

# Rejoice!

October 2021



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

## **Singing sacred songs in a strange land**

'How can we sing a sacred song in a strange land' is the response of the Jewish exiles when they are requested by their Babylonian captors to sing some of the songs of their homeland while in captivity. This question is probably asked by many Methodists who find it difficult to imagine the nature and form of mission they are called to do in the face of so many challenges facing us today. Psalm 137 is a communal lament, a Psalm of despair in the face of a strange calling upon their faith. There is no doubt that challenges facing us and our churches are shared.

The context is the experience of Jewish exiles in Babylon between BCE 597 TO 538. A dark period in the life of God's covenant people. The people of God have been defeated by their foes, captured and taken as prisoners into a foreign land. The temple which represented God's presence lay in ruins. The song of worship has gone quiet. This is unheard of! Is their God defeated? This was not only a period of misery; it was a period of chaos, shame and uncertainty. Their world had ended.

In response, they hang their harps up on poplar trees by the rivers of Babylon and weep in hopeless despair. To add insult to an injury their captors ask them to sing some of the songs of Zion. These songs not only remind them of the Temple, but they are 'sacred' songs, sung only in the temple in praise to God. Exile for them is profane. It's not a place to sing sacred hymns. How can these songs be sung? This is a strange land. What a challenge to their faith?

The past few years have been to many devout Christians an exile, a time of multiple strangeness around where singing songs is not easy. The world around us has turned strange or the church is the one that has become a stranger? Not many people today identify with the church, least of all the young people. For many of us who are getting older, our bodies do not have the energy we used to have; we are not sure if we can serve God as we did. So we are tempted to decline our calling to serve, due to age and sometimes

some illness. Our chapels have become a minority in a swelling multi-cultural, multi-religious and secular existence. COVID has worsened the situation, keeping our church doors closed, no sacraments, no baptisms, confirmations, no weddings, no funerals. We have been asked to sing songs in a strange world of Facebook, YouTube, Zoom and the internet. What a strange request especially for those of us who are not used to a life in the internet. The Methodist church recently approved the serving of Holy Communion online. Many Christians have found this new way of doing things quite strange. Many still feel uncomfortable doing worship online. It is a strange existence. What if this is God ordained?

This is what Jeremiah said to the exiles: “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” (Jer. 29<sup>5-7</sup>) God seemed to be saying, this is your new mission area, you are in this for a purpose. This is your new normal, learn to live with it!

Research shows that in the past year a significant number of people have had their faith revived, many have made enquiries about church membership because of the improved online worship. Our own Circuit Zoom services, WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube services have reached many more people than we ever were able to reach before COVID 19. Is God not inviting us to do mission outside our usual circles? May be God is challenging us to sing songs in this strange land!

Rev Rich Ncube: 01485 570232

# Praying together in the Circuit

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it  
The world and all its people belong to Him. Psalm 24:1

Sovereign God, you declared everything you created 'good'.  
May we never lose appreciation of the wonders of your world.  
Give us wisdom and the resolve to make necessary changes  
to protect your creation and the precious gift of life.

Gracious God every person belongs to you and is loved by you.

'All we like sheep have gone astray'

Redeeming God in your love draw all people to yourself

Holy Spirit bring unprecedented response to the gospel.

Let this be the time when your Covenant of Grace

a new heart, a new mind, and Your Spirit within

will bring transformation to the way people love and think and live  
when every person will be valued, respected and honoured  
and have life in all its fullness which Jesus came to give us.

This is Your desire O Lord.

Father God, all people are known to you, loved by you..

We give thanks for the commitment and care given during the

Covid 19 pandemic and every act of kindness shown.

We pray for those who have been deeply affected.

Those who have been bereaved and have not been able to  
be with their loved ones in their most difficult times.

For those who have become depressed, who have been isolated,  
those waiting for appointments which have had to be delayed.

Children and young people who have experienced disruption in  
their education, confusion about exams, uncertainty about  
their future prospects, separation from their friends.

In all the uncertainties, the concerns which overwhelm

Lord, in your mercy bring healing, hope and peace.

Lord bless our Circuit at this time of new beginnings.  
We pray for Rev. Robert, Rev. Paul and Rev. Richman and their families  
for our ministerial team and leadership team  
for the ministry of all believers.  
for each of our churches in towns, villages, estates.  
Lead us every step of the way, teach us to listen to you  
unite us in your love and your purposes.

