

Rejoice!

June 2018



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

Dear Friends,

A visit we make from time to time these days is to Guildford to see my son and daughter-in-law and young granddaughter. Sometimes we drive and sometimes we go by train. The last part of the journey feels, for me, a bit like a trip down memory lane. I was brought up in South West London. By car a lot of the journey is along the M1 and M25, but the last part is along the A3. I have happy memories of how we used to visit some family friends who ran a nursery just off what is now the section of the A3 between the M25 and Guildford. By train the journey feels even more nostalgic. The train from Waterloo goes through Wimbledon, close to where I lived for most of my childhood and it goes through Raynes Park. From the platform at Raynes Park you can just about see the Methodist Church where I took my music theory exams and where, occasionally, I used to play the organ. Not far away is the Raynes Park school which I attended from the age of 12.

Some things along this route are still the same and some are very different. The nursery by the A3 appears not to be there anymore. The area around Wimbledon station has been developed extensively and looks very different from how it was when I caught trains from there forty years ago. The view from Raynes Park station has changed less – I think one can still see the same funeral director's premises from the platform! I sometimes wonder what my old school is like. I know that it is still there, but no doubt it is very different, not least because, in my day, it was a single sex grammar school.

Inevitably I reflect, particularly on the more leisurely train journey, on whether things have changed for the better or not. Some of the changes will have been very gradual and imperceptible, but some more sudden and immediately obvious. I do hope that Wimbledon still has a vibrant town centre and that the school in Raynes Park is still offering the kind of excellent opportunities which it offered me. Change is inevitable, but we should always try to make sure that changes enhance our communities.

In our personal lives and characters change will happen too. Again, some changes will be gradual and some more swift and far-reaching. Where it is in our power let us hope and pray that the changes people see in us will be for the good and that the changes and growth in us will also enhance the lives of those around us.

In 2 Corinthians 4:16 we read: -

“Therefore, we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.”

Charles Wesley included these lines in a hymn Methodists love to sing: -

“Changed from glory into glory till in heav’n we take our place”.

In our communities and in our personal lives let us pray that any changes over which we can have some influence will be life-enhancing.

Andrew Maguire

I have never thought of myself as a copycat but after Catherine’s adventures with her appendix, it seems that this month was my turn. I have been having some abdominal pain down my left side which came and went and came again. This all came to a head on Friday morning May 4th. My doctor (who I had not ever needed to see till now) diagnosed a kidney stone and sent me straight to hospital (QE). The pain got worse and I had to be dosed with liquid morphine. The stone showed up on the scan and was moving from kidney to bladder. Sunday morning saw the pain diminish and so they decided not to operate but send me home. Although the pain returned for two days, I am now pain free. The stone has either broken up and passed through or will move again (I can’t wait!). Thank you for your prayers and good wishes.

By the time you read this I shall be back to the ministry that I am called to exercise here in the circuit.

Sincerely Maurice

District Synod

After a not too early start we had a rather dull and dreary ride to Dereham. But the welcome we received was far from dull or dreary! A cuppa, then a time of worship.

The theme for the day was “Rural Ministry and Mission” and we heard various speakers talking on this theme. One said, “A small church is no more a failed big church than a satsuma is a failed orange” and we heard of what was going on in some of our small churches to prove that. We also heard some young people who had enjoyed 3generate.

The afternoon was devoted to workshops. I attended one entitled “Poetry for a rural context” run by Rev. Catherine Dixon. A stimulating session that actually got my brain working as we read and discussed poems by R.S.Thomas, Seamus Heaney, Edward Thomas and (of course) Malcolm Guite.

Someone gave the following as a definition of Synod; “A roomful of people waiting to go home”. Not this time. Next Autumn we are the hosts. I’m actually looking forward to it.

Barbara Foster

Praying together in the Circuit

As water reflects the face,
so one's life reflects the heart.

Proverbs 27:19

In all we are, or say or do
our hearts' desire is to reflect you.

Precious Lord, our joy and our delight
Guide our steps as we walk in your light.

We seek your heart to be one with you
hearts beating with love in all that we do.

Our hearts ache with yours for the lost to be found
for indifference to cease and love to abound.

We pray for justice and peace in every place
for your transforming power, your amazing grace.

Revive us O Lord with our hearts ablaze
may our lives honour You all of our days.

