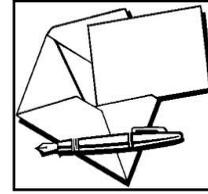


***St. John's Methodist Church  
Whitchurch***

***October 2018***

*Newsletter*

## ***Message from the Manse***



Dear Friends

When was the last time you sat and wrote - by hand - a letter? I have to admit I'm not always the best correspondent, but shortly I'm going to do just that.

The reason is that coming up in November is 3Generate - the Methodist Youth Gathering, where over 1000 young people from all over the country will be gathering at Southport, and as part of that we, the Methodist people, have been invited to write to them. 1000 Letters, to the younger members of our Church, to encourage and inspire. Sharing stories, inspiration, and memories. All in one handwritten A4 sheet.

If you'd like to join me in writing a letter, there's guidance on the Methodist Website - just put "1000 Letters" into Google and you'll find the right page. But even if you can't - have a think this month. If someone was to ask you about your faith, ask you what has particularly inspired you, what would you say?

God Bless

Rob

### Preachers

7th Rev. Jim Needham (HF)  
14th Rev Edna Perry  
21st Rev. Rob Weir (hc)  
28th Rev Rob Weir  
Nov 4th Mr David Wrench

### Stewards

7th Maurice Latham  
14th Avril Bradfield  
21st Brian Faulkner  
28th Rob Hewson  
Nov 4th Peter Shingler

### Junior Church Rota

<b>Date</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Assistant</b>
7th	Helen Trigg	Chris Crowther
14th	Briony Myles-Hook	Wendy Proffitt
21st	Briony Myles-Hook	Chris Crowther
28th	Half term Holiday—No Junior Church	
4th Nov.	Half term holiday – as above	

### Worship Leaders

7th Rachel Dimelow  
14th Lucy Chidlow  
21st \_\_\_\_\_  
28th Rachel Dimelow  
Nov 4th Lucy Chidlow

## Steward's Letter

### STEWARDS LETTER



By the time you read this, we will be in the third month of Autumn. Cooler mornings, darker evenings, not to mention what might follow! We are already seeing the leaves changing colours and even some falling. So let us enjoy the beauty of the autumn colours.

At St. John's it is Harvest Thanksgiving, a time when we thank God in particular for fruits, vegetables and flowers. Just stop for a moment and thank God for all he provides for each of us, as well as for our health.

It is also an appropriate time to say '*Thank You*' to each of you for what you do at St. John's on behalf of the church. The work seen, unseen, office holders, also the many things that are not acknowledged. Sorry it can't be a personal letter just for you (I may miss someone out).

Thanks - Giving

You give so much in money, time and prayer.

We have a challenging time ahead. Our church income is now less than our everyday expenses.

A Harvest always needs workers.

We all need to ask ourselves, could we give more?

Money yes but also time and prayer.

Thanks - Giving.

Brian Faulkner.

## Spontaneity

Some thoughts on spontaneous actions. Recently our brother and sister in law were out shopping in a busy chain store. He has been very ill in the past twelve months with cancer and has had major surgery and treatments. He is now improving slowly and has been so very brave throughout this.

An assistant - who was Polish came up to them and they got chatting to her. She listened to their story and immediately began praying with them! Right in the middle of the shop with busy shoppers all around. This to me is a wonderful act spontaneous and immediate.

Many times in my life I have witnessed this, sometimes ministers in some churches will offer prayers right there and then and pray openly with folks who are suffering in any situation.

At Spring harvest this was a regular happening and I am sure it helped so many people. I am not really fond of formal prayers and so I find spontaneous prayer very uplifting, it is such a wonderful thing to do. I am not very good at praying openly – how I wish I were, because it really 'hits the spot' when one is so down.

Of course, in this day and age of political correctness one has to be careful who one hugs! In the dark side of the internet lie many dangers, but it should not deter us from human contact I believe.

Spontaneous acts of kindness to a fellow human is so good to do and benefits both sides I think. Often a card, a phone call or a visit can cheer a lonely heart beset by problems whatever they are.

We are afraid of looking foolish and get embarrassed I think and afraid of 'upsetting the apple cart' but Jesus himself was a bit of a rebel and was not afraid to stand out in the crowd even when he was being jeered and laughed at.

So, let us be spontaneous in our prayers – throw off those inhibitions it can help to heal so many and is instant therapy for the soul.

