

# Rejoice!

November 2014



**The Magazine of the  
West Norfolk Methodist Circuit**

## REV MARIE WHITCOMBE

People around the Circuit will be aware that we had been due to review Marie's appointment in the Circuit at the September Circuit Meeting. I am sorry to have to report that, instead of having that review, other events have overtaken this. Marie has been off work since mid January with lung-related problems and rheumatoid arthritis. The advice received now through the Connexional Medical Adviser is that, sadly, she will not be well enough to carry on working as a Presbyter. Marie has been advised to seek early retirement and therefore is unable to be active in ministry for the remainder of her invitation period here (up to August 2015).

This is sad for her not to be able to carry on with the work she felt God was calling her to and sad for us also. Marie will receive support and advice from Connexion and District. Please keep Marie and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

Andrew Maguire

Dear friends,

This month forms something of a personal milestone. By its end I shall have passed by 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. Inevitably there is a bit of looking back as well as looking forward as I approach the day.

Looking back - I have lived all over the place and done many things but all my adult life I have been a Christian, for 40 years an accredited preacher and 32 years a Methodist Minister. But there are some consistent themes.

First, the call to follow God through his Son Jesus persists. This is never done with or entirely sorted, since God lays upon our hearts different things in different decades. 30 years ago, I was on the airwaves as one of a team putting on a Christian Radio broadcast on Sunday Mornings between 6 - 8 a.m. 20 years ago I served as chaplain at RAF Newton. I also was given time out to write a book about growing churches. Those doors are shut now but others open. Being a disciple is both about consistency - the kingdom values of love and compassion and justice are lived out, but it is also about surprises and challenges, even disturbances. Discipleship is not just about more of the same. God wants to do a new thing among us. Each church needs seriously to examine its life to discern the new thing that God has for them.

Second, another theme is the faithfulness of God. We sing "Great is thy faithfulness" and it is true. Henri Nouwen likens God to the catcher in the high wire trapeze act. Even when we appear to be in mid-air and out of control, God is the catcher whose arms hold us. It is God who sustains us and gives us the strength to do what we have to do. I remember some difficult days in ministry - the funerals of babies, children and teenagers, going in to address a church which was full of warring factions. I am aware of my own inadequacy and frailty and I know God enables me to minister in these dark places.

Third, another theme is people. For God so loved the world never means the world as an abstract thing - it means people. The consequence of that is that people matter - all kinds, not just religious

people or just Methodist people. So I have worked alongside all kinds of people and that has been an immense privilege.

Now what about looking forward? Of course no one has a crystal ball and can tell what is round the corner. I read the other day of a famous clairvoyant whose show was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances!! I intend to continue in ministry till I am 65 or 66 health permitting (and so far I am ok). I have a few small things on my bucket list such as visiting special places. But more or less I have achieved what I have felt called to do. I have no other aim than to be a Methodist Minister serving people.

Of course we live in a most difficult world. The Middle East is a tinderbox where past mistakes mean people choose brutal extremism. The way that these countries have fallen into chaos is hard to understand. We can do little to remedy matters except engage in fervent prayer upholding our own leadership in the decisions that are made.

During all the years of my ministry, the church in this country has declined in numerical terms. But I am not pessimistic. The church needs to regain confidence and courage to invite people to join us. Many years ago when I was in Nottingham, one of my congregation invited me to come to a Folk Club. I went feeling a bit apprehensive and at first did not know anyone except the person who invited me. But the evening was good and I returned. I continued for 5 years till I moved away from the area - all because of an invite. Yet in the church we are afraid to do this. Because of invitations both personal and leaflets we now have 40 children and 40 adults hearing the gospel presented through Messy Church once a month. It can be done. That is one small part of God's new thing for Downham but what has God in store for us across the Circuit?

Whether we are near a personal milestone or not we each need to reflect on our journey and discern what God has for now and what he lays on our hearts.

Sincerely  
**Maurice**

# Praying together in the Circuit

"Lord, many people have told me about this man and about all the terrible things he has done to your people in Jerusalem. And he has come to Damascus with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who worship you." Acts 9: 13 -14

Ananias was in Damascus, he had a vision in which the Lord asked him to go and minister to Saul. Ananias, having expressed his concerns, was obedient and went. He greeted him as 'Brother Saul' and explained that the Lord had sent him. Saul had his sight restored and was baptised. He saw things differently and it all started when he had a vision on the road to Damascus. He arrived in Damascus with the intent of persecuting Christians. Now a believer, he went to the synagogue and preached 'Jesus as the Son of God'. Hallelujah!