Thank you for the technology which has enabled us to share  
in worship and those who have enabled it to happen.  
Lord bless us as we begin to return to corporate worship.  
May we return adhering to guidelines, coping with a very different  
way of worship, but always aware of your presence with us.  
When we can't sing your praises may worship increase in our hearts  
as we express our love for you  
May the fellowship of your Holy Spirit unite us.  
Renew us and prepare us for the plans you have for us.  
Let this be a time, 'not of survival, but revival'

Prayers have been requested for:

Derek + Viv, Stephanie, Margie, Janice, Trisha, Linda, Andrew,  
Mavis & Julia, Judy, Dulcie+ Neil, Kath, Stephen + Victoria, William,  
Tom, Sarah. Joan,

## **UNANSWERED PRAYER**

The preacher's 5 year-old daughter noticed that her father  
always paused and bowed his head for a moment before starting his sermon.  
One day, she asked him why.

'Well, Honey,' he began, proud that his daughter was so  
observant of his messages. 'I'm asking the Lord to help me preach a good  
sermon.'

'How come He doesn't answer it?' she asked.

But we know he does!

## Happy New [Connexional] Year

We begin by say “Well done!” to Rev Paul and Rev Rich, plus their families, who’ve just completed their first year in the West Norfolk Circuit. In addition, it’s our 2<sup>nd</sup> year anniversary for Rev Jackie, Deacon Lynne and myself; that’s 2 years in Circuit and 18 months of COVID-19: TA DA! We’re survivors!!

All of us, Jackie, Lynne, Paul, Rich and myself, say a BIG ‘thank you’ to the Circuit for your help, involvement, encouragement and prayers. Together, let us all look forward to God’s unknown surprises, blessings and challenges throughout our upcoming Methodist year of 2021-2022. *May all of our churches be ‘A Place for All,’ Rev Robert*

The next edition of Rejoice will be as decided by the Circuit Meeting but I will inform those who need to know when a decision has been made. Ed.

### Marjorie Bocking

How Marjorie will be missed, especially by her Church family. She encouraged, was a friend to so many people and was a supporter of Methodist Women in Britain. She was an author, a speaker, leader of the Women’s Fellowship at Clenchwarton, a member of the local choir and a member of the entertainment group, at times writing the plays, including the yearly pantomime that we, as a family, have enjoyed over the years.

She was into horticulture too. She arranged mystery tours, usually ending up at a Methodist Church for a gorgeous tea. Dersingham was a favourite. The last one at South Wootton they had suffered a very wet day!

She was a real, true friend to me. I loved her and she can never be replaced. She was a good servant to her Lord God and will be so missed.

God bless Marjorie for all she has given.

Phyllis Bowman

# Around the churches



## Hilgay

At Hilgay we are pleased to be open for worship again, although socially distanced and wearing our masks. We shall all be pleased when we can sing our praises to God again.

Our chairs are spaced at 2 metres apart and each person has the same sanitised books at each service. These are placed on individual tables with each person's name on. We started this process after the first lockdown after much thought and planning and although we had to close again for the second lock-down we have re-opened for fortnightly services so far and all is going well. Praise be to God.

Everyone is happy that we can share fellowship after morning worship by having tea or coffee again. We manage this by everyone bringing their own mug. One person having access to the kitchen and pouring teas and coffee into our mugs which are placed on the appropriate tray. Biscuits are individually wrapped so everyone can help themselves and return to their seats and communicate with each other from a social distance, We then take our own mugs home to wash up so there is no chance of contamination. This has worked very well and everyone has managed to stay safe.

We are making preparations for what we hope will be a year of celebration. The anniversary of our chapel opening will be on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021. This will be our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are planning an open day for Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> of October and a special afternoon service followed by tea on Sunday October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 3pm.

We hope to hold various events during our anniversary year including monthly coffee mornings and evening entertainment for which we have a further planning meeting on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

Watch this space for further news.

(It must have happened!)

This is it!!!

