

"SINGING THE FAITH " Number 8

**"God with us, Creator, Father, bringing everything to birth;
Mother of the whole creation, fire of stars and life of earth:
Down the countless years composing, from the earth's evolving night,
love's response to love, and forming mind and soul to seek your light."**

This is a modern hymn with a classic theme. It acknowledges God who is known to us as Creator, Redeemer and 'Life and Power', or Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each of the first three verses names a different person of the Trinity and reminds us that this God is 'with us', not way up in the clouds nor only in past history, but ever present here and now. The final verse highlights the paradox of God who is almighty and beyond our understanding but is also 'closest Friend' and our 'unfailing guide'. Alan Gaunt who wrote the words was born in Manchester in 1935. In 1958 he was ordained in Clitheroe into the Congregational ministry. As a congregational minister and then in the United Reformed Church he held pastorates in the North of England. All that time he was writing hymns. At his death in 2003 one of the tributes recorded "Alan was one of our deepest thinkers and finest poets." He was convinced that finding words to express faith should be difficult and demanding because the mystery that is God cannot be explained in words.

Two weeks after his ordination Alan was married; he and Winifred had a son and a daughter. He retired in 2000 to The Wirral where he had been the minister from 1974 to 1985.

This hymn is sung to a tune from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, known as "Ode to Joy". This is appropriate because he urged his people to 'give everything to God who made us' and to 'live always from joy.' **RD**

'Be still for the presence of the Lord, the Holy One, is here.'

When this tune is played before our preacher of the day leads us in worship, please take this time to be still and quiet and reflect. Thank you. It could be a time to turn in "Singing the Faith" to number 20 or to ponder the three aspects mentioned in the hymn - the presence of the Lord, the glory of the Lord and the power of the Lord.



**Church Stretton
Methodist Church**
In the Shropshire & Marches Circuit

A warm welcome
to you all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
If you are visitors we trust that your holiday will bring
you joy and refreshment of spirit. Please join us for
coffee & fellowship in the hall following this service.

All are welcome

This Week at Church

 **SUNDAY SERVICES**

27th SEPTEMBER 2026

10.30 am Rev Jeremy Dare

4th OCTOBER 2026

10.30 am Rev George Heinz

Holy Communion

TUESDAY 29th SEPTEMBER 2026

11.00 am Sandford Service – at the home

2.30 pm Church Study Group – in the church hall

WEDNESDAY 30th SEPTEMBER 2026

10 am to 12.00 Baby & Toddler Group – in church hall

2.30 pm – 4.00 pm "Cuppa & Chat" – in church hall

MINISTER

REV'D GEORGE HEINZ

Telephone: 07538480626

CHURCH WEBSITE

[www.churchstretton-
methodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.churchstretton-methodistchurch.org.uk)

**WE ARE ASKED TO PRAY
FOR THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE**

Janet E, Chris & Brian F, Sally & Chris F,
Carol & Chris G, Fiona & Tim G, Connie G,
Residents & Staff of Sandford Nursing Home,
Christine & Gerry R.

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our harvest last Sunday; the flowers, the service, the lunch and the gifts for the Shropshire Domestic Abuse Service. The gifts were gratefully received. **Sue**

STUDYING PHILIPPIANS

Rev George Heinz is leading a four-week course which began on Tuesday 15th September. The next session is next Tuesday September 27th at 2.30pm in our church hall, using the Bible Month material on St Paul's letter to the Philippians. All are invited to attend any of the sessions.

UNICEF STREET COLLECTION

The annual street collection for UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) will be on Saturday 10th October. Help would be much appreciated. If you are able to offer for one hour between 9am and noon please contact Pam or Ruth.

CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES FOR UKRAINE

Can you help fill two shoeboxes from our church please?

One for a boy aged 6 - 8 years and one for a girl aged 6 - 8 years.

Suggestions for contents: socks, children's jewellery, hair accessories, soft toys, dolls, puzzles, card games, bubbles, stickers, coloured pencils, colouring pads, sweets etc. All items to be new please. No guns or sharp objects.

Please place your contributions into the box marked 'For Ukraine' by Sunday November 1st.

If we receive more items than can fill two boxes then we will fill more!!

Please speak to Sue if there are any queries. Thank you.

**Items for the Church Notices for 4th October 2026 to cdgtorridon@aol.com
or 01694 328319. Thank you**

HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICE LAST SUNDAY

Last Sunday, our preacher, Joyce Evans, left some support paperwork at home, she wanted to read the following to us

Tread softly because you tread on farmers' dreams

Of what does a farmer dream?

In the UK.....of a rich harvest?

Of a good price for the crop, covering costs with something left over.

Of enough capital to see him through bad times.

Of security – for himself and his family.

Of a good, well-managed farm to pass on to his children, as his father passed it to him.

It may be easier to ask 'what does a farmer fear?'

Because fear of failure is ever-present!

Fear of too little rain – or too much.

Fear of rain or wind spoiling a good crop.

Fear of low prices for his produce, falling bank balances and overdraft refused.

Fear of sickness or injury – how will my family cope without me?

Fear of government legislation that makes it hard to keep the farm in the family.

And all these apply in the world-wide farming community – along with other fears.

Fear of total crop failure.

Fear of invasion of locusts, leaving just bare earth where there was a green field.

Fear of drought – lasting for months, not just a few weeks.

Fear of 'picky' buyers for the crop – refusal could mean disaster.

Fear of starvation: no rain, no grass, no cattle, no crop, no sales. Nothing for tomorrow.....and for the consumer?

Have you ever seen a supermarket with no food on its shelves?

Our food supply seems secure.

If the buyer does not like one farmer or country he can make a deal elsewhere.

And it is so easy for us, with our own 'dream' of cheap food, to tread on the dreams of others.

The prophet Isaiah expressed God's indignation when he spoke of 'grinding the face of the poor'(Isaiah ch.3 v.15)

Love for our neighbour can be expressed in treading very softly and carefully in the choice of food.

A wise choice may mean fewer food miles, Fair-Traded imports and a fair return for the primary producer wherever they may be.

An unwise choice can cause irreversible damage to God's world and farmers everywhere.

In buying food, 'Tread softly because you tread on farmers' dreams.