

Rejoice!

June 2017



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

Just a thought...

As you are very much aware by now, Theresa May the Prime Minister has called for a General Election on the 8th June. This will involve all of us making decisions on the future of this country over the next 5 years. I have no particular problem with this but I am concerned that old wounds will be opened over Brexit and the divisions between people will get greater.

The Church has a responsibility to ensure the love of one another becomes the call during and after the election. We will all have differing opinions on what should happen and who should govern, but we must keep in mind that in the end following Jesus and his pronouncements on love should be our guiding principal.

Do politics and religion mix? Of course they do! Jesus was an amazing orator in the political arena of His time, and we as God's people should not be afraid to put forward our views on what the next Governments priorities should be such as caring for the poor, loving the outcast, healing of the sick, a fair sharing of the wealth that is generated in this country and of course Brexit negotiations.

How we do this practically is not easy and we can feel frustrated at what seems a hopeless task, but we must have faith that with God all things are possible. To dare to pray for what seems impossible is not a waste of time because in his infinite wisdom God will enable us in our own small way to make a difference to a situation which seems beyond our capabilities. Our task is to recognise the opportunity when it comes and grasp it with both hands.

Can our voice make a difference? Yes it can and so can our actions over the coming weeks and years. If the Church is to lead the way in a new and meaningful way we must not be afraid to speak up for and follow the life changing commandments of Jesus:-

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind”

“You shall love your neighbour as yourself”.

“That you love one another in the same way that I have loved you, that is how you are to love one another”.

May God bless you and lead you in your decisions over the coming days

Steve

**DERSINGHAM METHODIST CHURCH
A MUSICAL EVENING**

By

**THE WEST NORFOLK
REEDS**

CONDUCTED BY

DEREK OLDFIELD

SATURDAY 24TH JUNE

7PM

**MUSIC FROM BACH TO
GERSHWIN**

**FREE ADMISSION AND
FREE REFRESHMENTS**

Praying together in the Circuit

"they are un-schooled and ordinary men" they were astonished and took note that these men had been with Jesus .Acts 4: 13

Acts 3 and 4, the early days after Pentecost and so much happening !
What on earth was happening ? Heaven was touching earth,
Kingdom authority, Kingdom reality.

The disciples were *being* what Jesus asked them to be - his witnesses,
They were *receiving* what Jesus told them they must have -
the Holy Spirit working powerfully in and through them.
they were *doing* what he asked them to do
as channels of that God given power - to preach, heal, make disciples.
They were recognised as those who had been with Jesus.

Peter and John went to the temple to pray. They met a man crippled from birth and ministered to him giving him not what he was hoping for but something far beyond what he expected and what God alone could do. Some were amazed, some were disturbed by the things which were happening and the teaching of the apostles. The disciples prayed that God's purpose would not be threatened but powerfully continue. We've been encouraged to be part of a global wave of prayer 'Thy Kingdom come' in the ten days from Ascension to Pentecost. The reign and rule of God in the lives of his people, praying, witnessing, wanting Kingdom growth, power and authority to increase and for people to come to know the Lord Jesus.

We pray for 'Celebrate King's Lynn' in the walks on Saturday 3rd June with Christian witness and activities for people to experience and enjoy.

Lord, draw people to this event and most of all draw them to yourself, to know and love you and be transformed by your power at work within. Thursday 8th June, the General Election. As we prepare for this important day we pray for transparency and clarity of politicians and

guidance and direction for voters. For the outcome to enable our nation to go forward in truth and integrity as is pleasing to You. Wednesday 21st June 'the longest day', maximum daylight before the daylight hours gradually shorten. Lord Jesus, light of the world, light that can never be extinguished, we pray for revelation, enlightenment of who you are to bring in the dawning of a new day when people will never again walk in darkness but in your marvellous light.

For the world in all its need. For our response in prayer, serving, giving.

For your will to be done establishing justice, righteousness and peace.

For Christians facing opposition, for their faithful witness to impact their persecutors, bringing light, insight, new understanding.