Lord, we remember those who are called to challenging situations and circumstances, recognising the risks but obedient to your prompting; for those who are called to life threatening situations and pay the ultimate price. We give thanks for all who have served you faithfully taking up their cross and following You.

We remember those who face persecution as they remain true to you. For those who oppress and persecute others, may they be enlightened to who You are, encountering You in a life changing way. We pray for transformed lives to testify to your awesome power to redeem and sanctify and to be used in the establishing of Your Kingdom.

"I gave up those things that were so important to me for Christ. Even more than that, I think of everything as worth nothing. It is so much better to know Christ Jesus my Lord". Philippians 3:7-8

Prayers have been requested for:-

Derek + Viv , Stephanie, Janice, Amy, Trisha, Linda, Ruth Harbach, Andrew, Mavis, Julia, Rachel, Judy, Dulcie + Neill. Kelly, Kath, Stephen + Victoria, William, Tom . Ken and Norma. Brian and Marjorie Osborne.

Rev Marie Whitcombe; Sheila Nunn

Praying for the Circuit. Mondays at London Road 2.00 pm  
Thursdays at Downham Market 11 am

### *Pray Day for Schools*

The third Tuesday of November every year is Pray Day, when schools across Europe and around the world are the focus of prayer.

This year it will be held on Tuesday 18th November.

Crowns Trust [ Christians Reaching ot to West Norfolk Schools ] invite you to join in prayer at Highgate Methodist Church, not actually on the day, but on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 10.30 am - 1.30 pm. Come and go as you can.

**If at first you don't succeed, destroy all evidence that you tried.**

**A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking.**



# Around the churches



## Pott Row

We shall be bigger and more colourful when we hold our next "Tree Festival" as there are more people who wish to provide trees this year. The date is Friday and Saturday December 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 10am - 4pm and Sunday December 7<sup>th</sup> ,2pm to 4pm. We finish with our candlelit Carol service Sunday evening at 6.30pm. There will be Gifts, Books, Cakes and Bric-a-brac stalls plus Refreshments.

Everyone at Pott Row Chapel looks forward to seeing you.

For more information:- Beryl on 01485 600593.

Jenny on 01553 630369.

## Harvest Festival

Reg and Mary Rose led the 'Safely Gathered' congregation in thanksgiving. The selected hymns were well known ones as was shown by the singing! Our prayers covered local events and needs, as well as remembering people suffering in far away places as constantly mentioned in the national news. The clock had to be obeyed, and, after we had sung another hymn of praise, the end had to come as we finished with sharing the grace.

Then came the tea and coffee with the biscuits, before those who had requested the harvest lunch went to the school room.

Soon a bowl of soup, roll and butter was given to each person – and it was good to have Mary and Reg join us for the meal.

After the soup came a choice between apple and blackberry crumble or apple tart – and for some there was jelly and cream. Then we finished with tea or coffee.

Before leaving we expressed our grateful thanks to all who had prepared the lunch - and the very cheerful waiters!

Bill Hone

## Terrington St Clements

Our Flower Festival this year, entitled "All Good Gifts Around Us" was enjoyed by many. Arrangements were made by Frauke Adkins COLOUR , Viv Simpson

BOOKS ,Eileen Spurgeon GARDENS ,Ruth Hannay WATER ,Ruth Cooper RAINBOWS ,Sue and Holly Atkin GOD'S WORD, Molly Hunt NATURE ,Ruth Hughes DAWN TO DUSK Joy Mitchell BREAD, Mary Houghton CHRISTIAN LIFE and PEACE . we had Bric a Brac manned by Molly Hunt and Eileen Spurgeon, cakes and groceries sold by Ann Cross and Margaret Pepper ,plants and veg in the windy car park, Helen Maguire, Junior church ran the Tombola with Linda Howling , the raffle was supervised by Pam and David Little and games by Jenny Howling. The length of "200 years in string" winner was June Loades and Linda Howling won the scarecrow. Ruth Hannay , Frauke Atkins and Mary Houghton served lunches .

At the Sunday service led by Rev. Andrew Maguire, Helen made a harvest man from a pumpkin, grapefruit, potato, courgettes, carrots and tomatoes. It was much appreciated by the young people.

