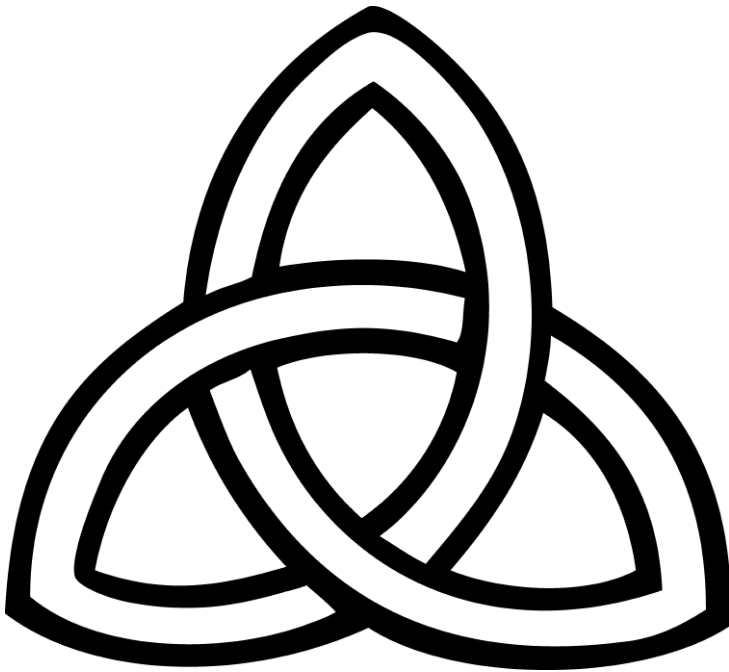


# THE LINK

The Magazine of Portsmouth  
Methodist Church



May 2021

Minister - Rev. John Mills - Tel. 02392 731858

[www.portsmouthmethodists.org.uk](http://www.portsmouthmethodists.org.uk)

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

By the time you read this I will be on sabbatical. I mention that not as a reminder to contact the lead stewards or Rev. Elize Goddess for anything whilst I'm away (but please do that!), but as inevitably I am thinking about change. Firstly, a change for me over these three months, a change (as good as a rest?) for the churches, as I won't be pestering you for three months, and a chance for all of us to look to the future. Whilst I'm away the Circuit process will begin to assess what will happen when I move on.

I'm writing this in the week after the death of the Duke of Edinburgh. At that time a couple of people had mentioned to me that they had been greatly affected, not because they knew him personally but because he had been a constant feature in their lives. In particular, being of a similar generation, their lives have marched to a similar rhythm of growth, family, ageing. There was that which was unspoken too.

These things are reminders that we live in a world of change but also of continuity or rather repeated rhythm. The seasons come and go each year with the same pattern. The church year progresses through Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and so on. Each year finds us changed, subtly or dramatically, either in ourselves or by our surrounding circumstances.

This is the way life is, summed up beautifully by the writer of Ecclesiastes in that poetic passage in chapter 3 "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven". Well worth reading if you haven't done so for a while.

The repeated seasons however tell us that we are part of something much bigger. When we look at the stars, we know that our earliest ancestors saw the same night sky, and that the wonder of creation and the eternity of time are both evidence of God's love – "the heavens declare the glory of God, the skies proclaim the work of his hands" – Psalm 19. The greatest wonder though may be, as the old hymn writer put it, "I cannot tell why he, whom angels worship, should set his love upon us, now or then". It is a love so profound that at the cross we see the one moment when the eternal unity of the Trinity, the Trinity which holds together all that that has ever been or will be, is broken for the only

time, and happens for love of us. Sam Wells in his brilliant new book “A cross at the heart of God” puts it like this – “At the central moment in history, Jesus the incarnate Son of God, has to choose between being with the Father or being with us. And he chooses us. At the same time the Father has to choose between letting the Son be with us or keeping the Son to himself. And he chooses to let the Son be with us. That’s the choice on which our eternal destiny depends. That’s the epicentre of the Christian faith. That’s our very definition of love”.

Worth pondering for at least three months. See you in July.

John

### ***Missioner update***

On Friday April 16th, interviews were held for the Development Worker post; a post to do some of the preparatory research and preparation for the District-led missioner project in Portsmouth. A very good candidate was offered the job, subject to references. Hopefully, by the time you read this, the appointment has been fully confirmed and the start date has been confirmed. Over the next few months, we'll get to know them and be able to help in their research as they compile the information and supporting evidence for the project.

### ***Confirmation into Membership***

On Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April, Suzanne Cunningham was confirmed into Membership of Portsmouth Methodist Church during a service of Holy Communion at our Trinity centre.

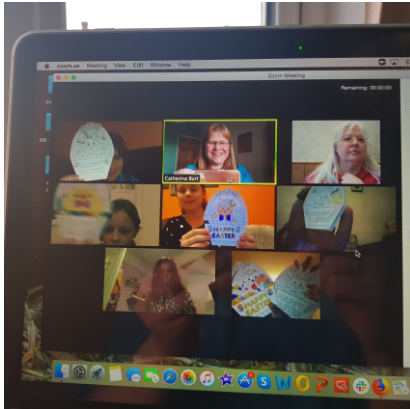
Suzanne and her husband Peter have been worshipping at Trinity for some years and we are delighted to welcome Suzanne into membership.

### ***Around our Centres***

#### ***Girls' and Boys' Brigade update***

8th Portsmouth Girls' Brigade (GB) and 4th Portsmouth Boys' Brigade (BB) both met online during the third lockdown but will be back face-to-face by mid-May at Copnor.