For all involved in ministry to take your yoke upon them sustained in unity and harmony with you. Protect each one in body, mind and spirit, supported and upheld by the prayers of your people.

For the testimony and lifestyle of those who have committed their lives to you Lord and the influence this has on family and friends.

For children and young people. for schools and universities, students and staff. For planning for holiday clubs and Christian events as the summer holidays approach. 'We will tell the next generation about the Lord's power and his great deeds and the wonderful things he has done' Ps 78:4

Prayers have been requested for:-

Derek + Viv, Stephanie, Janice, Amy, Trisha, Linda, Andrew, Mavis, Julia., Rachel, Judy, Dulcie + Neill, Kelly, Kath, Stephen + Victoria, William, Tom, Ken + Norma, Brian Osborne, Sarah. Willie receiving treatment and for Valerie, his wife.

Please pray for all the young people undergoing chemotherapy and surgery for osteo sarcoma.

We place before you those in need of your ministry in the turmoil and confusion going on in their troubled minds. Enfold them in your peace, protect them from destructive thoughts, renew their minds.

For those who can no longer recall precious memories of events and people, leaving them feeling deprived and incomplete. May their dignity be respected. May light shine in to disperse the confusion and recollection break through. For those who are alongside them on their journey. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers.

Sylvia Cornwell would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, calls, visits and expressions of condolence on Walters passing; they gave great comfort, peace and reassurance.



**JOIN ME
ON THE GOSPEL HOUR EVERY SUNDAY FROM
9PM
FOR THE BEST IN HYMN AND SONG
and
THE CHRISTIAN ROCK SHOW
FOR THE BEST IN HEAVY METAL AND ROCK
EVERY WEDNESDAY 7.30AM – 8.00AM
FIND ME ON
radioeacham.org.uk
(email revoliver@radioeacham.org.uk)**

HEAVENS GROCERY STORE

I was walking down life's highway a long time ago. One day I saw a sign that said "Heavens Grocery Store". As I got a little closer, the door came open wide. When I came to myself, I was standing right inside.

I saw a host of ANGELS. They were standing everywhere. One handed me a basket and said, "My child, shop with care. And all you cannot carry you can come back for more." Everything a Christian needed was in the Grocery Store.

First I got some PATIENCE, LOVE was in the same row.

Further down was UNDERSTANDING, you need that wherever you go. I got a box or two of WISDOM, a bag or two of FAITH. I couldn't miss the HOLY GHOST for it was all over the place.

I got some STRENGTH and COURAGE to help me run the race. By then my basket was full, but I remembered some GRACE. I didn't forget SALVATION for SALVATION is free, so I tried to get enough of that to save you and me.

Then I went up to the counter to pay my grocery bill for I thought that I had everything to do my MASTER'S will. As I went up the aisle I saw PRAYER, and put that in. I knew that when I went outside I would run into sin. PEACE and JOY were plentiful; they were on the last shelf. SONGS and PRAISES were hanging near so I just helped myself.

I said to the ANGEL, "Now, how much do I owe?" He just smiled and said, "Just take these things everywhere you go."

Again I said, "How much do I really owe?" He smiled again and said,

"My child, JESUS PAID YOUR BILL A LONG, LONG TIME AGO!

Thank you to Joan Edwards from Clenchwarton

Around the churches



Downham Market

Ladies Friendship Group

Our meetings are getting better every time we meet; we have another new member which is great. Our April meeting with our friend Andy Malcolm from the Deep Sea Fisherman's Mission was very enjoyable. As well as telling us about the traumas etc. he has to deal with we had songs and jokes which were enjoyed by all. The Quiz with Margaret and Ruby was also an enjoyed by all.

June 14th is our OPEN EVENING and everybody is welcome to this, non members especially.

This meeting commences at 7pm we have entertainment and a buffet supper. Entrance is £2.00 including supper. We also have a raffle and a £1.00 wrapped mystery parcel.

June 28th is the AGM with Rev. Maurice Stafford.

