

# Rejoice!

June/July/August 2022



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

**A Message from United Christian Broadcasters :**

## **IT'S ALL ABOUT GETTING UP AGAIN!**

If you have ever seen a child learning to walk, you know that falling down is an important part of the process. Getting back up again is crucial to developing the child's balance and muscle development. Likewise, a boxer isn't disqualified because he gets knocked down; he's disqualified because he doesn't get back up. Boxers know they will go down, so they focus on the art of falling safely and getting up quickly. Children and boxers both learn this: it's all about getting up again.

The Bible tells us that falling is common to both the righteous and the unrighteous. It's getting up again that sets them apart: 'If good people fall... they will get back up. But when trouble strikes the wicked, that's the end of them (Proverbs 24:16 CEV). The unrighteous stay down — the righteous get up again!

In Scripture some of God's greatest servants fell into personal failure. Abram lied to Pharaoh about his wife, Sarai (Gen. 12:11-17). Jacob deceived his father and stole his brother's birth right (Gen. 27:17-29). In anger, Moses disobeyed God by striking the rock (Numbers 20:7-12). Yet, instead of being disqualified, they were all *commended for their faith* (Hebrews 11:39 NIV).

How come? Because they acknowledged their sin and received God's forgiveness. In other words, they fell, but they got up again. And when you fall, you can get up again too. That's the 'faith' part of your journey. Staying down is *failure accepted* — getting back up is *faith activated!*

From *UCB Word For Today*, (20 April 2022) a free booklet published quarterly by United Christian Broadcasters, Westport Road, Stoke on Trent, ST6 4JF.

## Praying together in the Circuit

Though you have not seen him, you love him, and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

1 Peter 1: 8-9

Peter was speaking to believers in the province of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. People from these areas were mentioned as being present in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost and would have witnessed the amazing outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They might have heard Peter preaching 'those who heard were cut to the heart' and 3,000 added to the number of believers that day.

Now Peter, like a shepherd, was feeding lambs and sheep and taking care of them as he had been called to do. It was by the lakeside, the risen Jesus and Peter spent precious time together. Peter could have given up being a disciple and lived with overwhelming sorrow and regret because he had denied Jesus. Jesus had other plans for Peter and it was in expressing his love for Jesus that he received a new calling. Loving Jesus, a priority for Peter and for us as we understand the depth of His love for us 'for it is by grace that we have been saved'.

My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine,  
for Thee all the follies of sin I resign,  
My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour art Thou  
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus tis now.

William R. Featherstone 1864

Peter, with the other disciples witnessed in wonder the ascension of Jesus, they prayed together waiting for the promise Jesus had given them. "I am going to send you what my Father has promised, but stay

in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high. Luke 24: 49

On the day of Pentecost the church was born in the power of the Holy Spirit, the church grew and the Spirit of God moved in and through believers.

Gracious God, may our hearts be at one with your heart of your love for your world which you created and love so much that you gave your son

to save and redeem, to give eternal life to all who believe in Him.

Lord, reign in our hearts, clothe us with power from on high, fill us anew, guide and direct us, send us out in the power of your Spirit, with your love in our hearts, with complete confidence in the gospel, living by faith and not by sight.

May your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven..

Loving God, help us to love one another as you have loved us. Thank you for every act of kindness and love given day by day, making a difference to those who are recipients of that love, may your love increase in us and be active in and through us.

Lord, hear our prayers,

for your Holy Spirit moving throughout the world revealing truth.

where there is conflict, we pray for justice and peace.

where there is poverty, we pray for worldwide response of provision.

where there is corruption we pray for honesty and integrity

where there is abuse of human life, we pray for deliverance

Lord, hear our prayers

for all people in every place and situation to know your love for them

for children who have been bereaved with the loss of their parents

for lives devastated by the consequences of war  
for minds in torment from horrendous experiences  
Lord for your touch upon each life, bringing healing and wholeness.  
and new beginnings in the embrace of your love and provision.

Yours Lord, is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever and ever.