Although meeting on Zoom wasn't the same as seeing each other face-to-face, both the children and leaders still had lots of fun! The girls looked at the Easter story, pictured are some of them showing the Easter cards they decorated, and also Living Well, which included healthy eating and fitness. Topics the boys looked at included pirates, Australia, stories, and LEGO.



Some of 8th Portsmouth Girls' Brigade members and leaders also enjoyed a Zoom puppet making workshop led by Splodge Designs in March. Paper and card creations included lizards, cats, whales and monsters!

*(Brigades do ZOOM)*

### ***Preachers for May***

<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>Copnor</i></b>	<b><i>Eastney</i></b>	<b><i>Trinity</i></b>
2nd May	Rev. Bill Stillwell Holy Communion	Local Arrangement	Local Arrangement
9th May	Mr Danny Miller	Rev Dr Beryl Wright	Mrs Fran Jenkins
16th May	Mr Chris Stratta Leprosy Mission	Gathering for Worship	Mrs Shirley Haynes
23rd May	Gathering for Worship	Mrs Shirley Haynes	Local Arrangement
30th May	Mrs Milly Aquillina- Gray  Zimbabwean Fellowship Zoom Service	Rev. Bill Stillwell	Mrs Shirley Haynes

## ***From the Circuit***

A 'Reflect' flyer has been received. You'll find this printed full size on the back cover for this online event to be held on 22nd or 24th May..

## ***Wider Church***

### ***Christian Aid Week (10th-16th May)***

Christian Aid Week this year will still look a bit different, but with a little creativity we can all rise to the challenge and do our bit to celebrate this life-changing week. The Chrstian Aid magazine puts forward the following suggestions:

- Challenge yourself by taking on our 300,000 steps in May challenge to get fit and raise vital funds. If social distancing restrictions allow, you could team up with others too. Sign up at [caweek.org/steps](http://caweek.org/steps). If you are not a fan of walking, create your own individual challenge!

- Share our e-Envelope

Our famous envelope has been digitised. This gives you a cashless yet personal way to raise funds with friends, family and your wider community. Share it digitally through email or social media, or add your custom link to a church newsletter, pew sheet or noticeboard.

- Sign up for Quiztian Aid, suitable for all the family and online on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30 p.m. Sign up at [caweek.org/quiztianaid](http://caweek.org/quiztianaid)

## ***And finally ...***

### ***Mark Barton's article:***

#### **King Josiah**

Not only is the Bible the word of God, but its importance to historians is often forgotten. In 2 Kings 23 v11 it says *"He removed from the entrance to the temple of the Lord the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun. They were in the court near the room of an official named Nathan-Melek. Josiah then burned the chariots dedicated to the sun."* King Josiah gets 2 chapters in 2 Kings and he was involved in a refurbishment of the Temple in Jerusalem including removing some pagan elements such as the horses mentioned in the passage here. During the renovations the Book of the Law was found. King Josiah is thought to have been killed around 609 BC. Until recently our only evidence for King Josiah and the various court officials who are named was the Bible. However, in recent excavations of a central Jerusalem site, thought to be an administrative building in the city of King David which was destroyed by the Babylonians in their conquering of Jerusalem in 586, two bulla seals were found. Bulla seals were used to keep a roll of papyrus bound up. The Israel Antiquities Authority announced that one contains the Hebrew words "LeNathan-Melech Eved HaMelech" which translates as "[belonging] to Nathan-Melech, Servant of the King". The term 'Servant of the King' is often used in scripture of this era to describe a high-ranking official who served as an aide to the monarch. The other seal is inscribed "Lelkar Ben Matanyahu" or "(belonging) to Ikar son of Matanyahu".

So now Nathan-Melek is not just a name to gloss over, but a real person who served the King; we probably now know even where his office was.

#### ***Plastic Bottle Tops***

Helen Bishop has told us that plastic bottle tops are no longer being collected. Please do not give her any more!

#### ***Deadlines***

For June issue: **23rd May 2021**

For the combined July/August issue: **June 20th** The theme is holidays – be thinking about holidays that have special importance for you, memories, etc, even imaginary trips to places you have never been. We'd love to get your contributions!

# Reflect

Methodist spirituality

## ALDERSGATE

22<sup>nd</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup> May 2021 9.30am-12.15pm via Zoom\*

### A Warmed Heart

*"About a quarter before nine ..... I felt my heart strangely warmed ....."*

*These are some of the most well-known words in the Methodist Church. John Wesley's famous experience at a meeting in Aldersgate Street, London, is regarded as key to his ministry and to the development of the British Methodist Church.*

*What did it mean to John Wesley? What significance might it have for us?*

*We shall spend the morning in guided reflection and quiet exploring the faith development of John Wesley and the role of a warmed heart for both him and today's disciples.*

### Programme for the morning

<b>9.30am</b>	Welcome & Introduction Opening Prayers
<b>10.00am</b>	Session 1: Going through the motions
<b>11.00am</b>	Session 2: Living through the depths
<b>12 noon</b>	Conclusion Closing Prayer
<b>12.15pm</b>	Finish

*To led by Rev Judith Jessop, a Methodist pioneer presbyter from Sheffield*

If you would like to attend\* please e-mail Gill Dascombe [chair@reflectretreats.co.uk](mailto:chair@reflectretreats.co.uk) stating which date you would like to attend, or if you are flexible.

\*This is the first of two Quiet mornings exploring Wesley's spiritual journey. Part 2 will be held in the early autumn, dates to be advised.

There is no charge for this event, but donations (£5 suggested) may be made to Reflect:Lloyds Bank, Sort code 30 96 18, Account no 02833113, ref Quiet Day