

Rejoice!

May 2018



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

Dear Friends,

Those of us in ordained ministry are encouraged (indeed expected) to engage with 'continuing ministerial development'. Ministerial formation does not end when we leave training, indeed you might suggest that is when it actually starts. There is always so much more to learn and reflect on as we develop as human beings, as Christians, and as ministers of religion. Recently I had a rather unscheduled piece of ministerial development when I discovered what it is like to be on the other side of the hospital bed – not visiting, as is normally the case for me, but lying there sick and helpless. I was admitted to the QEH during March as an emergency case, and the next day I had an operation to remove my appendix. It was all something of a whirlwind, and 48 hours after I had arrived I found myself discharged and heading home.

My experience not only taught me what it is like to be a hospital patient – and I cannot praise the experience I had of our much-beleaguered NHS highly enough – but also what it is like to have your life utterly changed in a moment. When I got home, frustratingly there were things I couldn't physically do because of the operation. My body was demanding rest and time for healing while my mind was all-too-aware of the commitments in my diary that needed to be met, or at least rescheduled. I had begun Lent with a picture in my mind of the 'forty days and forty nights' that lay ahead. I *knew* how things would be from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day, and it was all laid out in my diary. I could not have imagined that the second half of Lent would be all-but wiped out by something unexpected and beyond my control.

Those of you who know me even slightly will know that being sensible is contrary to all my natural instincts. What a steep learning curve it has been over these past 5 weeks (at time of writing). Apparently, all the rules about the time it takes to heal, and what you can and cannot do post-operatively, do apply to me. Frustrating and boring have been the most repeated words in my vocabulary. I did resume light duties (probably more quickly than I should have, thank you to all those who have reminded me) and it was very precious to be able to lead and share in services for Holy Week and Easter. I am now mostly back in action, but it still catches up with me sometimes and I have to reign things in. Boring!!

All this time reclining and resting has not been a complete waste. I have had time to read, and time to reflect. I am all-to-aware that my experience is by no means unique. There are times when we are all subject to the vulnerability of what it is to be human, to inhabit bodies made of frail flesh, and to be in

relationship with those whose lives and bodies and destinies we cannot control. In the Incarnation God took on that same flesh as us and was subject to all of our weaknesses and limitations. God in Christ knew love and tenderness, friendship and family, but also betrayal and denial, suffering and death.

On Thursday 10th May the Church will celebrate Ascension Day. In a sermon preached on the Ascension, Rowan Williams said the following, which I found very helpful, and I hope you will too. *The Ascension of Jesus...becomes a celebration of the extraordinary fact that our humanity in all its variety and its vulnerability has been taken by Jesus into the heart of the divine life.* He goes on to speak of how Jesus' humanity took into it all the *difficult, resistant, unpleasant bits of our humanity*, and took them into *the heart of love where alone they can be healed and transfigured.* If you like, you can read the whole sermon in his new book, *Being Human*.

My unplanned illness and surgery was a frustrating reminder of what it is to be human. So many things can come out of the blue and knock us for six. Mindful of this, the Pastoral Carers' Day in the Autumn will be led by The Rev. Sue Martin, chaplain at Tapping House, who will be helping us reflect on sudden death and unexpected bereavement. If this is something you would find helpful you are very welcome to join us, even if you are not a 'regular' at our circuit Pastoral Days. The event is on Saturday 13th October at London Road beginning at 9.45, with coffee and tea served from 9.15. It will end with a soup lunch, and if you would like to come please could you let Mrs Phyllis Bowman (KL 671288) for catering purposes

Wherever you find yourself at this time, hale and hearty, or experiencing the difficulties and darkness that can come with our humanity, I trust and pray that in this season of Easter and Ascension-tide you will know the hope that is held out to us, that all the variety and vulnerabilities of our humanity are taken into the heart of the divine life where they can be healed and transfigured. Every blessing,
Catherine

PS - THANK YOU!! for all the good wishes, cards, greetings, messages, thoughts and prayers following my op. Again, another ministerial learning experience - being on the receiving, rather than the giving, end. It was all truly appreciated, lifted my spirits, and it was so precious to know myself held in so many prayers. Bless you all.

COFFEE MORNINGS IN MAY...

South Wootton – Wednesday 2nd May 10am-11am

St Faith's – in the Church Rooms – Saturday 5th May 10am-12 noon

London Road – Saturday 12th May – 10am-12noon

ORDINANDS' TESTIMONY SERVICES

The East Anglia District of the Methodist Church has two ordinands who will be received into full Connexion and ordained at Methodist Conference in Nottingham in June. Their testimony services are being held in May and everyone is invited and encouraged to support them with their presence and prayers.

The Rev. Debbie Caulk – testimony service at Chapelfield Road, Norwich, on Tuesday 8th May at 7pm. Preacher – the Rev'd Rosemary Wakelin. Refreshments served before and after the service.

The Rev. Charity Nzegwu – testimony service at Royston Methodist Church (Cambridge Circuit) on Thursday 24th May at 7pm. Preacher – The Rev. Jongi Zihle (co-Chair of the London District).

Thank you

A very sincere thank you to our Church family at Hilgay for all the kindnesses shown during Gordon's recent illness. So much practical help and all good wishes were most appreciated as were messages from many friends throughout the Circuit. We are making progress and hope to be back very soon.

With love and thanks,

Gordon and Mona Kisby

There's a thought!