The total raised was £572.60 for chapel funds. A big thank you to all who helped in any way.

At Network (now MWiB, Methodist Women in Britain) Ruth Hannay welcomed Sheila Johnson who spoke about Lydia, the seller of purple in the Bible. She explained how the dye was obtained from a gland in a tiny crustacean. Now of course we have synthetic dyes although some natural ones are still used.

Mary thanked her for her visit and presented her with a plant.

Linda Howling

## **Southery**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> September Southery Methodist Church held its usual Harvest Supper. This was well attended; they really have some excellent cooks and helpers. The Rev. Maurice Stafford said Grace. We then enjoyed an excellent meal, no one went away hungry. This was followed by our resident auctioneer Walter Cornwell on the produce given by local people. We enjoyed an excellent raffle with lots of prizes which had been donated. Once again thanks to everyone who helped or came to make it such a great success. We finished with prayers of thanks for such a friendly enjoyable evening.

May God bless and guide you all.

Gwen Dearsley.

## **Downham Market**

Ladies Friendship Circle

We started our new year with 29 paid up members at our first meeting which was a Sing-a-long Wartime Memories and recitations (we also had the Farmer and the rabbit). Our Mystery Tour outing on September 17<sup>th</sup> went to Heckington Windmill, which is near Sleaford and came home via Van Hague Centre at Eye. We all had a lovely day out. Then on 23<sup>rd</sup> September we had a



Harvest Festival and we sold goods to the value of £60.00 which is going to EACH.

Our November meetings are on 5<sup>th</sup> with a Fish and Chip Supper which is at 7pm.

November 19<sup>th</sup> is a Beatle Drive at 7.30pm

Everyone will be made welcome

Margaret Fox

We're really into Autumn now with some lovely sunny days but very cold mornings and evenings. I did send our news through last month, didn't get a failed notice so it must be lost in the ether somewhere. So now for two months news.

We had our harvest celebrations at the end of September with the Church looking very countrified with a wheat sheaf and a pumpkin so huge it took two men to lift it. Fresh produce was sold after the service for All You Can (MDF) and the long keeping produce overflowed our local food bank box. Then we enjoyed a shared faith lunch (why does food prepared by other people always taste better than your own?). After singing all our favourite harvest hymns so lustily it was good to relax after lunch for more fellowship.

We have just had a truly inspiring service led by the Rev. Jean Simmonds who told us all about the Turning Point Trust set up by her daughter and son-in-law. A lunch of soup and rolls was followed by more information on the trust's awesome achievements in the twelve short years they have been working in the slum town on the outskirts of Niarobi.

Our monthly messy Church events started recently are increasing in popularity. This month 35 children, 20 adults and 18 helpers attended and were fed and produced a very artistic panel 'I am the vine' which now hangs over the balcony for all to admire. Several families are now coming to Church regularly and the junior church numbers have increased considerably as well as the vocal input from junior church members in the children's talk at each service. Audience participation!

Joan Macey

## London Road Harvest celebrations

Starting on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> Catherine led the "Big Sing" of harvest Hymns from the Old Methodist Hymn Book, with the addition of the Sankey Hymn, Gathering in the Sheaves. The choir requested that they teach Catherine a new tune to an old Hymn the Arthur Sullivan "Golden Sheaves". The Hymns were interspersed with poetry and Bible readings, whilst the tenors and basses present were called upon to sing a verse of the Manx Evening

Hymn, which brought back memories for Catherine of the Blessing of the boats in Newlyn Harbour.

After everyone had sung for their supper they were provided with one - Butternut Squash Soup, Garlic Bread, Apple Pie and Custard, Cheese, Grapes and Plums.

The plate was passed around for "ALL WE CAN", and after expenses £148 .07 was raised.

At the morning Parade Harvest Festival Service, Catherine demonstrated her skill at growing runner beans but her failure with tomatoes. All the youngsters brought their Sunflower plants grown from seed handed out earlier in the year.

Gifts of produce received on Saturday and Sunday were for the Food Bank, whilst further donations were also made for "All We Can" .

We are grateful to the Flower Committee for all their work in decorating the church so well for Harvest, and to all the Pastoral Visitors who took flowers to those who could not attend.

"YES!!!! God is good"

### **Coro Stellante**

On Sunday October 5<sup>th</sup> London Road hosted the renowned ladies Choir Coro Stellante led by Michael Kibblewhite. The ladies are drawn from East Anglia but rehearse, and have most of their concerts, in West Norfolk.

