



The Link



The Magazine of

Marshside Road Methodist Church Southport

www.marshside-methodist-southport.org.uk



Priceless, but donations gratefully received

October 2015



It's not about self, but the wealth you impart on others!

Minister's Letter

Dear Friends.

The Conference in 2014 urged the Methodist people to engage with each other honestly, prayerfully and graciously in a process of deep reflection and discernment about matters relating to marriage and human relationships. The Conference in 2015 are asking the people called Methodists to consider through scriptural and theological reflection, whether or not there are reasons to revisit the Methodist Church's definition of marriage, and for Districts to provide feedback to the Marriage and Relationships Task Group on the range of reasons, and the missional and pastoral issues for revisiting or not revisiting the definition.

Last weekend I went on the training for the district facilitators of the conversations along with Mr Craig Price who is the other district facilitator. I went not quite knowing what to expect as I'd only had a week's notice that I was to be one of the facilitators. I needn't have worried the weekend was engaging, thought provoking and balanced. One of the things we discussed was how we always plan for a catastrophe. How we imagine in our minds that the person opposite us has an extremely different view from ours and that this in itself will cause the most appalling row and we will fall out and never speak to each other again; which is probably why we don't seem to talk about same sex marriage in church very much. One of the sessions was run by two Presbyters who had completely opposite views on the matter of same sex marriage, one of them was a conservative Christian and the other a progressive Christian; recipe for the aforementioned row you might think. But nothing could have been further from the truth. With great love, respect and joy they told their stories of their own journeys and how they had grown in their friendship with each other over the years. For me it was the greatest example of how we as followers of Jesus, the church, can live with contradictory convictions.

During the weekend we were also asked to consider what authority we give the bible in our faith journey. I don't know if any of you have read the report that came out in 1998 *A lamp to my feet and alight to my path?* Fascinating reading that came up with seven different ways the people called Methodist view the nature and authority of the bible. We also looked at the history of marriage within the life of the church. Did you know that the first marriage within the church was conducted in 1563 and that the Methodist church didn't conduct marriage ceremonies until 1835?

I am really looking forward to going around the district in the coming months and hearing how the people called Methodist view marriage and human relationships, listening to their stories and finding out why we think the way we do.

I must stress that this is not an exercise in changing people's minds but rather a way of seeing how we can continue to travel together as together we seek to do God's will. This will mean that we must continue to respect each other's opinion, that no-one is forced to do something that contradicts their conscience. The process, I hope, will mean

that we listen carefully to each other and act honestly and sincerely share with each other. Above all let's hope that we will demonstrate to the world that we are a family held together by the love of God.

Rev Jan

Give Him a Call!

The phone was a great invention. How easy it is to press a few numbers on our small devices and speak to someone the other side of the world. There was a time when a phone in a home was a luxury item. Now, it seems, we take it for granted that we have a gadget in our pocket enabling us to contact anyone, at any time, in any place. However, how many times have you wanted to speak to someone, only to be given a recorded message giving a variety of options? Then you have to wait in a queue for ages before your call is answered. Sometimes a voice informs you 'your call is important to us'.....but meanwhile you are left waiting, listening to endless music.

Yes, a phone may be useful in all kinds of circumstances, but they can also be very frustrating! So, it's good to know that God can be contacted immediately we need Him. There is no celestial call centre where our messages are delayed or referred. With prayer we can all God directly. This service is free with no charges. He hears our every call and we can be confident that our Creator will answer us in ways which are only for our good.

"When you pray, I will answer you. When you call to me, I will respond." (Isaiah 58:9)

Have you ever thought of taking some time out of daily life, to simply "be still" with God? To hear His voice, enjoy His presence, and perhaps receive His direction for your future? When I mentioned to a friend that I was taking some time out to "be still" and listen to God, she startled me with her reply : "What does His voice sound like?"

The made me think. And response is this : His voice for me is always calming, always reassuring, it always makes me feel overwhelmingly loved. It always gives me a sense of peace, which is deeper than any pain and stronger than any fear. No wonder the Scriptures talk of a "peace that passes all understanding!"