Margaret Fox

Messy Church continues to attract and care for youngsters and their parents but as they are meeting as I write so a report on their activities will have to wait another month. Our stalwart team who provides freshly cooked lunches every week day continues to provide a vital service both as regards the food and also the companionship. Our property team also works hard behind the scenes ensuring the wellbeing of our premises but (a bit like painting the Forth Bridge) no sooner is one problem sorted before another pops up. Our merry band of volunteers turns up each Saturday morning to provide home made cakes; to set up the varied bric a brac and book stall and erect the gazebo on the grass at the front of the Church for my plant stall. Neighbours of our members have come to buy recently, having been told we have varieties which can't be bought from supermarkets and considerably cheaper than garden centres; 'try the Methodist Church they tell their friends'. I do enjoy having a chat with new gardeners who don't know what to plant where and hearing from long standing customers how the plants they bought years ago are thriving in their gardens. No longer is gardening regarded as an older person's hobby. We really are in fashion now as it is realised (as we've known for a long time) that gardening can be very therapeutic and good for our

health, providing we have someone to do the heavy work. But now there's not so much heavy work as even digging, let alone double digging is said not to be beneficial to the soil. I must admit that years ago my family bought me a plaque saying "Gardening forever, housework whenever". I must say a big thank you to all the folk who bring their discarded plant pots, I've never had to buy any, and also to those who bring clumps or roots they are disposing of from their gardens. If you have a clear out, don't throw anything away, I'll always replant

I must also say a big thank you to all the organisations in the Church who took on one of our thirteen windows to decorate for Easter. It was so good to have the youngsters, Junior and Messy Church, Brownies, Guides and Boys' Brigade produce their interpretation of Easter and I am sure they enjoyed the preparation work. While some groups did arrange flowers the variety of offerings did make the Easter Services more meaningful for us all than just beautiful flowers at every window. The children especially also enjoyed the knitted figures made by Rob Argent and we remembered his sister Sandra Crossley who had also made some of them.

We enjoy good fellowship in so many ways in our church family and hopefully the ripples spread out to others. One lady telling me how well the plants were doing in her garden said looking at them reminded her to come and see what else I had on offer. So let me close this ramble with a piece taken from my previous URC in Southend.

You Matter You might think you don't matter in this world, but because of you someone has a favourite mug to drink their tea out of because you bought it for them.

Someone hears a song on the radio and it reminds them of you.

Someone has read a book you lent them and has got lost in its pages.

Someone remembered a joke you told them and smiled on the bus.

Never think you don't have an impact.

Your fingerprints can't be wiped away from the little acts of kindness you've left behind.

Enjoy the early summer month of June, we're nearly half way through the year already so make the most of every moment of every day and keep well.

.Joan Macey

Wimbotsham

Easter Day was glorious indeed! In celebration we heard the message of "a new life of revelation and liberation – open to all" at the Holy Communion service led by Rev. Maurice Stafford. This was followed by a generous distribution of cheerful Easter chicks knitted by Alice, each containing an Easter egg. Then, hot cross buns, coffee and chat were further enjoyed by us all.

The first Sunday after Easter (Low Sunday, perhaps so named in contrast to the high days of Holy Week and Easter) was an inspiring miscellany of contributions from our congregation members. These included a talk on the profound truth of God's love, bible readings and prayers; there were reminders of the words of the Serenity Prayer, those of "One is nearer to God's heart in a garden than anywhere else on earth" and the question raised "What are we going to do to make a difference in this season of new beginnings?". Personal meanings of chosen hymns were given and a longstanding recollection of a lively visit to Billy Graham's London crusade.

We continue to extend grateful thanks to our visiting preachers who during this past month, as always, enlivened and encouraged us with messages of hope, love and experiences of life in Christ.

As I write this to meet the deadline for June's "Rejoice" we are planning our first session on of our new Bible Study/House Group to be held fortnightly. Over the first few meetings we will be exploring a selection of Psalms, and look forward to prayerful lively discussion, warm fellowship and of course, a cup of tea/coffee!

Mary Davies

Terrington St Clement

MWiB Network was led by Frauke. We had three short verses read by Linda. Our guest speaker was Elizabeth Batstone, who read from Isaiah chapter 11 v 6-9.