Go for it! - *Sheila Walwyn*

### **Harvest Supper**

Monday 8th October at 6.30pm.

Come and enjoy a supper of Hotpot followed by Apple Pie and Cream and topped off with singing some hymns and songs, as we end our harvest Celebrations. The price is £6. It's a bit late, but if you would like to come please see Dorothy Faulkner.

### **Sponsor a Light**

On Sunday 9th September, I launched an appeal to raise funds to replace our chapel lights. Currently, we have 35 lights in church, each using an average of 350 watts. The new units, costing £30 each, only use 30 watts so we will make a large saving on our electricity bill. Junior Church members are also involved in this appeal by making candles to put up to show our progress. So please help with this appeal (box for donations at the back of church) and use the white envelopes if you are a taxpayer.

**Maurice Latham (senior steward)**

## **Book Review – Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth**

I have now read Part 2 (of 3) of Richard Foster's book called Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth. The second part of the book focuses on the outward Disciplines of simplicity, solitude, submission and service.

### Simplicity

The world around us is materialistic with a lust for affluence. Simplicity gives us the right perspective on material possessions and wealth. Simplicity sets us free to receive the provision of God as a gift that is not ours to keep and can be freely shared with others. It involves a life of joyful unconcern for possessions. The central point of the Discipline of simplicity is to seek the kingdom of God and the righteousness of his kingdom *first* and then everything necessary will come into its proper order. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of Jesus' insight at Matthew 6:25-33. Everything hinges upon maintaining the 'first' things as first. And we can be certain that when we live this way the 'all these things' that are necessary to carry on human life adequately will be ours as well. In reading this chapter I obviously reflected on my own life and challenged myself about my lifestyle and perspective on wealth and possessions. The book includes 10 outward expressions of simplicity which help apply the meaning of simplicity for today. One principle is to reject anything which produces an addiction in you – smart phones and newspapers can easily fall into this category! Simplicity is freedom, not slavery. Refuse to be a slave to anything but God.

### Solitude

The Bible shows us that seeking out solitary places was a regular practice for Jesus and so it should be for us. Our fear of being alone drives us to noise and crowds. Loneliness is inner emptiness, whereas solitude is inner fulfilment. Solitude is more a state of mind and heart than a place. It is out of our liberation from others and self that our ears become open to hear and our eyes unveiled to see the goodness of God. Through our solitude an open inner space has been created through which God finds us. Learning to control the tongue is also a key feature of this chapter. Those who spend time with God in silence and solitude have greater control. Our tongue is viewed as a thermometer which reveals our spiritual temperature.

If there is one thing I really crave in life at the moment its silence and solitude! With a 2 (nearly 3) year old and a 7 month old I usually have an hour or so to myself each day. The book includes some practical steps into solitude which I found very helpful. The first thing we can do is to take advantage of the 'little solitudes' which fill our day. The early morning moments before the family awakens, being stuck in a traffic jam, finding new joy in regular walks. For

those with a smart phone, the temptation can be to use these moments to check emails, WhatsApp or newsfeeds. These tiny snatches of time are often lost on us - what a pity! They can and should be redeemed.

Submission: Submission is the ability to lay down the terrible burden of always needing to get our own way. The obsession to demand that things go the way we want them to go is one of the greatest bondages of human society today. Only in submission are we enabled to bring this spirit to a place where it no longer controls us. Only submission can free us sufficiently to enable us to distinguish between genuine issues and stubborn self-will.

The book explores Jesus' teaching on self-denial and submission. Self-denial is simply a way of coming to understand that we do not have to have our own way. Our happiness is not dependent on getting what we want. Self-denial means the freedom to give way to others and hold others' interests above our interests. Jesus lived a life of voluntary submission and freely accepted servanthood. Submission and service function concurrently, so much of the practical outflow of submission will come in the next chapter (see below), but Richard Foster identifies seven acts of submission. The first is submission to the Triune God – we surrender our heart, mind and spirit into the hands of God. The second act of submission is to Scripture. We yield ourselves first to hear the Word, second to receive the Word, and third to obey the Word. We look to the Spirit who inspired the Scriptures to interpret the word and apply it to us. I think this is so important for Christians today – we need to read the Bible for ourselves and not rely on someone else telling us what it says.

