



DORE METHODIST CHURCH

SPRING 2021



The magazine of the church on the High Street.

Jottings from our Minister.

There is no doubt it's been a long, cold, difficult winter, but at last spring is here, and alongside the lighter evenings and spring flowers, there is brighter news as we navigate through our world of Covid -19.

A few days ago David and I took advantage of the slightly warmer weather to do some spring gardening. Neither of us would say we are expert gardeners, however we do like pottering around, keeping the lawn tidy, the bushes trimmed, and planting unpronounceable named plants! As we started the gardening David noticed some new growth in the rockery. To start with we couldn't work out where this small shrub had suddenly come from, and then remembered just after we moved here we brought a plant which didn't flourish and appeared to have died. We didn't get around to removing it for a while so, it was left sitting there sad and forlorn until eventually it was dug up and thrown away. Now as we started our spring gardening we realised that part of the plant had remained in the ground and a new one developed from it. This new one looks stronger and healthier, than the one we had planted previously, and we are currently watching it attentively as it grows again.



All this reminded me of one of the sayings of Jesus, where he commented that *"unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."* As we come to our Easter celebrations, coping for a second year with the effects of the Covid pandemic, I am left pondering at the many ways in which death and sadness can be transformed into beauty and new life. Easter is not about going back. It was, and still is, about all things new. Hope over despair, life over death.

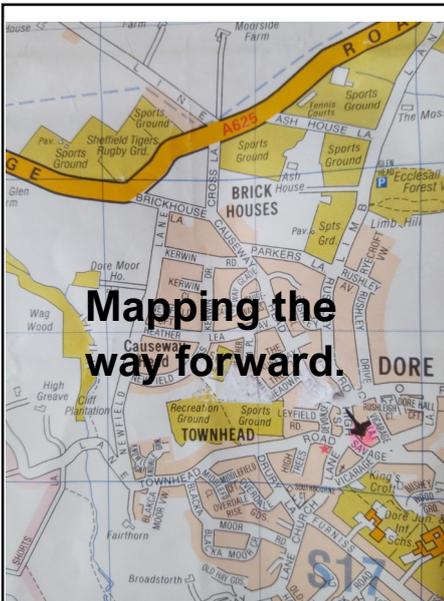
After so much suffering this last year, there has also been much heroism from key workers and NHS and this has touched us all. As we focus now on the coming months let us look forward with resurrection hope, ready to embrace new opportunities and as Timothy Dudley Smith says in his hymn "Past put behind us for the future take us – Lord of the years we bring our thanks today".

Happy Easter
Blessings

Gail.

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In common with most other churches and places of worship our building has been closed for the last year. But we have been active and alive in other ways – our Pastoral Team have maintained regular contact with all our members and made efforts to meet identified needs; we have produced and circulated a Weekly Update, which also included worship material for use at home; for those with internet access there have also been regular video messages from Gail, and in 2021 we started fortnightly services by “Zoom”: we decorated our church window for Advent and our magazine has kept going too: we have continued to support the Grace Foodbank: during Lent we have been able to join with friends from Totley Rise in a Lent course. For all this hard work we give grateful thanks.

Over the last year all of us have experienced changes and we may be longing to return to church with things exactly as they were previously. It is clear, however, that this may not be

possible for many reasons. Since January the Leadership+ Team has been considering what God is calling Dore Methodist Church to do as we come out of the pandemic. Is it possible, or right, just to pick up from where we were in March 2020 or is God moving us to consider being church in a new way?

A report was given to the Church Council meeting on 17th March and we are now sharing our thinking with our congregation and we want your views and comments. Given the news that Gail will be retiring in Summer 2022 there is an urgent need to address our future direction of travel in the next 6 months.

This is the start of a journey of discernment rather than the conclusion of a piece of work.

First a few facts:

- *We have 50 members and 14 Friends. Under 20 people are actively involved in leadership.*
- *Since the beginning of 2020 nine members and friends have died.*
- *In the last 19 years we have only made one new member but have welcomed some members who have transferred their membership to us.*
- *Our congregation is extremely generous, but the loss of members, together with reduction of rental income means that we are likely to use all our financial reserves in the next three years.*
- *We want to hold services in church as soon as it is safe to do so, but there is no clarity yet on when the 2-metre social distancing rule or the ban on singing will be lifted.*
- *The Sheffield Circuit are not making a Worship Plan until September so until then we will have to organise all our services. Also, after September there will be fewer Local Preachers available to lead services, so we will have to organise more ourselves.*
- *We know that Church run groups would like to start meeting, when possible, but there are practical problems for some groups.*
- *The external groups who use our building would like to return when all the restrictions have been lifted.*
- *We would like to have stronger Ecumenical links with others, but to date these have been limited.*
- *We need to expand and strengthen our current Leadership Team*

So in the light of all this information how do we move forward?