Prayers have been requested for: Derek, Stephanie, Margie,

Janice, Trisha, Linda, Andrew, Mavis and Julia, Judy, Kath,

Stephen + Victoria, William, Tom, Sarah.

### **Thank you!**

May I say a huge 'Thank you' for all the cards, letters and flowers which I received following David's death. It really helped tremendously to know that so many people were thinking of me and praying for me and the family. Thank you too to those who were able to attend his Thanksgiving Service and make sure that the many friends and family present who do not attend a Methodist Church heard a good Methodist witness and hearty Methodist singing!

Rosemary Caink

### **PRAYER HANDBOOKS AND LWPT DIARIES**

The next edition of the Prayer handbook for 2022/2023 will be available in mid-August, entitled 'The Greatest Commandment'. These are provided free to ministers, local preachers, worship leaders, churches and supernumeraries. Cost £4.15 to others.

Please let me know by 23rd July if you would like a copy.

LWPT diaries 2023 will be available from mid-September, cost £6. Please let me know by 2nd August if you would like one.

Many thanks.

Elizabeth Batstone. Tel: 01485 541068, pebatstone@gmail.com.



### **Clenchwarton**

We have a good list of fund raising events in the pipe line. Our next event is over the Jubilee weekend. On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June between 10am and 12am, we have a coffee morning and seed planting. We are hoping lots of people will attend and plant (or take home to plant) a sunflower seed to grow as tall as you can with a prize for the tallest in the autumn. There will also be some books for sale. On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June, so the village can join together to celebrate the Jubilee, we are joining with the parish church for our morning service.

Joan Edwards

### **Hilgay**

On Sunday June 5<sup>th</sup> Hilgay Methodist Church will be holding a Jubilee Songs of Praise at 3:30pm when we shall sing hymns and songs from each decade of our Queen's reign. This service will be followed by a Celebration tea. Our partnership of sharing services with Southery is working very well for both churches and we hope to enjoy many services together in the future. Thankfully all of our members who suffered from covid are now feeling much better and we pray the summer weather will help everyone. Remember this: God has gone ahead of us; He will always be with us. He will never leave us.

Pauline Driver.

### **Terrington St Clement**

Our Easter Coffee Morning was well attended and raised £325 for chapel funds, Thanks to everyone. Network continues monthly and included readings for Easter. We joined with Clenchwarton on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May. The service was led by Rev. Robert Roberts our superintendent. For some of our congregation it was the first time they had met him. It was so good to worship with our friends and catch up over a cuppa. We have a new "Saturday Club" for young people 10am to 11.30 led by Caroline Meaden, once a month. We have our Anniversary on 19<sup>th</sup> June and on 18<sup>th</sup> our coffee morning will celebrate the Queens Jubilee. God Bless.

Linda Howling

## Downham Market

As Barbara said in the last edition of Rejoice life goes on not quite normally but with something approaching normality. I reported the changes to Churches Together which is now being coordinated by the Rev. Nigel Moat and thankfully the Good Friday Walk of Witness again took place, well supported, ending up at this Church for hot cross buns in time for our 11.00 service. Plans are well in hand for the Queen's platinum jubilee celebrations on 2<sup>nd</sup> June when there will be a picnic in the town and clock tower squares; bring your own picnic but tables and chairs provided with entertainment, fancy dress competitions etc. This takes place from 12.00 till 2.00 then in the evening there will be a Songs of Praise with Church and local choirs taking part from 6.30 to 8.00.

Having to trouble my family for lifts into Downham and also because I find it difficult and tiring to concentrate on hearing what is being said I had reluctantly decided to not join in with CT meetings as now it is open for everyone to attend and not just the Church representatives. So if you would like to keep up to date and share in the work and witness activities CT is still able to arrange come along to the meetings which are held bimonthly on a Monday. Contact Nigel for details on 01553 810039. Apart from planning future events Nigel is hoping to get a speaker to each meeting to widen the area of interest.