Things have moved on since I last wrote for Rejoice so this is an update. During September and October we look forward to welcoming Southery congregation to meet with us for services on 5<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> September and 3<sup>rd</sup> October and our congregation will join them on 12<sup>th</sup> September and 10<sup>th</sup> October. Both congregations are quite small and as two of Southery's members have recently had operations and so are immobile for a time this seems a sensible way to support each other and also help the plan, while there is a shortage of preachers. If we all find this an acceptable way to move forward then we ask God's blessing on our work and hope it may continue. It will be good to meet together. We pray that Maggie and Sue make a good recovery and are soon well enough to join us too. We have been holding a monthly coffee morning on the last Thursday of each month and have been pleased to welcome the Downham Walking group for tea, coffee, cake and a chat after their walk around Hilgay. We started this because the village hall committee couldn't start their coffee mornings after lockdown because of ill health and a lack of volunteers. I now understand the Village Hall intend to hold a Macmillan Coffee morning on September 30<sup>th</sup> so we shall not have one then but hopefully in the near future we can meet and discuss the possibility of a joint coffee morning working together alternate months in the chapel and Village Hall and encourage each other in our work for the good of the village. We send best wishes and thanks to Val and Dave who have worked so hard for the Village Hall in the past, On September 26<sup>th</sup> Rev. Paul Critchley will lead our Harvest Festival Service at 10 am and..... On October 2<sup>nd</sup> /3<sup>rd</sup> we shall hold a celebration weekend as Methodists have been meeting in our present chapel for 150 years. Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October will be an Open Day from 10 am till 4pm celebrating the history of Methodism in the village and also celebrating people who have contributed to our journey so far. On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> October at 3pm a service will be conducted by Rev. Arthur Windridge from Cromer. (A former minister for Hilgay.) This will be followed by an afternoon tea. October 12<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm we hope to begin our new season of the Wesleyan Guild. We have short devotions followed by various talks, demonstrations etc. Ours is the only remaining Guild in our vast Circuit All are welcome. If you have Tuesday afternoons free, come and join us. We meet from October to Easter fortnightly at 2:30pm.

Pauline Driver.

## **Stanhoe Methodist Church**

Stanhoe opened, at last, for a face to face service on 13<sup>th</sup> June, with a Communion Service conducted by Rev. Richman Ncube. We were delighted to welcome him, and some friends from Burnham Market Methodist Church, with whom we hadn't worshipped since March 2020. It did seem to take a lot of organisation, one way and another, and we shall be glad when all restrictions are removed, and we can throw our doors open to more worshippers. The church itself is so small, that it is really not possible, under present rules, to have more than 10 people in the building at one time.

We hope to re-start our Bible Study Classes in September. In the meantime, our Prayer Chain is extremely active, as always!

We are so grateful that we have come through the pandemic relatively unscathed, although our member, and former organist, Gill Johnson, is unwell, and becoming very frail and unable to attend worship, and Jenny Sparks, who was once a very active preacher throughout the Hunstanton Section, and latterly attended Stanhoe and Burnham Market churches, is no longer fit and able to meet with us. She is very frustrated not to be able to work on her farm, now a donkey sanctuary, as she used to, but has good friends and neighbours who help her out.

Elizabeth MacLeod

## **Dersingham**

The congregation at Dersingham started meeting again in church at the end of May but were split into two groups this time instead of four and all the chairs were back in so it looked more familiar. We are still masked and spread around the church, but the Rev. Rich has taken communion services which folk have much appreciated after such a long time without. The organist plays suitable music at the beginning and the end which creates a worshipful atmosphere. Although we cannot yet sing the hymns, playing alternate verses while we read the words to ourselves and then reading the in between verses out loud has actually helped us (as more than one person has remarked) to concentrate on the words more than perhaps when we are lustily singing as Methodists are wont to do! A good discipline for us all! It is certainly good to be together again worshipping in the flesh. The Jigsaw Club is getting organised to start at the end of July and the Church Council will be meeting soon and will decide which further activities to gradually open up. So things are improving and getting back to normal, though it is good to hear that Zoom

services are to continue monthly for a while. They have been a wonderful substitute and enabled us to put names to faces around our section, and indeed the Circuit as well.

And more!!

At the beginning of August the church was put back to normal with all the chairs in and one way systems abandoned. We still continue to be masked and sanitize our hands and social distance, but we can now sing, which is great, and have coffee after the service. The Jigsaw Club and the Bowls Club have both re-opened.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> August a service of remembrance was held to remember five of our number who sadly died during the last eighteen months: Jean Griggs and Melvin Golding (who both held many offices in the church), David Hathaway and Nancy Port, and Joe Earl. The service was led by the Rev. Richman Ncube and tributes were paid to each of them by Elizabeth Batstone. Their families were invited and were very appreciative of having their loved ones' passing recognised in this way, most of them having had to abide by restricted numbers for their actual funerals.

Rosemary Caink

### **Hunstanton Methodist Church**

It's good to be back to our new normal. On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August we said goodbye to Michael and Julia Warnes who have moved to 'pastures new'. Our thanks to Irene Garrard for a lovely service.

After a lot of prayerful thoughts and serious thinking our members have come through. Jean Hornbuckle is our new organist, David Scotney has taken over as Church Treasurer and Noelene Wood-Davies is now our Church Council secretary. We have most of our other positions covered and we can now look forward to being Church once more.

Thankyou to everyone for their prayers, help and support.