She told us about the references to many birds and animals in the Bible including bears, camels, lions, donkeys, eagles and ravens. This proved very interesting, and she left us to find some more of our own.

At our next meeting with Mary leading we had a reading from one of Gervase Phinn's books by Jenny Howling. Helen outlined the main themes of the District Day at Downham Market.

Molly Hunt and Frauke Adkins shared their experiences in Florence and visiting the Leaning Tower of Pisa ably assisted by Jess Hunt on the projector. Our Anniversary Weekend is Saturday 17th June with stalls, a raffle, coffee 10am to 11.30am. Lunches will be served at 12 midday, please contact a steward to book a seat.

On Sunday 18th June at 10.30am the service will be led by Rev. Kim Nally. Every Blessing

Linda Howling

Dersingham

It is the month of May and time to prepare the church and the rest of the premises for the Flower Festival at the end of the month. A big spring clean will take place before the ladies (and gentlemen!) take over the kitchen with their food and delicious cakes, stallholders hump boxes of books, cards, Traidcraft items, plants and bric-a-brac into the hall, tables are erected, cloths washed and ironed, and, of course, others try to be creative and produce spectacular displays of flowers to illustrate the “Called to serve” theme. A lot of hard work and we hope, when you read this, that it will all have been worthwhile and that many of you will have been to see us and been uplifted by the beauty of all the flowers.

A concert is being planned for Saturday 24th June at 7pm when the West Norfolk Reeds, a group of clarinettists, will play pieces from Bach to Gershwin, conducted by their Music Director, Derek Oldfield. This Radical Hospitality event will be free and there will be free refreshments as well. We hope people will join us and enjoy a pleasant musical summer evening.

There is no coffee morning in June and the next one is on 29th July when we will be supporting Vasculitis UK. The next mid-week Communion Service will be on Wednesday 28th June at 10am.

Rosemary Caink

Clenchwarton

A mouse going across the stage caused members of the cast and audience to jump whilst watching “The Phantom of the Green Man”, a comedy play by Bill Sampson. The mouse was made by Graham Uttin, our stage manager who has made all kinds of props over the years, for our group, Lynn Players and others. The comedies by Bill are always very funny and the two which took place in our schoolroom on 20th, 21st and 22nd April were no exceptions.

The first play, “The Phantom....” Is about a coaching inn owned by Lady MacDonald, who is losing money. Something has to be done and the manager employs a French chef. From then on things go haywire! The gas in the kitchen goes off: the chef is accused of stealing her ladyship’s jewels: then a soothsayer appears heralding the supposed Phantom as an addition to the chaos!

The second play, also written by Bill, was “Charity begins at home”. Gran keeps her nest egg under the floorboards in case her money is taken. She has a cheque from the insurance for £350, but as she doesn’t trust banks asks for cash. It gets round the village that she has won £350 on the lottery. She soon has a visitor who would like a donation. Gran soon dispels the illusion! She

hears that robbers are about and decides to bury her money in the garden. Her money should go to those who needed it the most- her family. Charity begins at home”

A very happy time was spent by all, including the cast. Well done!

If you would like to go on stage there are vacancies for adults and children. Rehearsals are at the Chapel on Mondays at 7.30pm. you will be made very welcome. Next production is November 2017.

Harold Smith

Following our recent Chapel Audit we have several items that we would like to go to others to be used, if possible. If you could make good use of any of the following music books and items please ring Elspeth Hardy on 01553 775698 leaving a message if you get the answer phone.

The Best of Gospel Hymnal ISBN 2598605747

"I'll Walk with God" 26 of the most famous religious songs and ballads for piano and organ ISBN 0-86001-158-5

Spirit of Praise song book No 2, (2 available) printed in 1986

Power Praise Volume 3 ISBN 0-85476-500-X With Vol 3 Power praise hymn sheets approx 30

Scripture in song Volume 1

Methodist Service Booklets for Communion, Baptism, Confirmation and other special services 1974 X 33 available

A wooden pedestal bowl and a flat turned wooden plate

A silver plated commemorative plate from Harpley Chapel.