So life goes on but not quite as before. We recently had our Church AGM after the Sunday morning service and again I reluctantly decided to stand down from the Church Council. Our morning services have continued with most of us still wearing masks but now sitting more closely together. Our choir recently took a service, led by Dudley Pickston when the choir sang three items facing the congregation and without masks. Life felt almost normal again. In the evening the usual zoom service was a Circuit service when Dudley and John Miles received their certificates for long service as Local Preachers.

So quite a few of our normal activities are up and running albeit in a revised form but unfortunately not our Saturday coffee mornings when we had good bric a brac and book stalls and refreshments with home made cakes in Church and I had my plant stall under a gazebo on the grass outside attracting those shopping at Morrisons with a good display of plants to send them into Church with the lure of the cakes. We attracted quite a few regular customers in this way. There were also quite a few folk who did not want any plants but just wanted a chat and as both Sandy and I could talk for England we were happy to oblige and refer them on if they were in trouble. I still like pottering in the garden taking cuttings from plants needing pruning and potting up the

remains of some which needed splitting up. I am sure I benefit from vitamin D as they now call the feel better factor that comes from working or sitting in your garden, or the countryside. Consequently I still have quite a few plants to pass on including some acers, lily of valley, Japanese anemones, hellebores, peonies, bearded irises (mostly white) and aquilegia. If you would like any of these do let me know. I shall probably end up with supplying some care homes, which I've done in the past. So good for the residents to potter in their garden too.

Messy Church this month was very busy with more families than we have had for some time. We worked on Elijah speaking to us, how he felt and how God had a plan for him as indeed he does for us. They made deserts, created winds and sang about OUR GREAT BIG GOD! This edition of Rejoice is in the Summer holiday season with some folk trying to get away. Whatever you do enjoy the Summer, hopefully not too hot, and with the freedom of not being muffled up with so many layers of clothes and not having to have expensive heating turned on.

Take care, God bless.

Joan Macey

## Pott Row

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June at Pott Row Methodist Chapel

A musical afternoon tea in aid of Tapping House Hospice.

As part of the village celebrations for the Platinum Jubilee we will have the Chapel open from 2.30 pm, free entry but donations + a cake stall to raise money for Tapping House. As well as a chance to sit down, enjoy tea (and cake!) plus chat there will be musical entertainment from about 3 pm provided by the Springwood High School Sinfonia, under the guidance of Elaine Sargent, with contributions from Peter Worrell, a former member of the Halle orchestra. It should be a lovely afternoon to chat, relax and listen to some music... with tea and cake! All are welcome - if you are able to come and join us we would love to see you!

Alison

## Dersingham

At the time of writing this article the folk at Dersingham are looking forward and preparing for their Flower Festival after a gap of three years. Sadly we are missing some stalwarts of the team through moving away or death or frailty, but we shall endeavour to put on the usual high standard of event as we welcome people from the village and from the circuit. A recent Friday morning saw a merry group armed

with buckets and mops, dusters and polish, high-reaching cobweb dusters, large brooms and vacuum cleaners as we prepared the premises for our visitors. As someone said "It is cheaper than paying a cleaner!" and it is good fun too. Many hands make light work! Admittedly the coffee break was taken a bit earlier than had been planned, but then some people had started earlier than others!

Sunday attendance is beginning to pick up a bit now and hopefully, with the warmer weather and people generally getting back to some kind of normality, this will continue. The midweek carpet bowls club and jigsaw club have been meeting and the coffee mornings have been well attended. The next coffee morning will be on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July and is in aid of Methodist Missions.

Rosemary Caink

### **Gaywood, St Faith's**

The big news at St Faith's is that a new Team Rector has been appointed and is expected to take up the role in September.

The Rev Lyla Sorenson, is currently serving as assistant curate in the Watton Benefice to the east of Breckland. She is looking forward to the challenges of her new role as Team Rector at the church where Anglicans and Methodists share worship and mission. More details about the Rev Sorenson will be featured in an article in a future edition of the Rejoice magazine..

Since Rev Canon Julie Boyd moved from Gaywood in January 2021 the Team Vicar, the Rev Karlene Kerr, has been acting Rector working alongside the Methodist minister Rev Robert Roberts.