Pat Sharman

### **Downham Market**

Well, life has started again for us. We had our first Messy Church meeting for this term and had six families. It was different as families were sitting around tables and we were taking crafts to them. But everyone seemed to have fun. One mum said it was good to do craft things as a family. The theme was Harvest but it could have been God's gifts to us. We made bugs, scarecrow biscuits, bare Autumn trees and went on a hunt for pictures of the different types of weather. We will hopefully meet again on the second Friday in October.

Ladies Friendship is all prepared to meet again and should have had one or two meetings already, depending on when you are reading this. We will be socially distanced and careful of having enough fresh air. The time of the meeting has changed to 2.30 – 4.00pm every second and fourth Wednesday.

## Feltwell

### Sunday morning fellowship 11 am

We welcome anyone and everyone to share our moments of peace in this hectic world. Families can sit together, and other visitors have safely distanced seating. After a short time of devotions we have a chat and refreshments. We encourage visitors to wear masks

**NEXT(maybe LAST) ELEVENZES – 6<sup>th</sup> October** and may continue on a different day of each month **10am**, Mask wearing is encouraged.

**Covid is still with us so we continue to be cautious. Please remember your mask and sanitise your hands in case we have to serve inside.**

Did **you** come to our monthly coffee mornings way back at the ‘turn of the century’? Then you may know these people.



However, Jill Dennis, one of our group has passed away after several months in poor health. We remember her with affection and keep husband Geoff in our prayers and on our “to do list”.

## CRAFT GROUP MEETS ..... EVERY MONDAY at 2pm

A new era of craft beckons with new members, new ideas and new challenges.

*No longer knit & natter, so what can you share with us?*



### COMMUNITY GARDEN – WEDNESDAY MORNINGS

We are pleased to share with you all the installation of a 50,000,000 year old slate bench and table to celebrate the life and work and contribution Peter and Sybil Cooper have made to the life of this chapel and the village.

Come and take a stroll around our garden, starting with the **‘Meadow Snake Path’** and finish with a sit down on our new (old) bench.

*How many different grasses and wild flowers can you see?* We have meadow to tend, weeding to do to help the runner beans, lettuce, spring onions and more, oh, and we’ve picked some lovely beetroot. Someone’s had the raspberries though we found a few for our Harvest lunch after our Harvest thanksgiving on 5<sup>th</sup> September. This harvest will help local people who want fresh, organic fruit and veg on their meal tables.

### THE CRUNCH!!!

- 1 We could really do with some help with all this, especially if we’re going to be part of “Anglia in Bloom” in 2022.
  - 2 We invite you to break your loneliness and join us for a chat, sharing knowledge, and a bit of light exercise and a cuppa. A bit of weeding, pruning, dead-heading or hoeing, whatever you feel comfortable doing.
  - 3 Something that would really help would be some willing daily waterers. The rain has been very welcome but with the weather very warm (hopefully) our flowers and vegetables and especially our pots feel the heat too and are often gasping for water!
  - 4 So if you are passing and can spare 5 minutes, please pick up a watering can from our water butts and save a life!
- Thank you. Although not many of you will pass our way.

We can be contacted on Facebook or mobile 07712578721  
or by email [mikegw15@gmail.com](mailto:mikegw15@gmail.com) \_Mike and Brigette Wilkinson

## **Feltwell Methodist Church Community Hall**

**Only £3 for music, quiz and drinks(no alcohol) and a laugh!**

Come and have a jig or a twist, a wiggle or a wobble, or simply sit and listen just for your own enjoyment. Could be some 'community singing' if you join in with those tunes you know. You'll get a warm welcome here in Bell Street.

OPEN AGAIN....Our hall is available to hire and includes a stage and a sound system and heating!

BROWNIES started again in September and a new Pilates group is now using the hall weekly. Also Feltwell Historical Society resumed its monthly meetings. Feltwellbeings group continues to meet offering support and a break from loneliness for several local people.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

**Single cells (Batteries) should not be put in your green or black bins!**

So what do you do with them?

We have set up a collection point for the community at the Methodist Church in Bell Street. We have a bin where you can leave your used cells,

AA, D & C & AAA & other single cells and button batteries.

We also have a collection box for the local food bank.



Mike Wilkinson

## **Stow Bridge**

I am not a button pressing person, this technic age has by-passed me. The only time I press a button is when I want the bus to stop!

How fast we are travelling today with our everyday life. If we need a new electric kettle out comes the mobile, find what we need and, hey presto, it's on the doorstep in the morning!

Sometimes this system goes wrong and if it breaks down not much can be done. Or if you have to wait on the phone and are told you are third or even seventh in the queue waiting time; Patience, Patience, Patience.