Arriving at 1pm they all had tea and coffee before starting rehearsal.

A "catering group" at London Road provided them with "High Tea" and after expenses donations for Nordoff Robbins Musical Therapy Centres raised £100.

A reasonably full London Road was treated to a first half of sacred music, and the second half was based on music from the shows. During the interval, refreshments were served and raised £55 for the church,

Using the unique characteristics at London Road the first item featured two choirs, one based in the choir stalls the other based around the balcony of the church.

For those who attended, the praise for the high standard of singing was immense.

If you could not attend then book early for the Concert they are doing at Downham Methodist Church next Spring!!!!

David Gifford

### **Stanhoe**

We have resumed our fortnightly Bible Study classes, jointly with Burnham Market, and are now studying the Parables of Jesus. Rev. Steve Oliver is to take over from Elizabeth as Leader. After 15 years, she feels it's time for a fres

h approach!

We continue our mission to pray, with our Prayer Chain, which has also been running for nearly 15 years. A group of us, not all from Stanhoe, commit ourselves to pray on a daily basis for those in special need, through sickness, bereavement or other problems. We have a telephone contact "chain," so that messages are passed one to another as necessary, and a printed update sheet is circulated every second month.

On October 15<sup>th</sup> we

are holding a Peace Vigil in Stanhoe, to be led by Rev. Steve, opening the church for two hours in the evening, as we pray, silently and together, for peace in the Middle East. We often think, "what can we do?" when we hear of the dreadful atrocities being carried out by terrorist organisations. It seems to us that prayer to God, through Jesus, is a way in which we Christians can be pro-active in the battle against evil. What is more, by publicising what we are doing in the local community, we are offering everyone a chance to join the fight, while demonstrating that we are not prepared to accept the rise of Isil, and the threat it represents to the whole world. To this end, we have leafleted every home in the village, inviting anyone who cares to come, for as long or short a time as they wish. So Prayer and Bible Study and Pastoral care continue to be important for us as we live out our faith. We are few in number, but strong in the Spirit!

Elizabeth MacLeod

## Dersingham

We celebrated our Harvest Festival by supporting the King's Lynn Food Bank and those less fortunate than ourselves. The Rev. Steve Oliver led our morning service with the front of the church amass with tins, packets and jars whilst the windowsills and porch were decorated more traditionally with flowers and the produce of the fields and hedgerows. Steve joined us for the church lunch afterwards when we sat down to a hot Sunday Lunch. In the evening we welcomed the Rev. Catherine Dixon to our pulpit.

The members of the Bible Fellowship, which meets at the home of Philip and Elizabeth Batstone, are currently studying from the Fawcett Bible Studies 'Women of Faith, what they teach us'. Meetings are fortnightly on Thursdays and start at 7 p.m. The Coffee and Chat autumn discussion mornings started in October and the November dates are 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. They start at 11 a.m. to 12 noon and Steve Oliver introduces the discussions on various topical issues. Everyone is welcome to come and share their views and enjoy an interesting and stimulating morning.

The 'Lunches @ the Chapel' on the first Monday of the month, continue to be well attended and much appreciated. They attract between forty and fifty people, a mix of church members and other local villagers who enjoy a hot meal in the company of others.

The next Chickenfoot evening is on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November in the Church Hall. Tickets cost £3 and can be obtained from Rene Hayward on 01485 541035 and the proceeds will be split between church funds and Cancer Research. It has been decided to have a Christmas Fayre instead of just a coffee morning this year. This will be held on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the money raised will be shared between the East Anglian Air Ambulance and church funds.

Rosemary Caink

## St Faith's

An evening of music and prose to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of World War 1 is to be held in St Faith's Church on Saturday, 1 November, 2014, starting at 7.30pm.

Admission is free and the concert, which will feature some of the well-known popular songs of the wartime period as well as music and performances by soloists, has been organised as part of St Faith's events to mark the important historical anniversary. Everyone is welcome to attend the evening. More details are available by contacting the Church Office on 01553 774916 between 9am and 12 noon weekdays.

Earlier in the day there will be the latest in the monthly coffee mornings in the Gaywood Church Rooms, starting at 10.30am. These sessions are becoming increasingly popular. They offer church members and people from the wider Gaywood community, an opportunity to meet together over a cup of tea or coffee and a home-made scone or slice of delicious cake. There is also a book stall and a raffle. Everyone is welcome so do come along and meet friends.

