



# The Methodist Church

## THE GREEN SOCK



NEWS FROM THE SHROPSHIRE AND MARCHES CIRCUIT

### GUEST WRITER

This year after a long gap I have resumed sheep farming again (on a small scale) and it has struck me how things have changed over the years. Ewes are scanned to establish how many lambs they are carrying if any, various injections are available to protect them against different diseases and deficiencies as well as a myriad of licks which can boost colostrum quality, provide extra magnesium, calcium and even energy!

Another change is the introduction of so many continental breeds to improve confirmation of the animals for meat production pushing (Cont. pg.2)

## Pray without ceasing

ISSUE 23 APRIL-MAY 2017

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many of the older local breeds into the background, and then there is the close circuit cameras that save going out to check the flock so often and farmers can stay in the comfort of their homes until they are needed. Multi feeders can make rearing cade lambs easier and the adopting of multiple birth lambs onto singles or ewes who have lost their own lambs has become a real art form in itself.

Even though things have improved so much some things don't change. It still amazes me how sheep have this instinct to self-destruct in one form or another having released several or maybe the same one from pig netting fences, brambles and stopping them getting into the hay bales where they endeavour to pull them down on themselves. Fortunately they have not yet got into the meal tub and eaten themselves to death. Things such as ewes pushing their beds out during pregnancy, lambs dying inside their mothers before they are due, heads coming with no feet or feet coming with no head or the lamb coming backwards are the more unpleasant aspects of shepherding and add to the stress to both the farmer and sheep.

When a fatality did occur it came back to me how much it affects you as you analyse what you could have done differently to have avoided it, and the feeling of loss and hurt because they were in your care and you have let them down. Talking to others it is apparent that they have the same reaction to losses in their flock.

Having just been involved with a Lambing Service in our Cluster, because of the changes in the farming community to sheep farming being the main source of income on most farms, I have looked at John 10 1-16 where Jesus explains He is the Good Shepherd. I have realised how the people around Him would have understood what He meant in a way that many of us may not, as sheep were an integral part of their society and they understood the bond between the shepherd and their flock. Though things have advanced in our lives with vast improvements in medicines and technology, like the sheep we still have basic needs in our lives as those who Jesus was talking about, Hope, Faith and Love in Christ. Though we His Church need to keep up with progress in the world and help those who haven't found Christ in their lives, we also need to support each other in our life in Christ the "Good Shepherd", striving to be like shepherds not sheep.

**The Guest Writer for this issue is Local Preacher Wesley Morris.**

The views expressed in this publication are those of the individual writers and not necessarily representative of the Methodist Church.

## PRESIDENT OF CONFERENCE AND VICE- PRESIDENT VISIT THE CIRCUIT

### BAYSTON HILL - DISTRICT DAY

As part of the presidential visit, District Day entitled *Praying for a Change – Where Prayer, Holiness and Justice Meet*, provided an opportunity for people to attend conversations and workshops.



Revd. Neil Richardson and Revd. Roger Walton

A conversation with Methodist President of Conference Revd. Roger Walton and past President Revd. Neil Richardson considered, in light of predominant challenges churches currently face, the place of prayer in our desire for change and the kinds of changes we expect.

Stating their thoughts on what constitutes prayer, Revd. Richardson spoke of an openness before God in “love, trust and adoration”, an element of silence and also being God before others. Revd. Walton emphasised prayer’s conversational aspect and how going before God, an infinite opportunist who is interested in us, who hears and answers our prayers, with gratitude and honesty, entails an openness to change.

Stressing the urgency in addressing change, Revd. Walton established that questions of, What can change? (whether it is ourselves or the church,) and How God works in the world? would be posed.

Revd. Richardson felt that what is vitally necessary is seeing afresh God at work in the world. “When you look at the range of activity that some attribute to God....I wrestle with this and we all should and we do. The Bible, faith seems to tell us that God’s special sphere of operation (we need to remember that God is not a control freak God is a non-coercive God, that is fundamental to Christian faith,) is in the minds and hearts. That above all is where God works. God works from the inside outwards and the cross is the big instance of God working outwards from the heart of Jesus and his power, from the cross.”

Revd. Walton concurred, “(God) working within our hearts and into communities. Sometimes I think we see prayer as quite individualistic but in fact it is often in communities where God is working, in the heart of a community which is shaping the whole community.”

Asked about intervention and whether God acts in other ways in the world to change things other than through human lives, Revd. Richardson felt that the idea of God intervening can be a bit unhelpful and misleading as it leads inevitably to the question of what God is doing when he’s not intervening. “The Bible points us in a different direction. Jesus says in John’s Gospel, ‘My father is at work’ the implication being always at work, always and everywhere at work and that’s our starting point and I would say God’s intervention was supreme. A once for all intervention and that’s a pattern, so to speak, for every other intervention God ever made anywhere and everywhere.”



