

Good-News Desk!

The Magazine of Tylers Green Methodist Church



Minister:
Rev. Vida Foday

New Series No. 143



February 2020



God has seen us through last year and brought us safely into this New Year, with a month gone by so quickly, and for that we thank Him. We are grateful to be alive to see each other's face. Yes, it is wonderful to be alive, and deep feelings of appreciation often well up within us, but we must always centre our devotion on the One who not only provides the air we breathe but also gives us eternal life through faith in Christ. God cares for us and we trust Him to see us through this new year. As Christians, we need to keep our eyes focussed on the 'Cross' – which is the centre of our faith, and pray for an increase in faith to enable us resist all the temptations that we may be faced with not only this year but always.

Little Jeff was trying his best to save money to buy his mother a present. It was a terrible struggle because he gave in so easily to the temptation to buy goodies from the ice-cream man whenever the brightly coloured van came through the neighbourhood. One night after his mother had tucked him in bed, she overheard him pray, "Please God, help me run away when the ice-cream man comes tomorrow". Even at his young age he had learned that one of the best ways to overcome temptation is to avoid what appeals to our weaknesses. All believers are tempted to sin, yet we need not give in. The Lord provides

the way to be victorious over evil enticements (1 Cor. 10.13), but we must do our part. Sometimes that involves avoiding situations that would contribute to our spiritual defeat.

Consider the following comment by an athlete: 'In bad weather I get my exercise on a treadmill – but it's so boring! When the odometer says I've walked a mile, I've actually gone nowhere.'

Life without God is like being on a treadmill. Generations come and go. The sun rises and sets day after day, year after year. The wind follows a repetitive course as it blows and swirls over the earth. Rivers flow into the sea, but it is never full. Like these natural occurrences, life is always moving but never arriving, always encountering changes but never finding anything really new. People without God are without hope. How different for those who know God! Yes, they too sometimes experience routine, monotony, and difficulty, but instead of being on a treadmill they are on a journey.

May the Lord be praised for keeping us alive and may He strengthen our faith to enable us resist temptation and follow Him.

Let us we reflect on the following words of Charles Wesley's hymn:

And are we yet alive,
And see each other's face?
Glory and praise to Jesus give
For his redeeming grace!

Let us take up the cross,
Till we the crown obtain;
And gladly reckon all things loss,
So we may Jesus gain. (H&P 707: vv 1 & 6)

Every Blessing

Vida

Diary and Notice Board - February 2020

PETER HOWARTH

At our Local Arrangement on 1st March we will celebrate and remember the life of Peter Howarth. The service will be led by Peter Stevens and others. If you would like to take part in the service by sharing memories please let Peter know.

MONDAY BIBLE STUDY FELLOWSHIP: The meeting on **3rd February** will be at 3 Green Street (not as previously arranged at Angela Singleton's home). Unfortunately Rev'd Angela is unable to lead our studies that day. Please let Rosemary have ideas and suggestions as to what we could study on that occasion.

Monday, 17th February @ 2.30 pm - Meeting at 131 Cedar Avenue and led by Rev'd Angela Singleton. All are welcome.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY: The February meetings will be on the **12th and 26th** at 3.45 pm in the church lounge. If you are interested in learning and understanding more about the Bible, please do come and join our small group.

FEBRUARY COFFEE MORNING - SATURDAY, 8th @ 10.00 am:
Ann Dickenson has very kindly offered to do another of her musical quizzes. Come along and enjoy the fun - we always have a good time!

LENT LUNCH

Book the date: Saturday, 14th March at 12.30pm. Note the new time for the lunches to help those attending more than one.

FOOD HYGIENE COURSE

The Circuit has arranged a Basic Food Hygiene course taking place on Saturday, March 21st 2020, to be run by one of the local Environmental Health Officers. This is a 5-6 hour course and there are two spaces allocated for each church in the Circuit. The course is being funded by the Circuit so there is no cost. If anyone is able to attend please speak to Rosemary.

Nelson Mandela – freed 30 years ago

Nelson Mandela, who led the movement to end South African apartheid, was released from prison 30 years ago this month, on 11th February 1990. He became President of South Africa in 1994.

Mandela had been involved with the African National Congress since 1944, advocating non-violent resistance. But after the Sharpeville massacre of peaceful demonstrators in 1960, he helped organise a paramilitary branch of the ANC.

He was arrested for treason in 1961 but was acquitted. He was arrested again in 1962 for illegally leaving the country, then again in 1964 on charges of sabotage. The same year he was sentenced to life in prison.

When F W de Klerk became President in 1989, as part of the shift away from apartheid he lifted the ban on the ANC, and then ordered Mandela's release. In 1993, Mandela and de Klerk were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Mandela was raised as a Methodist and had strong Christian convictions, which he rarely aired in public for fear of alienating those who did not believe. In 1999 he said: "Without the church, without religious institutions, I would never have been here today ... Religion was one of the motivating factors in everything we did."

Charity collections

Most will know that Tesco, Loudwater collected for Action for Children in December through their blue token scheme. At the time of writing, Waitrose in Beaconsfield are similarly collecting green tokens to raise funds for both One Can and Wycombe Homeless Connection.