Like churches around the country, St Faith's has planned a weekend of activities to celebrate the Queen's 70th anniversary as Monarch. Our programme of events begins on June 3<sup>rd</sup> when there is to be a Platinum Jubilee Messy Church starting at 3pm in the Church Rooms, All families are welcome to join in this fun event when crown making will feature among the activities. On Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> starting at 10am, there will be a Platinum Jubilee Coffee Morning in Gaywood Church Rooms. There will be very much a "royal" theme with red, white and blue decorations and a special Jubilee Hamper raffle. As usual there will be stalls offering a range of products, including hand-made cards and food products, including home-made jams and preserves. Admission is free and everyone is welcome to join the party. On Sunday, following the 9.45 morning service, the Rectory Garden is the venue for a Platinum Jubilee Big Lunch which is to take the form of a

celebration picnic starting at 12 noon. Those attending are asked to bring their own picnic and a chair. If wet the event will be held in the Church Rooms. Later at 6.30pm there will be a special Jubilee celebration service in Church, when there will some special items from the choir, Everyone is welcome to attend all or some of these events.

After delays caused by the Covid crisis, work is due to start during the summer on the major scheme to re-develop the old, redundant church bungalow (in the church driveway) into a new community hub. The re-developed building will include a community drop-in cafe, a new church office and a base for the West Norfolk and Waveney MIND (mental health) charity. The bungalow has been empty since its last occupant, the Rev Dale Gingrich and his wife, Ann Mmrie, moved. The work to convert the bungalow for its new use is expected to take up to five months to complete.

After almost 60 years, St Faith's Gaywood Wives Group has sadly decided to disband and the remaining members have marked the closure with a farewell meal at Grant's restaurant in Norfolk Street, King's Lynn. Members were in tears when the closure of the group was announced because it marked the end of an era. In its heyday the Wives Group was a thriving club with up to 40 ladies attending its weekly Wednesday meetings in the Church Rooms. Over the years there have been a variety of speakers who have given talks on a wide range of subjects. Various other activities were organised including outings in the summer months and an annual Christmas lunch. The club has raised thousands of pounds for worthy charitable causes over the years. Lack of members after the Lockdown has been cited as one of the reasons for the closure.

St Faith's Church treasurer, Andy Hiles, has been putting his best feet forward taking part in the recent 10k GEAR run along a course around King's Lynn town centre and the outskirts of the town. Andy's efforts resulted in him raising hundreds of pounds for a dementia charity. Well Done. Andy from all your friends at St Faith's Church.

St Faith's is still looking to appoint a voluntary Safeguarding Officer. The position became vacant at the end of 2021 when Gill Hiles, who had carried out the role with great dedication and sensitivity for many years, announced she was stepping down. Anyone who feels they may be called to this important role can talk to Gill Hiles about what the role involves. Gill can be contacted, via St Faith's Church office, on 01553 774916.

The wedding season is upon us. At this season there are 18 weddings booked to take place in St Faith's Church. Some of these weddings had been booked to take place some time ago but were forced to be cancelled because of the Covid crisis. Happily the couples concerned have

now been able to plan for their special day and we wish them every blessing as they take their wedding vows.

For the first time before Lockdown, on May 15<sup>th</sup> St Faith's choir members, appeared in their blue choir robes. The choir has gradually returned to singing as a choir but, until that day wore their own civilian clothes. It was lovely to see the choir in their robes and it was another sign that life for us at St Faith's is starting to return to something like how it was before the necessary restrictions imposed by Lockdown.

Richard Parr

## Stanhoe

We continue to meet on alternative Sundays. Our Easter services were wonderfully inspiring: Elizabeth and Philip Batstone came to lead us in a Service of Quiet Reflection on Good Friday afternoon, which we all found inspiring and we were very conscious of God's presence. On Easter Sunday morning Rev. Richman Ncube led us in a joyful Service of Holy Communion. We had started the weekend with a visit from our Student Pilgrimage friends on Good Friday morning, passing by on their way to Walsingham, and we enjoyed catching up with them after a two year gap. As usual, we provided hot cross buns etc., and had a short time of worship together.