Revd. Walton, brought God’s choice to act into the discussion saying, “God’s freedom to act is always in relationship to our freedom as human beings, and so within our calling to exercise our freedom in line with God, draws us to a place of prayer, draws us to remodel ourselves on Christ and seek prayer, shapes us to be Christ-like. And therefore in a sense, God doesn’t override that. There’s a sense in which God doesn’t override what God has set in place.”

Drawing on a theme from David Wilkinson’s, *When I Pray What does God Do?* Revd. Walton introduced universal law. “One of the points he (Wilkinson) makes is that the laws of the universe are God’s creation and therefore sustained by God continually and therefore God’s activity is in maintaining and supporting the laws that God has made and we have discovered, in which we can exercise our freedom but he made for structure and creating things that will help renew the world or prolong it... And God sustains the laws of physics in which we then are called to exercise our freedom.”

He went on to explain that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and presently, buying into

Newtonian science has restricted human thought to a sphere where everything is calculable, or predictable hence the church has yet to catch up with more recent science such as quantum mechanics and the science of chaos where everything is unpredictable. Using as example a thrown cricket ball he suggests, that as the ball comes towards us, we can judge where it will land; it is predictable because we can see the trajectory *but* everything inside the cricket ball is unpredictable. Wilkinson argues firstly that, “We have so taken a Newtonian understanding of the way the world is that we’ve lost the possibility of seeing the other ways in which God might be at work, that are more hidden from our science theories”, and that “God may well work in the unpredictable aspects of the universe, because that safeguards our freedom but allows our spirit to be at work.” Revd. Richardson who hadn’t read the book, found the theories fascinating, suggesting we perhaps “rethink aspects of the Gospels in light of our developing understanding of science and faith.”

Expanding on his reading of the book Revd. Walton spoke of being captivated by a law governing the behaviour of electrons which dictates that once electrons meet they form a bond which, wherever they are in the universe is eternal and means they must again come together. Discussing this extraordinary relationship led to them sharing thoughts on the place of relationship in the church and how this impacts upon prayer and vice versa.

“In recent events one of the big problems that we have encountered is where folk don’t have a relationship. So, it’s possible that if you do not know people who are homeless or who go to a food bank to describe them as scroungers, or workshy, that’s the terminology and it’s possible because people don’t have a relationship. Now, Wesley’s view of the reason why the rich could be so dismissive of the poor is because they didn’t visit and they didn’t have relationship. We have seen over and over again, Rachel (Lampard) will confirm this too, that wherever we’ve gone in the country where people have opened relationship it transforms communities.”

“Relationship lies at the heart of prayer, our relationship with God, our relationship with each other, our relationship with creation, our relationship with the disconnect with righteousness, the unrighteousness and somehow in the mystery of prayer we’re being drawn deeper into relationships.”

Revd. Richardson concluded that progress and change will not occur without relationships with each other which emphasise the role of prayer. “If our hearts are not open to those people how can they be open to God? If the world is to change, the change has got to start with us...Christians who wait on the Lord and spend time waiting on the Lord by that activity, will become a subversive influence in the world, bringing God’s justice into the world.

## Local Preacher Susan Dutton Reflects on District Day Topics

Conference Vice-President Rachel Lampard and Keith Hebden Director of the Urban Theology Unit, looked at subject: “*How to be an Enchanted Activist*” Here are one or two interesting points I picked up on;



Jesus is a political figure and social justice, faith and holiness go hand in hand. So why after all these years of input and prayer is the world worse? It is easy to become disillusioned but that can sometimes be a good thing. Rachel got her enchantment from the great leaders in our Church, from Bible passages and the way God works through people.

We were reminded about those who are poor, not just that they have no money but many are maligned and voiceless. They need to lead on their own issues, not the issues others feel they should! A model for decision making therefore might include the experts but also those *experts with experience* to share wisdom. We may reply that in the Bible it says the poor will always be with you, but I had never thought it could mean because we are Christians we will always be with the poor, that is exactly where we should be. We were reminded that as we pray and worship we become more accustomed to mysticism and we need to take something of that mysticism out to others.