Margaret Newman

Some of you will remember Margaret Newman as a local preacher in the High Wycombe Circuit. Subject to Conference confirmation, Margaret will be serving as a probationer minister in Luton in the South Bedfordshire Circuit from September.

One loving heart sets another on fire. – Augustine

Ash Wednesday: My memory of the Passover in Jerusalem by David Winter

At the end of this month Ash Wednesday introduces the Christian preparation for Easter, which normally coincides with Passover, the major Jewish celebration of the year. It's near Easter because Jesus was crucified at Passover, having just shared this very meal with his disciples.

Passover celebrates and recalls the Israelites' escape from slavery in Egypt. Led by Moses they crossed the Red Sea and 40 days later entered the 'Promised Land.' They shared the Passover meal at their last night in Egypt and have kept it all for nearly the past three thousand years or so that have followed.

Many years ago, when I was in Jerusalem to produce a radio programme, I was invited to join a Jewish family for their Passover meal. It was a great occasion, very like our Christmas, a family event with deep religious significance for those who seek it.

At the meal in Jerusalem we ate modest lentils and unleavened bread – Matzos as we now call it. We also drank plenty of wine but not from the cup at the end of the table. That is 'Elijah's cup', only to be drunk from when the prophet comes to announce the arrival of the Messiah. At the last supper Jesus instructed His disciples to drink from that cup after supper, which may have shocked them at the time. The Messiah had come!

I believe, help my unbelief

By Tony Horsfall of Charis Training (www.charistraining.co.uk)

I was in a discussion recently as to whether or not a Christian can have doubts. The father in Mark's story (9:17-27) speaks for many people. He knew that Jesus *could* heal his son, but just wasn't quite sure *if* He would.

Doubt comes in many forms. It may be intellectual, a form of wrestling with the truth of certain key Christian beliefs like the Virgin Birth or the inerrancy of the Bible. It may be philosophical, a pondering of the problem of evil and why God allows bad things to happen to good people. Sometimes it is spiritual, and doubting whether or not we are saved. Occasionally it is emotional, wondering if we are loveable, if we have any worth or value in God's sight.

Such doubts are painful and debilitating, but true faith does not exclude the possibility of doubt. Indeed, we could say that faith would not be faith if there was not an element of doubt!

Often doubt is a way by which we discover the truth in a deeper way as we wrestle honestly with the questions we have. For many it is a way by which faith grows and matures, leading us to a greater understanding of the mystery of God and the reality that with our finite minds we can never understand everything about God or the way in which He works.

Doubt is not the same as unbelief, which is a stubborn refusal to believe what the Bible says to be true. Doubt is more a normal part of faith development and is not to be feared, especially if we bring our questions to God.

The great Methodist minister Dr William Sangster was asked if he ever doubted. "Yes," he replied, "of course I have doubts. But I also doubt my doubts!"

The Rev Paul Hardingham considers self-discipline during Lent.

Lent Fasting

This month sees the start of Lent, the season of penitence, self-examination and fasting running up to Easter. Fasting can be a neglected discipline, but it plays an important part in the Christian life. Jesus began His earthly ministry by fasting in the wilderness for 40 days and He taught His disciples to fast (i.e. not *if* but *'when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen.'* (Matthew 6:17,18).

Why Fast?

Firstly, giving up something in my life underlines my desire to put God first in my life. Secondly, fasting shows me how much I depend on things other than God in my life, so I can surrender my idols to Him. Thirdly, fasting encourages me to have a deeper hunger and dependency for God in my life. Therefore, fasting gives me space to humbly focus on God for His strength, provision, and wisdom and results in a more intimate relationship with Christ. It also enables the Holy Spirit to reveal my true spiritual condition, leading to brokenness, repentance, and a transformed life, with a heart more attentive to God.

How can I fast?

Usually fasting involves missing one or two meals during the day, although some can't abstain from food for medical reasons. It might also include abstaining or limiting the time I give to television, alcohol or social media. However, Lent can also be a time to embrace new spiritual disciplines e.g. joining a study group, 'random acts of kindness', or giving more time to prayer and Bible study. Whatever you do, make Lent count this year!

'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.' (Matthew 5:6).

WYCOMBE HOMELESS CONNECTION

Wycombe Homeless Connection need a regular supply of equipment, lots of food, and most importantly, plenty of reliable volunteers in order to keep the facility open to those in need. The organisation and resources required are considerable.

Any offers of help from those of you who are not already involved would be welcomed. Wesley does a great thing in opening its doors.

Thank you to all who have supported Wycombe Homeless Connection over the years, and in particular to some key members of our congregation who were involved in setting the charity up and ensuring Wesley was part of the rota. Long may it continue! For full details of how WHC works in our community please see their Annual Report.

Psalm 23 Garden coming to RHS Chelsea ⁶

The Bible Society has announced that “We’re absolutely thrilled to be working with award-winning garden designer Sarah Eberle, to bring Psalm 23 to life at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in May 2020!”

