



The Link



The Magazine of

Marshside Road Methodist Church Southport

www.marshside-methodist-southport.org.uk



**Marshside Road
Methodist Church**

Worship
Fellowship
Nurture

Fulfilling God's vision in the local Community

Priceless, but donations gratefully received

December 2015/January 2016

*Advent at Marshside Road
Methodist Church*

December 12th
Christmas Messy Church 4.00pm

December 13th
Traditional Carol Service 4.00pm

December 20th
Nativity Service 10.30am

Christmas Eve
Communion Service 11.30pm

Christmas Day
Family Service 11.00am

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The hopes and fears
Of all the years
Are met in thee tonight."
O Little Town of Bethlehem

Come and join the celebration.....

Letter from the Secretary of the Methodist Conference

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

A question asked around the year 365 continues to challenge us in every aspect of our ministry. 'Christians, where is your hope?' (Hilary of Poitiers Commentary on the Psalms 118:15,7). This is a question to be asked not simply as we begin the season of Advent, although certainly it has a place in our Advent devotions. Rather the question is posed as we, engaged in representative ministry, strive to offer the love and mercy of a creator God revealed in Christ to a world that is not always very easy to make sense of. The streets of Paris, the desolation of Aleppo, and the inhumanity of camps in Calais, each require of us some message of hope. Our daily responsibilities are no less demanding as we seek to articulate the Gospel by offering credible and hope filled words and acts to the situations of poverty and neglect that are very near to our door steps. However, there is more because those occasions and places where apparent success is close to the surface may equally require the challenge of what it is to live hopefully. That is, to really live with hope.

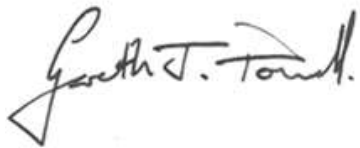
To live hopefully, to be hope filled, requires a good deal of effort and energy. The whole sweep of our inheritance makes that very clear. Even a passing observation of our history should help us to remember that as we establish and reform communities of hope so we need to be confident and we need to be able to see beyond that which is most obvious. Lifting our sights above the things which, if we are honest, can easily become rather tedious is not a denial of a given situation. Lifting our sights a little higher is to trace the promise of God's love which is always just that little bit further ahead of us than we are sometimes willing to acknowledge. The joy of our ministry, even when immersed in the least glamorous aspects of service, is that we act in hope and we act in order to build communities of hope. More than that, we live by hope. Belief in God does not ask of us to decide if we have a glass half full or half empty approach to our ministry. No amount of positive thinking (or grace for that matter) will alter the amount of liquid in the glass.

Manger, cross, tomb, bread and wine speak to us of a hope that is very much more than optimism or the vague notion that somehow we can make things better if only we try very hard. Manger, cross, tomb, bread and wine are one in that they mark the location of love, for where God is love is. That is both a simple and a hard message to proclaim, but proclaim is all we can do in the face of terror, hatred and disinterest.

‘Christians, where is your hope?’ Do not sisters and brothers lose heart. We reply, ‘Here’, because Christ Jesus is our hope and in Christ we have deep wells upon which to draw, living and celebrating the story of redemption and salvation. The reminder of St Augustine of Hippo that ‘Only hope makes us Christians’ (The City of God 6.9.5) is a truth we must hold to. Each of us in the very particular context of our ministry has to work at articulating what this hope means. I can only ever start that from the absolute conviction that God has called us and continues to bless us. Therefore, we live in such a way that as a hope-filled people we are alert to the reality of transformation.

We keep each other in our prayers and press on in our careful, hope-filled living.

May you know God’s grace in our common ministry,



Gareth J Powell

Secretary of the Conference

Melissa’s Thought for the Month – December 2015

Usually I am writing my “Thought” around a week before the deadline date. This month it is already the day immediately before! The news of the deadly bombing in Paris is of so much concern that I felt it necessary to wait for the latest news today, both in the paper and on the TV.

The image in my mind is of that suicide bomber standing trying to be sure that he chooses the exactly right moment to cause the explosion. The idea was clearly to produce the greatest possible damage and fear. A terrorist knows that people who are afraid are often unwise in their reactions. They may panic themselves or create panic among others. We do not know whether he was acting alone or was part of a group of extremists.

If you read this last week’s Southport Visiter (November 19th); you may have been struck as I was by Canon Garner’s article on the “ongoing battle” of good versus evil. Incidentally I always let him have a copy of The Link because when I used to go to Kim’s for coffee nearly every day, we used to meet there and talk pretty often. This time I put a note on his copy saying that I should mention it in this issue.

If anyone has claimed responsibility for the Paris bombs it is the group called ISIS. Is that a part of the “Islamic State” movement? If so it certainly does not point the finger at the problems as such.

Their faith is, I believe, in “There is no God but Allah and Mohammad is the Prophet”. It is clearly very much in parallel with our “We believe in one God and Jesus, His son is one with Him”. After all Jesus said during his earthly life “I and the Father are One, he who has seen me has seen the Father”. This may be in parallel but of course it goes very much further.

Jesus also referred to His kingdom. He added, though, “They Kingdom is not of this world or else my Servants would fight”. The only fight to which we are committed is the fight against evil in ourselves.

None of us is perfect and everyone of us has temptations not to fight it “with all our might”. Perhaps for many of us part of that fight is against complacency – “I’m alright Jack!”

One Christmas picture which I recollect is of Baby Jesus playing with a wooden cross. Did the carpenter, Joseph, make it for Him?

When troubles come at Christmas time it seems somehow “wrong” – but is it.