Now to Him who is able to carry out his purpose
and to do superabundantly more than all we dare ask or think
infinitely beyond our greatest prayers, hopes, or dreams,
according to His power that is at work within us,
to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus
throughout out all generations for ever and for ever. **AMEN**

Eph. 3: 20-21 Amplified .

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,

Lord we ask your blessing for

Young people preparing for exams, especially those going
through difficult times in their families, their health.

Celebrate King's Lynn
in The Walks on Saturday 9th June
The Methodist Conference meeting 28th June - 5th July
in Nottingham for those who will be ordained.

For our Circuit

Give to us Lord, vision to see by your Spirit
The path we should follow, that this circuit, in your strength
shall be a true witness for every tomorrow.

For Clenchwarton Chapel members who remember Bill Sampson. He and his wife Joyce were the main inspiration for CMEG. He wrote and performed in many of the productions, loved singing, was a talented artist and all who met him felt better for having met such a gentleman.

His latest play, "A Red Letter Day" was performed only a week before his death.

ACTION FOR CHILDREN
Step Out 2018
Saturday 16th June
Starting from
Hilgay Methodist Church
at
9.30 a.m.

This will be an easy 3½ mile circular walk exploring the footpaths in and around the village. Parking is available on the grass area opposite East End – look for the bus stop. Refreshment and toilet facilities will be available at the church. It is suitable for adults with children and with dogs on a lead.

You will need walking shoes and/or wellies if wet. Come and join us and help us raise a lot of money for **Action for Children**. For more information and/or sponsor forms contact Hazel & John Miles: **01366 385772**

NO WAY HOME

Drugs and crime are always with us in the news. How often do we find ourselves asking "What must it be like for the families?" I have just read a remarkable book which tells us how it was for one such family. It is called "No Way Home – a memoir of life on the run," by Tyler Wetherall, the youngest member of the family. The story opens in California where the father was a big-time marijuana drug smuggler. He had amassed a huge fortune but now the FBI and Scotland Yard were on his trail. He decided to do a run. Tyler was just a baby but by the time she was nine she had lived in 13 houses, in 5 different countries, never questioning her strange upbringing. The worst thing for her was when her parents broke up and she went to live with her mother in England. The children never knew where their father was; they telephoned him every week from a phone box in case their home phone was bugged. They had no idea why they had this nomadic way of life or what their Dad had done, until one day two detectives turned up to question their Mom as to his whereabouts. So, then she felt she had to tell them the truth and it was such a shock for them to learn that their family had been living a lie, their Dad was a fugitive and their name was not even their own.

Eventually Tyler's father turned himself in and was taken to America to face trial and imprisonment. The family settled in England and went each summer to visit him. In the book it is noticeable that there is no recrimination. The children went on loving their Dad and he was so fond of them. It must have been heart-breaking for them to see him behind bars and they would be too embarrassed to tell their friends where they had spent their summer holidays. He was released having served just over five years of a ten-year sentence. In America drug laws are extremely harsh and offences attract a longer sentence than for murder. This is despite the fact that marijuana is not always dangerous while alcohol most definitely is.

"No Way Home" has a happy ending, showing how facing the consequences and honesty can help the human spirit rise above hardship and adverse circumstances. They are now a family; the father went back to his work in finance. Tyler's brother and sister are doing well in their professions. Tyler is forging a career for herself as a writer. As well as her book, she has written in the Times and the Guardian as well as publishing some short fiction. Tyler studied English at Leeds University; while there she met my granddaughter Sarah and they became close friends. Although Tyler now lives in her native America with her Mom, she came last October to be a bridesmaid at Sarah's wedding. We have a recording of her making a lovely speech, in which she comes over as a very warm and attractive personality. Sarah returned the compliment by going over to New York in April for the launch of the book. If you would like to see Tyler yourself and hear her story you should be able to find online an interview she gave to the BBC World Service, "My father the FBI fugitive." The book is available from Amazon, search `Tyler Wetherall.`

John Garfoot

Around the churches



Hilgay

It was lovely to see a good congregation at the Good Friday evening service led by Downham Market Choir and the Easter Day Celebration went well with Heather Brown leading worship.

On April 8th our planned preacher was unable to come so we had planned to do a C.F.S. Heather very kindly offered to come to Hilgay again and lead worship for us. We had a really moving service with a relaxing meditation, (no-one went to sleep) and lovely Easter hymns with relevant prayers and readings. Thank you, Heather.

Our Chapel Anniversary will be on 3rd June when the preacher will be Rev. David Simpson and soon after that we hope to have the interior of the chapel re-decorated.

