



**STAINES METHODIST CHURCH
NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2018**

www.stainemethodistchurch.org.uk

Minister: Rev. A. Reed **Tel:** Ashford (01784) 252559

Sunday Services: 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Sunday School: 10:30 a.m.



From the Minister

Dear Friends,

For many people January is a good month to reflect as they look back over the previous year and as they look forward to the new one. For some people it is a time to make New Year Resolutions. This is not something I have ever taken very seriously because I tend to find that the resolutions falter very early on. The point for me is that if something is worth making a resolution about it should be something that is significant and therefore have an impact on my life and on the lives of people that I meet. In January 2018 I shall spend some time reflecting on my relationship with God. Here are some of the questions I will ask myself: Has my walk with God been as close over this past year as it has been in other years? Have I allowed the pressures of work and other things to get in the way of my relationship with God? Has my love for God got stronger and closer, or has there been a cooling off? What about my communication with God; how has this gone over the past year? Even as I write these questions I realise that there have been successes and failures, and that it might be painful to look at these things in detail. This means that I must be willing to be open with God and myself. But I do know that my God loves me just the same and that He wants to see our relationship get stronger, and He has graciously given me the time and opportunity to see how things might go in the coming year. So I will undertake this exercise and see where I end up.

I encourage you to do the same. Your questions will be different from mine, but taking the time to evaluate your relationship with God will reap a reward as you go on with Him in to a new year. We can also do this as a Church. Two thousand and seventeen was an incredibly busy year for all of us. Lots of initiatives have been introduced and have taken a lot of our resources. It has been very exciting to see people come into our Church during the week which has given us the opportunity to share the message of the love of God with them. Lots of things are going on in our Circuit that will affect our Church over the coming months and we really do need to be listening to God speaking to us. I am grateful for all the prayers offered up by our fellowship and I value your prayers for me.

I would like to encourage you to continue in prayer for the life of our Church and our Circuit and to pray for family, colleagues and friends. I also want to thank everyone who works so hard to keep our Church functioning. So many people give of their time and talents and we owe them an immense debt of gratitude.

I pray that God will bless us as we serve Him in 2018.

Andrew

News of the Church Family

Congratulations to Aimée and Alistair Perry on the birth of Oscar James at 5:21am on Friday 8th December; a second grandson to Avril and Alan Pye. Oscar was born just over 5 weeks early and weighed in at just 3 lbs 9 ozs. Oscar spent his first few weeks in hospital to gain weight, but was allowed home on Christmas Eve.

David Price managed to spend the Christmas period in hospital suffering from pneumonia. He is home now and recuperating. Thanks to all of you for your prayers. This is the reason that the January Newsletter is late, but I will get it out as soon as possible. There is usually a distribution team consisting of Suzanne Clarke and Pauline Nicholson, and as we start a new year this is an appropriate time to thank them.

This time I have also received help from Matt Sendorek who kindly volunteered to print the hard copies.

A Bumper Year

It certainly was a bumper year for my Christmas Cake making for, apart from one year when I baked twenty extra cakes for a businessman, I have baked more this year than any previous year. This was boosted a little as two people reordered one as their cakes had already been eaten! Thank you so very much to all of you who bought one. Including a donation, I have been able to send £272 to Christian Aid this Christmas.

I get so much in, firstly, being able to give you (hopefully) cake that you can enjoy and, secondly, being able to help people in the third world.

Barbara Lownsbrough

p.s. As this money has gone to the Christmas Appeal it will be matched, pound for pound, by the government; and so effectively we have raised £544.

Christian Aid is pioneering!

Many of you will already be aware that donations to Christian Aid this Christmas are to be matched pound for pound by the government from the overseas aid budget. This includes the amazing amount raised by Barbara Lownsborough for the incredible number of Christmas cakes she has baked again this year. The closing date is 5th February, so there's still time to donate and extract a little more from the government coffers at the same time.

But what's this about pioneering? — Well it comes from an article in the Winter 2017 edition of the Christian Aid Magazine, under the heading “This is what pioneering aid looks like”. It tells how Christian Aid is taking on projects that go beyond conventional ideas of aid, and these are often funded by governments and other large donors with exacting standards, showing that Christian Aid is trusted to deliver projects that reach huge numbers of people, to spend every penny carefully and provide concrete evidence that lives are being changed. Here are one or two examples:

— In Kenya, Christian Aid and its partners will be supporting 170,000 orphans and vulnerable children who are living with or affected by HIV and AIDS after securing a grant of \$36m from the United States Agency for International Development.