Just a few days ago I heard of a man who said, "There's no 'on line' here. Just ring and I'll deal with the matter straight away." No on line here.

I thought to myself, our God is not like that; no hanging on the phone, no waiting time, no queue, no breakdowns and he lovingly listens to all the calls he gets and deals with each individual as we pray to him in Christ's name. Our

Lord likes to hear us individually; he likes to talk to us in the stillness of our lives, through his Holy Spirit.

Does it occur to us how many people are praying at any one time; asking for guidance, forgiveness, healing or giving thanks or even praising him for answered prayers or his creation and his way of bringing us to his side again through the giving of Jesus for us? How many in the Christian Church worldwide are calling on our God of love at any one time? (I dare not quote a number!)

It is wonderful that we have free access to pray to him and he encourages us to do this anytime, anywhere, any body. He says, "Are you heavy laden, lots of worries, then come to me not only with your problems, but to offer me praise and thanks.

Our Lord does answer our prayer. I remember a dear friend telling me, "God sometimes says yes, sometimes says no, sometimes wait. Just trust him."

We at Stow Bridge are still a going Church as we started meeting again.

Although we are few, isn't it lovely to be able to sing our songs and hymns again and to have FELLOWSHIP.

Peter Hewitt

## St Faith's

It was a lovely, joyful occasion when family, friends and clergy gathered at a South Wootton Hotel to help long-serving St Faith's Methodist member, Elaine Price-Jones, celebrate her 100th birthday.

Elaine, who was a founder member and long-serving treasurer of the St Faith's Forget-Me-Not Lunch club for the Over-60s has organised an "open house-style" Coffee Morning for her centenary birthday on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> September. There will be a chance to drop in and wish Elaine "Happy Birthday", enjoy a slice of birthday cake and recall personal memories of Elaine's long life. Singing has always been an important part of her life and she was involved in the "Coming Together" of the Anglicans and Methodists at Gaywood in, what was in the early 1970s; one of Norfolk's pioneering Local Ecumenical Projects (LEP). Elaine's two choirs joined forces, setting an excellent example of co-operation for other Anglican and Methodists organisations at St Faith's to follow.

As well as always being known for her elegant dress sense, Elaine has retained her sense of humour. When asked for the secret of her long life recently she replied that throughout her life she has never joined a gym, never gone out jogging and never run anywhere. "Doing none of these widely accepted health beneficial pursuits clearly hasn't done me any harm," she said with a twinkle in her eye.

All of us at St Faith's Church wish Elaine warmest congratulations on her milestone birthday and all God's blessings to her.

It was wonderful for St Faith's Church to welcome back Daphne Sampson when she preached a special sermon marking Climate Sunday. As many people are well aware, Daphne is passionate about everyone one doing their little bit in protecting the world God has created. In her role as chair of Eco Church at St Faith's, Daphne has been an enthusiastic exponent of Climate Change issues, helping St Faith's achieve a bronze award and now working towards a silver accolade. As Daphne stressed in her thought-provoking sermon, we all, as individuals, can do our own little bit in the challenges presented by global Climate Change.

In common with parishes across Norfolk and North Suffolk, church life as we knew it pre pandemic Lockdown, is slowly beginning to return to what is being termed the new "normal". One main Sunday morning service is held each Sunday instead of the previous two and, of course, St Faith's Choir is now back leading our singing which has been a great joy for them and for the congregations. For the first time since lockdown, we were able to gather with flasks of coffee or tea and a bite to eat in the Rectory garden and enjoy some social time together. We could not have had better weather as we sat in the warm sunshine. Some restrictions still remain, including the wearing of masks in church.

Saturday October 2<sup>nd</sup>, will see the return of the popular Coffee Morning and More event which, before lockdown, attracted large numbers of church folk and those from the wider community. All are warmly welcome to attend the new first session when all the old favourite elements, including home-made bites, various stalls selling a variety of products and, not forgetting, the chance to take home a quality prize from the raffle table, will be there.

A toilet in The Lady Chapel in St Faith's will greet church members attending the Harvest Festival service on 19<sup>th</sup> September. The loo will have been set up by Betty Guy's son, Andrew to illustrate Toilet Twinning, the charity benefitting from donations given at the Harvest service.

It is a staggering statistic, but 2.3 billion people across the world don't actually have somewhere safe to go to the toilet. Not only does this make daily life unpleasant and uncomfortable, but presents a potential huge health risk.

Cash raised at St Faith's on Harvest Festival Sunday will not only help to fund provision of a toilet where none previously existed, but also support community education and sanitation programmes. Donation of food products at the Harvest Festival service will be given to the King's Lynn Food Bank.