On June 10th at our Sunday morning worship we shall welcome 'Folyouth' from Ashill Fountain of Life Church. This is the church our grandson Dominic attends and as some of you will remember he held a coffee morning at ours in the autumn half term 2017.

Since then he and his friends have done their 'Mission Adventure' to Albania. Come along and hear about the vision of Folyouth along with testimonies and stories from these 'Youth with a Mission' young people.

David and I heard them at their church and they gave a very moving and inspiring presentation.

On Saturday June 16th Hilgay Chapel will be open for 'Step Out', for Action for Children. Refreshments will be available for walkers and anyone who cares to join us on this occasion.

Pauline Driver

Terrington St Clement

Safeguarding: Could all people who need to attend the safeguarding course please contact me lindahowling1948@gmail.com or 01553829146. There is a new course 2in1 Foundation suitable for all those who need to attend. It

would help us to know at which location to have the next course. Your safeguarding rep should have a list of those who need to attend. Thank you.

Network; (MWiB) Molly Hunt told us about her coach journeys and Rev. Andrew Maguire told us about the three James in the Bible. New Beginnings continues with Rev. Jackie Goddard, Fun to Fit keeps us on our toes, Knit and Natter continues on Saturday mornings. We hope to have a Hunger Lunch with proceeds to Christian Aid.

Linda Howling

Gaywood St Faith's

June is an exciting month for everyone connected to St Faith's Church as we have the popular summer fete and, at the end of the month, the Ordination in Norwich Cathedral of our new curate, Laura Purnell.

The arrival of Laura, who is married to Martin and has five grown-up step-children, means that we will have an all-female ministry team on the Anglican side.

The new team will comprise of St Faith's Rector, the Rev. Julie Boyd, Team Vicar, the Rev. Karlene Kerr, curate, the Rev Laura Purbell, Julie Swinton, who is currently in training with a view to going forward for Ordination and assistance from the Rev. Catherine Dixon. The Methodists are led at St Faith's by the Rev. Andrew Maguire.

Laura and Martin are to live in Gaywood in a four-bedroom house on Wootton Road that has recently been purchased by the Diocese of Norwich.

It is hoped that quite a number of folk from St Faith's Church will travel to Norwich on Saturday, 30th June, to attend Laura's Ordination service beginning at 10.30am. If you would like to attend this service and require transport please contact the St Faith's Church office on 01553 774916 (Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings between 9am and 12 noon) or speak to a churchwarden on Sundays.

In the weeks leading up to Laura's Ordination, please keep her and her family in your prayers as she takes this important step on her Christian journey.

Laura says she is looking forward to getting to know the people of St Faith's Church over the coming months and years. As well as five step-children, the couple have 11 grandchildren who take up much of their spare time.

They have a large extended family on both sides with Laura's mainly based in Lincolnshire. They expect visits from Laura's sisters and from nieces and nephews.

Laura has spent the last two years training at Ridley Hall in Cambridge.

She says that her appointment at Gaywood will mean that she and Martin will be in the same house again to which they are both looking forward.

She and Martin have many interests but together they like to cook a meal and sit down and enjoy it together. They also enjoy a visit to the theatre or cinema. "Another joint interest is steam trains. I like to find a cosy corner with the people and crossword while Martin enjoys the whole experience and takes pictures which he may later draw or paint," she said.

"We both like to keep fit. I apologise in advance if we run (well jog slowly) past you looking like a beetroot, out of breath earphones in and don't see you".

Laura said that she and Martin are looking forward to welcoming church members to their new home as they gradually get to know everyone.

St Faith's church members will officially welcome Laura and her family to her first service at St Faith's Church at the 9.45am service on Sunday, 1st July.

There will be an opportunity to meet Laura and her family more informally after the service over refreshments in the Church Rooms.

The next Saturday Coffee Morning will be on June 2nd at 10 am.. Come and enjoy a cuppa and a chat with friends and browse the various stalls.

June 16th sees St Faith's summer fete which is always much looked forward to by church members and people from the wider Gaywood community.

There is an important change this year in that the official opening takes place at 1pm which is ONE HOUR earlier than usual. Please book the date in your diary and make a special note of the new starting time.

People love to come along to the summer fete with its friendly, family atmosphere and colourful selection of stalls and sideshows.

Following on from the success of the outdoor activities in the garden (in front of the church) Jenny Tooke and her team have extended these this year and they will be well promoted with signage around the Church Room site. It is also hoped that, weather permitting, there will be a number of stalls set up outside the Church Rooms.