For the workshop led by Inderjit Bhogal entitled Prayer and Protest, an interesting starting point was the meaning of the word *protest* - to bear witness to that which you uphold. We looked at the model of the Lord's Prayer and Inderjit underlined three yearnings; your name, your kingdom and your will, and as we followed through the prayer we see these things are honoured where all have daily bread, where all debt is forgiven, where there is support and companionship for others and when there is a world free from violence, evil, war and waste. In such a world yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, Inderjit has had so much experience of being alongside people of other faiths and he has shared the Lord's Prayer with them. All religions can say it even though they may have a different understanding of your kingdom come. So we were urged to pray this prayer anywhere, anytime with anyone, it is about things that were important to Jesus and so must be important for us.

## ROGER WALTON WEIGHS UP HOW GOD FORMS US



President of Conference Revd. Roger Walton completed his visit to the District with an address to some of its clergy and lay workers at Trinity Methodist Chapel in Kidderminster. His seminar on *How God Forms Us* looked at how Christian maturity becomes visibly manifest in the character of Christ's followers.

Revd. Walton spoke of how researching and writing about discipleship, has deepened his understanding what being a disciple entails. In visiting many churches, he became aware of the prominence of small groups within some churches, new churches in particular, and some of the mainstream churches. Ruminating the assumption, "some churches have that if you're going to be formed as a disciple, as a follower of Jesus, that's going to happen in small groups," he found that it was true in some cases and not in others which led him to think about how God forms people.

A question in discipleship discourse is, *What does it look like to mature as a follower of Jesus?* Most of us carry in our heads a notion of what it means to be Christ like, what it means to be more mature as a Christian follower. It might be that you go to the scriptures that define the actual attributes, or it might be that there are particular people who we feel embody Christian maturity. Sometimes its qualities or virtues or practices, so there is no right answer on this. Mature Christian discipleship might: reflect and show all the Fruit of the Spirit, (this coming *naturally* without trying). Maturity could be about honesty; being honest with God. Maturity could be about age but does that question whether a person in their 20s could be a mature Christian? Maturity could be about responding to situations in a Christ-like manner or a mature Christian might be a person who sees the presence of God in the events of life.

Revd. Walton summarised maturity as:

Personal qualities - Fruit of the Spirit, the Beatitudes – empathy, a confident grasp of the faith. A firm trust in Christ.

Practices - of daily prayer, Bible study, a disciplined orientation to God and practising Christian values in everyday life. The ability to more easily discern the voice of God, amid all of life's chaos, to listen and to be still.

Gifts and service – A wanting to use their gifts. A deep recognition that the gifts that God has given us are never for us alone, they are always for relationship, for others. Recognising that these gifts are only realised in their fullness when used for God.

He offered insights into the way in which discipleship is expressed distinctively in each of the Gospels:

MARK – God forms us in Mission. *“Come follow me and I will make you...”*

MATTHEW – God forms us through education. *Every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.*

LUKE – God form us in Worship. Luke’s Gospel begins and ends in worship. *They were continually in the temple blessing God.*

JOHN – God forms us in community. *“I give you a new commandment that you love one another.”*

Rev. Walton recommended interpreting Jesus’ “Follow Me” as an invitation to transformation, with the assurance “I am going before you”.

He summarised the call to follow as four steps:

1) Jesus calls 2) Follow 3) Be changed 4) Let go.

**NORTH SHROPSHIRE METHODIST CHAPELS**



**MAESBROOK VILLAGE  
HALL (SY10 8QW)**

**COUNTRY  
CHORDS**

**FOLK NIGHT**



- ❖ **FOLK SINGERS/PLAYERS WELCOME EACH EVENING**
- ❖ **BRING YOUR OWN INSTRUMENT AND HAVE A GO!**
- ❖ **SIGN IN FOR A SLOT ON ARRIVAL**
- ❖ **BRING YOUR OWN, NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS**
- ❖ **FUNDS TO MAESBROOK CHAPEL**

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**APRIL 7<sup>TH</sup>**

**MAY 5<sup>TH</sup>**

**JUNE 2<sup>ND</sup>**

**JULY 7<sup>TH</sup>**

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**ACOUSTIC  
EVENINGS ONLY**

**7:30pm**

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## **Continuing the Conversation on the Future of the Circuit**

In the February-March Green Sock, Supernumerary Minister Revd. David B. Jones set out some sobering figures:

	1960's	2015
Circuits	15	1
Ministers	26 (+3 deaconesses)	12 (soon to be 11)
Membership	4867	1230

He wrote that whereas the Church (presumably the building) had formerly been at the centre of local communities, we (the actual Church, the body of Christ) have become disconnected from those around us. He urged that we should seek to find out their needs and then try to address them.

For me this is to ignore a more fundamental issue: since the 1960's 15 circuits have been reduced to one. At the same time as we have apparently been withdrawing from our communities, we have been consolidating the administrative/managerial functions. This is not unique to Shropshire, and has been happening elsewhere. In my mother's area over roughly the same period a number of chapels have been closed and congregations amalgamated, while their circuits have been combined into a new unit.