St Faith's intrepid cyclists, Joan and David Greening, clocked up an impressive 48 miles and visited 29 West Norfolk churches and chapels, when they took part, on 11<sup>th</sup> September, in the Norfolk Churches Trust Bike, Walk or Drive event. Their pedalling prowess looks set to have raised around six hundred

pounds through sponsorship. The couple, well-known for their cycling pursuits, said they particularly enjoyed cycling along the promenade from Heacham to Hunstanton, with the tide fully in on their left. They thanked all those who gave them donations.

Owing to declining health, Carol Dexter, has stepped down from her roles as flower arrangements co-ordinator and vergier at St Faith's Church.

Carol has shared her Vergier's role with Robin Banham. She served in the important role for about 19 years. Her flower co-ordinator's role goes back 25 years. Carol's husband, Peter, has taken over from his wife as Vergier with Robin.

Carol, a professional florist, who ran her own flower shop for many years in King's Lynn town centre, was sincerely thanked for all her skilful work in creating such beautiful floral arrangements reflecting the changing seasons. Church members have fond memories of former Methodist Steward and Local Preacher, Jackie Austin and her husband, Nick. They left Gaywood a few years ago and made their home in Cromer. A group of about 10 St Faith's members travelled to Cromer and spent a few hours at Jackie and Nick's lovely home and enjoyed a buffet lunch in their beautiful garden. During her years at St Faiths, Jackie was very involved in the life of the parish. In December Jackie will be heading-up the organization of the 2021 Christmas Tree Festival held in Cromer church.

Richard Parr

Would anyone like an electric organ? If the answer is yes contact John Houghton.

Feeling old?

Spare a thought for the honey mushroom in Malheur National Forest, Oregon, U.S.A.

It is the planet's largest living organism.

It spreads over an area of 2,385 acres and is thought to be at least 2,400years old!!

**429 BC** Hippocrates was spared death from a plague that killed between 1/3 and 2/3 of the population of Athens. Hippocrates was the first to say that disease was not

miraculous, or a punishment from the gods. Hippocrates is best known for the Hippocratic Oath that every physician swears to uphold.

Thank you Sylvia

## TAKE TIME

Take time to think,  
It is the source of power.  
Take time to play,  
It is the secret of perpetual youth  
Take time to read,  
It is the fountain of wisdom.  
Take time to pray,  
It is the greatest power on earth.  
Take time to love and be loved,  
It is a God-given privilege.  
Take time to be friendly,  
It is the road to happiness.  
Take time to laugh,  
It is the music of the soul.  
Take time to give,  
It is too short a day to be selfish.  
Take time to work,  
It is the price of success.  
Take time for charity,  
It is the key to heaven.

A four-year-old child, whose next door neighbour was an elderly gentleman, who had recently lost his wife.  
Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there.  
When his mother asked him what he had said to the neighbour, the little boy just said, 'Nothing, I just Helped him cry.'

# 1.

## Rev Paul's WW1 Wanderings – The Final Chapter!!!!

After a 4am alarm call, an early breakfast and an early departure by coach from Arras in France the final day of walking begins at Langemark German Military Cemetery on the Ypres Salient in Belgium. Langemark is known for being the site of the first gas attacks in WW1, marking the start of the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915. The Cemetery contains the graves of over 44,000 fallen German soldiers, including 3,000 student volunteers involved in the Battle of Langemark in 1914.

From here, we walk across open countryside to the St Julien Canadian War Memorial – known more commonly as The Brooding Soldier – an 11m high granite column with a sculpture of 'The Brooding Soldier' on the top shown in the posture that is used during military funerals. Approximately one in three men became casualties during the battles around this location, with one in nine losing their life. A reminder of the sheer loss of war.

Our morning lunch break takes place at Poelcappelle British Cemetery. I find the headstones in military cemeteries fascinating. There is so much information on them. Name. Rank. Number. And, at the bottom, an opportunity for families to have had something written forever to remember their loved one by.

“Too dearly loved to ever be forgotten” “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin”

And this one from a WW2 headstone. Words chosen by a mother from a letter written by her son:

“Mother, I've weighed the risks which I prefer to living in a world dominated by Nazis”

At Poelcappelle Cemetery, there is a unique headstone for a violinist called Hugh Gordon Langton. Instead of words, there is a musical stave and a series of notes. The Musical Director of Blackpool Tower Circus, took these six notes and created a piece of music called 'Langton's Theme' which was played at a Remembrance Concert in my old church in Poulton-le-Fylde in 2018. It was an incredible moment to hear those notes come alive that I had seen on a headstone in Belgium and a fitting tribute to a violinist of old.