It is hoped that in future the summer fete may return to its popular location of the lush green lawns of the Rectory gardens. People have very fond memories of the years when the Summer fete was always held in the extensive gardens. As usual, admission is free and once inside visitors will be able to browse around the various stalls which will include all the old favourites including bric-a-brac, home-made cakes and jams, games and puzzles, gift stall, bottle stall, tombola and plants.

When you have picked up one or two bargains, you can enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a delicious slice of home-made cake in the refreshment area.

People like to take this opportunity of catching up with old friends and there is always the sound of happy chatter as friends exchange news and views.

Another important date is on June 9th when Celebrate King's Lynn provides an open-air showcase for all the various church groups in the King's Lynn area.

The event covers a large section of The Walks and is run under the auspices of Churches Together in King's Lynn. Julie and Ian Swinton are very involved with the St Faith's Church contribution to this event, heading the Outreach committee.

As well as stalls offering information about the various church groups in Lynn, many of the stalls will offer visitors the chance to try their skills at various games. Refreshments are available and admission is free. The event runs all day and previous events have been greatly enjoyed by visitors in the Walks. Work is continuing, quietly in the background by members of the St Faith's Building Project team to create a new office in the old church bungalow in the Church drive.

It is hoped that the new office will be part of the first phase of this exciting project. Once the office has moved into the bungalow, further phases of the project, including the provision of a drop-in centre and meeting rooms, will follow. It is hoped that the cost of this work will partly be met from grants. Although we are only in June, thoughts of some church members have been focusing on Christmas and the fourth St Faith's Christmas Tree Festival. Previous Festivals have proved very popular and helped to raise the public profile of St Faith's Church. As part of the Festival, which opens on 7th December and continues for four days, there will be evening concerts, a craft stall with a Christmas flavour and a raffle. Look out in this article for details in the coming months. Anyone who has any ideas for including in the Festival please speak to the Rev Julie Boyd, Joan Greening or Susie Cranko-Page. Church members Patrick and Patsy Jackson, who arranged the very successful Quiz and Chips evening in May, are also behind another exciting fund-raising venture. This will be in October in the form of a Mystery Auction. Pat and Patsy are asking that church members think about bringing back a present from their holidays. The present should be wrapped and where it is from written on the outside. These presents will then be auctioned off at the mystery auction. For more detailed information please speak to Pat and Patsy at the church or call them on 01553 277268.

Richard Parr

Downham Market

Ladies Friendship Circle

We had a very interesting evening with our friend Andy Malcolm from the Deep Sea Fishermen's Mission. The work they do for our fishermen and their families is remarkable. We gave him a cheque for £72.00 to help the mission which we made at an earlier meeting from a Bring and Buy sale.

Our quiz night was a great success we have lots of laughs and always learn something new.

Our June meetings are 13th with a talk from a member of the Tapping House Hospice.

27th is our OPEN EVENING which starts at 7pm. The cost is £2.00 which includes entertainment and a Buffet supper. Everyone is welcome.

Margaret Fox

After the Beast from the East had gone we had hot Summer weather. From snow to a heat wave in about two weeks does not give us time to acclimatise and I am sure the flora and fauna were just as confused and uncomfortable. My daily riverside walk colour changed from the yellow of the celandines and cowslips, sadly over for another year, to the white of Queen Anne's Lace (cow parsley) and May blossom so Spring is really sprung. The recent hot spell involved me in driving into Downham several times a week to water all the plant stall plants stored in the Memorial Garden, but not being watered every day meant I lost quite a few. However, it was good to start getting my own garden planted up at last now that the builder's yard has been landscaped and all I had to do was select from my racks of boxes stored in my garden what would look good. Some of the plants were descendants of cuttings or divisions of plants given to me many years ago by friends, quite a few of whom are no longer with us, and these brought back memories of previous homes, clubs and past times.