When a sermon becomes overlong
It would be nice to have a large prong.
To advance on the preacher
With its prominent feature
An alarm going "bingety bong"!

Praying together in the Circuit

This Jesus who was taken from you into heaven
will come back in the same way that you saw him go to heaven.

Acts 1: 11

At the beginning of his ministry Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness, overcoming temptations, remaining true to God's purpose.

During the forty days before he was taken up to heaven, the risen Jesus ministered to his disciples who were in the wilderness of doubt, preparing them to be a fellowship of believers who would be empowered for their ministry - the great commission.

He talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

On the day of Pentecost the promised empowering of the Holy Spirit came upon them opening up a new era of God's purpose which continues today.

Living Lord meet with us in personal, intimate fellowship dispersing doubt, increasing faith, releasing love and worship.

Keep us true to your purpose.

As a fellowship of believers lead us to faith in action.

Renew your church, pour out your Spirit upon us.

Kingdom power and authority flowing from your throne touching the world you love and came to save.

May we be good and faithful stewards of all you have given us as we seek your way forward step by step, moment by moment for such a time as this.

Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end. He did not give up because of the cross ! On the contrary because of the joy that was waiting for him, he thought nothing of the disgrace of dying on the cross, and he is now seated at the right side of God's throne. Hebrews 12: 2

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,

God of compassion

we pray for those who feel they are at breaking point,
physically drained, emotionally broken because of their circumstances.

Give them strength in their weakness, light in their darkness,
comfort in their sorrows, hope for their future.

Your unfailing love and mercy are new every morning,
great is your faithfulness.

SAVIOUR LOVE Jesus Christ ransomed	THE GOSPEL HOUR	restored JOY healed PEACE FORGIVEN
	 <p>with Rev. Steve Oliver every Sunday evening at 9.00.p.m.</p> <p>Listen on</p> <p>Radio Heacham <small>anguk</small> Local Internet Radio</p>	

CHARLES WESLEY 1707 - 1788

May 24th is celebrated as Wesley Day, the anniversary of John Wesley's conversion in 1738. The account of it from his Journal will be read from many Methodist pulpits:

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

It should be noted that Charles Wesley had come into a similar experience three days earlier at Pentecost. Charles was John's younger brother and they shared a gracious upbringing at the Epworth Rectory. He was educated at Westminster School and Christchurch, Oxford. It was actually he who founded the Holy Club which got the nickname "Methodists" because of its members' methodical way of life as they strove to find salvation by disciplined devotions and good works, visiting prisoners and founding a ragged school for poor children. John joined them later. Both brothers were ordained into the Anglican Church and they went out together to Georgia. Their mission there was a complete failure and they returned two very unhappy men. As John said "I who went out to Georgia to save others was not myself saved." They had seen it in others, a party of Moravian Christians who, on the voyage out there, kept on calmly singing their psalms during a ferocious storm, while everyone else was scared to death.

On their return home they again met up with Moravians, notably their leader. Peter Bohler, who explained to them that salvation was not something that we earn by our pious living and good works, it is the gift of God, St Paul's Justification by faith. Soon afterwards Charles married Sarah Gwynne, and she accompanied the brothers as they set out on their amazing evangelistic tour throughout Britain, often facing dangerous opposition but founding Methodist Societies wherever they went. Charles did not always agree with his brother; in particular he was opposed to a break with the Church of England.

Charles ceased to travel in 1765 and he and Sarah settled down to family life in Bristol, with Charles confining his preaching to that region. Their house there is now a museum. They had seven children. And it is believed that Charles wrote the hymn "Gentle Jesus meek and mild" for

them. It is touching to see the graves of five of them, who died young, in a nearby churchyard.

Two surviving sons became brilliant musicians, Charles the younger and Samuel. The family moved to Marylebone to further their careers. They gave concerts to the elite of the day. Uncle John did not feel at home in such high society. Samuel became known as the English Mozart, while Charles became organist to the Royal Family. His son was another renowned musician, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, whom we know best for his tune "Hereford" which we sing to "O thou who camest from above."

It is of course as a hymn writer that Charles Wesley is most famed. His hymns are to be found in the hymnals of most major denominations. My granddaughter is a Catholic and she tells me that they had Charles' hymn "Christ the Lord is risen today" at Easter Mass. A recent informal poll put "And can it be" as the special favourite. It certainly raises the roof when we sing it at St Faith's.

John Garfoot

Methodist Women in Britain Forthcoming Events

Easter Offering May 16th at London Road Methodist Church
King's Lynn. (2.30pm)

Speaker Elizabeth Batstone.

A.G.M. October 1st at London Road Methodist Church (2.30pm)

Autumn District Day October 11th to be held at
Cambridge Methodist Church (10.30am for 11.00am
start).

DISTRICT CELEBRATION - SATURDAY 5TH MAY

The Circuit coach will pick up at Hunstanton, King's Lynn and Downham Market. Cost £5.

ASK YOUR STEWARDS FOR FURTHER DETAILS!



A District Celebration

Saturday, 5 May 2018 at 6.30 pm

St Edmundsbury Cathedral,
Angel Hill, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 1LS



'Day by Day in Worship and Mission'
with guest speaker Revd Loraine Mellor,
President of the Methodist Conference.