The classic management response to lack of resources, is to amalgamate into larger units which are supposed to be more efficient and economic, but which become impersonal, remote and eventually unmanageable. And the remedy seems to work: for a short time the fire blazes more brightly, but then starts to die down, so the impulse is to close a few more chapels and make the circuit bigger to compensate for lack of ministers, money and men and women at worship.

But just how far can this go? Is the remedy worse than the disease? Is the solution killing the patient? Einstein is supposed to have defined insanity as "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

When the current Circuit was proposed, it was to be the answer to all our problems, but we should be asking if it IS working, and if so who it is working for, whether there are alternative answers, and are we asking the right questions anyway? And a question that must be posed is "does the Circuit as currently structured have a future?" Will there come a time when lack of ministers and money (ours or maybe a neighbour's) will trigger the next amalgamation of Circuits into something even bigger?

This is not to denigrate the work of our Ministers but surely we pay our Ministers to MINISTER, not to manage, and a second classic mistake since the 1960's is that people who are good at their jobs, who have a real calling to some cause, teaching, social work, the Church, are shoe-horned into being managers, which may be something they are not fitted (or called) to. If we want the Circuit to function, then should the Superintendent Minister, and the Management be left to someone wholly qualified: a Managing Director appointment with the Super acting as Chairman of the Board? Perhaps we are no longer connected to our communities because we worship our Chapels, rather than IN our Chapels, but we also support structures which are supposed to support us. If we are to engage with local communities, then maybe we need to find new ways of doing things and new support structures. Is the Circuit the tombstone which will mark where Methodism is buried?

He said that we *urgently need to be making more new members* reminded readers of the challenge of Jesus to 'make disciples' and that we should *start thinking and praying now, and then put our thoughts, ideas and dreams into action for God's sake.*

**Mr Martin Bennett**

## LEOMINSTER CHAPEL HOST BREAKFAST CONVERSATION TO ADDRESS UK HUNGER

Leominster Methodist Church held a Breakfast Conversation in March where a group was established to support the End Hunger UK campaign, a national campaign sponsored by several charities including Child Poverty Action



Group and Church Action on Poverty. Over a cooked breakfast the group made up of participants from local churches of various

denominations, discussed the growing need for food banks in most of the towns and cities in the UK, why people in a developed society are going hungry and what the church can do to address this crisis. With members of the clergy and caring professions



being increasingly approached by people facing food and fuel poverty, due in many cases to what they consider the failings of the benefits system, particularly payment delays, an inflexible and harsh sanctions policy and long adjudication procedures, participants felt that the time has come to do more than provide food through food banks.

Rev. Jon Chesworth who chaired the discussion said, “The Breakfast Conversation was an opportunity to enjoy breakfast and talk about the serious issue of why people are going hungry, to listen to peoples’ stories and share experiences,” adding that he felt that the



Rev. Jon Chesworth

system set up to help poorer members of society is “not compassionate enough”. Myths about false benefit claimants were dispelled in a presentation which revealed that this accounts for under 1 percent of claims and that zero hours contracts were largely to blame for the desperate situation many, who are in work yet turn to food banks, find themselves in.



The presentation included first-hand accounts from people living with long-term reliance on food banks, a segment on a Church Action on Poverty initiative that provides meals for children during school holidays, a screening of the trailer for the film I, Daniel Blake and a brief overview of the Truth and Lies Report published by the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT).\*

Through the discussion which followed, the group identified a need for policy to deal specifically with poverty in rural areas. They decided to take practical steps including galvanising church members to lobby MPs, investigate where school holiday meals provision schemes can be established locally, develop fundraising initiatives and continue to meet as an ecumenical endeavour to support End Hunger UK. Prior to the Breakfast Conversation, Circuit Steward Andrea Sheppick made two videos featuring Revd. Jon Chesworth and Frances Biseker addressing food poverty. These can be viewed via these links:

<https://youtu.be/bBW5N3OyZRM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8N5hrE46h5E>

For more information visit:

[www.endhungeruk.org](http://www.endhungeruk.org)

[www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/truthandliesaboutpoverty](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/truthandliesaboutpoverty) \*

## David Boddy Considers The Nature and Purpose of Prayer



The nature and Purpose of Prayer

To be dead to sin but alive in Christ

Prayer is alien to our proud human nature. And yet somewhere, sometime, probably all of us reach the point of falling to our knees, bowing our heads fixing our attention on God and praying.