On May 13th we had a wonderful fellowship service on the theme of the gifts and talents we have received which we must not neglect. The front of the Church was decorated like a flower garden as well as the usual beautiful pedestal and there were tables displaying all sorts of crafts and sporting activities. We enjoyed a slide show of paintings of many views of Downham accompanied by soothing contemplative music and the choir sang Many gifts but only one Giver. I must admit I never really appreciated my school motto engraved in the stained-glass window 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee' till now. After our Easter celebrations our choir is busy learning anthems to enhance our Sunday services. We are rehearsing 'Make a joyful noise' for the Church Anniversary on 8th July; another piece for the Action for Children service on 15th and, for our Harvest celebrations in September, John Rutter's "All things bright and beautiful". John Rutter has written some beautiful songs and carols bringing back for me memories of my time with Southend Festival Chorus when we did an afternoon and evening concert at the Cliffs Pavilion at the beginning of every December. We had junior and senior school choirs, bringing in all the parents, and the town and Salvation Army bands all helping and with the bribery of sweets young children would swarm onto the stage to sing "Away in a Manger" while the choir provided a gentle humming accompaniment. Our conductor would listen keenly to spot talented singers who might be future choir members. Talk about catch them young! Such

happy times and such a good start to the lead up to Christmas, especially as a goodly collection was taken for various town charities.

Talking of catching them young brings me to our Messy Church sessions led by Hazel and her team of volunteers who teach, inspire and feed a crowd of youngsters and their parents every month. Hazel has reported on their last session. The theme of May's Messy Church was 'God 24/7'. It was based on the final words of Jesus as recorded by Matthew. We thought especially of how Jesus asked his disciples to share the good news throughout the world and that he would be with them always. The presence and words of a South African Christian, Lynese Morris, added weight to the importance and validity of this commission. Crafts had included making model mountains, bracelets with a cross on them, decorating biscuits with sky, mountain and the word 'always' and a 'Minute to win it' competition. It was a happy session and we look forward to sharing our friendship and faith again next month.

Before the June session, on the Downham Carnival Day we are going to have a gazebo on the Howdale as a centre for what we are calling Messy Play. We hope to meet other families and invite them to join us at our regular sessions.

In leading our worship to say thank you for all the talents we have in our congregation, Deacon Janet stressed the importance of using them all, especially the more personal ones in welcoming newcomers, teaching and setting an example to our young folk, sharing our neighbours' problems and being pastoral visitors helping the elderly and lonely. So in using our talents we can use our hands, voices and innate sensitivity in the Lord's work.

We now look forward to the Summer, our holidays and out of door activities whatever the weather.

Stow Bridge

We continue to enjoy our worship with our Anglican friends. It means we get to hear the local clergy so it gives us a real mix and points of view besides holding us together.

As God has proclaimed it the seasons come around in their order. It's good to see all the green in the countryside and green shoots from the veg patch! Now we await the burst of colour of summer flowers and fruits. What a wonderful world we live in.

And of course, we are aware of and see the sadness of people in troubled countries, and in our country too. Our thoughts are for them.

Now what about the dreamers' word. IF.

If God had voicemail!

Thank you for calling my Father's house. Please select one of the following options.

Press 1 for requests.
Press 2 for Thanksgiving.
Press 3 for complaints.
Press 4 for Angels.

I'm sorry all of our Angels are busy helping other sinners right now. However, your prayer is important to us and will be answered in the order received.

Please stay on the line. You are 10,364th in the queue.

If you would like to speak to Gabriel, press 1, for Michael press 2, for a directory of other angels press 3.

To find out if a loved one has been assigned to Heaven press 5, enter their National Insurance number then press the £key.

For reservations at my Father's house please enter J.O.H.N. followed by 3 v 16.

For answers to nagging questions about dinosaurs, the age of the earth and where Noah's Ark is please wait until you arrive here.

Our computers show that you have already prayed once today. Please hang up and try again tomorrow.

This office is closed for the weekend to observe a religious holiday.

Please pray again on Monday after 9.30 am. I

If you need emergency assistance please contact your local Minister.

Thank you!

A feminist speaker was addressing a large group and asked, "Where would man be today if it were not for woman?"

She paused for a moment and looked around the room before saying, "I repeat where would man be today if it were not for woman?"

From the back of the room, a lone male voice called out, "He'd be in the Garden of Eden eating strawberries!"

Enjoy the sun!

Peter Hewitt

Not from Peter but they could be!!

Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?

What does a clock do when it's hungry? It goes back four seconds.

What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.

Energizer bunny arrested. Charged with battery.



Methodist Homes Sunday – June 10th 2018

Best Sunday for Ages

As MHA celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2018, Methodist Homes Sunday will have a special emphasis on the achievements of age and the completeness of life. The theme of worship is “Full of Years” and churches are invited to use the resources to look at ways in which we can focus on the things that matter in each and every age.

