



# The Link



The Magazine of

**Marshside Road Methodist Church Southport**

[www.marshside-methodist-southport.org.uk](http://www.marshside-methodist-southport.org.uk)



Priceless, but donations gratefully received

March 2017



**Our Mission? To Bring Joy to the World!  
(Monday Evening Fellowship's Christmas Shoe Box Appeal)**

Dear Friends,

At the last Church Council it was agreed to create more space in the Church for people in wheelchairs and their carers, mothers and babies in pushchairs and people who prefer to sit in a seat rather than a pew.

To enable this to be achieved, it was agreed to remove the pews that face inwards on either side of the Church. This will allow the current children's area to be expanded and the area around the piano to hold more chairs for people to sit comfortably, next to people in wheelchairs/babies in pushchairs etc, without feeling conspicuous or "in the way".

A working party is being arranged to work at removing the pews. The work will commence on Monday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April and will hopefully last no more than 3 days.

If you would like to help with the removal of the pews then please speak to Stan Rimmer.

Also at Church Council there was a lengthy conversation on the use of Facebook, Twitter and other forms for Social Media to hold discussions regarding Church matters and how to limit their impact on the Church life.

It was agreed to publish a Code of Practice which can be applied to Social Media. The Code of Practice is to be used in conjunction with the Church's Social Media policy that was published last year and republished (in part) in this edition of The Link.

To prevent discussions from escalating into public disagreements that reflect negatively on the Church, any negative views will result in the following Code of Practice being posted in response and it is hoped that the next step would be for the poster to contact a member of the Leadership Team to discuss their concerns in person.

**"It is the policy of Marshside Road Methodist Church not to respond to any negative personal views and would encourage you to contact the Leadership Team in person."**

Thanks,

**The Leadership Team**

# **Policy for members and friends of Marshside Road Church on the use of Social Media**

## **Introduction**

Social networking through the use of Internet based and other electronic social media tools is integrated into everyday life. Use of Facebook, LinkedIn, Blogging, Wikis and other social media vehicles are common place.

The lines between work, social life and what happens in church, can become blurred. Generally what people do in their own time is a personal decision. However actions that are deliberately damaging or hurtful to the Church, or to an individual or group within it, or that bring the Church into disrepute are already potentially disciplinary matters, whether they are carried out online or not.

## **Matter of Trust**

Methodist discipline relies on trust, these guidelines therefore as far as possible trust in people's common sense.

- Social media do not change our understanding of confidentiality or what is or is not acceptable to say. The Church expects all involved to respect confidences when they are included in them. Similarly, something that would be unacceptable to print in a newsletter or the letters pages of the Recorder – for example – would be unacceptable to publish online.
- Increasingly, people with an existing personal online presence are assuming paid or voluntary roles within the Church. The Church cannot expect that all of this is consistent with what we would want to say on any given topic. How people reconcile their past online writings with their role in the Church is for them and their line manager or other person to whom they are accountable in the first instance.
- These guidelines should not limit or prevent constructive debate or discussion through social media. People should be free to engage in discussions and debates within and beyond the Church on any topic, but should also remember their responsibilities to the Church or to any bodies they are members of when they do so. There is a wide range of opinion within the Church on some topics, and one of the attractive features about Methodism is our ability to disagree constructively.
- There is a fine line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour online, and this line will move with time. One of the benefits of a healthy online community is that it is this community that provides the best guidance to others and to itself. The aim of the Church should therefore be to foster healthy and active online and social media.

The core summary of being responsible, respectful and good representatives of the Church remains.

### **Benefits to the Methodist Church**

The rise of social media has considerable potential benefits to the Church.

- It can allow us to: spread our messages through our own social media sites; enable a sense of connectedness across the Connexion; and encourage collaborative working amongst people in different parts of the Connexion or even the world. It also enables us to listen to and participate in online “conversations” that might provide a stronger sense of what really matters to the Church or to groups within it.
- Social media are also increasingly the way that young people choose to communicate, or even expect to communicate. For all groups, when well used, social media and other electronic communications can act as levellers – all can participate more equally, regardless of their position in society or the church, their geographical location or any disabilities.

### **Risks to the Methodist Church**

There are also multiple risks and the major ones include:

- A member of staff, other employee or someone clearly linked to the Church (e.g. a minister) posts something online that is illegal, defamatory, offensive or otherwise damaging to the Church, its reputation or relationships within it or with partners
- Confidential information is disclosed, accidentally or deliberately
- An individual within the Church posts comments about colleagues, managers or others that are serious enough to warrant investigation or possible disciplinary action.
- Decisions made by governance bodies are undermined or disrespected through continued argument online.
- The speed of electronic communications, including social media, makes it easy to say something that is later regretted, but which has become permanently online for all to see.

### **Next Issue**

The next edition of **The Link** will be published on the **Sunday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2017**. Therefore, items for inclusion in the next edition need to reach me by **Sunday the 26th of March**. Thanks, Mike ([MikeOwen10@aol.com](mailto:MikeOwen10@aol.com))

## Missions

**Total Raised for Marshside's Mission Project the Food Bank which finishes today was £1595.00. A big thank you to everyone who helped raised this fantastic amount.**

Looking forward to your support for our new project Supporting Dalit Solidarity which begins on the 4th March.