The Church Council considered and agreed the following

- Thinking realistically, over the next five years is our focus going to be about offering love and care (recognising the decline in numbers, age profile etc.) with regular traditional worship and fellowship groups, as well as engaging with and meeting the wider needs of the community, by giving different points of entry to explore faith?
- Do we stop running some/any of our existing church groups and replace them with a new group(s) offering friendship and fellowship to all, and explore the possibility of partnering with external agencies/charities to develop groups/activities for the local community?
- Do members of the Church Leadership Team meet with a similar group from Totley Rise Methodist Church to explore common issues and explore potential opportunities for the two churches to work more closely together?
- We need to focus on a small number of issues/activities and successfully deliver these, bearing in mind all the resource implications.

It was also agreed that all this information needed to be shared with the congregation so that everyone can give their views and comments. Normally we would have done this by a series of General Church meetings, but this is just not possible at the present time.

So its now over to YOU. Please prayerfully think about your ideas and suggestions on our way forward, and what you could offer. One of our Leadership+ Team will be in touch with you after Easter to get your comments.

Members of the Leadership+ Team:

Jackie and John Bailey, Bridget Ball, Eric Barraclough, Gail Hunt ,Margaret Millican , Nigel Thomas, Daphne and David Willie.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank you for all that our church means to us, and for those who Worship within it.

We pray for your guidance for the future as we move forward together to share your love and the joy of knowing the risen Lord Jesus with those around us.

Help us to discern the role of our church in the community in which we live.

Show us how to care for one another and keep in touch with their needs.

Teach us how to nurture and encourage others to use their gifts for your glory.

Guide us in the planning of our worship so that it may enrich and enliven the lives of all who attend.

We pray for all the members of our community; children, young people, families, the middle-aged and the elderly.

Surround us all with your love and fill us with your Holy Spirit so that we may go forward into the future with confidence, trusting in you.

In Jesus' name

Amen.

(Thanks to Janet and Eric Barraclough for this prayer picked up from a church they visited.)

Gwen Holmes.

We were saddened by the recent sudden death of Gwen. Alan has agreed that the eulogy used at her funeral service can be shared in our magazine.

"Gwen was born in Hillsborough in 1936. She had early memories of Air Raid warnings with searchlights in the sky and the drone of bombers flying over the city.

Her parents gave her a lovely upbringing with many holidays to Butlins, the Norfolk Broads and Derbyshire. With special memories of Tissington and the Stepping stones at Dovedale.

At 17 Gwen joined The Victoria Hall youth club, it was here where we first met. I did my national service, fortunately having several weekends at home to be together. We got engaged when Gwen was 21, we were married at 23, then bought our first home at 25. She was always a visionary, planning holidays, gardens, home improvements, almost anything with excellent ideas and imagination.

Telling me stories of her childhood Gwen would reminisce of going to support Sheffield Wednesday with her Dad as often as they could from an early age. They would walk from Grenoside to the Wednesday ground then home again all the way back up the hill. It was with her Dad where her keen interest in sport came. From playing tennis and roller skating as a child to bowls and badminton in the garden in later years. At the age 47 Gwen persuaded me to go skiing. We both enjoyed it so much that we carried on for a further nine years giving us many stories to tell and memories to share.

I would now like to read you some comments from our family.

Joanne says she was the heart of the family, she taught me how to bake, cook, sew and to knit. Giving me a love of nature, crafts and history. Encouraging us all to be adventurous, to try new things. But most of all, we must never give up. All with unconditional love and support.

Gill's memories of growing up at home were wonderful. A childhood with no worries, home was always full of fun and happiness. Having wonderful birthdays, Christmases and holidays which mum always made incredibly special. Mum taught me how to cook from an early age, to sew, knit and cross stitch. The love and support she showed over the years gave me the confidence to grow into the person I am today. Love that will stay with me forever.