Elspeth Hardy

Hilgay

It was good to be able to host the Fellowship Breakfast on Saturday 6th May and to be able to welcome a lovely group of people which meant having to add an extra table.

Maggie led a very good session of hymns, prayers, readings and Music. Thank you, Maggie for all your hard work on these occasions.

On Saturday 13th May Shell Club will have had a Dance Workshop led by a Zimbabwean lady called Anna. Thanks again to Lesley for all her hard work with this group.

On May 19th Hilgay Methodist Church will have been the venue for the wedding of Philip Driver and Louise Jones. We wish them all best wishes and God's blessing on their marriage.

Pauline Driver

Pott Row

Towards the end of March we held a coffee morning to raise funds for the Norfolk Hospice Tapping House, a charity which we regularly support. It was a very friendly, lively and well attended meeting with many people coming from other villages around. It was organised by our members who were very grateful to all who gave so generously to enable us to donate £350 to the hospice.

Pott Row members are also very grateful to Mr & Mrs Peach who held a coffee morning and BBQ in their garden in April. What a great time we had as we enjoyed the company of friends old and new, and, of course, the burgers and hot dogs! The grand total of £650 was raised for our Church fund, and again we are so thankful for the support we receive from Mr and Mrs Peach.

We are looking forward to two more events -

our Annual Quiz on Friday 2nd June

our Strawberry Tea on Saturday 8th July.

As always we had a very special time over the Easter weekend. Our Good Friday service was led by Rev. Catherine, who also took the Easter Communion at 8.30am on Sunday. This was followed with a hearty breakfast, which led to a lively and thoughtful service led by Mr Keith Dennis. It was a great time of celebration which was enhanced by two extra musicians - Peter Worrell with his violin and Wendy Corner playing flute.

Bill Hone

North Lynn

Anyone for Mustard and Cress? Plentiful supply available!

Or so we could have advertised from the bountiful crop growing in our 'Easter Garden'. Planted just before Easter at our 'Messy Church' activity, we wondered initially if anything would grow on the rough looking barren compost representing the barren landscape surrounding the tomb in which the body of Jesus was laid. As well as the tomb were tiny pansies looking very woe begotten. Someone wondered how we would water it and soothsayers speculated the chances for growth were minimal!

Three bare crosses stood stark over the scene.

Yet on Easter Day signs of life were stirring. A water spray had been sourced and used when the Easter Flowers were arranged at the front of church on Easter Saturday. The room was cool but warm enough to stimulate growth. Springing out of the barren earth early signs of new life were appearing. Just as the Easter Message!

And over the next few weeks the garden took on an entirely different appearance. The little pansies grew and flowered. Seeds of Mustard and Cress scattered randomly on the dry earth shot upwards with a vengeance. There was life!

The seedlings grew and grew and grew. The whole table on which the garden stood was a swathe of green heading skywards. We turned the garden regularly so the growth was even. At that point we wondered about harvesting the crop and offering it to go in egg sandwiches, but refrained.

So a living illustration of new life appearing from desolation. A true example of the Christian Message. We shall tend the garden at least until Whitsun and if possible until Pentecost.

This message of growth is being carried into our church life. We have met to consider the next stage of our redevelopment and are to meet two prospective architects in the near future to brief them as to our vision and then see who can offer (and at what price) the concept we favour most.

Then Rev. Becca advised the building of the new vicarage next to our church was planned to start in the near future – she still has a hope to be moved in by Christmas!

Our regular activities all restarted after the Easter break and by now we hope a working party will be coming regularly on a Friday to tidy the patio and garden area at the back of church. Hopefully we can then have a few outdoor events during the summer.

So in the spirit of post Easter renewal, North Lynn looks outwards to the community as we offer a blend of sacred, social and learning opportunities.

Neville Posnett

Stow Bridge

A headline in February's Methodist Recorder reads, "Making the most of our buildings." This is a good thing to happen, not only to church premises but our schools and other places too. Not just to raise money but for community clubs and non profit making groups, letting them out free of charge. As the article states, "We as Methodists seek to serve and share."

