was empty.

I immediately called the police. I gave them my location, confessed that I had left my keys in the car, and that it had been stolen. Then I made the most difficult call of all. "Honey," I stammered. (I always call her 'honey' in times like these.) "I left my keys in the car, and it has been stolen."

There was a period of silence. I thought the call had been dropped, but then I heard Diane's voice. "Ken," she barked, "I dropped you off!"

Now it was my time to be silent.

Embarrassed, I said, "Well, come and get me."

Diane retorted, "I will, as soon as I can convince this policeman that I did not steal your car!!!"

From the Friendship Book series

Children have their own individual ways of interpreting stories they hear at Sunday school. The following is how a 10 year old boy recounted his lesson to his mother.

"Our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind the enemy lines to rescue the Israelites from the Egyptians. He brought them to the Red Sea and ordered his engineers to build a pontoon bridge. After they had all crossed, Moses looked up and saw the Egyptian tanks coming. He grabbed his walkie-talkie and ordered his air force to bomb the bridge and save the Israelites."

His mother looked doubtful. "Are you sure, David, that is how your teacher told the story?"

"Well, not exactly, but if I told you what she said, you'd never believe it!"

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 of 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 class 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.'

Puzzle Time: Clothing – anagrams and clues (*another puzzle from Oswestry Methodists*)

1. One of a pair – could be a badger's home? (4, 3)
2. Was an Austin model, but not the mini? (4)
3. Sham Kay provides cover for some ladies (7)
4. Her Majesty's Ship named by Gilbert and Sullivan (8)
5. Brave start reveals some form of singlet? (4)
6. Mary drew Bo to keep out the cold? (4, 6)
7. Distress signal rockets with wide feature? (6)
8. Sounds like failures to observe the law? (8)
9. Rag I let go to wear inside (5)
10. Police informer with will to go round the issue? (5, 5)
11. Boring studious man, or akin to being unsociable? (6)
12. Too warm! Breathes heavily? (3, 5)
13. Ill-fitting Joseph? (6, 3)
14. North Korean leader or nearest offer? (6)
15. Desmond's short dance skirt? (4)
16. Eases off - for casual wear (6)
17. Push Dr Jo for galloping in? (8)
18. Average for the course with small Ford vehicle? (5)
19. A hundred Egyptian Sun God + 20% tax? (6)
20. Cod or of Good Hope? (4)
21. Coat for an ass? (6, 6)
22. Blunders - stupid errors? (8)
23. Sounds like James had cause to fall? (7)
24. Sounds like Russian Emperor was mistaken (6)
25. Scotsman and his family – a load of rubbish? (10)

Postcodes – which district/county are represented by the following? (*From Betty H*)

1	BN	2	BR	3	CO	4	IP	5	CT
6	GL	7	HR	8	PL	9	CW	10	RG
11	HX	12	SY	13	LD	14	WR	15	LL

Answers to Puzzles in Issue 13: Countries of the World

1	Panama	2	Guinea	3	Argentina
4	Qatar	5	Sudan	6	Bulgaria
7	Congo	8	Latvia	9	Malta
10	Canada	11	Brazil	12	Jamaica
13	Ecuador	14	Togo	15	Hungary
16	Denmark	17	Switzerland	18	Greece
19	Yemen	20	Kuwait		

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 15, which will be out on 7th October, to rhodes4144@gmail.com, by phone 01938 850514, or post to "Brynteg", Castle Caereinion, Welshpool, SY21 9AS, by 3rd.

More contributions needed!

(Cake orders: Gwen 555988 or Janice 850514)