We may look both ways to be sure no one is watching, we may blush, but despite the foreigners of the activity, we pray. Why do we? it's almost as if it is part of our DNA. Is it a peace beyond understanding? Or to experience a deep longing to commune with God through prayer?

When people who have faced tragedy or trial, heart break or grief, failure or defeat, loneliness or discrimination, they often turn to God in prayer.

I asked my prayer group;

What happened when they prayed and poured out their hearts to God?

They told me:

It's as if God understood me,

He seemed to surround me with his presence

I felt comforted as if he actually cared for me.

The apostle Paul wrote these words to the Church at Philippi:

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God,

which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Phil 4:6-7)

The greatest fulfilment in prayer life has not been the many miraculous answered prayer I have received, although that has been wonderful. The greatest blessing to me is that I have a deeper and more meaning full relationship with God.

Every morning for a good hour or more I do business with God. The Holy Spirit is leading me to learn more about prayer and about what God would have me pay about, it is like embarking upon a wonderful adventure not actually knowing where he would have me go. You see it's all about trusting, yes trusting in God, a confidence, a peace, relief of all our cares and anxieties.

For me God pours out his power upon me when I pray, situations are changed people are moved of God. From the feedback forms I receive more than most say that they feel God moving and being touched by God when I pray.

I read in the scriptures that God is ready willing and able to answer the prayers of his followers.

God's power can change circumstances and relationships.

It can help us face life's daily struggles.

Can heal psychological and physical problems,  
remove relationship difficulties in marriage and financial problems.

God wants to meet our needs if only we would ask God in prayer. I am convinced to my very core that God wants to make a difference in my life and in the lives of every believer who trusts that Jesus Christ died on the Cross of Calvary and was raised to life on the third day that we might live a life worthy of that calling upon our lives.

It boils down to this, if we are willing to invite God to involve himself into our daily challenges we will experience his power at work in every aspect of our lives being worked out to glorify the risen saviour.

The answer may be in the form of wisdom an idea so desperately needed at a crucial moment in time, or confidence, a perseverance, maybe a change in

attitude towards a particular person, or a change of circumstances.

I believe Gods power is released through the lives of people who pray.

Prayer is the key to unlocking Gods Holy Spirits power in our lives, not making us conform to the patterns of this world any longer, but be being transformed into that likeness of Jesus Christ. (Romans 12:2).

I know that God answers prayer, I do know he wants to hear my prayers.

The adventure of prayer begins for me, with a willingness to listen to God. I set aside time every day for God to do business with me. In Psalm 46:10 it says be still and know that I am God.

To be still - What do I mean by still?

Being alone with God - Not allowing the world to crash in on that time with God.

We do lead such busy lives, yes! But we can still set aside time each and every day to be alone with God. John Wesley got up each morning at 4.30am to spend time in prayer before God, and yes, it is a discipline.

If we are to be that true reflection of Jesus Christ, we are to spend time with God in prayer and quite meditation, just as Jesus did.

Yes, there is a cost, a price to pay, but to encounter his loving grace and mercy, cleansing away all the dross of this world, lifting us up from a place of darkness into his light, **what a beautiful place to be, alone with God.**

Local Preacher on Trial  
David Boddy



## OSWESTRY CHAPEL BAPTISM

The baptism of two year-old Dorothy Appleby at Prees-Green in March was attended by around sixty people with at least twenty of the being children. The occasion was made all the more special due to the contribution made by her elder siblings, Sam, Henry, Alfred and Bertie. The four brothers read an acrostic about their only sister which was described by Revd. Heather Wilson who conducted the service as “very real and extremely funny.” Dorothy’s maternal grandmother Mrs. Chris Downes contributed her rendition of a poem entitled *The Things We’ve Handed Down*. The particularly fitting lectionary reading that Sunday was John 3:16, on which Revd. Wilson based a simple message that younger congregants were able to embrace.



**The Appleby family: brothers Bertie, Alfred, Henry Sam, parents Sarah and Paul with Dorothy just visible in between**

We sang, *'He's Got the Whole World in his Hands'* with the actions included. And we finished with *'Give Me Joy in my Heart'*. We closed the hymn books and waved our arms to the chorus, 'Sing Hosanna. Sing Hosanna. Sing Hosanna to the King of kings.' Revd. Wilson commented, “It was really moving. Chris Jones played the organ expertly and everyone sang with enthusiasm.”

With the newly completed refurbishments to the church, the space “was very inviting having just been painted from top to bottom” Revd Wilson said, adding “Literally, the scaffolding had just been removed and debris cleaned up the day before.” She praised Prees-Green members for the warm welcome they extended to their numerous guests.

