



Keeping in Touch Wesley Place Methodist Church, Alsager

Dear Friends,

I love my job! 30 years ago, this summer I left college in Birmingham and headed down to Shaftesbury in north Dorset as a probationer minister. Since then in Cornwall, Yorkshire, and now here, I have met some saintly and amazing people, and shared their faith journey, worked with them in their precious churches, and had the privilege of partying as well as weeping with many Methodists.

A presbyteral minister's role, like mine, is threefold - a ministry of word, sacrament, and care. It's a good job I don't mind standing up in front of people and talking! God's word became flesh in Jesus, and repeating that word as a preacher, listener, Bible reader, and conversationalist is part of the focus of my job - whether in the pulpit or the pub. Ministers in Methodism lead the sacraments of baptism and communion only as a means of keeping church order, everyone knows who's doing what - it is nothing to do with being more qualified or special in any way. Sometimes when I ask someone to help in giving the bread and wine they reply 'Oh no I'm not worthy of that'. I try and persuade them otherwise, because a minister is no more worthy than anyone else - just called to share in doing it on everyone's behalf. Overseeing churches and caring for them is the third aspect - and just like the other two, it's not exclusively the role of the minister, but led, facilitated and overseen by the minister, it is shared by the pastoral visitors and indeed all of us.

The minister is a 'leader from the middle' I think. Committees can drive us all mad at times, but sharing the work of God in the church is a role we all have a place in, inclusivity is the name of the game. Some of the most enjoyable times in my life are when a group of people work on something together and achieve something none of us could have done individually, and empowered by the Spirit of God we recognise God at work in our midst. Methodism works by 'representation' - we can't all be on every committee, we're not democratic, but we recognise those with gifts and a calling, and equip each other to serve in appropriate ways.



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In the gospels, Jesus is asked 187 questions.
He answers (maybe) 8 of them.
He himself asks 307.
Maybe faith isn't about certainty, but learning to ask—and sit in the complexity of—good questions.

So we ministers aren't the only preachers, pastoral visitors, or sacramental leaders, all is shared with God's people.

It's a sign I think that God is at work amongst us that every time I am planned to lead worship at Wesley place on a Sunday there's so much to do - communion services, baptisms, and this week the General Church Meeting that the Church Council Secretary Celia and I have been trying to shoehorn into the calendar since early May! That we shall also celebrate another baptism is another sign of our work together in forming God's church. This week it's Jasmin (don't forget the J is pronounced Y!), recently the 4 year old candle bearer to so

many other children and their families, Jasmin will be given her own candle as she is baptised! Here indeed is the body of Christ functioning - the minister, the candle bearer, the baptismal secretary Elspeth, and the computer expert leaving the desk to stand as guardian for Jasmin's baptism.

Woven into the service will be the reporting Church Council business, electing church stewards and new members to Church Council, as well as discerning God's call to us this year - what can we do to support families and friends who will miss school this summer. More at the meeting from Leslie.

I think, as usual, of hymns and scriptures to form the prayers and make sense of our life together as a church. StF 25 'God is here! As we his people meet to offer praise and prayer,' is one of the best contemporary hymns there is I think - it speaks of God in our midst, speaks of the symbols of our spirituality and sacraments, welcomes children, and acknowledges the challenges of living through change and doubt. It finishes with a deep affirmation of faith 'We adore you! we believe!'. The other brilliant hymn for today is StF 409 'Let us build a house where love can dwell'.

I always smile as I remember these verses from St Paul, selected from 1 Corinthians chapter 12:

4 Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, **5** and there are varieties of services but the same Lord, **6** and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. **7** To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. **13** For in the one Spirit we were all baptised into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

14 Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. **15** If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. **16** And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. **17** If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? **18** But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. **19** If all were a single member, where would the body be? **20** As it is, there are many members yet one body. **21** The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." **22** On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,

26 If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

The reason I smile is that I remember an all age service of worship with the minister I learnt a lot from as a student in Leeds: He borrowed from the local dress shop a mannequin and dressed it moderately in a swimming costume, then proceeded to use it as a very good visual-aid: he described the parts of that Church by looking at the parts of the body model in front of him. He removed the arm to show how the body couldn't function without it, and the swimming costume strap slipped off revealing parts of the body usually treated with the utmost modesty! He was so embarrassed, but we never forgot the message!!