I was pleased to read this and to think that it is going on and I am part of it. As most of you know, we share the C of E Church of St Peter, Stow Bridge or rather we use the Church three Sundays and the C of E meets one Sunday each month. I always say it's as near to a Methodist Church as we could wish. It's partly hidden by trees and it would be sad to think it was only used once a month. I'm sure we are pleased to share. Where else would we have gone after our old building became unsafe to use. Maybe our name should be "The Church at or in Stow Bridge."

(I'm not sorry but do I sound like a parrot!?)

Peter Hewitt

Peter received a herb belt for his birthday but said it was a complete waist of thyme!!



Any items for the **JULY/AUGUST** edition should be with the editor by **JUNE 12th**, earlier if possible. **If you don't get an acknowledgment of emails PLEASE enquire if I have received them as some articles have found their way into my spam bin which I don't check very often!**

Mrs Barbara Foster
140 Stow Road
Magdalen, King's Lynn
PE34 3BD
Tel. 01553 811867
E mail rabbit1308@btinternet.com

Safeguarding

We all know that churches needs to be safe places. Many of us have attended a **Creating Safer Space** training session in the past. Things have moved on since that training module was introduced. There is a fresh understanding of some of the areas of abuse and the needs of survivors. The Methodist Church has decided that those people who were trained previously now need to attend a **Foundation Module Refresher** to ensure that they are up to date.

There are many people who need to attend. They include:

- Pastoral visitors
- Anyone working with 0 - 18 year olds in the name of the church
- Anyone working in activities targeted at adults who are vulnerable
- Church stewards
- Local preachers
- Worship Leaders
- Presbyters and Deacons

The sessions will be held on several occasions and in different places across the Circuit. Please note these sessions are for people who have already attended the original Foundation Training. If you are in one of the above posts and have not already attended the Foundation Training, a different session will be arranged for you. There will be more information about this later.

The dates for the Safeguarding Refresher Course which everyone who did the original course needs to do are;

Friday 16th June at Downham Market at 7.30pm [approx. two and a half hours]

Monday 24th July at 2.30pm at London Rd.

Friday 15th September at Downham Market at 10am

Please contact Linda Howling to book a place as we will be restricted to 24 per session

The Taxi Driver meets St Peter

One Easter a priest and a taxi driver both died and went to heaven. St. Peter was at the Pearly gates, waiting for them.

“Come with me,” said St Peter to the taxi driver. The driver did as he was told and followed St Peter to a mansion. It had everything you could imagine from a bowling alley to an Olympic size pool.

“Oh, my word. Thank you,” said the taxi driver.

Next St Peter led the priest to a rough old shack with a bunk bed and a battered old television set.

“Wait, I think you are a little mixed up,” said the priest. “Should I be the one who gets the mansion? After all I was a priest, went to church every day and preached God’s word.”

“Yes, that’s true,” Peter replied, “but during your Easter sermons people slept. When the taxi driver drove everyone prayed!”

Thank you, Sylvia Perkins

A Brand Plucked from the Burning

In view of the news of a disastrous care home fire, I was very reassured when at King's Lynn Residential Home they had a regular fire alarm drill. Patients were advised beforehand that it was not the real thing. When the alarm sounded, all the doors closed automatically; the staff rushed to assemble in the dining hall and it was made sure they knew exactly what to do.

There was a very famous fire in Methodist history. On 9th February 1709 the Rectory in Epworth, Lincolnshire, caught fire. It was probably caused deliberately by parishioners who had a grudge against their rector, Samuel Wesley. It was started in the corn barn and quickly spread along the rectory's thatched roof. There was just enough time for Samuel to gather together his family and lead them to safety outside.

Then it was realised that 7 year old Jack Wesley was missing. He had evidently been fast asleep in the nursery when the others escaped. His father attempted twice to rescue him but was beaten back by the flames. Thinking that Jack was dead, he knelt down outside in prayer for his soul.