He speaks to me through His word, the Bible. Then, as I sit in my "prayer chair", a rocking chair by my window looking out at the world, He gently whispers His instructions through all of nature, it sounds a bit like this.....

The blue sky says; "Always look up", the Sun says; "Shine", the birds say; "Sing", the trees say; "be fruitful", the flowers say; "consider the Lilies", the open road ahead says; "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel", the gentle rustle of

the wind in the trees says; "Though your can't see My face, you can hear Me, see reflections of Me, feel Me, touch Me and know me through all I create, if you just take the time to be still!"

Norma Murrain

My Shoes

I am wearing a pair of shoes. Each day I wear them. Each day I wish they'd feel more comfortable and some days they do. Some days my shoes hurt so badly that I do not think I can take another step. I get funny looks wearing these shoes. I can tell in others eyes that they are glad these are my shoes and not theirs. They never talk about my shoes. To learn how painful my shoes can be sometimes might make them uncomfortable. To truly understand these shoes one must walk in them but once you put them on, you can never take them off.

I now realize that I am not the only one who wears these shoes. There are many people in this world. Some people ache daily as they try and walk in them. Some have learned how to walk in them so they don't hurt quite as much. Some have worn the shoes so long that days will go by before they think about how much they hurt. No parent set out to wear these shoes.

Yet, because of these shoes I am a stronger person. These shoes have given me the strength to face anything. They have made me who I am. I am a proud parent who has a child with special needs and I will forever walk in these shoes.

MyLoveForAutism

Melissa's Thought for the Month – October 2015

The theme of the 2015 Flower Show was, if you recall it, "China". Shall we quickly forget the beautiful flower-decked pagoda which greeted us as we entered the Grand Floral Marquee?

My thought for the month was already planned as the one type of prayer I have not yet considered here – meditation or contemplation. The typical picture we have of the Buddha is sitting considering his navel.

My first reaction to that was "How silly!". Thinking it over I realise that it is anything but foolish. After all the navel is the point at which we received life giving blood from our mothers while we were still in the womb. It is intriguing that when we refer to our inherited characteristics we at times call it in the blood line, that we usually associate with our father's family!

I always say that we British have a great deal in common with the Chinese people. Is that why so many enjoy eating Chinese meals? I know that while I was still going out for midday meals I liked best to go to a restaurant which not only served Chinese food but was also staffed by Chinese people.

Like the British they strike me as being essentially practical – no airy fairy stuff about religion. Basically Christianity is fundamentally "down to earth". That is exactly what Jesus was when He literally "came to Earth as a genuine human being". The God we worship does not go in for half measures. He cares so much for every part of His

creation that He was obliged to experience for Himself the limitations of human life. He “emptied Himself of all but love”.

Sometimes we wonder about our own limitations – physical, mental and spiritual. No one of us is perfect in any of those ways, I certainly know that I am not. Each night before going to sleep I recall the time I have not used to the best advantage of everyone else. That must come before the quiet committal of my friends, the world and myself to the loving hands of God. Even then, I recall that “the sun that bids us rest is waking our bretheren “neath the waters sky”.

Of course, I am fortunate enough to know individuals who live in a number of those countries. Such experiences give much more reality to world wide intercessions. Even those whom I do not know personally are involved in situations which I understand for myself (within my limits).

Those Chinese people who have not (yet!) found the richness of the Christian faith do not adopt the more primitive forms of ancient worship. It is more wonderment at the way in which life flows from one generation to the next.

The Chinese typically follow Confucious – the practical law giver and/or Buddhism, with its stress on the continuity of life. We to may wish to consider “The Rock whence we were born!”

Melissa.



Church Family News

There were probably times during the summer when we complained about the weather (as we Brits are notorious for), but especially if the weather was bad whilst we were on holiday. However, what a lovely start to autumn with the mild weather and sunshine. How wonderful the trees are looking. The colours are breathtaking. Last weekend we came together in church to thank God for all His goodness to us and we were given the opportunity to share with others through gifts for the foodbank. As always, the response was amazing and it is good to know that we can continue to share by supporting the foodbank throughout the year as we think of those who are finding life difficult.

During September, two of our church families celebrated family weddings. **Hannah Gildert's grand-daughter** was married here in church and **Margaret Boston's son, Colin** was married in Whitewell. We sent our very best wishes to them both.