The following day, 2<sup>nd</sup> November, St Faith's will be marking All Soul's Day by holding its annual Service of Resurrection Hope beginning at 6.30pm. During that special and moving service, prayers will be said for those people in the parish of Gaywood who have died during the past year. Their loved ones who mourn their loss will also be remembered in prayers.

The names of all those whose funerals were held at St Faith's Church or taken by one of the clergy team at the Mintlyn Crematorium, will be read out .

Everyone will be invited, if they wish, to light a candle as a sign of God's light. St Faith's team Rector, Canon Beryl Wood, said of the service: "The service will include hymns, readings and prayers that enable us to join with the whole company of the saints, angels and the whole heavenly host in worship and thanksgiving to God for our beloved."

Canon Beryl said those people who have lost loved ones during the past year have been remembered in prayer and thought by church members . "We believe this service is a fitting way to give thanks for lives well lived and cherish the memories of those who have passed away". The service of Remembrance at St Faith's on 9<sup>th</sup> November will have special significance this year because of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the outbreak of the World War 1. It is expected that the church will be full for the service which will be followed by the parade to the Gaywood Clock war memorial for the traditional laying of wreaths.

The exhibition, focusing on the details of some of the men and women from Gaywood who served at The Front and made the ultimate sacrifice for their country, can be seen in the church until Remembrance Sunday. The exhibition was put together with a £6,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for which sincere thanks are expressed. Since the exhibition opened on August 4<sup>th</sup> this year, it has been seen by a steady stream of visitors, both adults and children. People have complimented St Faith's on the high quality of the displays.

The ever-popular St Faith's Christmas Fair is being staged at Gaywood Church Rooms on November 15<sup>th</sup> starting at 2pm. The Rooms will be transformed into a colourful market-style with a variety of stalls selling an assortment of goods including some home-made items. There is always a lovely atmosphere at the Christmas Fair and the chance to pick up some bargains. Refreshments will be available and, for the children, Father Christmas will be making an appearance in his specially created Grotto. The Fair includes a Grand Raffle and admission is free.

Everyone loves to join in with a good sing of popular hymns and on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2014, at 6.30pm (note the earlier start time) there will be an opportunity to "Sing for your Supper" at a special evening at St Faith's Church. Everyone is welcome to come along and enjoy a "good sing" followed by a "Bring and Share" supper. The hymns selected to be sung will be from the Mission Praise Hymn book and people are invited to suggest their favourite hymns for consideration to be included during the session. People are asked to take something to contribute to the supper. More details about this event can be obtained from the Church Office on 01553 774916 between 9am and 12 noon weekdays.

St Faith's Christmas Tree Festival is just a few weeks away and the centuries-old church will be transformed into a sparkling winter wonderland with around 30 trees all colourfully and creatively decorated by local Primary school pupils, members of church-connected organisations, community groups and charities. The event runs from Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December until 15<sup>th</sup> December. There will be concerts on the Friday and Saturday evenings and on Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> December the trees will be at their sparkling best when the annual Gift Service is held.

Plans are now at an advanced stage and we look forward to welcoming the many visitors who will come into the church to look at the trees and attend the concerts and Sunday Advent services. Our first Festival in 2012 proved a great success and we are hoping that this second event will be equally popular with visitors. More details are available from the Church Office on 01553 774916 between 9am and 12 noon weekdays.

Richard Parr

## Stow Bridge

At the Harvest Supper for the C of E funds held on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October the sum of £150 was raised. Of course, the Methodists were prominent at the supper and we enjoyed the fellowship of all present. Friends of the church were there also. It was a fine meal with a quiz. Grateful thanks to all helpers and providers from the diners.

Whenever I go into Downham Methodist Church I'm trying to see the various things of the Crucifixion in the altar window. The designer, Mr Michael of Norwich, attempted to show the painful experience of Christ's death, suggesting growth or rebirth by using the colour green; the two top sections of the window showing the sun and the moon and conveying the moment when darkness fell during the day.

The left lower panel shows a sponge on a reed and nearby the pincers. The nails are at the bottom of the section. At the top of the lower right panel are the dice with a spear below and a hammer at the base.

This design, the sharpness of which I meant to suggest is the crown of thorns, was intended to stimulate and not to state thoughts and in this way the window has an arbitrary meaning. The design uses shapes to suggest the ultimate suffering while underlining the hope for the future.