The parents of Paul Appleby, (Dorothy Appleby’s father), Lance and Lucy Appleby of Abbey Farm, regularly attended Prees Green Chapel.



## Bayston Hill Ecumenical Lunch



At Bayston Hill we host a village lunch in alternate months with Christ Church, our Anglican neighbours.

Around forty people enjoy a cooked lunch followed by a short service.

This is very much appreciated by both diners and kitchen staff.

**Thelma Eccelshall**



## St. Mark's Coventry Update

Demolition has begun inside the building to get rid of all false ceilings and partitions put in when it was used by the National Health Service.

Three *Kingdom Come* prayer meetings have taken place and have been encouraging. Prayer and worship is the engine room of the church and there is a sense that God is going to bring what is dead to life.

Tom Eagles has been appointed as curate and will arrive with his wife, Charlotte, and two young boys. They are passionate about building community within the church and beyond.

Phil has been interviewed on Radio Coventry and that has generated a lot of interest.

The project was featured on Midlands Today largely homing in on a mural that has been rediscovered. It is a 40 foot wall painting called The Ascension, by renowned German artist Hans Feibusch.

**Susan Dutton**

# WHEN THE LIGHTS WENT OUT AT BISHOP'S CASTLE

## Let there be light.....a piece of doggerel

The wind is blowing, the rain is pouring, and here comes the W.I.  
The atmosphere's buzzing, the tables are laden,  
With cakes, competitions, crafts, bring and buy.

The speaker arrives, laden with baskets. The room's full and all  
welcomed in.

The business completed, the maker of baskets  
Now takes to the floor, the talk will begin.

Bang! What is happening? Must be a problem! Oh no, all the lights  
have gone out.

It could be the trip switch. A torch in my pocket,  
Just need to find it, we'll soon sort this out.

The coats go flying, where is the pocket? Rummage through coats,  
several deep.

Oh - trip's not the problem, it's help that is needed.  
Quick, flash the torch! Electrician is out in the street.

He's heading for football, makes a diversion, and to the rescue he  
comes.

An end to the darkness, the panic is over  
All eyes on the speaker, the meeting resumes.

That's Bishop's Castle, helping each other -what a community needs.  
Thanks for our Hall, providing a venue  
For worship, for meetings, activities all week.

So long may our church continue to be.

Pat Morrison , Steward, Bishop's Castle Chapel

## MWiB Spend the Day Baking at House of Bread



Modelled on a concept originating in Liverpool by a man who, with a heart for the local poor, decided that baking bread with them would provide them with both food and fellowship, House of Bread (HOB) Stafford was established in 2010. Today, as well as providing over a hundred hot meals each Wednesday, operating a Food Bank, a Clothes Bank,

Café and a range of activities for people who rely on their services, every Friday they host Bread Church. In February, the District's Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB) were guests at a corporate Bread Church workshop.



Jack Morris, son of House of Bread director William Morris, works with the charity managing such areas as the Food Bank and social media. He explained, "Bread Church is where people come along and make two loaves of bread one to keep and one to give away and it's all from scratch. You weigh out your flour, you put your salt in and your yeast in and then you hopefully have great fun kneading."

MWiB District President Liz Moore was inspired to add the Bread Church workshop to her slate of presidential events when one year her husband returned from Synod with two loaves of bread. "I was taken with it. I thought that would be a lovely thing to use for the MWiB as one of our events to bring people together from across the District. Each president has different ideas and works in different ways and I thought this was a different way of worship." Liz said. Anticipating that all the bread couldn't be made in one go, Liz ensured other activities, including a list of Biblical questions based on bread, a bread-making word search and some adult colouring sheets about bread were available to people as they waited their turn to make dough, which thanks to the HOB team's organised system was not too long in coming. With up to thirty attendees (the MWiB number was closer to sixty,)



and a single small oven, the Bread Church atmosphere can seem somewhat chaotic, Jack informed however that years of experience mean the baking process is fairly fine-tuned.

Operating from Rising Brook Methodist Church and a nearby building the staff and volunteers call "Browning Street", House of Bread activities which are funded principally through donations, attract a variety of people. "We have homeless people coming along, people of all ages, young children love it. We have people come who can't use all of their limbs. We make it as accessible as possible for everybody so it's fantastic." Jack told the *Green Sock*.



**MWiB District President Liz Moore with Members of the House of Bread team**

House of Bread staff and volunteers engage in numerous fundraising schemes. Adult Caseworker Cathryn, who has volunteered with the charity for a year, explained the ethos. "We tend not to rely on the government as we don't see that as a sustainable resource. Also it just gives us more free will to do what we want with the funds we raise from, for example the charity dinner we have coming up and an auction, so it's all run by the community for the community."