Just then, a pale white face appeared at an upper window. The child had woken up but the stairs were already on fire and about to collapse and flames were licking across his bedroom ceiling. He had the presence of mind to rush to the window. A famous painting by Henry Perlee Parker in 1840 shows neighbours reaching up to pluck little Jack from his bedroom window to safety.

Samuel's wife Susanna paid special attention to the education of her children according to the latest ideas. Each had a special day of the week when she would give them one to one attention. After little Jack's miraculous rescue, she was convinced that he had been saved for some special purpose. She called him "a brand plucked from the burning" (quoting Zechariah 3:2 in the Old Testament) and paid special attention to his education.

When we think of all that John Wesley achieved, we can see that Susanna was right. Methodism today has 80 million followers in the world. His

brother Charles Wesley takes up this theme in the Wesleys' Conversion Hymn in May 1738:

Where shall my wondering soul begin?
How shall I all to heaven aspire?
A slave redeemed from death and sin,
A brand plucked from eternal fire,
How shall I equal triumphs raise,
Or sing my great redeemer's praise?

John Garfoot,
(with help from Raymond)



Henry Perlee Parker, 'The Rescue of John Wesley from the Fire in the Epworth Rectory' (painted 1840)

What did the Yorkshireman say when he ran out of Sellotape?
Eh, by gum!!!

St Faith's

The big news for everyone at St Faith's is that our new Team Vicar, the Rev. Karlene Kerr, will become a member of our clergy team from 1st June when she will be licensed into her new post by the Bishop of Lynn, the Rt Rev. Jonathan Meyrick. Everyone is warmly welcome to attend this special service which starts at 7pm. We have been without a Team Vicar since April 2016, when the Rev. Dale Gingrich moved...

One of Karlene's areas of responsibility in her new role will be covering the large Fairstead and King's Reach housing estates. The proposal is that Karlene will eventually re-locate from her current clergy home in Jermyn Road to live on either Fairstead or King's Reach. It will be the first time in almost 30 years that St Faith's clergy will be actually living there.

Karlene has an adult daughter and originally comes from Jamaica but has lived in London for most of her life, coming to this country aged 12.

She has a varied career background working for the health service, in sales, finance and including a period as a building society manager.

She said she believes her extensive and rich experience in working with and relating to people in all manner of situations has prepared her for her new role at Gaywood to which she is looking forward so much.

Moving in with her are her two elderly cats.

In her leisure times she says she is a huge film fan and enjoys watching quality dramas on TV. She enjoys reading, writing, dancing, music, walking and eating anything sweet!!!

June at St Faith's is always Summer Fete time and the fund-raising team, under the direction of Ann Ess, has been working hard to ensure that the event is another success.

The Fete will be on June 17th from 2pm to 4pm in the Gaywood Church Rooms. All the usual variety of stalls and sideshows will be set up including one or two new ones. If the weather allows there will be games for children staged in the nearby garden in front of the church. Admission is free and everyone is welcome.

Seventy years of singing God's praises in St Faith's Church.....now that is a remarkable achievement worth celebrating.

We certainly did just that with our own wonderfully uplifting "Songs of Praise" service in honour of Olwyn Barber's seven decades as a member of our choir. I first came to know Olwyn when I joined the choir in April 1963, as an eight-year-old schoolboy.

It is my view, for a number of reasons, that we are unlikely to see the like of such long service again. It was a real one-off celebration, which we not only marked within our own church community in Gaywood, but with the entire

British nation through the service being filmed for the popular BBC Songs of Praise programme and screened into the nation's rooms at teatime on Sunday 14th May.

I have always felt that one of the things about our celebration of Olwyn's amazing service to her God and his church at St Faith's, was not only that it has spanned 70 years, but also that Olwyn has been an almost 100 per cent presence in the choir stalls every Sunday come rain or shine. In her earlier days, Olwyn tells me, she would attend three services on Sundays. She has been such an enthusiastic and regular attender that you could almost set your watch by her.

There is also an affectionate joke among some of our church members that Olwyn has been such a major part of the fixtures and fittings in St Faith's over seven decades that we would need to apply for an official Faculty if we ever wanted to remove her!!

