

Good-News Desk!

The Magazine of Tylers Green Methodist Church



Minister:
Rev. Vida Foday

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ONLINE



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The year 2020 will not easily be forgotten by humankind all over the world due to the coronavirus pandemic, as many lives were lost all over the world. Sadly, the global pandemic persists in this New Year, with new variants of the virus spreading fast - resulting in a high level of infection all over the world. The knock-on effect is countless: ranging from Health care staff being over-stretched, unemployment, poverty, homelessness as well mental health issues on the rise and many more. Nations are struggling with their economies, places of learning and worship closed on and off during Lockdowns; with many people wondering where God is in all this. The assurance is that God is still present with us even in these uncertain times. It is worth mentioning that the manufacturing of various vaccines across the globe has brought about some hope to the world - thanks to the scientists across the world. There now appears to be 'light at the end of the tunnel' as the various vaccines are now being rolled out across the world. With God's help, we shall overcome this pandemic.

As is the norm - we, the Methodists, renew our covenant relationship with God annually in services in January, or for some congregations - in September (the start of the Methodist year). "Through the words of the Covenant Prayer, we desire, by God's help, actively to do or patiently to accept whatever is God's will for us." (MWB p281). In summary, we pray to God to empower us through the Holy Spirit for His service. In serving God, we 'do good to all' as John Wesley men-

tioned in the four ‘Alls’ of Methodism’ namely: (all need to be saved, all may be saved, all may know that they are saved, and all may be saved to the uttermost); for if we devote our lives under the direction of the Holy Spirit we will reap an eternal harvest. Unfortunately, Churches in the Circuit have had to close and reschedule their Covenant Services due to the escalation of the new variant of the virus.

Time flies! It seems like yesterday when the birth of Christ was celebrated at Christmas – (a Christmas like no other due to government restrictions)! Since then, we have almost sailed through the Epiphany stories in the Lectionary B readings, with the Transfiguration story following soon on the 14th of this month, after which we will be heading towards the Lenten period.

One of the Gospel readings used in preparation for Lent in “Ash Wednesday” services, is Matthew 6:1: “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.”

Lent is clearly a time for secrets when we seek to grow inwardly and increase our measure of grace and holiness; the secrets that are known only to ourselves and our Heavenly Father.

John Wesley called them the means of grace: prayer, reading the Scriptures, fasting, acts of kindness aimed at justice etc.

Lent is about blessing, about walking closely with the Lord, about growing in spiritual maturity and depth.

May the Lord walk with us through Lent, towards the season of Easter - a season of resurrection.

With love and every blessing!

Vida

Testimony Faith Homes:

Thought for the beginning of Lent

The devil wrestles with God, and the field of battle is the human heart. –

Fyodor Dostoevski

I have written out a cheque today for £259 for Testimony Faith Homes. I am thrilled to bits with this , and want to thank you all for your generosity to this needy charity. We collected £159 from your donations and £100 came from Church Funds. Well done everyone!

Geraldine Nelson
Treasurer.

Weekly Services in our Circuit.

Did you know that you can catch up with our Sunday Services at any time of the week? The circuit service from Marlow is streamed every Sunday at 10.30 am on this link:

http://www.marlowmethodistchurch.org.uk/service_live/index.php.

If you miss it then you can catch up on the Marlow Methodist Church Facebook page.

If you are not 'on Facebook' you can still watch the Wesley Service. It is streamed live at 10.30 am on Sunday mornings on this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0G1DdgptnR-2wRKgjwiW3A>.

If you miss the Wesley Service 'live' all previous services can be viewed on the same Youtube link.

Both services feature people from around the Circuit and several Tylers Green members have taken part in the Marlow services whilst both Vida and Peter have led the worship at Wesley. Most recently Peter's second Wesley service was recorded at Tylers Green on the Sunday when we had such heavy snow.

The thing I find most interesting about the Wesley services is that Youtube logs how many people are watching (!) the interesting thing is that whilst 20-30 people are watching when I tune in on a Sunday morning, by the end of the week it has been viewed perhaps 70-100+ times.

Editor: Canon Paul Hardingham considers the temptations of Jesus.

How to handle temptation

'I can resist everything but temptation' (Oscar Wilde). During Lent we remember Jesus' experience in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11), when *'He was led by the Spirit.. to be tempted by the devil.'* (1). Temptation is a test of *obedience*, whether we do things our way or God's way. After 40 days of fasting Jesus was tired, hungry and vulnerable. Like Him, the Devil will attack us at our most vulnerable moments, especially during this pandemic.

The first temptation was to turn stones into bread: Jesus' ministry was not about meeting His own needs, but being nourished by God's word. *'We do not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'* (Deuteronomy 8:3). Like Jesus, we are called to make God our priority and trust Him completely.