Sad news came last week, with news of the sudden death of longstanding member, Gill Johnson. Gill had been our organist, and Secretary to the Church Council, for many years, as well as being always supportive and a strong and much valued member of our congregation. She had been in poor health in recent years, and died suddenly on 12th May, at the age of 90. She will be very much missed.

Elizabeth MacLeod

## Wimbotsham

We continue to do well, but with one or two older members sometimes absent. Our Bible Study group is growing and we hope to start an informal midweek group for chat and table top games.

We have a good atmosphere and fellowship.

Mick Blanks

## Peter Hewitt says.

Great love and good deeds were done over the last two years. Many were done in God's name. We have nothing but what our God gives us through the good earth. If our leaders acknowledged this perhaps more people would listen and He would once more be our foundation.

(Sorry Peter. Ran out of usable space)

## Justice Matters

The Climate Justice Group has had two more Zoom meetings. We devoted the majority of our meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> April to discussing our ideas about justice as part of the Walking with Micah project. We fed back the main points that arose from our discussion using an online form. All kinds of groups are invited to hold discussions using guidelines and materials, which can be found on [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk) and to feed back their ideas. There are worship and craftivism materials available too.

We also have been planning some practical initiatives:

- Rosie Rayner has been organising "Sing for Zimbabwe" 12.00 - 18.00 on Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> June at Hunstanton Methodist Church in aid of Christian Aid.
- We now have a clearer idea of ways, in which we can take forward our link with the Matjinge Circuit in the Matebeleland area of Zimbabwe and will take our ideas to the next Circuit Leadership Team Meeting.
- The ECO FESTIVAL is now going to be held on Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> October at Hilgay Methodist Church. The church will be open from 10.30 until 3.30 and we aim to have activities and displays to interest people of all ages. The Woodland Trust has booked to come and we hope that other outside organisations will also be involved. Refreshments will be served throughout the day.

One focus of the Eco-Festival will be the many small steps that we can all take to help to improve the health of the planet. Another will be celebrating the wonderful diversity of wildlife in our area. There was an inquisitive squirrel in our garden towards the end of the winter. Since then spring has transformed the garden and it is even busier with wildlife. There is a flurry of bird activity. In the late winter and early spring, reed buntings are constant visitors to the garden. They

are easily spotted because they are constantly fanning out their tail feathers like Spanish dancers. There is now a baby hedgehog as well as two adults and we are frequently visited by two muntjac deer even in the middle of the day.

### **Another initiative.**

Last edition Feltwell Church wrote about one of their efforts to become more eco aware.

We're collecting blister packs to be recycled. Just think how many we could recycle if everyone in the village delivered theirs to our recycling point.

I expect 80-90% of our Circuit congregations take pills of some sort. Just imagine how many recyclable blister packs that amounts to. We have filled a sack since Christmas!! As a circuit we could make a significant impact on recycling. There are selected Superdrug stores receiving blister packs which are collected by a company called Terracycle. Don't ask "Can we do it?" Rather ask the question "Is there a reason why your church could not get involved and recycle 1000s instead of sending them to landfill to pollute the earth?"

We have started saving them at home and they soon add up. We now need to find a Superdrug store to take them. Perhaps other individuals or Churches could do likewise. Ed.

**Celebrate Kings Lynn is happening on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July** this year and if anyone is interested in being involved can they please email [Oliviakingslynn@gmail.com](mailto:Oliviakingslynn@gmail.com)

This will be the last edition until September. If anyone has anything for then please let me have it by **AUGUST 12<sup>TH</sup>**. My email is [rabbit1308@btinternet.com](mailto:rabbit1308@btinternet.com) or you can ring me on 01553 811867



## **SING FOR ZIMBABWE**

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June 12.00 until 18.00**

**Hunstanton Methodist Church**

**Come and meet Zimbabwean friends** and learn more about the country during an afternoon of music, food and fellowship

There will be fun and activities for children

Everyone is welcome; please bring a friend and a contribution of food

We will be collecting for Christian Aid's work in Zimbabwe

The service at 10.30 am on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June will be linked to the event