Congratulations to **Jamie** (son of **Pat & Bob Wright**) & **Holly Wright** on the safe arrival of their son **Oakley** and best wishes to all the family. Congratulations also to the **Williamson family** on the arrival of a little daughter, **Elsie**, to **Nicola & Christopher**, brother for Ethan. Love to you all. **Marion Halpin** received the wonderful news of the arrival of her first great grand-daughter very soon after the great sadness of losing her

brother. Our love and sympathy were with Marion on the loss of her brother but it is good to be able to also share in her joy. God bless you Marion.

There are some special birthdays this month. Starting with the oldest, we think of **Peggy Rimmer** in a nursing home celebrating a 90+ birthday. We also think of **Jack Balmforth** who now lives in Tunbridge Wells but was member here. He too is celebrating a big 90+ birthday this month. Happy birthday (belated) to **Sheila Jones** who celebrated a big 'O' on 29th September and to **Jeanne Anderson** who will be celebrating her special birthday on 25th October. Our very best wishes to you both. Celebrating a very special birthday on 5th October was **Mike Owen**. I believe your party was a great success Mike & your parents' house has not been the same since! Congratulations & very best wishes Mike. A mere youngster, but celebrating a special birthday also on 25th October is **Kathryn Simpkin-Watkinson**. Love to all our special birthday people. (I am conscious that there must be many who slip through the net without a mention so please, please keep me informed).

It is lovely to welcome new faces into our congregation and we give a big welcome to the **Caslake family** with their little daughters **Florence & Madelaine**. Florence broke her arm recently & is a very brave little girl. We do hope it heals very quickly. Welcome also to **Leah (Woodward)** and her beautiful little daughter **Ella**. Lovely to have you with us.

Congratulations to **George Merone** on his recent retirement, though he did give himself a bit of a health scare around the same time. I am not sure what retirement is, George, but hope you manage to find out and you and Avril have a very happy, healthy and relaxing time together.

As I write this, **Jane Biggs** will be at Whiston hospital undergoing surgery to her finger. We pray that all will go well for her and we send her our love. It is great the **Darren Wright** is now back at work part time. It must have been pretty exhausting to start with Darren but we pray you will go from strength to strength. It was good that **Ron Rimmer** was able to attend worship last Sunday morning though we know he is far from well and awaiting hospital treatment. Our thoughts and prayers are with you Ron and we hope you will soon be feeling much better. Good to have **Pam Flatt** in worship again and we continue to remember **Francis Thomas** in prayer.

To any I have omitted to mention, especially our many friends unable to worship with us, please be assured of our love. Please keep me up to date with family news so that we can share together.

God Bless you all, **Dorothy Simpkin**.

Your Supporter Number is: 99328181

24 August 2015



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Telephone: 0300 123 2112
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Thank You

Dear Mrs Taylor,

Thank you for supporting Action for Children Sunday again this year.

The Methodist Church and Action for Children have been working in partnership for over 140 years, and every year Action for Children Sunday is celebrated in hundreds of Churches like yours throughout the U.K.

Over those 140 years, our work together has continued to grow and develop. When Rev. Stephenson founded Action for Children (formerly NCH), it was initially Methodist staff and volunteers who developed new ways and standards of caring for children and young people. The Methodist Church and Action for Children have always featured prominently as leaders for change in the history of child welfare, proving we both really are there, for as long as it takes.

Year on year, the generosity of congregations up and down the country never ceases to amaze us, and your gift of £75.00 enables us to continue giving society's most vulnerable and neglected children and young people the support they need.

We would be most grateful if you could pass on our sincere thanks the congregation. The contribution the Methodist Church continues to make to children and young people across the UK truly is a vital one, and we are so thankful for your support.

With kind thanks,

Sarah Cook
Director of Fundraising

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Next Issue

The next edition of **The Link** will be published on the **Sunday the 8th of November 2015**. Therefore, items for inclusion in the next edition need to reach me by **Sunday the 1st of November**. Thanks, Mike (MikeOwen10@aol.com)

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Ministers : Revd. Jan Fraser

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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)	
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Disclaimer :

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