There is an order of service and additional worship material, which may help with Local Arrangement services (CFS) and is available to

download from the website www.mha.org.uk/mhs

Although, the official date for MHA Sunday is June 10th, it can be held on a more convenient date at any time of the year to suit individual churches.

Income raised helps to provide life enhancing services such as:

- Chaplaincy
- Music Therapy for people with dementia
- Support services in Live at Home Schemes

Many churches support MHA each year but in their 75th year, it would be good if everyone could do something.

All churches should have received an envelope via the March Circuit Meeting enclosing details of MHA Sunday with the donation envelopes and instructions regarding forwarding any amount raised to myself for onward transmission to MHA.

Please contact me if you wish to know more about how you can support this worthwhile charity.

Heather Titcomb

MHA Circuit Representative

01485 542960

heather38@tiscali.co.uk

JOSEPH RACE – PIONEER MISSIONARY TO CHINA

Throughout my ministry I have been most interested in our Methodist heritage; this stems from the fact that one of my earliest churches had a remarkable history. This was High House, in the tiny Weardale village of Ireshopeburn. In days when the area was heavily populated with miners and quarrymen John Wesley called there no fewer than thirteen times. The chapel was built in 1760 specially to house the congregations that he attracted, although ironically, he had to preach outside because the crowds were too big to be accommodated. This is now the oldest Methodist Church in the world. I have just heard that it needs extensive repairs beyond the means of the small congregation and cannot be used at present. The matter is now in the hands of Methodist Heritage so I very much hope that something can be done to preserve such an historical treasure.

One of my members was Mrs. MacQueen who often spoke to me about her nephews, Philip Race, who became Vice-President of Conference in 1957, and his brother Steve, a popular musician and broadcaster; older readers may remember his “My Music” programmes. One day in the family attic Steve was thrilled to come across a trunk containing diaries and letters of his grandfather (1848 – 1880). The result was that he wrote a fascinating book “The Two Worlds of Joseph Race” (still available online). The first `world` describes his younger years in Weardale where life in mid-Victorian England was quite basic. I have seen the small stone cottage high up on the slope outside the village where he was brought up. At the age of six he was able to attend a charity school but when he was ten he had to go out to work at the local lead mine. Up there the weather can be quite severe – I have seen snow drifts 20 ft high and have taken a funeral when the coffin had to be borne on a horse drawn sledge; imagine what it must have been like for young Joseph to have to be up at 5 o`clock in the freezing cold for work, where his job was to wash the ore.

The highlight of the week was chapel. I suppose the Race children would be glad when the hour-long sermon was over and it was time for a sing, to the accompaniment of Mr. Bee on his clarinet (I remember it still hanging up over the organ.). When he was 12, Joseph attended a mission in the adjoining village at St John`s Chapel, conducted by a visiting evangelist, and was soundly converted. From then on, a fervent and pious class leader, Joshua Dawson, who was also a local preacher, took him in hand; Joseph didn`t mind a bit because Joshua had an attractive daughter, Hannah, and she and Joseph were soon walking out together. By the time he was 20 Joseph was a preacher and his prospective father-in-law encouraged him to become a minister. Within a year of becoming a fully accredited local preacher the Quarterly Meeting unanimously recommended him for training and he was given a place at Richmond College, which had a great reputation for training candidates for overseas mission. Unhappily it is now closed, but when I was there a roll of honour was in the entrance hall, with names of pioneer missionaries, among them Joseph Race. This had been his dream for many years. In particular he had his eye on China, where lived a third of the human

race. Western powers, denied access for centuries, had opened trading settlements on the coast. From these the early missionaries went inland. For one who had very little formal education he had to work hard to keep up with studies but he made the grade and after three years went to say goodbye to his family, and more importantly propose to Hannah and ask her to follow him to China. She readily said yes to both requests, although her father was not too pleased. Not only was he losing his daughter, but by now Joshua was travelling the country in a Gospel Car and hoped Joseph would join him instead of going right round the other side of the world. Both men prayed about it but received different answers. So we find Joseph boarding the SS Sarpedon at Liverpool in 1874 and going on a slow boat to China. Arriving eventually at Canton, the missionaries there wanted to detain him, but he was anxious to get on with the job he had come half way round the world to do, one of a gallant band of only 14, determined to take the gospel to 140 million Chinese.