# **DERSINGHAM METHODIST CHURCH**

**PE31 6HP**

## **FLOWER FESTIVAL**

### **THEME MIRACLES – GOD AT WORK**

**26th, 27th, 28th May**

**10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.**

**Books + Cakes + Cards**

**+ Gifts + Plants**

**Coffee + Light Refreshments + Teas**

**Free admission**

**Sunday Service 10.30 a.m.**

**Songs of Praise 4.00 p.m.**

**Proceeds for Church Funds**

## **Be faithful**

'You were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things.'

Matthew 25:21 NKJV

In Scripture, to be faithful means to be steady, stable, dependable, and consistent. Do those attributes describe you? They should, because faithfulness pays big dividends with God. 'A faithful man will abound with blessings' (Proverbs 28:20 NKJV). Jesus said, 'Many are called, but few chosen' (Matthew 20:16 NKJV). Why is that? Because talent may open the door and get you the job, but character and faithfulness will keep you there.

When it comes to faithfulness, God will test you in two ways:

1) *Your faithfulness in someone else's vision.* 'If you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own?' (Luke 16:12 NKJV). If you're critical, caustic, complaining, competitive, or constantly comparing yourself with others, you will be disqualified for what God has in mind for you. Faithfulness calls for serving with love and humility.

2) *Your faithfulness in small things.* 'His lord said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things...For to everyone who has, more will be given...but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away"' (Matthew 25:23, 29 NKJV). God wants to know He can trust you. You prove that by how well you serve others and by your faithfulness in small things.

These are proven biblical principles that don't just work in spiritual matters, but in everyday life. So today, take a few moments to prayerfully ask yourself the question, 'Am I faithful?' When you are, God will bless you.



## The Everlasting Arms

One morning, as a fifty mile-an-hour westerly gale was buffeting the spring flowers, an item in the news headlines caught my attention (no, not about Ukraine!) and sent my thoughts far beyond our shores, our oceans and continents, our earth. Fresh evidence had been discovered of how a massive asteroid struck the earth 66 million years ago in what is now the Gulf of Mexico, causing world-wide events that brought about the end of the dinosaurs: long before the beginnings of mankind. It puts things in perspective! It compels us to grope our way through the mysteries of time and space, trying to grasp the nature of what we call eternity, and the everlasting nature of God.

Men like the authors of *Job* and the Psalms tried to convey the contrast between the immensity and the eternal nature of God, and the relative insignificance of a human being: 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him?' (Ps 8). And yet our embracing and encircling God *is* mindful of us, because he formed us, as poets and sculptors are mindful of their creations and parents are mindful of their children. Not only is God all-powerful, but also all-loving: he is Love.

The Jews liked to picture God as having strong arms to give his children support and protection; he was the protector of his faithful people Israel:

'Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvellous things;

**His right hand and his holy arm** have worked salvation for him...

'He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to Israel;

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.' (Ps 98 v 1-3 NIV)

They used the picture of a shepherd to represent God's faithful and gentle care for those who could not help themselves:

'He tends his flock like a shepherd: **he gathers the lambs in his arms** and carries them close to his heart. (Isaiah 40:11 NIV)

Shortly before the birth of Jesus, Mary proclaimed that God had '**stretched out his mighty arm** and scattered the proud with all their plans.' (Luke 1:51) The saviour would appear amid humble surroundings, but would grow in stature and power. *He sent Jesus to reveal his love and his power to redeem and save — not only Israel but the whole world.*

In his hymn "Jesus, the name high over all" Charles Wesley proclaimed his sense of God's loving and protecting presence in his own life and his ardent desire to reveal the immensity of that saving love to everyone: '**The arms of love that compass me** / would all mankind embrace.'

*'The arms of love':* how well the phrase conveys the parental nature of God's care for us: embracing, uplifting, protecting and saving arms: a presence on which we can always depend.