The Psalm 23 Garden at RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2020, designed by Sarah Eberle, will offer visitors the chance “to stop, reflect, and feel refreshed”.

The Bible Society said: “This powerful psalm, with its visual imagery of green pastures, still waters and the valley of the shadow of death, just cries out to be turned into a garden.

“We hope you’ll love it. And after the Chelsea Flower Show, the garden will find a permanent home at the Winchester Hospice in Hampshire, where it will be a blessing to patients and families.”

The Bible Society says it is also hoping that people will “join us in creating community gardens across the country inspired by the Psalm 23 Garden. You can do this outside your office, in your school grounds, or in your churchyard. Let’s get gardening!”

“You can follow the project on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and join us on the road to Chelsea.”

From our C of E Parish Pomp friends

Advice given by a Verger to a visiting preacher: "You'll 'ave to shout very loud in this 'ere church, Vicar. The agnostics are somefink terrible!"

Lost in translation

Two American preachers were visiting in Germany and attended Sunday services. Since they couldn't speak German, they decided to do as the man sitting in front of them did.

A few minutes into the service the preacher from the pulpit said something and the man in front of them stood, and they stood also. The congregation burst into laughter. They then sat down when the man did.

At the end of the service, they met the pastor and found that he spoke English. They asked him why everyone laughed so much when they stood?

The pastor explained that he had announced that they would have a christening service that evening, and would the father of the child please rise.

Thought for the month

Life is too short for us
to do everything we want
to do;
but it is long enough for
us to do everything God
wants us to do.

Anon



"Pancake party?" said Simon,
"What Pancake Party?"

A prayer for humility

O God, since you created everything we can see, hear and touch, may we constantly acknowledge your bounty. And since you sustain everything we can see, hear and touch, may we always be mindful of your strength. Thus, may we walk the path of life with a spirit of humility, knowing that in all things we depend on you.

This little prayer is as valid today as it was when written in the Mozarabic Sacramentary in the 3rd century.

Do you remember (No.1)

When I first became a Methodist, the Holy Communion Service was never integrated into the Sunday Service. Instead, at the end of the morning, afternoon or evening service the blessing was given and those not staying for the Communion Service left.

A separate service then took place and invariably followed the liturgy set out in the 'Book of Offices' where it was also referred to as 'The Lord's Supper.'

There was a further offering during Communion, this time 'for the poor.' Indeed, many chapels had collection boxes for the poor just inside the church and any coins (nearly always coins) in the box were added to the offerings made during the Communion Service. These gifts were used by the local church for a variety of charitable purposes.

Peter S



And finally...

Love in a bag

I asked my nephew whether he bought his wife anything for Valentine's Day, and he said he had bought her a belt and a bag. When I commented that I am sure she would appreciate them, he agreed: "Yes, and hopefully the vacuum cleaner will work better now."

CHURCH DIRECTORY

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Minister: Rev. Vida Foday* - 📞 562788 (Vida's day off is Friday)

Worship Leaders: Geraldine Nelson* and Chris Oxby*

Senior Church Steward/LP : Peter Stevens*— 📞 815256

Church Stewards:

Toyin Akinwale— 📞 817792

Martin Hellewell— 📞 816168

Geraldine Nelson – 📞 815631

Chris Oxby – 📞 814982

Communion Stewards

Angela Davis — 📞 928535

Rosemary Newman — 📞 461492

Jenny Crayford — 📞 812546

Church Treasurer : Geraldine Nelson - 📞 815631

Church Council Secretary: Sue Horley Sue.horley1@gmail.com

Room Bookings: Geraldine Nelson – 📞 815631

Pastoral & First Steps: Rosemary Newman— 📞 461492 and Christine Stevens - 📞 815256

Property : Peter Stevens— 📞 815256

* Church Leadership Team

Church Premises

Please mention anything requiring attention to any of the
Property Stewards: Peter and Christine Stevens,
Martin Hellewell or Rosemary Newman.

**ITEMS FOR THE MARCH GOOD NEWS DESK TO PETER BY
FRIDAY, 14TH FEBRUARY PLEASE**

We are grateful to Parish Pump for providing some of the content of
Good News Desk



SERVICES DIARY - SERVICES AT 10.45 a.m. unless otherwise stated.

Date	Preacher/Service Details	Vestry Steward	Org	Welcome Stewards <small>If you are unable to do your turn please arrange cover!</small>
2nd Feb	Rev Vida Foday	Geraldine	No	Christine Stevens & Jenny Crayford
9th	Rev Vida Foday (Holy Communion)	Toyin	Yes	Angela Davis & Chris Oxbpy
16th	Rev Alan Bolton	Martin	Yes	Christine Stevens
23rd	Pam Sweet	Chris	No	Margaret Hallam & Rosemary Newman
1st March	Local Arrangement Remembering Peter Howarth			Christine Stevens and Jenny Crayford

Please pray for Marion Howarth and family, and for Peter Green as he prepares for his second operation. Please pray for the Wycombe Homeless Connection's Night Shelter in this middle month of providing food and a bed for those living on the streets of High Wycombe.