The majority of the House of Bread core team are church goers though many of volunteers are not. "That's fine. We accept anyone and everyone to come along and if they want to volunteer and give us some time that's lovely," Cathryn said. The input of volunteers allows Bread Church to take place continuously throughout the year, with the soup, bread and scones that comprise the meal, which might be the only hot meal an attendee has that week, being all freshly made on the premises.

As part of the afternoon's worship, House of Bread General Manager Lisa Pryce talked on the growth of their ministry which through making bread is touching lives physically, mentally and due to their Bible Study which is well attended by non-church goers, spiritually.

## **News From the METHODIST CHURCH OF GREAT BRITAIN**

### **MCIB in Post EU Conversations**

**JPIT churches are inviting their congregations to take part in discussions across the UK to explore what kind of society we should be seeking to create.**

At a time when the UK is moving towards exiting the EU, there is naturally uncertainty about what our future as a country will look like, whichever way people voted in the referendum. Churches are being invited to take part in constructive conversations about the sort of society we would wish to live in, and hope to leave to future generations. Talking about things where people disagree can be difficult, so a pack - "Conversation Welcome" - has been provided to help. The conversations will be held by local Baptist, Methodist, United Reformed and Church of Scotland churches. They are being promoted by the Joint Public Issues Team, through which the four Churches work together on issues of justice and inequality.

The resource pack is available at:

<http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/eu-referendum/conversationwelcome/>

### **METHODIST YOUTH REQUEST MENTAL HEALTH GUIDANCE**

**Mental health and the pressures of school life are among the topics that young Methodists have told the Church they would like support and guidance with.**

Following 3Generate, attended by more than 500 young people, three manifestos have been produced that highlight the issues concerning young people in the Methodist Church today. Other issues raised include poverty, the refugee crisis and the positive tackling of extremism. The manifestos will be presented to the 2017 Methodist Conference, taking place in Birmingham in June.

Tim Annan, Youth President of the Methodist Church commented: "Young people are an integral part of the Church today and these are the issues they are talking about which are affecting us as Methodist people now. The church has an important job in helping people grow in their faith and to provide the support that we all need to explore and discuss these issues from a Christian and a Methodist perspective."

Penny Fuller, Church and Community Development Co-ordinator, commented: "The world can be a very difficult place for people of all ages to navigate, especially at the moment. Young people don't just want to understand the world; they want to take an active role in seeking solutions to its problems."

**BROCKTON CHAPEL APRIL 2017**

St Paul says 'Instead of doing what I know is right, I do wrong...  
Who will rescue me...  
Thank God! Jesus Christ will rescue me.'  
*from Romans chapter 7 verses 18-25*

**SUNDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> APRIL**  
 'Deliver us from evil' ...  
 ...the ultimate peace plan  
**3.30pm ACTIVITIES**  
 Design & make an Easter pizza, make a symbols zip-pull  
 then choose from a selection of Easter crafts.

**4.15pm SERVICE**  
 Led by Kathryn & including 'magic cross-tear-a-prayer'  
*If you don't want to come to the activities feel free to join us for the Service.*

**5pm EASTER FOOD**  
*Messy Church is for EVERYONE, whatever age you are!*

**You are also invited to:**

**Jan 28<sup>th</sup> April at 6pm - Mrs. Helen Pearson**  
 Helen was a teacher at the Community College for many years.

**Jan 7<sup>th</sup> May at 6pm - Rev Hazel Rataffie**  
 Communion Service

**Jan 14<sup>th</sup> May at 3.30pm - Messy Church**

This is how much God loved the world:  
 He gave his Son, so that no one need be destroyed.  
 By believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life.  
 God didn't go to all the trouble of sending his Son  
 merely to point an accusing finger,  
 telling the world how bad it was,  
 He came to help, to put the world right again.  
*John chapter 3 verses 16-17*

*More information about anything on this leaflet  
 from Michael & Elisabeth Knight-680285-chapelhouse@uwclub.net*

**PREES GREEN  
 Methodist  
 Church  
 TRADITIONAL  
 CREAM TEAS**

**Sunday 14 May  
 Sunday 18 June  
 Sunday 23 July**

**2 - 4:30pm**

**With**

**Bring and Buy  
 of cakes, plants  
 and produce  
 contact**

**June Jackson on  
 01948 840 239**

**Every one invited  
 to a really lovely  
 time of fellowship**

**“Therefore if anyone  
 is in Christ he is a  
 new creature...”**

**2 Cor. 5:17**

**WANT TO SHARE A STORY?  
 A TESTIMONY?  
 PUBLICISE AN EVENT?  
 OR WRITE A REVIEW?  
 POEMS,  
 PRAYERS,  
 ANECDOTES...**