Service: If true service is to be understood and practised, it must be distinguished clearly from 'self-righteous service'. Self righteous service comes through human effort – it is highly concerned about results and seeks human applause. Whereas true service comes from a relationship with the divine Other deep inside, it comes from whispered promptings and divine urgings. Energy is expended but it is not the frantic energy of the flesh. True service quietly and unpretentiously goes about caring for the needs of others.

#### Summary

It is clear that the Spiritual Disciplines are things that we do and we are cautioned to never lose sight of this fact. It is one thing to read about the Disciplines in theory, but if it doesn't somehow work its way into our experience and life situations than we have missed the point. Let us forever centre on Christ and view the Spiritual Disciplines as a way of drawing closer to his heart.

In the November newsletter I will share my reflections on the final part of the book – the corporate Disciplines of confession, worship, guidance, celebration.

*Jenny Marston*

**'Loving our neighbours' here in this country and throughout the world at Harvest Time**

During the Harvest service this morning, adults and children were invited to bring contributions of dried or tinned food to the front of the church, which will then be taken to the Whitchurch Food Bank.

All contributions of food and flowers brought to decorate the church will, as usual, be in the long room at the Harvest supper and donations made for these will be collected and sent to 'All we can' - the Methodist Relief and Development fund - along with the cash from the collection at the Harvest service.

If you were not able to contribute this morning, please could try and bring something for the Food Bank next week?

**Christian Aid Home Coffee and Tea Afternoon**

Briony will be hosting a coffee and tea afternoon at her home on Thursday 11th October from 2 - 4pm. There will be a short film plus Traidcraft goods on sale and delicious cakes!

There will be lifts to her house from the church car park at 2pm and 2.30pm. Further details in next week's pew news.

## **PRAYER REQUESTS**



Thank God for the many ways He continues to bless and encourage us at St John's. Give thanks that we can bring our prayers to Him, knowing that He will hear our prayers and answer them according to His great love and mercy.

Pray for those known to us personally who are in any kind of need: particularly members of St John's who are ill, housebound, in care, lonely or bereaved.

### **St John's**

Give thanks for all those serving St John's on the various committees/Church Council and pray that, as they meet during the near future (the Worship Committee meets on 25<sup>th</sup> September and the Church Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> October), they will seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit

Pray for the Pray-Think-Act meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> October that ideas and resources will be discussed that will help us all to be more intentional in our discipleship

Pray for all those people who are reading Richard Foster's book 'The Celebration of Discipline' that their studies may enrich their spiritual lives and help to walk even more closely with God

Pray for our children and young people as they begin a new academic year, that they will be helped to fulfil their God-given potential

Ask God to bless the various groups that meet at St John's – Parents and Toddlers, Network, the Music Group, the Tuesday Fellowship Group, the prayer meeting, Cafe Church – many of which will be starting up again after the summer break

Pray for a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit to help us become a praying church, a church that seeks God's will and purpose

### **Our nation**

Give thanks for God's mercy and provision in sustaining our nation

Give thanks for the many individuals, small groups and churches who are earnestly praying for our nation and ask God to help them persevere in faith so that their prayers will bear fruit in the life of our nation

Pray for the protection of family life in our nation and that each individual child becomes fully, without interference, what he or she is intended by the Lord to be

Pray for wisdom for our national leaders as they make decisions on our behalf, especially in regard to Brexit

### **Our world**

Pray for those parts of our world where there is conflict, that the Holy Spirit will enable world leaders to 'hear' each other and come together in a spirit of openness.

Pray that truth, righteousness and justice will prevail

Ask God to encourage and strengthen Christians who are being persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ

Give thanks for the work of Aid Agencies as they seek to help those suffering from the effects of natural disasters

Pray for revelation, restraint and wise action for Donald Trump. Ask God to grant him the humility to listen to wise advice

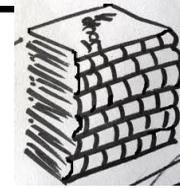
## **Winterley Brass Band**

*We are delighted that the Band come to perform at St. John's last night. We hope you enjoyed it. It is three years since they came to play for us, and last night they were just as good as ever! A special thanks to all those people who helped in any way!*

## Rotas for October+1

### Book Stewards

7th May Arthan  
14th Sheila Walwyn  
21st Mary Scott  
28th Wendy Proffitt  
4th Nov. Beryl Posniac



### Tea & Coffee

7th Pete & Elizabeth Shingler  
14th Nancy Millington & Chris Crowther  
21st Linda Jenkins & Sarah Lunt  
28th Eileen Grunner & Lynn Fowler  
4th Nov. Sue Davies & Jane Cliffe