— In Myanmar and Bangladesh Christian Aid's partners are supporting communities to reduce the impact of disasters and cope better in the aftermath, funded by the UK aid-funded Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme.

— In Ghana the Growing Economic Opportunities project helps create new jobs for 15 – 35-year-olds, particularly young women and people with disabilities, and this is part-funded by the European Union.

It is reassuring for me to hear that the organisation I promote is trusted by three different governmental organisations, and it also means that more of the international aid money is going directly to the work on the ground, through Christian Aid's local partners, rather than sending expensive officials from the rich world to oversee the projects. So let's continue to help with this pioneering work led by Christian Aid.

Linda Marshall

Prayer Diary for the month of January 2018

“Come Holy Spirit”

Please pray/give thanks for:

- 1st Give thanks for the volunteers who manned shelters at Christmas.
- 2nd teachers and children as they begin a new term.
- 3rd Mr. Andy Gilmour and Rev. Juliet Ushewokunze as they prepare to lead worship.
- 4th Our minister Andrew Reed, and Pat, his wife.
- 5th our “Minnows” group who restart after their Christmas break.
- 6th those who mourn.
- Sun Christians persecuted for their faith.
- 8th the people who are affected by the fires and extreme cold weather.
- 9th Worship Leaders and Local Preachers as they meet tonight.
- 10th Mr. Terry Lewis and Rev. Andrew Reed as they prepare to lead worship.
- 11th for new parents.
- 12th National Health Service staff as they struggle during this winter season.
- 13th racial justice between our various ethnic groups.
- Sun those living and working in refugee camps.
- 15th Thank God for loved ones.
- 16th East to West; the staff and young people.
- 17th Rev. Andrew Reed and Mr. Paul Murphy as they prepare to lead worship
- 18th-25th Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity; for harmony between all denominations.
- 19th those who have been bereaved, especially over the festive season.
- 20th people caught up in drug trafficking.
- Sun all Ministers in our Circuit.
- 22nd our local council and officials.
- 23rd victims of abuse, and their abusers.
- 24th Rev. Brian Hoare as he prepares to lead worship
- 25th the congregation at Christ Church, Feltham as they prepare for their final service there.
- 26th Manna Food Project; volunteers, contributors, and those who use it.
- 27th Holocaust Memorial Day:

Sun Homeless Sunday. For Nightstop UK who work with homeless teenagers.
29th those we know who do not yet know God for themselves.
30th those who suffer from HIV/AIDS.
31st for Jonathan Perkins and Rev. Andrew Reed as they prepare to lead our worship.

All good gifts around us
Are sent from heaven above,
Then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord
For all His love.

Matthias Claudius (translated: Jane Montgomery Campbell)



The Church Prayer Chain

The Prayer Chain exists for the benefit of anyone in need of prayer.

Michael & Barbara Bagg

Jim Brodie

Barbara Lownsborough

If you have a prayer request, please contact any one of the above.

OnTheOutProject — December 2017 Update

No way of escape

Being vulnerable to cruel people, unable to cope, vulnerable to alcohol and drug abuse

Having mental health issues

Seeing yourself as unlovable

Separated from your own family

Nowhere to live, no job

Feeling of rejection

Feeling lost

Feeling empty

Feeling helpless

Life has no meaning

Life has no purpose

Life has no hope

Unable to, or choosing not to, make use of organised means of equipping prisoners for the outside world

So you are released from prison : *(on the out)*

Without a coat (and this is winter!)

Not knowing where the railway station is *(the most common destination for most people in this category, though often via the off-licence)*

Alone, or with people who are likely to lead you into more trouble, for example, drug and alcohol abuse leading to violent offences leading to more time in prison

Who will save you from this vicious circle?

This is where OnTOP comes in. Since October 2016, OnTOP, overseen by Kingdom Living Church, Staines (meet in Laleham Methodist Church) has supported people leaving prison (in particular HMP Bronzefield, the largest female prison in Europe, off Woodthorpe Road, Ashford).

Two aspects of the ministry are:-

1) Fortnightly church service followed by a drop-in session

2) Pastoral 1 to 1 support which sometimes involves the provision of food and clothing.