- The event is free with tea, coffee and cake provided at the cathedral from 5.00 pm.
- The East Anglia District will cover half the cost of coaches arranged by circuits.
- Suggested car parks are Ram Meadow, Cotton Lane, IP33 1XP and Parkway Multi-Storey, IP33 3BA.
- Disabled parking is available at the cathedral. There is a lift from the cloisters and a ramp from the front entrance.
- The service will be interpreted by a BSL interpreter.
- A worship group from Haverhill will lead worship songs from 6.00 pm.
- The service will start at 6.30 pm.

Come and share in a wonderful celebration!

East Anglia District
of the Methodist Church



Around the churches



London Road

First of all we will deal with the medical bulletin.

Rev. Catherine has made a swift recovery following her visit to QEH to remove a troublesome appendix.

She says she is taking life at a more reasonable pace (If you believe that you will believe anything), Lesley, who in the past has been Catherine's stand in has herself been hospitalised at the Norfolk and Norwich- we are pleased to report that she is talking again and making slow but steady progress.

Like the Queen I celebrate two birthdays a year, April 1st is my second birthday – being 11 years since my Liver Transplant. Grateful thanks to everyone at Addenbrookes and the donor family.

During March London Road hosted the East Anglia Region Presbyters' Synod. Ninety-one ministers attending.

On Easter Sunday, as well as the Celebrations of the Resurrection we were also celebrating 160 years since the foundation stone of St James Methodist Church was laid. For this very important double celebration we had the privilege of having the Chair of the District Rev. Julian Pursehouse take our service.

To continue the theme of Celebration during his young people's talk he produced a packet of "Celebrations" which were passed through the congregation.

Julian preached on the theme "I have seen the Lord!!!!" A verse form our Gospel reading of John 20 1-18.

He stressed that Mary Magdalene was the first Evangelist – she did what she was asked and went to **the brothers and sisters to tell them that she had seen the Lord.**

He challenged us all to do likewise and let everyone know of our celebration that we have seen the Lord.

David Gifford

Wimbotsham

Part of our service last Sunday was about sharing, so I thought it would be nice to share a few thoughts with you all about our Chapel. Tucked away in a quiet lane, wonderful and peaceful, it sits as if awaiting something. But come Sunday morning it's all change. Cars start arriving, the doors open and all of a sudden "it's all happening" with greetings and chat. Then, silence and the service of worship begins as we share with each other in praising the Lord. We also look forward to (what Don calls) the Gates and Team services about every four weeks. It is lovely to hear people sharing their faith and beliefs with the congregation, all overseen by Don who keeps us well in order. After the service we enjoy chatting over tea/coffee and biscuits, then off home rejoicing.

We now have a Bible Study and Fellowship every other Tuesday at 10.30 am. All are welcome and take part in the discussions. It's good to be there. We are truly blessed. A note for later this month – we are planning a Coffee Morning. Do come and join us – it is all free and it will be lovely to see you. Come and go as you please.
Rejoice in the Lord always.

Mick

Vases of colourful flowers adorned our little Chapel and our pews were nearly full for our Easter Sunday service. Inspiring messages were shared and joyful hymn singing celebrated Christ's resurrection. Easter eggs hidden in gorgeously knitted baby chicks (thank you, Alice!) were distributed and there were hot cross buns with the tea/coffee afterwards.

With plenty of room for more, be assured of a very warm welcome if you would like to come along to our Bible Study/Fellowship meetings. The dates in May are Tuesdays 1st, 15th and 29th when we are continuing to read and discuss the Book of James. His letter reminds us of Christian standards and values in every area of life, putting faith into practice.

Mary Davies

South Wootton

Joan Macey in the April edition, refers to an age when "ladies" did not wear trousers. My mind went back to another event in the old King's Lynn Circuit. A new minister had arrived from a "proper" Church in Manchester, where at Sunday Services, "ladies" must wear hats, and this included the Ministers wife who WOULD lead by example Poor girl hated hats! But what of the new Church of which they had little knowledge? To be on the

safe side she wore a hat, to find she was the only lady who did. Thank goodness, her husband was told, no more hats. The following Sunday they arrived at the Church to find nearly all the ladies were wearing hats! Of the minister's wife the local milliner was heard to say, " What a lovely lady, I have not been so busy for years"

Things did settle down, but she rarely wore a hat again.

Peter Screen .

Gaywood St Faith's

I, together with other members of St Faith's Church, have been on a wonderfully uplifting Journey that took us through a busy Holy Week eventually reaching a glorious Easter Sunday celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. I had decided this year that I would attend all services that were offered at St Faith's in its Holy Week programme and at times it felt like I was travelling on a spiritual marathon phew!! which gathered momentum as it went along towards Easter Sunday.

I have to say I found the whole programme of services an amazing experience of spiritual renewal and awareness.

I must take this opportunity of thanking the Rector of St Faith's, the Rev. Julie Boyd and her clergy team colleagues, team vicar Karlene Kerr, Methodist Minister, Rev. Andrew Maguire, Rev. Catherine Dixon, Daphne Sampson and Julie Swinton, for such a wonderful Holy Week programme.

In the weeks leading up to Easter there was an opportunity to attend a series of Friday Lent lunches. A group of ladies from the church had provided delicious home-made soups and bread for lunch (also serving the meal and washing up afterwards). The lunches were followed by talks by members of the St Faith's clergy team on the subjects under the title of Resources for Lent. The subjects were all different and informative and covered Spiritual pathways to God, (the Rev Karlene Kerr), Music, (the Rev Andrew Maguire), Imagination and Scripture, (Daphne Sampson) and finally the Rev. Julie Boyd Art. All proceeds from the Lent lunches this year were donated to the Diocesan Lent Appeal. In 2018 this is to be focused on enabling local mission in Simbia, Papua New Guinea.