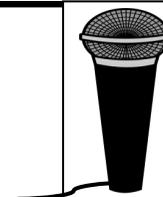
### Flowers

7th Harvest festival  
14th Audrey Holland  
21st Jean Craddock  
28th Lynn Fowler  
4th Nov. Joan Morgan



### Sound System Operators

7th Wendy Proffitt  
14th Jim Walwyn  
21st Gordon Davidson  
28th Mike Nimmo



## **Disabled Access – the end is in sight!**

I'm delighted to inform the church that, at long last, work is due to start on our Disabled Access Project. We have now satisfied all the many interested parties such as English Heritage, the Methodist Authorities in Manchester, Shropshire County Council along with many others.



Our architect has been working very hard to organise everything on our behalf. A contractor has been appointed, and we are all ready to go! We have received donations from many different bodies, and we are very grateful to all those who have given us their support.

We would not have been able to go ahead without the support of our Circuit, and, in particular. Sally Graham who has helped us tremendously. This project is part of the mission of our church – a huge leap forward to make our church fit for purpose. No longer will people be able to say that they didn't come to church or attend a function at church because they couldn't get into the building. From now on there will be access for everyone! The circuit has given us a huge donation towards our project as well as lending us a small amount to get us over the finishing line.

Last week we held very important meetings with ourselves, the Architect and the Contractors. There are still many details to be decided, but we will be to tell the church exactly what will be happening. Once the work begins and becomes a work site, no-one will have access to the church (whether you are a keyholder or not)

Special provision will have to be made for things like flowers and printers; if you have a special case please contact JRW who will liaise with the site foreman. We are all going to be inconvenienced in some way or other. We are hoping to hold a series of Afternoon Tea events when we can meet with the foreman who will update us as how the work is progressing. Parking will be limited and getting around the site may well be difficult. However, please don't stop coming to church! All will be well and it will all be worth it in the long run. Who shall we get to come and open our new facilities? Suggestions to me please! The work will take 12 weeks to complete. We are not sure whether the work will start before Christmas (unlikely) or after Christmas on 7th January 2019. Watch Pew News!

Although we are delighted that at long last, work is due to start, the reality is that we will still need to continue to raise money. We need not only to repay the loan to the Circuit, but we also need to raise money towards Phase Two, which, you will remember, is making the interior of this big Victorian building we use, fit for purpose as they say nowadays. We have big plans for the interior. It will need big money.

My thanks to all of you who supported our Brass Band Concert last night (6th October). Not only was it a very pleasant experience but it also helped us to raise vital funds towards our Refurbishment Goal.

Forward in Faith!

JRW

### Where did all the women go?

I recently had the opportunity to go and see the Exhibition of Primitive Methodism at Englesea Brook Museum and was left with the question -Where did the women go? The women were local preachers, evangelists, exhorters called by God to fulfil the great commission and share the Gospel of Christ to those that needed it. Whilst John Wesley had not previously encouraged women to be local preachers, in 1769 he was presented with the challenge of Sarah Crosby and later in 1771 supported her call to preach. Other women such as Mary Fletcher were by the late 1770's involved in local preaching. Records indicate that numbers recorded noted over 40 women in total (Gleave 2017).

Women were in the forefront of the Methodist work in the early 1800's, working within the poorest communities, helping, supporting and demonstrating the love of Christ through action.

The Methodist women were ahead of their time, practising the essence of Liberation Theology. They were there within the context of need, meeting with and empowering the poorest of the poor to enable change for themselves from within. One of the main features of Liberation Theology is the thought that God has a preference for the Poor; this is seen in Amos 5, where God is holding Israel to account for how the poor and needy are being treated and identifying the injustices against them by those with power and money.

The role that women undertook as local preachers within the Methodist Church was all to change in 1803 when women were banned from Local Preaching. The loss of these women may have been profound, not just to the local church and circuits but to the people they were helping through social enterprises such as Methodist schools, health and pastoral care of those in prison. It was with these social enterprises that Primitive Methodism was also associated.