I have yet to find some of the articles.

Peter Hewitt

(This article prompted great discussion among the ed. Committee. Apparently there is an explanation on the wall in the corridor leading to church. Must investigate!)

Two men on a building site. One was hanging upside down. the foreman said, "What are you doing?" he replied, "I'm a light bulb."

The foreman said, "Get down, you're mad, crazy, go home, you're sacked."

His mate started packing his tools up. The foreman said to him, "What are you doing?"

He answered, "I'm going home as well. I can't work in the dark!"

We all need the light.....of God.

What do cannibals do at a wedding?

Toast the bride and groom!

**These are sentences actually typed by Medical secretaries in NHS Greater Glasgow**

On the second day the knee was better and on the third day it disappeared.

The patient has been depressed since she began seeing me in 1993. She is numb from her toes down.

While in ER, she was examined, x-rated and sent home.

Patient has two teenage children, but no other abnormalities. She slipped on the ice and apparently her legs went in separate directions in early December.

By the time he was admitted, his rapid heart had stopped, and he was feeling better.

Downham Market  
Methodist Church  
**Craft Fair**  
Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November  
9.00am - 4.00 pm  
Free Admission  
Refreshments  
Raffle  
Proceeds for Church Funds  
Enquiries and Bookings 01366 384772

# Remembering

Our RAF Tornados are bombing the IS in Iraq. Every day we see pictures of them on television hitting their targets. Have you ever wondered what it is like to be on the receiving end of a bomb? I have had some experience of it as I was in London for eight months during the Blitz. I don't know whether it was fatalism or wartime bravado but we weren't really scared. We just said "It will be all right so long as it hasn't got your number on it." It was quite a sight seeing the barrage balloons by day and searchlights criss-crossing the sky at night. The worst was perhaps the shrapnel raining down from anti-aircraft shells so that it was necessary to wear a steel helmet. I did go down into an air-raid shelter once but there was a rat and I came out again quickly. For all that it was quite a sensation to hear that awful swishing sound, drop down on the pavement and sense that crunching thud not too far away.

My uncle John was a Methodist minister at Golders Green and I often went to spend the evening with him. It was quite a sight to see sleeping families filling the platforms of the underground. My uncle's church was a few hundred yards away and one evening he went out to go to a meeting. However he came back and said "I think I will change my shoes." Soon after he had gone a second time a landmine came down on the road between us and the church. My aunt and I dived under the table and the house windows were blown in. Of course we were anxious for my uncle and were greatly relieved when he came in covered with dust. If it had not been for his delay in setting out he would have been just underneath it.

Having survived London I was posted to a sleepy village in South Wales called Gileston, where we expected all would be peaceful. However it was only two miles away from the aerodrome at St Athan. One night about 70 of us were in a wooden hut canteen run by SSAFA (Soldiers Sailors and Airmen's Family Association). Suddenly a bomb fell on the road just outside and the debris came crashing through the roof. I was playing the piano at the time and a table just two yards away was smashed to smithereens. There was only one slight casualty.

For the next 4 ½ years overseas air raid warnings were a regular occurrence. I was at a Christian meeting in Benghazi one night and there was a particularly bad one. We made our way back to barracks defiantly singing Onward Christian Soldiers, an incident I recall whenever we have that hymn.

I am just thankful to still be here. But sadly many of my close friends' names are on my old school's war memorial. On Remembrance Sunday it is always with some emotion that I say "We will remember them."

John Garfoot



## SAINT ANDREW

November is a great month for remembering. It begins with All Saints when we recall those who have gone before us, an opportunity to give thanks and pray for our own loved ones who are now God's care and keeping. Then we shall no doubt be invited to "remember, remember the 5<sup>th</sup> of November" when St Faith's special painting of the Gunpowder Plot comes into its own. Remembrance Sunday followed by what we used to call Armistice Day on the 11<sup>th</sup> will have a special significance this year. But I would also like us to think of St Andrew's which is normally on November 30<sup>th</sup>, although this year it has been transferred to December 1st as it clashes with Advent Sunday.