In 1887 Anthony Showalter was moved to write a consoling letter to two former pupils of his whose wives had died, and his thoughts came to rest on Deuteronomy 33:27, where Moses is blessing the tribes of Israel: '**The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.**' Those words began to form themselves into poetry:

*Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms, Leaning,  
leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.*

And then into music, which can be found on [hymnary.org](http://hymnary.org).

A friend of his, Elisha Hoffman, then wrote the verses that are still loved and sung today.

*What a fellowship, what a joy divine,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms;  
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.*

*O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms;  
O how bright the path grows from day to day,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.*

*What have I to dread, what have I to fear,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms?  
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.*

The phrase brings to mind some of the ways we like to think of God, and all of them biblical: his strength, for example: protecting those who love and trust him. Jesus, our eternal friend:

*Have we trials and temptations?  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In his arms he'll take and shield thee:  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.*

*Joseph Scriven*

Remember his outreach, finding us like the good shepherd, wherever we happen to be; carrying us when we are exhausted:

*Safe in the arms of Jesus... Jesus has died for me;  
Jesus my heart's dear refuge: Jesus has died for me.  
Firm on the Rock of Ages ever my trust shall be.*

*Frances Crosby*

*What have I to dread, what have I to fear,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms?  
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.*

The image of outstretched arms can suggest various thoughts. I know of a sculpture depicting a youth looking skywards, on tiptoe; arms spread like wings, yearning to fly: Icarus. Renewal: arms outstretched to heavenward fly... 'If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come.' (2 Corinthians 5: 17).

...And then there is Jesus crucified, yielding to his Father's will: 'Come unto me... Whoever comes to me I will never drive away.' (John 6: 37)

Do you remember this song, recorded by Jim Reeves and others?

'The chimes of time ring out the news:  
Another day is through;  
Someone slipped and fell:  
Was that someone you?

You may have longed for added strength your courage to  
renew.

Do not be disheartened: for I have news for you.

It is no secret what God can do,  
What he's done for others he'll do for you.

**With arms wide open he'll pardon you:  
It is no secret what God can do.**



## Put me to suffering?

Most of us have been at a covenant service in the New Year and, if the traditional covenant prayer was used, said those words. That seems as if we are inviting God to deliberately cause us suffering. The more modern version avoids that misunderstanding. (... *in all that I may endure* – see service book P. 288.)

Does God really cause us suffering? The “Why has God done this to me?” syndrome. To me, suffering has one or more of the following causes: *chance, genetics, cruelty, bad choices*. If we are going through (*through* is a significant word.) a bad time, God, by his spirit, can be with us. God, by his spirit can also help us to make the right decisions.

Does God have 'a plan' for our lives? I doubt it. If we are open to God, we will make our plans according to what we perceive as his will, (usually accessed through prayer or meditation).

Thus it will *seem* that God has caused us to suffer – or to have success, and it may *seem* as if God has a plan for our lives, but is that really the case? We must take responsibility for our own lives and not blame God.

The important thing to remember is that God loves us, and wants us to have 'abundant life' (John 10: 10) if we follow the way of Jesus, come what may.

Dudley

## Jacqui Parkinson: Threads through Creation

We have just returned from a canal holiday in the Midlands and one of our stops was in Worcester. There was an exhibition in the Cathedral of 12 huge textile panels by Jacqui, depicting the Creation story from Genesis. It was breath-taking and moving. Her use of colour, shape and pattern is wonderful. It took her three years to complete and she has an extensive tour of UK Cathedrals planned. If you have any interest in threads, the Creation story, then you would definitely enjoy looking at the panels.

The nearest Cathedrals to us are St Edmundsbury from 27<sup>th</sup> July till 3<sup>rd</sup> August, and Peterborough Cathedral from 22<sup>nd</sup> March till 30<sup>th</sup> April.