In 1807, Mow Cop in Staffordshire became an important location for Primitive Methodism, when Hugh Bourne and William Clowes organised an open-air event drawing large crowds, thought to have been phenomenal in number possibly exceeding 100,000 who gathered to hear the Gospel preached. Due to previous political unrest and revolutions, large gatherings of people had been banned from coming together. John Wesley prior to his death in 1791 had stopped large gatherings of people to reduce the perceived threat that the Methodist Church may have conveyed with large crowds of people. The gathering at Mow Cop was the start of a revival within Methodist history within the local area with the beginnings of a congregation at Englesea Brook in 1811. It wasn't until 1828 that the Chapel was built.

Within Primitive Methodism women could preach and be itinerant up until the early 1840's. The change in this practice was due to the same rationale as the earlier changes made within Methodism – respectability was being sort and travelling

women preachers were not seen as respectable within a male dominated society. Large crowds were gaining attention from the authorities leading to Parliament trying to control travelling preachers from non-conformist background - Parliament tried to do this on two occasions in 1800 and 1811. In 1803 it was decided at Methodist Conference that there was no longer an active role for women preachers, and they were confined to speaking to female gatherings only if agreed by the local Methodist hierarchy.

Whilst women were not always given the opportunities to preach so openly as previously, their work continued in different ways -focusing on mission. With the start of the first World War, male preachers both ordained and lay were required to fight, leaving gaps within the local churches, that were filled with the female preachers stepping up to the task and holding the forts in the local churches. There is much history and many stories about women within Methodism and Primitive Methodism that played their part to raise standards for the poorest in society and make their voices heard, proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. Whilst I do not want to preach 130 times in 2 years like Ellen Webster or sail to America like Ruth Watkins or be nicknamed 'The praying Nanny' like Ms Anne Cutler (Gleaves 2017 and Manchester University Library), I hope that we as women preachers and members of local churches can stand up and speak out for justice and equality like Amos and other minor prophets did.

The Methodist Church has a rich history of women within Methodism. That history, that story continues today. Women have been ordained within the Methodist Church since the 1974 and continue to invest in their call and vocation. There may be times that women face objections to being in ministry at any level, both lay or ordained, but it is important to remember that it is Christ that has called us and Christ that enables us to do the role that He has called us to and that we too are part of the promise given in Joel chapter 2 v 28 and as given again in Acts chapter 2 v 17.

*“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.”*

If God is prompting you to get involved in the Church in any way, then please speak to our Stewards or Minister and explore what God is saying to you. You never know what adventure is about to start as you journey with Christ as your companion.

Gleave, M 2017 'An extraordinary Calling': Female Preaching in Primitive Methodism (1813- 67) The Ranter Digest Issue 15: Spring 2017

<http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/search-resources/special-collections/guide-to-special-collections/methodist/using-the-collections/researching-women-in-methodism/the-role-of-women-in-methodism/>

### **Regular Church Activities**

Mondays 9:30-11:30am: Parents & Toddlers (*Term time*)  
1st & 3rd Tues. 7.30pm: Fellowship at Queens Road  
1st & 3rd Thurs. 7.30pm: Prayer Group at Church  
Thursdays 7.00pm: Music Group Practice

### **Dates For Your October Diary**

3rd 7pm Church Council  
5th Decorating church for Harvest Festival  
6th 10am—12 noon: Coffee Morning & church open  
6th 7.30pm Winterley Brass Band Concert (*see notice*)  
7th 10.30am Harvest festival  
8th am— Toddlers Harvest  
8th 6.30pm Harvest Supper  
10th 10.30am –12 noon Ladies Coffee  
10th 2pm Bible Study at Church  
10th 7.30pm Pray, Think, Act meeting at the Manse  
15th 3pm Events Committee  
Tues.23rd 2pm Network: Talk by Jackie Hives  
25th 7.30pm Café Church

### **Other dates to note**

Sat 27th 10am– 3pm Yoxall Hall, Haslington: Craft Fair

### **Future Events**

2nd November 7pm Quiz & Fish and Chip Supper

### **November Newsletter**

Please let **Mike Nimmo** have all your submissions for the November 2018 Newsletter by 21st October.

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**Taxi for October**

7th	Sheila Latham
14th	Hazel Nimmo
21st	Jim Walwyn
28th	David Whiteley

**Spick & Spanners**

4th Chris Crowther, Dorothy Charlesworth  
& Lynn Fowler



18th Helen Trigg, Brenda Aumeer & Wendy Proffitt

**The Most Famous Bread & Cake  
Makers in Whitchurch!**

## **WALKERS**



**“Olde Worlde Charm”**

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