Personally, I loved all the Holy Week programme and highlights for me included walking around St Faith's Church as we stopped for scripture reading at The Stations of the Cross. The pictorial images had been so creatively set up by the Rev. Julie and I found this a most moving experience.

I also greatly enjoyed the two sessions of Lectio Devina (reading the Gospel of St Mark) led by Rev. Karlene Kerr in her home on Jermyn Road. When the

Gospel is re-read there is, as our small group found, always something new to discover.

Another personal highlight was the beautiful Easter Sunday Dawn service of Holy Communion starting at 6am. It was dark, cold and raining when we gathered outside the east end of the church. I will always remember closing my eyes in prayer in the darkness and opening them as the dawn broke revealing the brightened Easter Day sky. Alleluia! He is Risen.

Afterwards there was friendly fellowship at a breakfast and the menu included porridge, pancakes, eggs and jams with tea and coffee. Many thanks go to Tatiana Halliday, her husband, David and Daphne Sampson for our breakfast spread.

We are now into the Merry Month of May and we are all praying and hoping that, we may, at long last, be able to enjoy some warmer weather after what seems like weeks and weeks of cold and wet conditions.

It seems amazing that next month, on June 16th, St Faith's traditional summer fete will be happening with all that it offers in terms of social fellowship and the opportunities to pick up a bargain or two from its colourful selection of stalls and sideshows.

This year, building on from the success of last year, it is hoped to further develop the children's activities that were set up in the garden at the front of the church and to have a few stalls located outside the Church Rooms (weather allowing).

The summer fete has always been an event much looked forward to by church members and by those in the wider community who do not consider themselves regular church goers. Admission is free and everyone is welcome to come along and enjoy the fun and fellowship.

While we have not yet had the summer fete at St Faith's, some church folk have been turning their thoughts towards Christmas and the fourth St Faith's Christmas Tree Festival.

The previous three Tree Festivals have proved very popular with church members and visitors who have loved seeing the church filled with around 30 decorated Christmas trees. There are also to be two evening concerts as part of the Festival. Look out for more details in the coming months.

Talking of Christmas, it is also hoped to repeat the first Christmas Day lunch which proved such a happy and successful event in December 2017. It offered food, fellowship and company on Christmas Day to folk who may have otherwise spent the day on their own.

It was the first such lunch event to be staged at St Faith's and much of the credit for the success must go to the Rev Julie Boyd and her husband, Matthew, whose original vision it was and who put such creativity and enthusiasm, not to mention a lot of hard work, into making it such an enjoyable lunch. Look out for more details nearer to Christmas.

Plans are also now underway for events at St Faith's Church to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War in November 2018. The events will include an exhibition in church telling the story of some of the men and women from Gaywood who went off to fight for their country in the Great War but who tragically lost their lives on the foreign battlefields.

Richard Parr

Stow Bridge

It was really good on Sunday April 8th to see so many in St Peter's Church. Mind you, the majority were C of E from around our four parishes, which meet in each church one in four Sundays. When we Methodists meet alone on the other two Sundays there are about six or seven of us. So it was great to see so many people worshipping together in fellowship and taking the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Also, it was good to feel the heating system working again!! I was asked to read the New Testament lesson. It was from Acts 4 v32-35: a very short passage. In the Good News version, the passage was entitled "The believers shared their possessions." It went on to say that the believers who had houses sold them, brought the money to the Disciples and it was distributed to those in need.

Don't know how big the group was but what a wonderful happening. But soon a thought came into my head.

Could we have done this today? Could I have done it? Could you? Could the Church as a whole do it? I imagine this would be a very hard ask.

Maybe it was just a silly thought.

Peter Hewitt

Feltwell

Greetings fellow Christians and readers. It has been a challenging few weeks for many of us, some affected by the snow, many affected by heating problems (me included) and many struck down with winter ailments. Our fellowship was not immune to these either with Sybil the first to succumb, then Jean and latterly myself with Brigitte having a torrid time dealing with the NHS treatment of her aged parents. The Lord strengthens us and carries us through and out the other side. Kelly Clarkson had a hit with the song "Stronger" in which she sings "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger". That quote is attributed to the German philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche. Actually, he said it much more eloquently: 'That which does not kill us, makes us stronger.'

Since coming to Feltwell I have helped Jean steward at 3 funerals, but I am pleased, no, delighted to announce, especially for our organist, Sybil's benefit,

a wedding will be taking place later this year at Feltwell, my daughter's. We look forward to that joyous occasion.

In the meantime, we will have held our 2nd Hall of Stalls event on the morning of 28th April when cakes, plants, aromatherapy and many other crafts will have attracted people to our hall.

Our coffee mornings will continue at 10.30am on the 1st Thursday of each month; the next being on May 3rd..

Finally a little anecdote I found in my dad's preaching notes.....

A senior citizen is one who was here before credit cards, TV, CDs, frozen food and ballpoint pens, panty hose, drip dry clothes; dishwashers were the women of the house, time-sharing meant togetherness, a chip was a piece of wood not metal impregnated plastic, hardware was about durability and software hadn't been thought of. We got married first and then lived together. My..... how did we manage?!