Date	Description	Paid In	Paid Out	Balance	Total Raised
01/03/2016	Balance Brought Forward			£0.35	£0.00
07/03/2016	Brunch	£265.00	£265.00	£0.35	£265.00
07/03/2016	Donation to Foodbank	£100.00		£0.35	£365.00
03/04/2016	5ps from Church	£3.70		£4.69	£368.70
23/05/2016	5ps from Church	£5.45		£10.14	£375.15
06/07/2016	Raised by Dan Mayor	£209.00		£219.14	£584.15
22/07/2016	Raised by Dan Mayor	£170.80		£389.94	£754.95
28/07/2016	Raised by Dan Mayor	£68.20		£458.14	£823.15
31/07/2016	Paid Out to Project		£447.00	£11.14	£823.15
19/08/2016	5ps from Church	£21.15		£32.29	£844.30
08/09/2016	Donation to Foodbank	£34.00		£32.29	£878.30
15/09/2016	5ps from Church	£2.55		£34.84	£880.85
15/09/2016	Donation to Foodbank	£55.00		£34.84	£935.85
22/10/2016	Brunch	£238.80	£238.80	£34.84	£1174.65
22/10/2016	Donation to Foodbank	£57.20		£34.84	£1231.85
06/11/2016	Donation to Foodbank	£25.00		£34.84	£1256.85
06/11/2016	Empty Foodbank Box	£64.80		£34.84	£1320.65
23/11/2016	5ps from Church	£9.20		£44.04	£1329.85
05/12/2016	Donation Christmas Meal	£81.00		£125.04	£1410.85
05/12/2016	Paid Out to Project		£124.70	£0.34	£1410.85
06/12/2016	5ps from Church	£2.20		£2.54	£1413.05
03/01/2017	5ps from Church	£5.00		£7.54	£1418.05
10/01/2017	5ps from Church	£5.00		£12.54	£1423.05
22/01/2017	5ps from Church/Donation	£127.20		£139.74	£1550.25
29/01/2017	Donation to Foodbank	£20.00		£139.74	£1570.25
30/01/2017	5ps from Church	£2.70		£142.44	£1572.95
07/02/2017	5ps from Church	£3.75		£146.19	£1576.70
19/02/2017	5ps from Church	£7.00		£153.19	£1583.70
26/02/2017	5ps from Church	£11.30		£164.49	£1595.00
27/02/2017	Paid Out to Project		£164.00	£0.49	<b>£1595.00</b>
28/02/2017	Balance Carried Forward			£0.49	

## **Dalit Solidarity**

### **Our Next Mission Project commencing 4th March on Missions Weekend**

Walking alongside our Christian sisters and Brothers, and indeed alongside all Dalits in their struggle for justice, is a key way in which we can show support and Solidarity with them.

- Dalits make up 85-90% of the membership of the Church of North India (CNI)
- Dalit Christians (and Muslims) face double discrimination as schemes to reserve a quota of places for Dalits in higher education and in employment, recognising their disadvantaged position in society, are only available to Dalits of the Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh Faiths. Campaigning to change this law is a key part of CNI's work for social justice for its members, and one on which they are putting increasing emphasis.
- The vast majority of Dalits still live in extreme poverty and experience discrimination in all aspects of life, despite recent development of cities, the growth of the Indian economy, the emergence of a metropolitan middle-class, all of which only benefits up to 20% of India's 1.2billion people.
- For Dalit women and girls, with lower participation in society and with lower literacy rates than their male counterparts, the position is even bleaker, without targeted intervention and support.
- Girls are not valued equally with boys in many parts of Indian society, with abortion of female foetuses and the killing of baby girls not uncommon
- Parts of Indian society too are not respectful of girls and women, with sexual harassment and assaults being commonly found.

**\*Dalit** is the name adopted by those who are traditionally seen to be untouchable. They are considered to be below the caste system altogether, and are often assigned to menial jobs like cleaning latrines and collecting waste. They are/were therefore considered to be polluted or untouchable.

## **Caste discrimination in the UK**

Estimates of the number of Dalits currently living in the UK vary from around 50,000 to up to 1 million. A survey published by the Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance suggests that 58% of UK Dalits believe they face discrimination because of their caste. Such discrimination occurs in places of employment, education or in the provision of goods and services. There is currently no legislation in place in the UK to protect them. This injustice has been debated by the UK government extensively in recent years and provision exists in law for protection. However there have been repeated delays in the implementation of this.

## **What can we do at Marshside**

Pray for justice, work to raise awareness of caste discrimination, express solidarity with victims of discrimination in whatever way you can, Write to MP(Template [ww.mwib.org.uk](http://ww.mwib.org.uk))Support our fundraising efforts-brunches, saving 5ps and donations for Dalit Solidarity.

## **Imagining Autism at The Atkinson**

Imagining Autism is a collaboration between Drama and Psychology at The University of Kent. The project explores how drama and play based practices can engage autistic children, with positive changes in communication, social interaction and empathy.

From 6 - 16 March 2017 Imagining Autism will be in residence at The Atkinson and working with over 100 pupils from local schools. The team will also be delivering a series of events for local professionals and families so that their work and findings can be shared, discussed and applied throughout the North West.

## **Imagining Autism for Professionals**

These free events are for professionals who work with people with autism, including teachers, childcare professionals, drama and arts professionals and healthcare professionals. Professor Nicola Shaugnessy and Dr Melissa Trimmingham will present their work and discuss how their findings can be applied in a variety of professions.

**Wed 8 March, 6.30pm - 8.30pm - The Atkinson**

**Tue 14 March, 5pm - 7pm - Litherland Sports Park, Litherland**

## **Imagining Autism for Families**

These free and informal events are for parents and carers of children with autism. As parents of autistic children themselves, Professor Nicola Shaugnessy and Dr Melissa Trimmingham will share and discuss how their findings can be applied at home as well as inviting families to share and discuss their own experiences.

**Mon 13 March, 5pm - 7pm - The Atkinson**

**Thu 16 March, 1.30pm - 2.45pm - Rowan High School, Litherland**

### ***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.*