The St Andrew's flag has been especially familiar to us this year in view of the Scotland referendum. Tradition has it that in 832 AD the Picts and Scots, though greatly outnumbered, were fighting against the Angles. Their leader had a vision of a white diagonal cross against the celestial blue background of the sky which he believed was a sign of victory and vowed that he would make Andrew patron saint of Scotland. Relics of the saint were brought from Constantinople to what is the modern town of St Andrew's. When he was to be put to death by crucifixion, at his own request it was on an X shaped cross, or 'saltire', believing himself unworthy to meet his end in the same way as his Lord. Hence the design of the Scottish flag

In the Gospels, though he was a senior member of the team, Andrew was generally content to remain quietly in the background. Mostly he is only mentioned in the lists of disciples' names. But on just three occasions there is a little bit more about him.. There was the very first time he came into contact with Jesus. John the Baptist pointed him out..."Behold the Lamb of God! Andrew from that moment became a follower of Jesus, and the very first thing he did, we are told, was to go and bring his brother to the Lord, and when you realise that his brother was none other than Simon Peter you will know how important that introduction was.

Again, on the occasion of the feeding of the 5000, it was Andrew who brought that small boy up to Jesus with the lunch box his mother had packed up for him, five barley loaves and two small fishes. It made a miracle possible. Each time we hear anything about Andrew he is introducing someone to Jesus. Those Greeks who were in Jerusalem and wanted to know if they could see Jesus. They approached Philip. "Sir, we would see Jesus." Philip wasn't sure. "Do you think it will be all right Andrew?" "I'm sure it will, Philip, let's go and see." So for the first time since the wise men had come to the manger cradle, people from the

great outside world came to Jesus and all because Andrew brought them. No wonder in our church diaries St Andrewstide is marked as a “Day of Intercession and Thanksgiving for the Missionary Work of the Church.”

John Garfoot

## THE METHODIST CHURCH SAFEGUARDING PAST CASES REVIEW

As part of its commitment to safeguarding people who are vulnerable, the Methodist Church is undertaking a review of safeguarding cases in the church over the past 60 years. The point of the review is to make sure that any children or vulnerable adults who may still be at risk as a result of past cases are protected, and also so that lessons learned from past cases can be embedded in good practice in the future. Ministers (active or retired) are being asked to respond to the review in a particular way, but the church also wants to make sure that lay people have a chance to contribute any information they may have. Further information and details of how to take part are available from Circuit ministers, from the Methodist Church website, or from the Connexional Safeguarding team (by ringing 0207 467 5125 and speaking to the Past Cases Review Administrator). Ministers and Safeguarding Officers from the District attended on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2014 the session to mark the beginning of the process in our own district. For information we are printing below the open letter to the Methodist people on this subject from the General Secretary of the Methodist Church, the Revd Dr Martyn Atkins.

Andrew Maguire

September 2014

### **The Methodist Church Safeguarding Past Cases Review: an open letter to the Methodist people.**

As part of the commitment of the Methodist Church to creating safer spaces the Conference agreed to undertake a Past Cases Review across the Connexion. The remit of the Review is to look at any safeguarding cases connected to the Methodist Church over the last 60 years, involving children and/or vulnerable adults.

The Review has two main aims. First, to take any action that may still be necessary to ensure that children or vulnerable adults are protected in particular situations that are brought to the attention of the review team, and

second, to ensure that learning from past cases is embedded in good practice across the Church in the future.

All ministers have been required to participate in the Review and with only a very few exceptions they have already responded with great thought and care.

The perspective of lay people within the Church is crucial however. Lay people often carry information in churches that may not be passed on to ministers, particularly in the past when the importance of recording information was not as well understood as it is now. It is vitally important that anyone who has experienced abuse within the Church context has the opportunity to tell their story to the Review.

The purpose of this letter is to remind any person within the Methodist Church of the opportunity to contribute to the Review.

Details of how to participate in the Review and the form to be completed are on the Methodist Church website

[www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk)

If you are not able to use the internet, response forms are available from the Connexional Safeguarding team by ringing 0207 467 5125 and speaking to the Past Cases Review Administrator.

It can be very difficult to relive painful experiences and there is therefore support available to anyone who wants it. Ministers will be more than willing to support members of their congregation in completing response forms for those who feel comfortable doing it this way. Others may not want to discuss it with someone they know or they may need more specialist help. Every Methodist District has a Safeguarding Officer and their names and contact details can be found on the Safeguarding page of the Methodist Church website. If they cannot help directly they can point people to where they might get the support they need. A list of organisations that offer specialist counselling or help with specific forms of abuse is also found on the Safeguarding page of the Methodist Church website.