Happy Christmas everybody.

Melissa.

Christmas Fair 2015

Thank you so much to everyone who helped with and supported the Christmas Fair on 28th November. It was a really happy occasion and there have been so many comments about how much the event was enjoyed.

We were very grateful to the children and staff of Marshside School for coming along to sing for us at the opening. They were lovely and got us off to a wonderful start. Thank you so much to Sam Owen who kept the Christmas atmosphere going by playing carols on his violin. It must have taken quite a bit of courage to stand there on his own serenading us so beautifully but with talent like that, he can afford to be confident!

A special thanks must go to ‘the man in red’ who came out of retirement at the last minute to help us out. We were so grateful to you George. Hopefully next year you can go back into retirement. You were certainly kept busy this year though. Lovely to see so many families with children waiting to pay you a visit.

Many thanks to all who came along on Friday evening to set up. It was a brilliant turnout. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard on the day, on the stalls, in the kitchen or behind the scenes to make the event such a success and thank you to all who stayed behind to clear up afterwards. Thank you especially to stall holders who took responsibility for taking away left over items meaning the store room did not become filled up again.

The incredible amount raised was as follows:-

Cash taken on the day (including the quiz)	£1175.57
Donation from Thought for the Day	£450.00
Anonymous donation	£624.21
Extra donation	£5.00
Proceeds from the Brunch (14th November)	£126.26
Total	£2381.04
Less Champion Advert	£18.00
Nett total	£2363.04

NB All other expenses deducted before cash being recorded.

Thank you to everyone on behalf of the church.

Joyce Smith & Dorothy Simpkin

Next Issue

The next edition of **The Link** will be published on the **Sunday the 31st of January 2016**. Therefore, items for inclusion in the next edition need to reach me by **Sunday the 24th of January**. Thanks, Mike (MikeOwen10@aol.com)

It's a cracker.

Why did Santa's helper see the doctor? Because he had a low "elf" esteem!

What happened to the man who stole an Advent Calendar? He got 25 days!

What kind of motorbike does Santa ride? A Holly Davidson!

What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck? A Christmas Quacker!

What is the best Christmas present in the world? A broken drum, you just can't beat it!

How did Scrooge win the football game? The ghost of Christmas passed!

Who is Santa's favorite singer? Elf-is Presley!

What do Santa's little helpers learn at school? The elf-abet!

What did Santa say to the smoker? Please don't smoke, it's bad for my elf!

Marshside Road Methodist Church, Southport, PR9 9TL

www.marshside-methodist-southport.org.uk

Ministers : Revd. Jan Fraser

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Email : revjanfraser@hotmail.co.uk

Sunday Services

09:00 am.	Holy Communion – first Sunday of each Month
10:30 am.	Morning Worship – including Crèche, J Team and Teenscene
18:30 am.	Evening Fellowship – see Weekly Notices

Weekly Programme

Day	Meeting	Time	Contact
Monday	Parent, Carer & Toddler Group	09:15 – 11:45	Mrs Margaret Boston (211548)
	Preschool	09:15 – 11:45	Mrs Mai-Ling Duckworth (509944)
	Playgroup	12:50 – 14:45	Mrs Mai-Ling Duckworth (509944)
	Monday Evening Fellowship	20:00 –	Mrs Joan Owen (220436)
Tuesday	Preschool	09:15 – 11:45	Mrs Mai-Ling Duckworth (509944)
	Playgroup	12:50 – 14:45	Mrs Mai-Ling Duckworth (509944)
	Bible Study Fellowship	10:45 –	Mrs Dorothy Taylor (211643)
	Prayer Fellowship	19:00 – 20:00	Mrs Pat Wright (213647)
	Knit & Craft Club, see website for details	13:00 – 16:00	Mrs Dorothy Mitchell (228430)
Wednesday	Preschool	09:15 – 11:45	Mrs Mai-Ling Duckworth (509944)
	Boys' Brigade & Girls' Brigade	18:30 – 21:30	Mrs Kay Owen (225126) Miss Heather Jackson (532977)
	Wednesday Group - every 4 th Wednesday		Mrs Sheila Jones (227661)
Thursday	Preschool	09:15 – 11:45	Mrs Mai-Ling Duckworth (509944)
	Thought for the Day	10:15 –	Mr George Phillips (514795)
	Playgroup	12:50 – 14:45	Mrs Mai-Ling Duckworth (509944)
	Choir Practice	19:30 – 21:00	Mr Glenn Howard (840485)
Friday	Preschool	09:15 – 11:45	Mrs Mai-Ling Duckworth (509944)
	Chris Wright's School of Dance & Drama	16:00 – 19:15	Miss Alison Wright (0773 4305348)
Saturday	Chris Wright's School of Dance & Drama	09:15 – 15:00	Miss Alison Wright (0773 4305348)
	Monthly Messy Church (see Website)	16:00 – 18:00	See the Church Website for details
Other Contacts :	Church Notices		Mrs Dorothy Simpkin (229987)
	Cradle Roll		Mrs Margaret Boston (211548)
	Magazine/Website Editor		Mr Mike Owen (225126)
	Action for Children Co-ordinator		Mrs Dorothy Taylor (211643)
	Pastoral Committee		Mrs Joan Owen (220436)
	Premises Letting Officer		Mr David Goldson (514390)
	World Missions		Mrs Lin Mayor (212059)

Disclaimer :

The views and opinions expressed in this Church Magazine are solely those of the author of the individual article and not necessarily the views of the Church, Leadership Team or Minister.