Mike Wilkinson

Southery

It's Sunday afternoon, 8th April, and once again we met to share fellowship in that very special sense that we experience in our CFS services. Twelve of us met and everyone had a chance to choose a favourite hymn, or share a poem or meditation. Carol read our Bible reading about doubting Thomas. Maggie followed with prayers and included a meditation on the thoughts and actions of Thomas. Sue read from one of Eddie Askew's books, Evelyn read from her favourite Helen Steiner Rice book, and Doris gave us a Patience Strong poem. I usually research famous Norfolk Christian women for CFS services, but this time read from "New Directions in Children's Ministry" (1995) a poem based on Rudyard Kipling's "If." The final six lines go:

If you don't care a toss about getting wet,
If you enjoy writing on walls,
If just by your presence you bring others joy,
If you're prepared to take risks and ask questions,
If you're a role model for the kingdom,
Then you are a child.

Finally, we were delighted to welcome a holiday maker to our service: Claire from Stoke. Of course, we thought it strange someone should choose our village to have a holiday. However, over a coffee we found we could "sell" our area to her, leaving her to have a very busy week!

It's been a delightful Sunday. Thank you all.

Ruth Palmer

Dersingham

Our Easter celebrations were enhanced by the beautifully decorated cross at the front of the church covered with red, yellow, white and blue spring flowers. It was a real aid to worship and Steve, in an appropriately colourful waistcoat led our worship, distributing chocolate eggs to the troop of scouts from Wisbech who were worshipping with us, and pieces of dramatically broken chocolate eggs for the rest of us (Steve threw them to the floor having ensured health and safety rules were adhered to by double wrapping them!!). We sang the Easter hymns, celebrated Holy Communion and then the scouts distributed Easter cards which they had decorated to members of the congregation.

Another Chicken Foot evening was enjoyed which raised money for the church and the Alzheimer's Society, and a community lunch of chicken casserole followed by the chef's special birthday cake was much appreciated by our local regular diners. It was Jane's birthday (fancy having to cook lunch for 30 people on your birthday – I believe she **was** being taken out for a special meal by Paul in the evening!).

Now it is time to start thinking about our annual Flower Festival which runs from Thursday 24th May to Sunday 27th May. The theme this year is entitled 'Step by step' and all the arrangements will feature journeys from the Bible of which there are many if you think about it. Come and see which journeys have been illustrated in flowers and how the flower arrangers have interpreted them. The children from the local primary school will, as usual, open the proceedings on the Thursday and Friday mornings at 10am with their enthusiastic singing and the special preacher on Sunday morning at 10.30am will be the Rev. Julian Pursehouse, the Chairman of the East Anglian District. Our own minister, the Rev. Steve Oliver will lead the Songs of Praise service at 6pm. The money raised this year will be shared between a fund for a Rifton Dynamic Walker for a local eight-year-old boy, Alfie Rump, who was born with spastic quadriplegia, and our own church funds.

Rosemary Caink

Terrington St Clement

Network (Methodist Women in Britain) guest Joella Nash spoke about "weather sayings" and included needing Jesus to help us in life's storms

Our Easter Coffee Morning with hot cross buns, various stalls and raffle, also competitions raised £336.85 for church funds. Thanks to all who contributed in any way.

Network 2 speaker was Elizabeth Saunby. She displayed her "Teddy Bear " collection and told us all about them including stories and poems. Members were encouraged to show their own bears and say a little bit about their history.

One of our members, Ruth Cooper celebrated her 90th birthday in the village hall, including a surprise visit from her Australian relations.

Date for diary: Chapel Anniversary June 16th and 17th.

God bless.

Linda Howlett

Highgate

The Chapel was full to overflowing – yes! - really!

Actually, it was Good Friday, and Shirley welcomed those on the Walk of Witness into the Chapel.

Just a short stop to hear the Word and to worship together and then continue on their way into the town, walking behind the cross,

It was Easter Sunday and we expected just a few because several were away, so were pleasantly surprised to have more than we expected come together to worship. However many are there, and all are welcome, the priority is His presence and our desire to worship Him.

Janet Mason

Downham Market

Ladies Friendship Group

Our Easter meeting was a great success. We sang wonderful hymns and had nice readings from several members.

The competition for making a nest was very interesting, with 15 exhibits, made from all kinds of things; twigs, cakes, baskets, crochet some filled with eggs and chickens etc. The imagination and craftwork of the members was great.

Mary Davies came on 4th April to talk to us about macrame; this was very interesting and, in my mind, very difficult. She brought lots of examples of the beautiful things she had made.

Our next meetings

May 2nd Quiz with Ruby and Margaret

May 16th Outing to Sandringham then to Hunstanton for Fish and Chips. Coach will leave the Hollies at 1.30pm

Anyone interested please contact me.

May 30th Mad Hatters Tea Party. Fancy dress if you wish. Everyone welcome
Please note 7pm start

Margaret Fox

I shouldn't have said last month that Spring was nearly here as the Beast from the East came back and I was not able to get my plants stall started outside. In the New Year my daily riverside walk with my dog, Bella, was cheered by the snowdrops peeping through the snow. Now the celandines and cowslips are blooming but not in Spring weather, it is still bitterly cold; something to do with a gulf stream which comes from the South and acts as a radiator being as cold as it was 100 years ago.

Our Easter festivities are over for another year but how we enjoyed them. All the lovely music the choir had learned contributed to a very meaningful Good Friday service at Hilgay. The Walk of Witness organised by Churches Together was well supported and we made our presence known in the town amid the non-stop shopping. After a jubilant Easter service on Sunday morning the cross, covered with bright yellow daffodils was put in front of the Church in our efforts to remind everyone that Easter is not just about shopping for hot cross buns and Easter eggs.