From here, the walk takes us across Passchendaele to Tyne Cot Cemetery – the largest cemetery for Commonwealth forces anywhere in the world from any war. There are 11,954 burials here and the Memorial Wall commemorates 34,998 men who have no known grave. The Cross of Sacrifice – a symbol present in every Commonwealth War Grave Cemetery containing more than 40 burials – is placed here on top of a pillbox reportedly after King George V suggested so on his visit to Tyne Cot in 1922.

We walk next to Polygon Wood Cemetery with 107 burials including 60 New Zealanders. It was whilst walking through this cemetery in 2017 that we were privileged to hear a rehearsal for New Zealand National Anniversary Service. Walking through the woods, amongst the graves, we heard a Maori Lament sung. It took the breath away – though we could not understand the words, the pain in the voice struck deep.

I remember that there is a long section of the walk – towards the end of the day – alongside a lake. We regroup at a bar on the lakeside – one of the occasions that you want to be at the front of the walk!!! An opportunity for refreshment before the final kilometre into Ypres itself and the finish line at the Menin Gate.

The Menin Gate commemorates those men who died between 1914 and August 1917, whose bodies were never found. Lieutenant Alex Heller is one of the 54,896 names on the Gate. He was buried in a rudimentary grave outside the town, but the fighting in the area after his death meant that his grave was destroyed and thus he has no known resting place. It was Helmers death that inspired Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae to write the poem ‘In Flanders Field’.

I mentioned in the spring edition of Rejoice that in 2017 I walked in the WW1 uniform of a Padre in memory of those Chaplains who served and died during WW1. I walked in uniform again in 2018 but this time in the uniform of a medic called Noel Chavasse. Noel was the twin of Christopher who I played in ‘Brothers in Arms’ around Lancashire and at the Edinburgh Fringe.

Both Noel and Christopher were Christians serving as medic and chaplain respectively. Noel was an incredibly gallant medic, regularly putting himself in danger to look after the men in his care. He received the Victoria Cross in recognition of his actions on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1916 in

Guillemont, France where he worked tirelessly, in open ground and under fire to tend to the wounded.

He received the Victoria Cross once again for his actions over the period 31<sup>st</sup> July – 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1917 in Wieltje, Belgium. Noel was sheltering in a dugout with several other soldiers during heavy fire, when the dugout received a direct hit. Several soldiers were killed, other – including Noel – were badly injured. Noel refused to go to for treatment, opting instead to go out repeatedly under heavy fire to search for and attend to the wounded. Noel subsequently died of his injuries. In a final letter home to his fiancé, he wrote – almost apologetically – “duty called me and called me to obey”.

He is buried at Brandhoek New Military Cemetery in Belgium and it was a privilege to visit his grave on my first walk in 2016. His headstone is inscribed with two Victoria Crosses and the words “Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends”.

Whilst the walk looks like it will be going ahead this year, I am considering deferring my involvement until 2022. Playing into my thoughts is my wife Jo being away in the Falklands until November, coupled with the hope that if Covid restrictions ease we may get to visit her down there during the October half-term (18 hours on a plane with the boys – help!) It wouldn't be fair on the Circuit for me to be away twice in October.

However, this doesn't mean my fundraising ends! Those of you who have donated so far, the charity will use your money wisely and your gifts still count towards my total fundraising for 2022 if I do end up deferring!

You can still donate either by dropping me a cheque made out to ‘ABF The Soldiers Charity’ or by visiting my online donation page:  
<https://events.soldierscharity.org/fundraiser/PaulCritchley>

It has been an incredibly difficult year for charities, with big fundraising events having been cancelled – the Frontline Walk brings in on average £100,000 each year for ABF The Soldiers Charity – anything you can give will go towards supporting soldiers, veterans and their families for life.



## The Menin Gate

Latest update. It will be 2022 hopefully!

- L - Listen to God's voice and reflect. Let go and let God.
- O - Obey his word and his teachings
- C - Call on Jesus' name and be calm.
- K - Know what is the purpose of all this.
- D - Dwell in his presence, do not panic.
- O - Offer a prayer for everyone's safety.
- W - Wait and be patient. This too shall pass.
- N - Nurture our personal relationship with him.

Are we better or worse after lockdown? We are all older! Do these resonate with anyone?

Old age is coming at a really bad time. When I was a child I thought "Nap Time" was a punishment. Now, as a grownup, it feels like a small vacation.

The biggest lie I tell myself is..."I don't need to write that down, I'll remember it."

I don't have grey hair; I have "wisdom highlights." I'm just very wise.