As many people have commented, we at St Faith's have been richly blessed to have someone like Olwyn in our choir, someone who has shown such faithfulness and dedication since joining the choir as a girl of 12 together with her friend, the late Pearl Grummett.

Of course, as a result of the publicity surrounding Olwyn's fascinating story many, many more people, including from outside church circles, are aware of her amazing record.

When our Rector, the Rev. Julie Boyd, welcomed those in the congregation at the start of Olwyn's special anniversary service on Sunday 30th April, she told them that it was a day of celebration for Olwyn....."a day to give thanks for the gift of music and voice".

As Rev. Julie said "you cannot be in a parish choir for 70 years without building knowledge of music and hymnody" and Olwyn chose some of her favourite hymns for her service.

The choir was directed by choir master, Roger Darbishire and the organist was Jonathan Chaddock. The bells were rung before the service by St Faith's ringers under the direction of tower captain Iain Russell.

Olwyn's first hymn choice was Christ is Made the Sure Foundation, in its fifth verse the hymn speaks of the unity in which we live at St Faith's, the unity of Anglicans and Methodists together. something very important to Olwyn.

The second choice, Loving Shepherd of thy Sheep, reminded Olwyn of her time attending Sunday school.

The first anthem sung by the choir, Day by Day, reflects our aim to grow daily closer to God, "to see him more clearly, love him more dearly and follow him more nearly".

The second anthem was Ave Verum Corpus meaning "Hail, true body".

It is a Eucharistic hymn that has been set to music by various composers and dates from the 14th century.

The next hymn chosen by Olwyn was Hark my Soul it is the Lord. This hymn, Olwyn sees as a conversation. In the first five verses God speaks to us and assures us of his love for us. In verse six, we make our response, professing our love for God. The love of God and how we look to him to help us through our daily lives is reflected in the words of the hymn, Glorious things of Thee are spoken.

The final hymn, Olwyn's favourite, was the rousing Thine be the Glory, which says what we believe in, the hope that God holds out to us. It is a hymn of Resurrection hope.

At the end of her sermon Rev. Julie told the congregation that what she sees in Olwyn is someone who "inwardly faces the sunshine and knows the joy of new beginnings."

The joy of the Easter season is the joy of resurrection hope, when we turn to face the sunrise and give thanks.

"So today, let us do that, let us sing our songs of praise with thankful hearts" Among the presentations made to Olwyn during the service was a wonderful letter of warm congratulations and tribute from the Bishop of Lynn, the Rt Rev. Jonathan Meyrick, which Rev Julie read to the congregation. There was also a certificate from the Royal School of Church Music recognising Olwyn's long service. Later Olwyn cut a special anniversary cake made for her by fellow Choir member, Sue Benstead.

The Rev. Julie said : "Olwyn, today we celebrate with you 70 years of choir membership. It is so very important to use the gifts that we are given in the service and in the worship of God. This is something that you continue to do and I am sure find great pleasure in as well".

May God continue to bless Olwyn and long may she continue to be a very real vocal presence in the choir stalls of St Faith's Church.

Richard Parr

(My computer decided nothing was going to come too close to this article without doing sinful things! Nothing to do with the St Faith's contributor!!)

West Norfolk Methodist Circuit Diary

JUNE 2017 onwards

Saturday June 10th Fellowship Breakfast at Terrington at 8.30 am

Friday June 16th Safeguarding Refresher Course at Downham Market at 7.30pm

Saturday July 8th Fellowship Breakfast at Wimbotsham at 8.30 am

Monday 24th July Safeguarding Refresher Course at London Road at 2.30pm.

Saturday August 12th Fellowship Breakfast at Pott Row at 8.30 am

Saturday September 9th Fellowship Breakfast at St Germans at 8.30 am

Friday 15th September Safeguarding Refresher Course at Downham Market at 10am

Saturday October 14th Fellowship Breakfast at Downham at 8.30 am

Saturday October 11th MWiB Autumn District Day at Ely Methodist Church

Saturday November 11th Fellowship Breakfast at Marham at 8.30 am