Jacqui is the widow of Rev Rob Frost who wrote “Hopes and Dreams” amongst other things and she started her first pieces, “Threads through Revelation” to help with her Grieving. Barbara

## Treasure or tat

This was the title of a talk given by Alison Butler (*Liaison Officer for Methodist Historic Objects*) to the East Anglian Methodist Historical Society on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

Five people from our Circuit were present and found the talk interesting and helpful, but this topic is relevant and important to all Methodist Churches, from the greatest to the least, and all church members, because artefacts of historical importance have been ‘lost’ while non-important items have been kept.

The first thing Alison emphasized is that the decision to retain, re-locate or recycle **must not be left to one person**, even if that is the minister, steward or other office holder! An example of what can happen, if the decision is left to one person, occurred at Downham several years ago.

When some cupboards were being cleared, a rather tatty book, which was falling apart, was found. The person finding it had put it in the pile of things to be binned. Fortunately, John saw it and took a closer look at it. He discovered that it was a Minute Book for Circuit and Local Preachers’ meetings dating from the 1840s. That was deposited in the County Archives.

It's not just paper artefacts which could be important. It could be furniture, hymn boards, fonts, models, crockery etc. Alison gave us lots of advice and notes that we can share with anyone interested. If any artefacts have a story, it's important that the story is recorded with them.

If you are unsure whether something in your church, or in your home, is relevant or not, we may be able to help. In that case, please contact Hazel, as a Circuit Archivist. If she can't help directly, she will try to find someone who can.

Hazel & John Miles

**A four-day weekend!** Our government said the late May bank holiday in 2022 will be moved to Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, the day for the Trooping of the Colour in London, and there will be an additional bank holiday on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

It is supposed to be an opportunity for communities throughout the land to come together to celebrate the historic milestone of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee.

February 6<sup>th</sup> marked her becoming the first British Monarch with 70 years of service to the people of the United Kingdom, the Realms and the Commonwealth. We wish her well.

What will you do with this 'windfall' ? - presumably weather-dependant in the UK.

On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June from 9pm the beacon by St Edmund's Church Downham Market will be lit. From 12pm - 2pm there will be a Street Party on the Town Square - bring a picnic. 6.30pm in the Town Hall sees a 'Songs of Praise'.

Sylvia Perkins

### **Service Recognised**

On the evening of the 1<sup>st</sup> May, a Circuit service was held in Downham Market Methodist Church, in person and on zoom. Rev. Robert Roberts welcomed everyone to this special occasion to present long service certificates to two local preachers.

The certificates were presented by the Rev. Paul Critchley to Dudley Pickston 60 years' service and John Miles 50 years' service. Dudley and John both gave a short testimony, Bible reading and the congregation sang their favourite hymns.

Donations given at the service were for the Leaders' of Worship and Preachers' Trust, totalled £56.

The service was well received by those in the Church and also by those on zoom. All enjoyed being able to celebrate and give thanks for Dudley and John, two of Mr. Wesley's preachers.

Elizabeth Batstone

Circuit Leader of Worship and Preachers' Meeting Secretary

We watched the beginning on the canal but lost it just as John was starting! Ed

### **What's on from June 2022**

26<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> May Dersingham Flower Festival

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June between 10am and 12am, A coffee morning and seed planting. At Clenchwarton

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June Beacon Lighting in Downham Market 9pm

Sunday June 5<sup>th</sup> Hilgay Methodist Church A Jubilee Songs of Praise at 3:30pm

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June Coffee and Music for Tapping House at Pott Row

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June Coffee Morning with bric-a-brac at Wimbotsham 10 am - 12 noon

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June Sing for Zimbabwe at Hunstanton at 12 pm

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June Jubilee Coffee Morning 10am Terrington Saint Clements

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June Chapel Anniversary Terrington Saint Clements

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July Celebrate King's Lynn

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July Coffee Morning at Dersingham 10.30 for Methodist Missions

27<sup>th</sup> July - 3<sup>rd</sup> August Threads through Creation at Bury St Edmunds Cathedral

Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> October at Hilgay Methodist Church. ECO FESTIVAL 10.30 - 3.30

22<sup>nd</sup> March - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023 Threads through Creation at Peterborough Cathedral