Now a hundred purple crocuses are appearing in the grass in front of the Church, planted earlier by our team of volunteer gardeners, Eddie, Rob and Nigel. They lovingly attend to the Memorial Garden as well as the display along the path leading to the Church and it really lifts the spirits to see the beautiful entrance to our premises.

The purple crocuses were donated after being bought in bulk from Downham Rotary Club as part of the funding for their Polio Plus Campaign which was started in 1985. Since then the number of cases has dropped from over 350,000 to 400 in 2014. Apart from Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan all countries are now polio free but the work goes on as children receive booster doses. In recognition of all their work worldwide Rotary has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. As we admire the lovely carpet of purple it is good to think of all the young children who are now safe from that dreadful disease. Much as we older folk may grumble, and I do, about modern technology being so hard to master, we must be grateful to live in times when so many improvements are being made in health care giving us an improved quality of life and surviving a lot of diseases which used to be killers. With God's help we must use our extra time and reasonable health in His service.

Our usual activities are continuing week by week. Our stalwart cooks and helpers continue to serve refreshments and hot lunches from Monday to Friday giving their guests not only sustenance for their bodies but friendship and fellowship to raise their spirits. Our Saturday coffee morning is also a good rendezvous for folk who don't get out much with delicious cakes and

drinks, an extensive book stall and a tempting bric a brac stall. I am hoping the new gazebo I have ordered (the last one got packed away badly and broken after doing duty as Santa's grotto) will arrive in time to set up on Saturday as the plants which survived the Winter have made good progress and I have had access to a big garden where I was able to garner what I wanted. I now need to sell a lot of plants to make this expense worthwhile and add to the takings on a Saturday which are helping towards all the renovation and renewal bills we have to pay to keep our sanctuary in good order. Do come and see us on a Saturday morning if you have not done so up to now. The sun might even be shining and the garden is so beautiful now. Let's look forward to a warm, if late, Spring.

Joan Macey

Quantity of half inch tiles in various shades of blue suitable for craft work available free. Please phone Joan Macey on 01553 279564 if you would like them.



Any items for the **JUNE** edition should be with the editor by **MAY 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!**

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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

Editor's apology!

Although I thought the magazine left me intact, somehow a whole page of Deacon Irene's letter was taken by gremlins! This was most upsetting but here is the page that was missed. I hope all now becomes clear.

Some words from Deacon Irene.

I have a Management group that I meet with once a month to talk about the work that I'm doing. My Management group consists of Rev. Andrew Maguire, Sheila Johnson, Maggie Blowers, Ralph Perkins and Lesley Dent. Sometimes Rev. Maurice Stafford joins us. They are there mainly to offer support and guidance and I'm grateful for the time they give to travel and meet with me and to offer their expertise and advice.

At the Circuit Leadership Team meeting on the evening of the 21st of February at London Road. Rev. Andrew had asked me to say something about my first year in the Circuit. He kindly offered some guidance by suggesting three topics on which to talk. First was about the highlights; second was about where I thought the greatest potential was for developing the work and third was about any particular things that I felt might hinder the work. I'll summarise what I shared with that meeting regarding the highlights and maybe a bit more.

The Highlights

One of the biggest highlights for me is being in the West Norfolk Circuit. One of the first things I did in the first few months of arriving, was to try and familiarise myself with the context I was going to be working and ministering in. I travelled around Downham Market and visited some of the surrounding villages. I went to Kings' Lynn and instantly fell in love with the Hardwick Retail Park with one of the biggest Tesco's I have seen... and I have seen a few including the one at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry and on the Great Horton road in Bradford. Recently my brother and his family visited and he said that the Sainsbury's at the Hardwick Retail Park was one of the biggest he had seen and I think he was surprised mainly because it is in a rural setting.



Circuit Celebration Service

Preacher:

**The Rev. Julian Pursehouse,
Chair of the East Anglia District**

**Service to include the admission of
Mr Thomas Smith as a Local Preacher**

3pm, Sunday 27th May 2018

London Road Methodist Church

followed by refreshments

Another in the series sent in by Deacon Janet. Carry On Travelling

Welcome to Guernsey! The Bailiwick of Guernsey Circuit consists of 13 churches on 3 separate islands (Guernsey, Alderney and Sark), outside of the jurisdiction of the UK. Guernsey operates with its own government, a separate health, education and legal system.

I have lived in the parish of Forest since being stationed here nearly five years ago alongside my presbyteral colleague and spouse, Mark. We share in ministry alongside four churches, each with their own identities and patterns, and I am often community-focused, linking with schools, pre-schools and the island's hospice.

As many will know, the number of years of ministry is often referred to as 'years of travel'. Living in the Channel Islands, which are a tourist destination for many and a vital part of the local economy, the links with travelling come into their own. In addition, whilst my local travel might be limited, attending Circuit events may need a boat trip, and some District meetings can involve a short flight. As part of the MDO Rule of Life, I meet regularly with my diaconal sisters and brothers in the Southampton Area Group another short flight away. Fortunately, the manse is a ten-minute walk from the airport, and, with only a cabin bag for a day trip, even a 7.15am flight to Southampton doesn't mean getting up too early!

The novelty of island life can soon wear off when flights are cancelled due to fog, or ferries are stopped because of high wind speeds. Yes, it can frustrate many a well-laid plan, but I find that, if I look, there is always a glimpse of God to be found in the alternative arrangement!