Liz remembers being taught how to cross stitch. At Christmas fighting over the stuffing balls. Having a broken wrist once and Granny drying her pot with a hair dryer after getting it wet in the sea.

John remembers spending many weekends together during his school days. Cycling in the Manifold Valley and fishing on the Norfolk Broads. Knowing how proud she felt of his woodturning and woodwork. He always knew that Granny would be there for him whenever he needed her.

With five great grandchildren, Kieran, Liam, Callum, Sky and Autumn. All of whom have always loved coming to see Granny Sheffield. Telling stories of what they had been up to, showing pictures of their ponies, playing in the garden and looking at Granny's old maps.



My memories of Gwen are many. In earlier times we were continually active, having lots of holidays, camping and touring with the kids. Both seaside and countryside holidays, once even driving to Venice in our camper van, so many memories. After my retirement we bought a very comfortable touring caravan and enjoyed lots of long touring holidays around Europe.

But holidays were just a small part of Gwen. With a good sense of humour and always smiling. She was loving and loved, she listened, she cared.

Gwen was not a housewife or a stay-at-home mum she was a home maker. A home where everyone was loved, safe, welcome and wanted.

I was truly fortunate to have known Gwen.

She was so much more than my best friend; we were part of each other. Before, now and forever."

We continue to hold Alan and all the family in our prayers.

Easter Scramble

Can you unscramble these words? They are all related to Easter.

1. NMELIS ECKA
2. MLPA ADNYSU
3. OODG YFARID
4. TOH SCSOR NUSB
5. STOUNIP TLPEAI
6. 30 CSEPEI FO SRIVEL
7. MDAUYN YEOMN
8. AOOLGGTH
9. EHT ATSL PSRPEU
10. ASEMURELJ
11. UARABBSB
12. AYRM ELADANEMAG
13. RHETE ETMSI
14. DENOYK



Activities during lockdown.

Since Christmas we have experienced a further period of lockdown, and have had time on our hands to pursue different hobbies and pastimes. In our last magazine we had a number of book recommendations from David and Daphne. We know that a number of our members are developing their dissection skills (*doing jigsaw puzzles!*). No doubt others are rediscovering activities and pastimes from earlier days.

One person who has a longstanding passion for photography is John Doornkamp and we are grateful to him for sharing local pictures taken recently.



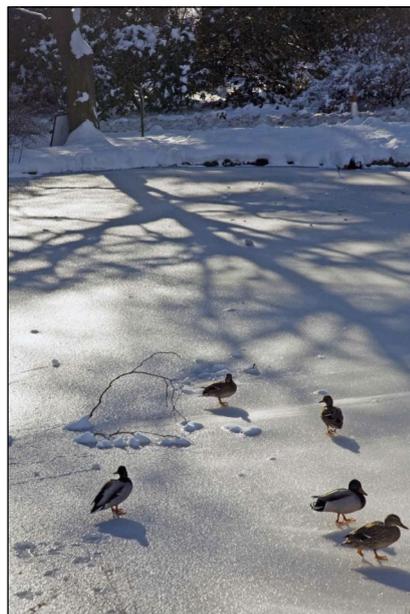
Blacka Moor Woods in winter.



Dore Church after sun rise



Vicarage Lane Snow



Frozen pond at Whirlow Brook Park

Shoebox appeal.

For a number of years we have supported an annual Christmas Shoebox appeal, filling shoeboxes with gifts for children around the world. There now follows a story from Samaritan's Purse website showing the final destination for some of the boxes they received last year:

Island with No Power, No Airport Receives Shoebox Gifts

Children on a remote island in the Pacific receive shoebox gifts and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The small island of E nubirr has no electrical power and no airport. Located in the central Pacific between the Philippines and Hawaii, E nubirr is part of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and home to just over 1,000 people. Most residents work on the neighboring island of Roi-Namur, which is leased to the U.S. government as a military base. Four churches dot the island—though, sadly, many lack a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.



Volunteers presented the Gospel to an eager crowd of children and parents before they distributed the shoebox gifts.

In early December 2020, a team of four set sail for E nubirr aboard Cloud Nine, a 57-foot ketch filled with 30 cartons of Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts. For six-and-a-half hours, the boat rocked across the sea until the team had traversed the necessary 40 miles with their precious cargo.