On arrival at Wusueh on the North bank of the Yangtze, he found he was to work with the redoubtable David Hill, whose pioneer work had become a legend back home. Hill dressed and lived like a Chinaman and had even taken a Chinese name. Joseph soon learned the hard lesson that Western missionaries were not welcome. They shouted after him in the street "Foreign devil!" How must he do? The way opened unexpectedly. The friends at High House had presented him with a medicine chest, which they thought would be very useful in a country where medical facilities were limited. One day he saw a boy with a bad cold and gave him some camphor. The next morning, he found four Chinese waiting for treatment and every day the queue grew larger as the word got around and soon he had to send to Hankow hospital for more medical supplies. Though without formal medical training he successfully performed a cataract and appendix operation. (I have had both but thankfully they were on the NHS)

In time Hannah was allowed to join him and she made that long and perilous journey alone. What must it have meant for that young girl to go out there? Methodism owes a great debt to the wives of missionaries. Gradually a little company of believers was built up and Joseph helped them to build a church. But the strain began to tell on him and when he was only 32, in 1880, he contracted typhoid fever and died in Hancow hospital, the first of that brave band of early missionaries to give their life for China. Hannah returned home alone with their three little children

And what of China? It has always been a place of danger and sacrifice for those who have gone out there with the gospel. In the Boxer rebellion of 1900, 135 missionaries died. By 1949, when the Communists took over, there were between 3 and 4 million Christians in China, but even when the bamboo curtain came down the Church survived and grew and it is estimated that within a decade China will have more Christians than any other country in the world

The toil and sacrifice of Joseph and Hannah Race has not been in vain.

John Garfoot

MWIB DAY AT MUSEUM STREET METHODIST CHURCH IPSWICH.

Ruth Arnold our District MWiB president welcomed us all to the day after a very welcome coffee or tea to drink after a long but smooth, journey.

The first part of the day was a short time of worship followed by the notices and telling us of the national conference in Swanwick where Rachel Lampard last year's Vice President of the Methodist Church was very well received and a wonderful time was had by all. We were all encouraged to consider going next year.

As yet there is no venue for the East Anglia District MWiB day on 11th October. There is to be a Quiet Day on the 10th November and Esther will lead the day on the Advent theme.

There is a pressing need for a Vice President for MWiB in our District and so please consider this prayerfully and let me know soon please.

The one-day District conference at Belsey Bridge will be on 18th May 2019.

More than £900 has been raised for the Bees, Beds and Blessings project in Jamaica and Ruth is very grateful. We have a collecting tube for silver such as 20p's or £1's and any collected will be passed on to this very worthwhile project. The Jamaican minister Rev. Everald Galbraith (friend of Rev. Bernard Arnold and Ruth) has become the President of the Caribbean and America's from next month. He may need to move to Bermuda to work from there so Ruth will keep in touch with Shereen his wife to get news. Prayers are very welcome for them both as there may need to be changes in the workings of the Methodist Church during his busy term of office.

The amazing total of £16,000 has been raised all told for E.A.C.H during Heather's term of office.

We were then treated to a wonderful hour or so from Rev. Catherine entitled "Being Human". Here is my report of how I heard what Catherine said in her very eloquent way. I hope she will correct it if I misreport any of what she said!

Catherine explained how God has made us special and in his own image using her thoughts on the writings of famous theologians and through the poetry of Rev. Dr. Malcolm Guite and others.

We looked at a picture of a tree of little blob people and chatted to each other about which blob person we thought we felt like and where we are at in our lives. Catherine said "There is something precious about being human, created by God and in the image of God". Our society is preoccupied by image as we all know. Catherine then read poems of contrasting ways we are created human, as made in the image of God, but also how we have a corrupt image of ourselves, and how perhaps we struggle in our lives in relation to our faith.

Catherine read a story depicting an image that older women often have of themselves and how it may be wrong but that we are frustrated about the limitations of our flesh.

God chose this flesh and came as a vulnerable baby so why are we so obsessed with 'image'?

Philippians 2: 6-11 was read and Catherine talked about how all our humanness is Taken into the heart of God at the Ascension, saying "God took on human flesh and he always blesses it". She mentioned how Mo Farah ran in the London Marathon with all kinds of people, and it could have been any one of us taking part alongside him!

Everyone had a place and could take part in their own way.

Catherine reminded us that God did not create us to be alone, and the glory of God is seen and known when we come together. We saw a sculpture of Elizabeth and Mary who were both extraordinary women, along with other projected words, poems and pictures shown on the screens at the front and sides of this large Methodist Church.