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU  
 Contact:  
 media.smcircuit@gmail.com**

**Email items for JUN/JULY issue to: media.smcircuit@gmail.com by 20/05/17**

SHROPSHIRE & MARCHES METHODIST  
CIRCUIT

**EASTER OFFERING  
DEDICATION  
SERVICE**

AT

**BAYSTON HILL  
METHODIST CHURCH**

ON

**FRIDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017  
2.30pm**

ALL WELCOME

**KINGSLAND COMMUNITY  
GARDEN COFFEE MORNING**

**SATURDAY 29th APRIL**

**10 –12am**

**KINGSLAND METHODIST CHURCH**

**North Road**

**Refreshments and stalls**

**Pant Methodist Chapel  
Service on Sunday 4th June  
With Ellesmere Vintage Band**

**Wem Junior Church  
Campout 9th– 11th June**

For info contact Felicia or Andrew  
Dutton: [fdutton@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fdutton@hotmail.co.uk)



**Be the change**  
Holiness and Justice

**9-11 June 2017**

Cliff College, Calver,  
Derbyshire

For information and booking visit:

[www.methodist.org.uk/connectingdisciples](http://www.methodist.org.uk/connectingdisciples)

**All ladies are invited to a  
MWiB Circuit Lunch**

 **Friday June 9th  
Bayston Hill Methodist  
Centre SY3 0HZ**

**12.30 for 1.00pm  
cost £5**

*Afternoon Speaker,  
Margaret Gardner  
"Over the teacups"*

*There will be tea and cake to close the afternoon!  
Please book your place.*

Thelma on **01743 235941**  
or  
Dilys on **01743 366218**



**Bring and Buy table for MWiB funds**

**COMING EVENTS:**

**APRIL**

**7 FILLING STATION Newcastle, Clun**  
7:15pm

**7 COUNTRY CHORDS Maesbrook**  
**Chapel** 7:30pm pg. 8

**12 PUBLIC READING OF ST. MARK'S GOSPEL**  
**Sun Inn, High Street, Clun** 7:15pm

**29 COMMUNITY GARDEN COFFEE**  
**MORNING Kingsland Chapel** 10am-  
12:00 pg. 23

**MAY**

**5 EASTER OFFERING SERVICE Bayston**  
**Hill** 2:30pm pg. 23

**5 COUNTRY CHORDS Maesbrook**  
**Chapel** 7:30pm pg. 8

**14 CREAM TEAS Prees Green** 2-4:30pm  
pg.23

**25 MWiB QUIET DAY Rock Village,**  
**Kidderminster (DY14 9SD)** 10:30am

**MWiB**



**DISTRICT QUIET DAY**

THE SONGS OF  
OUR SISTERS

LED BY REV. DENISE WILLIAMSON

THURSDAY 25TH MAY 2017

10:30am TO 3:30pm

ROCK VILLAGE HALL

PORCHBROOK ROAD, ROCK NEAR  
KIDDERMINSTER (DY14 9SD)

£5 . Please bring and share lunch

**27 SMALL SPACES THEATRE CO.** *My*  
*Dearest Kate*, **Kingsland Chapel** 7:30pm

**25 - JUNE 4 THY KINGDOM COME PRAYER**



**JUNE**

**2 COUNTRY CHORDS Maesbrook**  
**Chapel** 7:30pm pg. 8

**4 ELLESMERE VINTAGE BAND Pant**  
**Chapel** pg. 23

**9 MWiB CIRCUIT LUNCH Bayston Hill**  
**Chapel** 12:30pm pg.23

**9-11 WEM JUNIOR CAMP OUT**  
**Marton House** pg. 23

**9-11 CONNECTING DISCIPLES Cliff**  
**College** Pg. 23

**17- 18 BELLE VUE ARTS FESTIVAL**  
**Belle Vue Chapel** 12-4pm

**18 CREAM TEAS Prees Green**  
2-4:30pm pg.23

**JULY**

**7 COUNTRY CHORDS Maesbrook Chapel**  
7:30pm pg. 8

**23 CREAM TEAS Prees Green** 2-4:30pm  
pg.23

PLEASE FORWARD DETAILS OF FUTURE EVENTS  
TO: [media.smcircuit@gmail.com](mailto:media.smcircuit@gmail.com) if you would  
like them advertised on the Circuit Facebook  
pages or website.

For full details of services across the Circuit,  
please consult the Circuit Plan or contact  
individual churches directly.

Contact us: [media.smcircuit@gmail.com](mailto:media.smcircuit@gmail.com) or 01588 630 769