In order to ensure that the learning can be analysed and properly presented to the Conference in June 2015, we need all responses to the Review to be received by 24th December 2014.

Yours sincerely,

**Martyn Atkins**

General Secretary of the Methodist Church and Secretary of the Conference

## Action for Children Step Out

On Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> June a motley crew of nine assembled at Downham Market Church. Dressed in various jumpers, wet coats, walking boots, carrying sticks, they were going to walk three miles to raise money for the splendid work Action for Children does. Nine walkers in all raised **£820.02**. Not quite the £1000 that John had hoped for. We'll have to try harder next year. But a good result nevertheless.

We needed our rain protectors as the rain came down very heavily when we stopped, under a big tree, to sip our liquid refreshment but we all arrived back at Church in good spirits.

Thank you to everyone who took part, everyone who sponsored us and thank you for the warm coffee that awaited us when we finished. Ed

### Action for Children

## COFFEE MORNING & STALLS

Downham Market Methodist Church  
Saturday 1 November 10 – 12 noon

Christmas Cards and diaries will be on sale

Stalls include: Cakes and Groceries,  
Toiletries, Bric-a-brac and Books,  
Shrubs and Plants



## ACTION FOR CHILDREN update....

### From Abbi Lang our new area Fundraising Representative

‘I am the new fundraiser for Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, working with the community and local corporates to maximise income and promote the brilliant work of Action for Children. I previously worked at East Anglia’s Children’s Hospices as a fundraiser. Hopefully I will be in contact with you at some point, but it would be lovely to hear from you so please do get in touch. I would be more than happy to come to your local church and talk more about the work of Action for Children and projects in the local area.’



Any items for the **DECEMBER/JANUARY** edition should be with the editor by **NOVEMBER 12<sup>th</sup>**, earlier if possible. If you don't get an

acknowledgment of emails please feel free to enquire if I have received them as some articles have found their way into my spam bin which I don't check very often!

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# Notices.

## In an office:

TOILET OUT OF ORDER..... PLEASE USE FLOOR BELOW

## In a Launderette:

AUTOMATIC WASHING MACHINES: PLEASE REMOVE ALL YOUR CLOTHES WHEN THE LIGHT GOES OUT

## In a London department store:

BARGAIN BASEMENT UPSTAIRS

## In an office:

WOULD THE PERSON WHO TOOK THE STEP LADDER YESTERDAY PLEASE BRING IT BACK OR FURTHER STEPS WILL BE TAKEN

## In an office:

AFTER TEA BREAK STAFF SHOULD EMPTY THE TEAPOT AND STAND UPSIDE DOWN ON THE DRAINING BOARD

## Outside a second-hand shop:

WE EXCHANGE ANYTHING - BICYCLES, WASHING MACHINES, ETC. WHY NOT BRING YOUR WIFE ALONG AND GET A WONDERFUL BARGAIN?

## Notice in health food shop window:

CLOSED DUE TO ILLNESS

## Spotted in a safari park:

ELEPHANTS PLEASE STAY IN YOUR CAR

## Seen during a conference:

FOR ANYONE WHO HAS CHILDREN AND DOESN'T KNOW IT, THERE IS A DAY CARE ON THE 1ST FLOOR

## Notice in a farmer's field:

THE FARMER ALLOWS WALKERS TO CROSS THE FIELD FOR FREE, BUT THE BULL CHARGES.

## On a repair shop door:

WE CAN REPAIR ANYTHING. (PLEASE KNOCK HARD ON THE DOOR - THE BELL DOESN'T WORK)



## **West Norfolk Methodist Circuit Diary November 2014 onwards**

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November Action for Children Coffee Morning at Downham 10am - noon

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November Circuit Pastoral Committee at South Wootton at 10 am

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November Fellowship Breakfast a Hilgay at 8.30am

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November Craft Fair at Downham 9am – 4pm

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November Christmas Fair at Downham Market

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December Fellowship Breakfast at Pott Row at 8.30am

12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> December Second St Faith's Church Christmas Tree Festival

### **2015**

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January Fellowship Breakfast at Wimbotsham at 8.30am

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February Fellowship Breakfast at Southery at 8.30am

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March Fellowship Breakfast at St. Germans at 8.30am

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April Fellowship Breakfast at Downham at 8.30am

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May Fellowship Breakfast at Marham at 8.30am