*Please join us for.....  
an open gathering  
for all those involved with pastoral  
care*



*“Lockdown”  
- care received and care given*

*An opportunity for  
sharing, support, remembering and  
resourcing*

**Saturday 30th October 2021  
Downham Market Methodist Church  
10.00 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.**

Agenda

- 10.00 Coffee and welcome
- 10.30 Opening devotions
- 10.45 – 12.30 – Our experiences of care during lockdown
- 12.30 Lunch (please bring packed lunch – tea and coffee provided)
- 13.30 – Feedback, questions and shared conversations
- 15.00 Closing devotions & Holy Communion

*(You will be welcome to join in for all or part of the day)*

*For further details and to book please contact Deacon Lynne on 01485  
540839*



*Circuit Carers' Weekend 2021 -  
Save the dates.....!*

Like so many other things, our Pastoral Carers' Days have had to be postponed because of the necessary restrictions caused by the pandemic – however I'm delighted to say that the next one is now planned for the end of October and will be part of a weekend to celebrate, and give thanks for, the work of all those involved in caring pastorally for the folk in (and connected with) our church communities around the circuit.

The **"Carers' Day"** will take place at **Downham Market Methodist Church** on **Saturday 30th October** and will be a chance for us to share our experiences of how we have been able to support one another during the difficult times of the last eighteen months or so, since Covid 19 changed the way we all live, worship and gather together as friends and family. There have been some heartwarming stories about care given and received and we look forward to hearing a few of these on the day. As well as looking back and reflecting, we shall also be sharing our hopes for the days ahead, and this will form the main part of our **Circuit Service** on **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October at 6.30 p.m. – to take place on Zoom.** This has become our pattern for Circuit Services but, as usual, we shall be providing printed orders of service for those who are unable to access the service online, so that as many folk as possible can be part of this.

Obviously we are "watching the data" and will wait to see how the Covid infection rates develop, to see whether we feel it will be safe enough to meet "in person" on the Saturday – but we are planning with optimism and we "travel in hope".....!

Meanwhile, please do take a look at the following flier for the Carers' Day, which gives details of the day's agenda – but if you would like to know more, or if you have any questions about the weekend, feel free to get in touch with me ([2tonges317@gmail.com](mailto:2tonges317@gmail.com) or by phone).

Every blessing!

Lynne

*Deacon Lynne*      01485 540839

# **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations of the opening of HILGAY CHAPEL**

**Open Day – 10a.m to 4p.m.**

**Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October**

**Why not join us for morning coffee,  
lunch or afternoon tea?**

- **Craft activities to try**
- **Church trail about the chapel &  
its history.**
- **Raffle**

## **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service**

**Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October at 3p.m.**

**Followed by an afternoon tea**

**Preacher: Revd Arthur**

**Windridge**

**A warm welcome awaits friends  
old and new of all ages!**

## Time Away

I believe all of us like the idea of time away.’ ‘Away’ has a sense of adventure for me. Now actually doing it is another thing. Depending on one’s personal constraints, considerable planning may be involved. In fact, that initial step, just saying to oneself, “I’m going to do this!” can be a big challenge.

On the sixth of October 2021, I will start my first sabbatical as a minister. Sabbatical is a break or change from a normal routine which means for me: not dealing with the duties and responsibilities of a minister and superintendent in our circuit.

I began my life as a minister in August of 2002 whilst I also began studying at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. However, my 2 small churches were some 80 miles south in Manchester, GA, which I typically only saw on the weekends.

It’s now 19 years later and I’m some 4,250 miles from where I started. Before ministry, a friend of mine gave me the novel, *The Book of God*, by Walter Wangerin, Jr, in which the author has used the bible as a basis and removed the typical book titles and chapters, verses numbers and duplicate entries to make a story about the people of God from start to finish, Genesis to Revelation. My reading this book was part of my calling to become a minister.

For my sabbatical I’m going to read the bible from end to beginning, i.e. from the book of Revelation to the book of Genesis, just a portion each day throughout my sabbatical, journaling at the end of each day. I’m looking forward to reconnecting and discovering what some of the things I know and what I missed some 20 years ago. I’ll let you know how things turn out in the New Year.

*Blessings and peace, Rev Robert*

We hope you return refreshed and full of energy and fully rejuvenated!!



# **West Norfolk Methodist Circuit Diary**

## **October 2021 onwards**

Saturday October 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Day at Hilgay 10-4u  
Sunday October 3<sup>rd</sup> 150th Anniversary Service and Tea at Hilgay 3pm

Saturday October 30<sup>th</sup> Carer's Day at Downham Market 10-3pm

Sunday October 31<sup>st</sup> Circuit Service via Zoom 6.30pm