As I go off on holiday, and over the summer season, others will contribute to this message, and during August we'll go fortnightly to give Sarah a rest and time with her family!

God bless, from one of the team, part of the body - together we are Christ in the world today.

Your Friend and Minister,

Rob.

God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer.

God Is Here! As We Your People
Meet To Offer Praise And Prayer,
May We Find In Fuller Measure
What It Is In Christ We Share.
Here, As In The World Around Us,
All Our Varied Skills And Arts
Wait The Coming Of The Spirit
Into Open Minds And Hearts.

Here Are Symbols To Remind Us
Of Our Lifelong Need Of Grace;
Here Are Table, Font, And Pulpit;
Here The Cross Has Central Place.
Here In Honesty Of Preaching,
Here In Silence, As In Speech,
Here, In Newness And Renewal,
God The Spirit Comes To Each.

Here Our Children Find A Welcome
In The Shepherd's Flock And Fold;
Here As Bread And Wine Are Taken,
Christ Sustains Us, As Of Old.
Here The Servants Of The Servant
Seek In Worship To Explore
What It Means In Daily Living
To Believe And To Adore.

God Of All, Of Church And Kingdom,
In An Age Of Change And Doubt
Keep Us Faithful To The Gospel;
Help Us Work Your Purpose Out.
Here, In This Day's Dedication,
All We Have To Give, Receive;
We, Who Cannot Live Without You,
We Adore You! We Believe!

Let us build a house where love can dwell

Let us build a house where love can dwell and all
can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell how hearts
learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of
faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome
in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak, and
words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek to dream
God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness and as
symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome
in this place.

Let us build a house where love is found in water,
wine, and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground where peace and
justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus, is revealed in
time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that free us:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome
in this place.

Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live
the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image
of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome
in this place.

Let us build a house where all are named, their
songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed as
words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of
faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome
in this place

Sunday	Time	Worship
26th June	10.30	Led by Rev Rob Hilton
3rd July	10.30	Led by Rev Sarah Butcher Including Holy Communion
10th July	Youtube	Led by Daniel Keen
17th July	10.30	Led by Rev Ian Duffy

MONDAY AFTERNOONS @ WESLEY PLACE

Please join us on Monday Afternoon 2pm-4pm for Board Games, tea/coffee,biscuits and chat.

Looking forward to seeing you

CHURCH FAMILY CELEBRATION

Christianne & Peter invite you all to an Open house with Tea/Coffee and gateaux from 10am to 1pm on Thursday 30th June to celebrate a Golden Wedding and an 80th Birthday. Please, no presents but a donation can be made to Wesley Place if you wish.

Address: 20 Dunham Close, ST7 2XR

Action for children

Val Carron will be gathering collection boxes during July.

Meter of coins

It's that time of year to collect together all your spare change. Meter of coins will take place 31st July. Please dig deep for this worthwhile cause.

WEDNESDAY MORNINGS @WESLEY

PLACE

PLEASE NOTE NEW TIMINGS FOR WEDNESDAY MORNINGS

Church open 11am-1pm

Please join us next Wednesday at 11.30am for a short, informal service this week led by Rev'd Rob Hilton. There will be tea/coffee and biscuits and, of course, chat afterwards. BYO Lunch if you would like. Please join us. We'd love to see you.

Sing Along

Harriet has suggested some hymns for the week

I the Lord of Sea and Sky

<https://youtu.be/mgLwH5RdtPk>

Will You Come and Follow Me

<https://youtu.be/zk6IUalJ3sk>

Moses I Know you're the man

<https://youtu.be/yr7YZ203UVI>

Circuit Service

4pm June 26th @ Broomhall & Sound



Come and enjoy an open air service and craft activities. Bring a picnic with you.