In the afternoon after a refreshing time having lunch and talking to people from other Circuits the theme of Rev. Catherine Dixon's talk was "BEING ALIVE"

She asked us to draw a table with 6 places and choose which people of all humanity past and present should come to our dinner party. It was an extremely difficult exercise and we weren't given long. With some hilarity around us and a few sharing their choice of five other guests we thought about the qualities we admire in people and those we might want to influence for the better if we shared the dinner table!

We thought about some of our qualities. Catherine read a poem by Megan Beech 'When I grow up I want to be Mary Beard'. It seems this lady, a clever Cambridge Professor, is not thought to take much notice of image in the way she dresses and looks which is part of her statement about image maybe. Yet she presents the programmes I've seen in such an interesting way one admires her for it.

Whatever we wish for ourselves, God always invites us to his table as is suggested in one of George Herbert's poems, *Love bade me welcome*, and in the 23rd Psalm *you prepare a table before me*.

God invites us and calls us by name said Catherine. Malcolm Guite wrote a lovely poem "Easter Dawn" which Catherine read about Mary Magdalene finding Jesus in the garden and being called by name.

Rev. Catherine then read a few lines from Rowan Williams book 'Being Human' which talks about us flourishing because we are made by God and He calls us by name and says "You are Mine".

Then Catherine spoke about relationships and our relationship with GOD What makes us flourish? How and when have we felt fully alive? Is it possible to share this feeling with others and help others flourish? Just as God's life is breathed through us Rev. Catherine suggested that there is a glorious sense of being fully and alive in the programme "Strictly Come Dancing". She said "God's glory is in us and can be our dance and zest for life if we let it".

Giraffes Can't Dance is a children's picture book in rhyme and was read by Catherine at the end of her talk. The main character, a giraffe, cannot dance and jive

like the other animals and feels left out and slinks off alone until at the end of the story he finds a tune that gets his body moving and fills him with joy and the feeling of being fully himself and part of the animal scene. In fact, the animals who saw him were in awe of him and thought he could dance better than any of them!

The last lines said by Catherine were “We only have to find the one tune that makes us dance. God is in that flow of music, leads us in the flow and then we can begin to feel gloriously and fully alive”.

Joyce, Audrey and I really enjoyed this stimulating and happy day listening to Rev. Catherine and hearing of the great work that East Anglia District MWiB does amongst us. It was great to join in Fellowship with others we don't see very often. It would be really lovely if a few more would like to go to the next District day and there will be more details later.

Helen Maguire

THE DEAD HORSE THEORY

The tribal wisdom of the Dakota Indians, passed on from generation to generation, says that:

‘When you discover that you are riding a *dead* horse the best strategy is to dismount.’

However, in modern business, education and government, a whole range of more advanced strategies is often employed such as:

1. Buying a **stronger** whip.
2. **Changing** riders.
3. Threatening the horse with **termination**.
4. **Appointing a committee** to study the horse.
5. Arranging to **visit other countries** to see how other riders ride dead horses.
6. **Lowering the standards** so that dead horses can be included.
7. Reclassifying the dead horse as **living impaired**.
8. Hiring **outside contractors** to ride the dead horse.
9. Harnessing several dead horses together to **increase the speed**.
10. Providing **additional funding and/or training** to increase the dead horse's productivity.
11. Doing a **productivity study** to see if a lighter rider would improve the dead horse's performance.
12. Declaring that the dead horse **does not have to be fed**, it is **less costly**, carries **lower overheads**, and therefore contributes more to the bottom line of the economy than do some other horses.
13. **Re-writing the expected performance** requirements for all horses.
14. **Promoting** the dead horse to a **supervisory position** of **hiring** another horse.

John Miles (from an unknown source)

West Norfolk Methodist Circuit Diary JULY 2018 onwards

Thursday May 31st Circuit Meeting at London Road 7.00pm

Saturday 2nd June 10 am St Faith's Coffee Morning

Saturday 16th June 10am - 4pm Ecumenical Day of Prayer at Downham Market.

Saturday 16th June 10 am Step out for Children at Hilgay

Saturday 16th June 1 pm St Faith's Summer Fete

Saturday July 21st 2pm - 4pm Sir George Edwards Memorial Meeting at Gressenhall

Monday October 1st MWiB A.G.M. at London Road

Thursday October 11th MWiB Autumn District Day



Any items for the **JULY** edition should be with the editor by **JUNE 12th**, earlier if possible, (but not too early as they might get lost!). **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

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