All this talk of travelling reminded me of my presentation at the Connexional Candidates Committee some years ago. The first words I spoke were 'Welcome to Kingdom Travel!' In my allotted five minutes, after describing the Methodist people as a group of travellers on a holiday, I proceeded to describe how I thought that a deacon is like a holiday courier or tour guide for 'The Kingdom Travel Company'. Here are their functions, or responsibilities, accompanied by ways in which I feel they resonate with the diaconal ministry that I exercise today.

Therefore, a travel rep and, for me, also a deacon:

- **points and knows the way but is also ready to go to undiscovered places** (adventure holidays!). I am a Local Preacher, so have regular opportunities to proclaim the Good News in worship and point to the importance of knowing Jesus and what that can mean in our daily lives, but there are often times when I venture into less well-known situations, for example, when a baptism or wedding is requested and I endeavour to represent Christ and see how Christ is already at work in the lives of those I meet. This can be nerve-wracking but also exciting!
- **speaks the language and knows the locals** (or if not, gets to do this). Guernsey-French is the local language, but spoken, sadly, only by a small percentage of the population. My previous French studies have proved to be of little help! The Occupation of the Channel Islands between 1940 and 1945 gives a particularly strong and resilient identity to locals, and the subsequent Liberation (celebrated each year on 9th May with an additional Bank Holiday) provides obvious links with faith.
- **is a source of useful information**, including helpful guidebooks. As someone called by God to continue my Christian journey in a public representative role, my previous experience, initial ordination training and continued learning mean that I am keen to enable deepening discipleship and a wider awareness of the Christian faith. I like resourcing others to lead small groups, through home-grown and published materials, but I really enjoy (though often with a little trepidation) engaging with children and young people. I partner with the island's Christian schools team, offering assemblies, lessons and the Walk Thru the Bible 'OT Mini', which provides a whistle-stop tour through the Old Testament in five hour-long sessions for nine and ten year olds.
- **encourages those on the journey to take note** of particular things (sights, etc.). During the last year, I've had the privilege of helping a new attendee at one church to take a deeper look at who Jesus is and what it means to be a Christian in the Methodist Church. Alongside this, I offer occasional small group sessions, such as Lent Groups and the sessions using material including Fruitfulness on the Frontline and Faith Pictures, to provide an opportunity to think through matters of faith and discipleship in daily life, and to pray and support one another through the diversity of life circumstances that come people's way.
- **deals with unforeseen circumstances and delays**. During the last couple of years one congregation found itself needing to relinquish its premises. Based on its existing and healthy relationship with its Anglican counterpart, the Parish Church now hosts both congregations

on Sundays. It's been a privilege to walk alongside all those involved, and thrilling to see the new energy and life created out of what might have been perceived to have been a hopeless situation.

- **promotes activities for people to get to know each other better.** Throughout my life, the concept of community has been key, and we all know that building relationships is an activity worth investing in. For me, one of the aspects of the MDO that was especially attractive as I was sensing God's call, was the commitment to belong to a religious order that is linked by a Rule of Life and loving support for each other. Being involved in coffee mornings, Lent lunches and afternoon cream tea events are brilliant times to get to know people better. I also take part in an annual away time on the very small neighbouring island of Herm, where a small group spends time together, worships and reflects on matters of faith and life, whilst enjoying the beauty of a unique location, and simply being with one another and getting to know each other more deeply.
- **wants everyone to have a fulfilling and satisfying time.** Jesus said "I came that they might have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10b). I regularly seem to say in a wide variety of situations that each individual human being is infinitely precious to God. That means including everyone, and gently encouraging everyone to take steps forward in getting to know God better, so that people can flourish and be who they are called to be in Christ.
- **has a direct line to Head Office.** Through ministry as a deacon there is a vital element of personal devotions and prayer, supported by the MDO. And I find that offering prayer when visiting is a helpful way to encourage others to encounter God for themselves as well as bringing comfort and assurance of God's love to those I meet.

Hopefully this gives an insight into the life and experiences of one deacon in a particular time and place. May we all 'carry on travelling' with the best Guide of all - keep an eye out for the next 'carry on' coming soon!

JOHN HUNT - MISSIONARY TO CANNIBALS

John Hunt was born in Lincolnshire in 1812. He had an education of sorts at the local village school but like most country boys in those days he began to work on a farm when he was about 10. He made rather a poor fist at it.; "I was continually called a stupid fellow because I could not tie up the plough line as well as some other boys and because I was weak in body as well as in mind." Up to the age of 14 he does not seem to have gone far astray. Religious impressions went deep with him even in those early days. "I well remember when I was afraid of dogs, gypsies, thunder and lightning or even a

shower of rain, I had recourse to prayer as a sure means of deliverance from evil. Sometimes he was terrified at the thought of the torments of the lost. He was looked upon as a serious lad, for if he was slow at learning how to farm, it was well known that he remembered the clergyman's text better than anyone else.