Contemporary Praise and Worship Service with Worship band

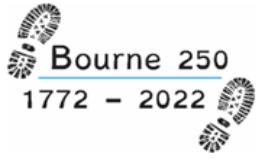
Sundays at 4pm

3rd July at Wheelock New Horizons

31st July at Haslington Methodist Church

21st August at Sandbach Wesley Centre

Everyone welcome for a time of lively Worship



Crafty Ranters

No previous experience necessary!

A relaxed group that meets every 2nd Friday of the month to enjoy Chat, Cake, Coffee & Craft!

11 am to 1 pm

at

Englesea Brook Chapel & Museum

CW2 5QW

**Friday 12th August
Englesea Brook cross stitch**

Cross stitch is a craft that embraces all walks of life and gender. To celebrate the cross stitch pictures that are at Englesea Brook we will make our own simple samplers.

To book your place please contact Ruth: director@engleseabrook.org.uk

Tel: 01270 820836

Registered Charity Number: 1132237



Here comes the sun! and we'll be
Travelling Light
at
Englesea Brook Chapel & Museum
CW2 5QW

Join us each Saturday in August, 10.30am to 12.30pm
for summer fun, crafts, cake
and
sensory storytelling!

- Saturday, 7th August: '**Oh I do like to be by the seaside!**'

Come and enjoy a morning at the Englesea Brook beach, build a beach hut and design your own ice-cream.



Sensory story at 11am

- Saturday, 14th August: '**Pitch your tent here!**'

Come and meet us at camp in our beautiful countryside setting, go bug-hunting and make a bug shelter.



Sensory story at 11am

- Saturday, 21st August: '**Over the sea and faraway**'

Sail with the Prims to faraway lands and do a spot of boat-building to discover what floats and what doesn't.



Sensory story at 11am

- Saturday, 28th August: '**In the footsteps of saints**'

Did you know Englesea Brook is on the Two Saints Way? A route of pilgrimage between Chester and Lichfield. Discover who the two saints were and make your own peace sandals.



Sensory story at 11am

Activities are suitable for all ages and are free of charge, although donations are always very welcome!

Here at Englesea Brook Museum we aim to be as accessible as possible to all – if you have any particular needs please contact Elizabeth: learning@engleseabrook.org.uk
tel 01270 820836 (Weds to Fri) so that we can do our best to meet them.



Englesea Brook Chapel & Museum of Primitive Methodism, Englesea Brook Lane, Englesea Brook, CW2 5QW.

Tel. 01270 820835. Email: admin@engleseabrook.org.uk Registered Charity No. 1132237

 Prayers from the Prayer Group this week: 

Dear God, you have your amazing way to turn disaster into blessing!

In the present of the Holy Spirit we pray with hope and confident

Prayer of thankfulness

*Good warm weather changes our outlook of life and brought about time of relaxing

*Gratefulness of recovering and achievement of grandchildren

*Alsager Carnival has brought about the community spirit of all in one, regardless of races and the country of origin with the blessing of weather

*The refreshing freedom of Holiday in France and Belgium with old friends

*Joyous time in celebrating Birthdays

*The expertise of NHS which we can rely on with gratitude

Prayer for social Justice,

For this Refugee week and for honest dialogue especially for the earthquake in Afghanistan

Prayer for our circuit event and our church family and friends

*All the events of worship and Praise in the circuit

*Circuit Service in Broomall & Sound

*Our family in Twyford House and members at home in receiving news of the church

*Wesley Place AGM this Sunday be led by the Holy Spirit

*Celebration of Jasmin's Baptism and welcome into the church

Amen 

Defend us, O Lord, with your heavenly grace, that we may continue yours for ever and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more, until we come to your everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Book of Common Prayer (1552)

Gracious and loving God, thank you for staying close to us in all that we have experienced in recent times. As your holy people, we ask you to strengthen us with wisdom and understanding as we look forward to the new opportunities you will share with us. Encourage us to offer rich hospitality: to recognise the individual, welcome the stranger and offer a community of love to all. Amen.

Andrew de Ville, Southampton District Chair