On Cloud Nine were Scott and Katie, a husband-wife missionary team to the Marshall Islands, as well Jim, a Fijian, and Frank, a Marshallese. Once they landed on E nubirr, they were joined by volunteers as well as four representatives from local churches who would host an Operation Christmas Child outreach event.

Kids Embrace the Gospel

Even though it was 85 degrees and extremely humid, 293 children gathered under a covered patio and waited patiently for the action to begin while parents huddled around the edges.



“We had a time of prayer prior to the event,” Katie said. “As we prayed, we just had this feeling to expect something amazing, so we were excited to get started.”

The team began with some Marshallese songs and then performed a skit before presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the eager crowd using colorful posters supplied by Samaritan's Purse. Next, the shoebox gifts were handed out, along with The Greatest Gift Gospel booklets.

One boy at the festive event was Randy, a 12-year-old boy who loves to play soccer. He desperately wanted a soccer ball of his own. But the most popular sports throughout the Marshall Islands are basketball and volleyball. His mother had diligently searched for a soccer ball to buy for him, but she was unable to find one. But God knew the desire of Randy's heart. When he lifted the lid of his shoebox, Randy was thrilled to find a soccer ball and pump of his very own!

“One of the local pastors, Antonio, said that this shoebox, for many, is the first gift that these kids have received that is just theirs,” Scott said. “They don't have to share—that is a big deal!” But as delighted as the outreach team was to see the children enjoying their gifts, they were even more excited and thankful to God for the spiritual fruit that came a short time later. “At the end of the programme,” Katie said, “we did an altar call where 131 kids accepted Christ!”

When we pack our shoeboxes we never know where they will end up or what the impact will be.

Vaccinations.

By now most of us will have received at least our first “jab” – quite a number will have had the second one. We may have had our jab at our local GP’s surgery or at a specially created vaccination centre (we know Gail travelled to the dizzy heights of Chesterfield for hers!), but none of us went to the local Methodist Church! The Revd. Dr. Joanne Cox-Darling explains how Trinity Methodist Church in Codsall (Wolverhampton Circuit) is offering faith, hope and love to its community as part of the national vaccination programme.

“I walked into one of our church buildings on Friday afternoon, armed with chocolate brownies. Every room was filled with people. The atmosphere was fizzing – a heady mixture of hope and needles.

Since early December, we have partnered with Seisdon Primary Care Network and the local CCG to provide a Covid-19 vaccine centre for South Staffordshire. When we are up to full capacity, 1000 people will walk through the doors every day.

For us as church, the rationale was two-fold. Firstly, we have a longstanding healing ministry. Offering a space for the vaccine, therefore, gives us a chance to share hope, good news, clinical excellence, and support the restoration of society. Secondly, we have invested long and hard in both the refurbishment and relationships necessary to being a venue which is open and accessible for the community. As a church, we have been exploring what it means to live out our calling as a ‘space to play, pray and heal.’ No-one expected the pandemic to be our Spirit inspired, God-given training ground. Yet this is where we find ourselves – inhabiting a space offering faith, hope, and love, at the coalface of a global pandemic.

Relationships.

For us, relationships are at the heart of our activity as a church for the community. We have engaged in a range of ways and activities to build relationships within the community. Since the first lockdown, we have sent a fortnightly delivery of chocolate brownies and doughnuts to medical practices (and local school staffrooms). This was intended as a classic piece of missional blessing – offering a gift into the community, without expectation of return.

The return initially came as one medical centre used our premises as a venue for flu clinics throughout the autumn and winter. The clinical staff got to know our building, and got to work out the processes and protocols required to get the maximum number of people through the building in a safe manner.

We have also been able to encourage our church members to get involved with part of our local community – including sitting on GP patient partnership committees, again a relationship which has secured our reputation as a place suitable for a vaccine centre.

In more recent weeks, we have built relationships with the wellbeing officers within the NHS, who have enabled us to be present for people who need a listening ear during their 15 minutes recovery. This has included chatting with carers and family members who are just relieved that there is hope for an end to separation; to providing links to the local foodbank for those who require a referral; to sitting with patients in tears as they describe this visit to a Methodist chapel as the first journey outside of their houses for nine months.

We see part of our job is also to make sure that we don’t read that last sentence too quickly.

Reputation.