For a time, he found less time for his prayers and more for the gang of village toughs, though he says he never served the devil as cleverly as he wished. He drifted like this for a year, when an attack of rheumatic fever sobered him and he began again to pray and read his Bible. Rather unwisely he started with the Book of Revelation, but it must have helped him because of the light that came to him. On his return to work he found himself alongside a Methodist who invited him to their meetings. From then on it was Class Meetings, Cottage Meetings, Chapel Services, and the friends at Balderton did more than they knew when they invited this young labourer to their services. He moved to the village of Swinderby and it was there that he was converted under the ministry of the Rev. John Smith. It was at a prayer meeting after the service "A most overwhelming influence came over me...at that moment I felt the pardoning love of God ...I exhorted all to join me in praising the Lord. We sang "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" (they used to sing the doxology at such meetings every time someone was converted; I read of one occasion when they struck it up twenty times! It was not a smooth path that lay before him; he lost his job because he was too strict. That in itself was providential as he entered the service of a Mr. Wilkinson who was a great reader. John had access to books for the first time and he made good use of the chance. Soon he was persuaded to start preaching. In his first sermon he said that all ideas forsook him. He was not alone in that! It was about this time that he met Hannah Summers, again the child of a humble farm labourer, a kindred spirit at the chapel, who like John had a conversion experience of her own. The superintendent of the Lincoln Circuit heard him preach and in spite of his broad dialect and rustic bearing, deemed that here was a man of outstanding promise. Had he any thought of entering the ministry? No, he wasn't worthy of that, but his reluctance was overcome and Mr. Smith wrote to the Missionary Society recommending him for training as a missionary, adding "He has a matrimonial engagement with an excellent young woman, truly pious and of a good understanding." So it was that John was sent to Methodism's first ministerial training college at Hoxton (Later to be transferred to Richmond). He worked hard there for two years and then was told he was to be sent to Fiji. He wrote to Hannah, "You must immediately make preparations to becoming a missionary's wife in a most remote station." He was ordained and they were married. Soon John and Hannah were on the long journey to the other side of the world. Four months later they arrived in Australia and transferred to a small schooner to take them to Fiji. The captain was afraid to go too near to the cannibal islands

and dropped them off at the nearest one, saying he would be back in a year's time. Some of the missionaries were indeed killed and cooked and eaten. As well as cannibalism there were horribly cruel practices among the natives, burying old people alive, offering human sacrifices whenever a war canoe was built, strangling widows so that their spirits could accompany their dead husbands to the next world. Yet men and women like John and Hannah dared to confront cannibal chiefs with the evil of their ways. One of the missionaries was asked "Weren't you afraid to go there?" "Lady." He replied, "We died before we went"

Hunt was at first received with cold and hostile suspicion but within a few weeks mastered the Fijian language and for the first time reduced it to writing and translated the New Testament and began work on the Old Testament. The Lincolnshire plough boy was to be remembered in Fiji as "The man who gave us our Bible." Somehow he found time to write a number of books, including his "Letters on Entire Sanctification" which took the doctrine of perfection further than any other Methodist theologian of his day. He wore himself out in ten brief years in Fiji but he saw cannibal chiefs converted and masses of people following their leaders. By 1848 there were 3000 professing Christians in Fiji, but John's health was failing and he died in October of that year at the age of only 36. And what did this cost Hannah? For long periods she was alone with no news of John, often in danger, letters from home a year old, with supplies of food limited, children dying in infancy. The wives of missionaries in those early days shared their dangers and hardships.

A sequel: In 1985 when great celebrations were held celebrating 150 years of Christianity in Fiji the Rev. Dr Richard G Jones was invited to go as guest of honour representing the first missionaries who went from Britain. He brought back a glowing account of warm, friendly people, a vigorous church in which the life of the nation is deeply rooted. Today there are 212,860 Methodists in Fiji. In Britain we have 188,000 members

We should be profoundly grateful for that brave army of missionary pioneers in our history, people like John and Hannah Hunt who, at great sacrifice and in obedience to the final command of our Lord, have gone out to "make disciples of all nations." It is because of them that there are 80 million Methodists in the world today.

John Garfoot

Acknowledgements: "In His Armour" by Alan Birtwhistle. NOW magazines September 1980, June and November 1985 and February 1986. Rev Dr RG Jones

DERSINGHAM METHODIST CHURCH

PE31 6HP

FLOWER FESTIVAL

THEME – STEP BY STEP

24th 25th and 26th May
10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.
Sunday 27th May
2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Books + Cakes + Cards + Gifts
Plants + Fair Trade products

Coffee + Lunches + Teas

Free admission

Sunday Service 10.30 a.m.
Songs of Praise 6.00 p.m.

Proceeds for Church Funds and Fund for the
Rifton Dynamic Walker for Alfie Rump

Methodist Church
Wesley Road,
Terrington St. Clement.
Concert by an amateur trio
playing violin, 'cello and piano
and clarinet and piano duets.

Thursday 31st May

7.30p.m—9p.m

Admission free and donations
are invited for 'Alzheimers'
Society'. There will be light
refreshments.

All are very welcome



day of prayer

St Faith's Church, Gaywood

Saturday 26th May 2018

prayer stations for private devotions all day 8am-8pm

**prayer services at the following times
8.30am, 10am, 12noon, 2pm, 4pm, 6pm, 8pm**

come and pray – *thy kingdom come*

www.thykingdomcome.global

West Norfolk Methodist Circuit Diary

MAY 2018 onwards

Saturday 5th May 2018 6:30pm District Celebration Service at Bury St. Edmunds

Wednesday May 16th Easter Offering Service

Saturday 26th May day of Prayer at St Faith's

Sunday 27th May Circuit Celebration 3pm

Thursday 24th May/Sunday 27th May Dersingham Flower Festival

Thursday May 31st Circuit Meeting at London Road 7.00pm

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

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