The second temptation was to put God to the test: Jumping off the Temple pinnacle would have been a dramatic way for Jesus to gain popularity, but this is not God's way! *'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'* (Deuteronomy 6:16). We too need to learn this lesson!

The third temptation was to worship Satan: Finally, the devil took Jesus to a mountain to offer Him worldly power. In contrast, His calling as Messiah was marked by suffering and honouring God. *'Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only'* (Deuteronomy 6:13). This is often our experience in living for God.

Jesus stands with us in our temptations. As we claim the promises of Scripture, we will find strength in the power of the Spirit and the victory of the Cross.

An exam for R.E. asked the following question: 'What does a Bishop do?'

One pupil wrote: 'Move diagonally across the board.'

By the Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle.

Do your days rush by at a hectic pace?

Have you ever stopped to think that your mobile phone and emails have not given you *more* time? Just *more things to do* in the same amount of time.

We leave our messages in one place while we take our bodies elsewhere. Instead of doing one thing after another, we shoot out a variety of tasks, and then swoop down on them later, needing to deal with them all at once.

In a four-minute clip from a street scene from an old Orson Welles film and a similar clip from a more recent film, you will see an amazing difference. In the early film, the camera records ‘real time’ – people get out of their cars, walk across streets, wait for lights, speak to other people, enter a bank. In the more recent film, a similar sequence was reduced to a half a dozen quick cuts. Transition time was eliminated.

Modern life teaches us that ‘down time’ is wasted. Time is money. So mobile phones, emails, etc, enable us to ‘waste’ less time. The tempo of cultural life picks up, the heartbeat of daily life races, and our own body rhythms respond with adrenaline, cramped muscles and heart attacks.

To take time out for daily prayer, for a quiet walk that is not to the next meeting, for daydreaming or for Bible study becomes a cross-cultural act. Following Christ, waiting on Him, is a countercultural act.

One lovely biblical phrase is ‘in the fullness of time, it came to pass’. This suggests four things: that time crests like a wave; that there is a right moment for things to happen; that it’s not ours to plan that moment, but to recognise it; and that we are not the primary agents of what happens in the world.

So, feel free to accept God’s offer of rest when you are weary; receive each moment of your life as a gift from God’s hand; pray to discern what each new encounter you make requires of you, and freely entrust everything else to God’s care.

(Revd Dr Herbert McGonigle puts it so well, particularly the 2nd and the last two paragraphs. - Peter Stevens)

God for All

Readers have received, through two earlier articles in Good News Desk, information about The Methodist Church five-year programme of evangelism called God for All. There has also been a special Zoom meeting to learn about the programme from Circuit representatives.

Since then, there has been a poorly attended Zoom meeting to begin to explore what our church needs to do to embrace the programme which is designed to reach out to the community and the marginalised as well as reviewing what we can do and what might have to be put aside in order to do it. In fairness, this Zoom meeting was held at 9.30 am when it may not have been possible for some to attend, but it still resulted in a lively discussion.

To move things forward there is to be a letter from our minister to all our members and regular worshippers setting out our thoughts to date and we ask everyone, and we mean everyone, to start to think about how we can respond to God for All and to let us know your views.

When you get your letter, please consider it carefully. The first year of the programme is a year of prayer, but it is also a year of opportunity and your views are valued. Please get involved.

Peter Stevens on behalf of Vida and the Leadership Team

And finally ...

Seen on a birthday card:

Forget about the past,
You can't change it.
Forget about the future,
You can't predict it.
Forget about the present,
I didn't buy you one.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

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Minister: Rev. Vida Foday— 📞 562788

Worship Leaders: Geraldine Nelson and Chris Oxby

Senior Church Steward: 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 - 📞 812088

Room Bookings: Geraldine Nelson – 📞 815631

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

Property : Peter Stevens— 📞 815256

Property matters: For the moment speak to Peter or Geraldine.

Online Good-News Desk

Items and information for the March Good-News Desk should reach Peter Stevens by 15 February 2021. Please email psredkite@googlemail.com or 📞 815256

Note: Some items in Good-News Desk are included by subscription to Parish Pump—the resource site for Church Newsletters.

A prayer in the time of the pandemic

Dear Father God,

You promise to hear us when we come to you in prayer, thank you! We so need Your listening ear at this time – and your help, Lord.

Winter always brings challenges, but this winter is exceptional as the effects of the pandemic continue. When we are afraid, or lonely, or grieving, or in despair, help us to trust You and to know that You are with us in the middle of it all, sustaining us. You are not social-distancing, You are very, very close, full of love and compassion.

We pray for our National Health Service and ask for Your special strength and protection for all staff. Thank you for the skills You have given to scientists all over the world. Thank you for the hope which the vaccines now bring. Most of all thank You for the hope which Jesus brings. This earthly life is a whisper in the light of eternity and Jesus is the key to that eternal life. Thank You, Father, for meeting all our needs in Jesus. Amen.

By Daphne Kitching (adapted)

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