A third aspect of the ministry has recently been added:-

3) "Through the Gate" (TTG) support. This involves meeting women on the day of their release and offering to accompany them on foot to Ashford station. This is a specialist service focussing on women who have not engaged with the various agencies that offer structured TTG support. This aspect of the project is in association with the Bronzefield Chaplaincy Department, and is being pioneered by Simeon Sturney, from Kingdom Living Church, who is driven by the desperate needs of those people whom most of us would choose to ignore/avoid/hide from, but whom Jesus has shown an amazing willingness to walk alongside and suffer with in order to bring them into His kingdom of light and peace.

Here, surely, is a window of opportunity for the Church to get involved:-

Prayer: people not too busy to spend time each day in a quiet place, interceding and seeking God's way forward.

Practical support in the various activities : worship, drop-in, pastoral, TTG etc.

Donations of clothing, food, money etc.

If you feel called to any of this work, we would be very pleased to welcome you to our team.

Graham Wells

New Printer

The Church has now a new (refurbished) printer which has more features than the old duplicator, including finishing features. Unfortunately I have not been able to familiarise myself with it yet, and Matt has been thrown in at the deep end; so the Newsletter for this month will be a bit rushed.

The Church has also installed Wi-Fi so we are now fully connected. For further details please contact Matt Sendorek.

Dave Price


Final Service at Christ Church, Feltham

Sunday 28th January at 4:00 p.m.

Sunday 28th January is the final service at Christ Church, Feltham (also known in the past as Hanworth Road). Refreshments will be served afterwards and this will probably be your last chance to look around this building which has several stained glass windows celebrating the Boys' Brigade, etc.

November Church Collections

Here are the figures for November and from the beginning of the Methodist Financial Year that started on 1st September 2017.

Last year to 31st August 2017 the total was		£17,102·93
Average Weekly Collection last year (52 weeks)		£328·90
Total this year from 1st September 2017 (13 weeks)		£3,812·16
Average Weekly Collection from 1st September 2017		£293·24
November 2017 Total Collections (4 weeks)		£1,252·71
Average November 2017 weekly collection		£313·18

Note:- There was no evening service on 5th November.

John Bennett

Services for the month of January 2018

7th 10:30 a.m. Mr. A. Gilmour
6:30 p.m. Rev. J. Ushewokunze

14th 10:30 a.m. Mr. T. Lewis
6:30 p.m. Rev. A. Reed

21st 10:30 p.m. Rev. A. Reed [Communion]
6:30 p.m. Mr. P. Murphy [Communion]

Homeless } 28th 10:30 a.m. Rev. B. Hoare
Sunday } 6:30 p.m. ~~Service at St. Peter's Church~~
An event to mark Andy Gilmour's
retirement from Canaan led by Rev.
John Izzard.

“Preparation in Worship” is now *every* week from 10:20 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
— a chance to take a few minutes to prepare ourselves for worship

Sunday 28th January is our Church Anniversary

Dates for your Diary

January

Friday 12th 10am-noon “Minnows” (p.11)

Saturday 13th 10:30 a.m. Messy Church

Items for inclusion in the February Newsletter to David Price
(Staines 462204 or dave@shirleyanddave.me.uk)
by Sunday 21st January at the latest please

Minnows Carer and Toddlers Group

We have just completed our first term and are happy to report that the group is going well. Adults and children seem content with the format; we have plenty of good quality toys and activities and a regular committed team of church members. Our aim is to provide a welcoming, safe, caring environment where adults and children can relax and interact and we can share our Christian faith in a non-threatening way.



During this first term we have met 40 different families most of whom are not church-goers, and most weeks consist of 10 – 12 family groups which is a comfortable number for the church hall. Highlights of the term were gathering together around the Christmas tree to hear the Christmas story again and to find we had exactly the right number of gifts for the children who were there (a total guess – God is good!) and, earlier in the term, being delighted to be given the following note by a grandmother from India who could speak very little English and had been coming with her grandson:

“It’s really pleasure to meet all of you people. You all of them are really nice. I like to come here every week. Me and my grandson enjoyed here a lot. Thank you very much. My visa is going to finish next week and I am going to leave UK this Saturday. I just want to say goodbye to you people and thank you very much for everything.”

Such things affirm for us what we are doing and with the support and encouragement of the church and your prayers we will continue to offer the best that we can to this group that we love and thoroughly enjoy!

Julie Underwood