As people take to social media to comment and complain about queues – and even phone the minister to request that we stop the snow (!) – there is the opportunity for the church building, and our volunteers, to make sure that the experience of patients and clinicians is one of welcome. We have tried hard to think about how to make the experience as safe, and as non-clinical, as possible. We are not, after all, a clinical venue. We are a Church.

With the Covid-19 signs pinned to almost every door and wall, it can be hard not to look like every other community facility. We continue to try and adapt our displays, walls, and even our toilet doors – as other ways to bless our guests whilst they are with us.

Behind the scenes, we are able to listen to staff who are working in the Centre in addition to their normally contracted hours. We are supporting volunteers and patients through offering spiritual care in addition to the social prescribing on offer from the NHS. Little of this would be possible 8



without our cleaner and caretaking volunteers, who continues to make sure that all of our users are safe and cared for.

Front of house, we have encouraged people to join the volunteer team. Some of the clinical staff are members in the wider circuit. We also try and carefully respond to the comment and criticisms, so that people are best prepared for the best possible experience. Whatever the weather. One favourite anecdote remains the Zoom Sunday worship which was interrupted by the delivery of 10000 syringes!

When many of us are still working out what church looks like when the building is closed – we are having to work out what church looks like when the congregation don't meet, but the building is very much open and perhaps 'on show' more than it has ever been (we also have a nursery on site, which remains open to local preschoolers). This impacts our congregation differently, and occasionally more painfully, than to the wider community.

Restoration.

There is no doubt that with the advent of the regulated vaccines, comes hope that a new normal is within our grasp. Offering the space for a Vaccine Centre enables us as a church building and community of faith, to hold that hope and offer that place for restoration – of society, of creation, as well as for individuals.

We are finally able to use our building for the restoration and healing of the world – and it is not a privilege we hold lightly. This is the calling of the kingdom of God, for which we are happy to get involved with.

The real story-keepers and miracle workers throughout this are the hundreds of medics and volunteers who are at the start of this vaccine marathon. They deserve every chocolate brownie and prayer we are able to offer to them – and that is absolutely our privilege.”

One arm at a time, together, we are offering hope which will change the world.

(Reproduced from the Methodist Church Website. Written in February 2021.)



Christian Aid Week

10-16 May 2021

In Kenya, extreme weather is making it harder and harder to survive. For communities fighting the climate crisis, every last drop matters and every last one of us can help them thrive. The coronavirus pandemic has only increased the urgent need for families to access a reliable source of water.

The devastating climate crisis robs people of the water and food they need to live.

Rose walks for six hours to fetch water for her grandchildren. She tries hard to give them the kind of life she remembers from when she was a girl: when the rivers flowed with water and the crops bore fruit.

Rose and her grandchildren shouldn't have to go hungry. A simple earth dam, built with the help of Christian Aid's partners and your donations, could completely change her life. This Christian Aid Week, you can be one of the hundreds of thousands of our supporters who give, act and pray to stop this climate crisis driving people like Rose to hunger.

More information on how we will be able to support Christian Aid Week this year will be in our Weekly Updates.





Due to Coronavirus Covid-19
we are currently closed for our usual
Morning Worship on Sunday mornings.
Our building also remains closed for all activities.
But we worship via “Zoom” on a fortnightly
basis. See our “Weekly Update” for more information.
Our “Weekly Update” also includes worship material
for use at home.



This magazine can also be found in the pages of
our church website alongside up to date
information about our church services, weekly
updates, events and lots more!

Visit us at www.doremethodist.org.uk

DORE METHODIST CHURCH

You will find Dore Methodist Church a place of WELCOME, BELONGING and
BELIEVING, ACCEPTANCE, SUPPORT, LOVE, FORGIVENESS and a place of
COMMUNITY with caring people who will help you discover more of God’s love
and purpose for your own life.

Minister:

Rev. Gail Hunt

Tel: 0114 236 0772



Church Stewards:

Nigel Thomas

Jackie Bailey

Dore Methodist Church,
High Street
Dore,
Sheffield S17 3GU

We hope that you have enjoyed reading this edition of our magazine.

Our “Weekly Update” includes worship material for the forthcoming Sunday.

Contributions for each should be sent to John Bailey by email at john.bailey23a@btinternet.com or by phoning (0114) 235 1085.

All items for the “Weekly Update” are needed by TUESDAY evenings.