

**St Paul's Methodist Church,
Woodfield Road, Northgate, Crawley**

Ministers:

Rev Melvyn Cooke 01293 973847 melvyncooke@me.com

Deacon Jenny Parnell 01293 664696 jenny.parnell@methodist.org.uk

Website www.crawleymethodistchurch.org.uk

St Paul's Newsletter *19/26 June 2022*

A reflection from Rev Gillian Baalham



Do you know, I think it is finally beginning to feel like summer! The gardens are coming back to life, the temperature is rising, and the traffic suggests that we are feeling more like getting out and about. I wonder what activities you like to do in the summertime? Are you a beachy person or a mountain walker? A newspaper in the garden reader or water sports fanatic? A bird-watcher or a travel-lover? I wonder if any of you will be going fishing this summer?

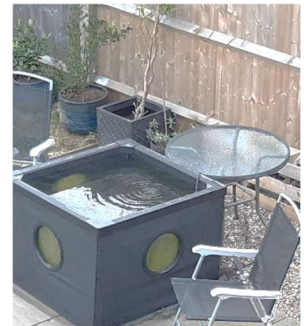
I think I have probably done my stretch of fishing duties over the years, enjoying learning how to fish with family and friends, watching fisherfolk on the beach, usually Felixstowe or Swanage, or finding places to go crabbing, buckets and lines amidst dripping ice creams and chip papers.

However, over the last few weeks, as I've been spending more time in the garden, I've been spending more time with our pond fish. They're always hungry, and the strong sun means that they need cleaning out much more. One Tuesday morning as I pottered in the garden, I noticed the net which has been keeping them safe for the last eight months. It's very nearly a year since we first came to the Horley manse and were delighted to see a nice level patio just big enough for the fishpond we had just bought. In due course, at the beginning of July, the fish were transported safely from Bedford to Horley to their new home. Given the concerned warnings from several of you, I quickly made sure that the newly built pond was covered with a net. It did the job but it wasn't very tidy. "Never mind," I said, "it will do for now and when things have settled I will make it fit really well". Summer 2021 merged into meeting all of you from September onwards, then came Harvest, Christmas, Easter....

The garden slept, the fish stopped eating for their winter rest ... and I forgot all about the net. That is, until now. That morning, with welcome heat on my back, it felt like now was the time to really sort that net out. I found a bodkin and nylon thread. I cut the net to size. I worked out how to make it fit better and I started to sew, thinking it would only take 5 minutes. It wasn't long before I realised I needed to take more care, as well as more time. I sat down with my net on my knee and I carried on sewing. All was quiet. All was still - apart from the occasional splash from the fish. As I sewed and fell into the rhythm of my task I realised that what I was doing was "mending nets": well, one net, anyway. I'd heard the story about the fishers at the lake so

many times. You know the one - the one where Jesus came walking past, saw them at their tasks and called them to follow him. That was the bit I'd always remembered of the story, and always will do, but I've never really thought about the nets. As I sewed, slowly now and carefully, I began to understand just how much time must have spent on that lakeside, home again from a day's fishing, sorting out fish, checking to make sure that all was secure, making time to mend their nets.

I pondered on this and keep doing so. Somehow that time beside the fish pond in the sunshine, just sewing, when I could have been doing something else so much more active had become a special time, a quiet time, a space when actually time was less important than the simple job that I had to hand, a time when all I needed to do was mend the net. There can be so many things calling out to us: lists of things we could do, would do if... , should do.... Sometimes such things can overwhelm us, pushing away the time when we might just need to sit and "mend the net": for it was during that simple task that Jesus walked by. Amidst the post-work banter, over the mending of nets, at the end of a day's fishing, Jesus came and joined people on the shore of the lake.



So it is that I share with you my experience of "mending nets". I encourage you this summer, in all the wonderful things that you will be doing and the sights that you will see, take some time just to sit and, metaphorically perhaps, "mend nets". May the peace and the space and the company of Jesus fill you and refresh you and give you strength, hope and joy for what yet lies ahead. Have a fantastic summer!

Every blessing from *Gillian, AJ, cats and fish!*

Worship at St Paul's

Sunday 19 June 10:30am Worship with Mr Eddie Newton
Sunday 26 June 10:30am Worship with Mrs Elisabeth Brooks
Sunday 3 July 10:30am Worship with Deacon Jenny Parnell
Sunday 10 July 10:30am Communion with Rev Clive McKie

Unless otherwise stated, services are streamed on Facebook with videos available later

Fellowship at St Paul's

Tuesday Fellowship meets each week at 8.00pm via Zoom. All welcome. For the Zoom link contact Carol Ofield or email ask.stpauls@gmail.com

Wednesday Fellowship weekly, 11am at St Paul's. Everyone is welcome.

22 June Table games

29 June 'Working at Gatwick' talk by Kaanji Thambipillai

For kids and young people

King's Kids 10:30am every Sunday

Young People's Singing Group meets on Friday evenings in term time, primary aged children from 6.30-7.00, secondary aged from 7.00-7.45.

Don't forget this date!

There will be a Circuit service at Trinity Methodist Church, East Grinstead on 24th July 2022 at 6.00pm as we say farewell to Rev Melvyn Cooke after 8 years of ministry in the Circuit. There will be some very Methodist 'tea and cakes' after the service with Melvyn and Hazel as we wish them well for the future. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Join in these prayers for Refugee Week from *All We Can*

*God creator of all,
For people who are displaced,
may they find a safe refuge.
For people who have lost control of their lives,
may they know a sure foundation.
For people who live in fear,
may they be given a strong fortress.
For people who are disillusioned,
may they have hope in a future.
Loving father in times of crisis, sorrow and uncertainty
we ask that you draw near. Amen*

*Loving and tender God, today we pray for the Rohingya people living in the camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh – in particular those affected by the recent fire in the camp.
This day, we hold before you all those who are found longing for a place to call home.
We pray for peace in the homeland of refugees fleeing conflict and that all involved might find boldness and humility to build societies where all feel safe.
At this time, we remember Christ the bringer of peace;
Come, cause your light to shine upon the refugee and those suffering this day.
Bring peace, healing, and a sense of belonging for all. Amen*

Continue to pray for all you know who are in need of our prayers.

Please send prayer requests to ask.stpauls@gmail.com and remember to obtain the permission of the person to be named

Last call

There is still time to sign up for the Church Membership preparation sessions led by Jenny and Gillian beginning 7th July. If you are interested, please contact Rev Gillian at gill.baalham@methodist.org.uk

Dear Friends,

The Leadership Team would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience and understanding as we have slowly returned to normal service following the various lockdowns.

Following our meeting on 8th June, you will be delighted to know that we are no longer requesting face coverings be worn, although you may wish to do so.

We will continue to keep the Sanctuary well ventilated but other restrictions have now been removed.

In July, we will continue to take Holy Communion as we have done over recent months, with the option of either the individual fellowship cups or the actual bread and wine, which will be brought to you.

With grateful thanks for all your support,
Every blessing,
St Paul's Leadership Team

Here's the answer to the 16 hidden books of the Bible puzzle from the previous newsletter. How many did you find?

I came across this remarkable Bible Book quiz while on holiday in Honolulu. Kept me looking so hard. The facts were that some answers were easy, others required some revelation. It caused quite a jam especially since the names of the books were not capitalised. But the truth will become apparent and the numbers add up. It's a real job and a most fascinating quiz.

Yes there will be some that are really easy to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a vicar to find one of them and will lead to loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better.

See how well you can compete. Relax now, for there really are sixteen names of Books of the Bible in this paragraph.

(Thanks to Geoff Ridgway for the puzzle and the answers)

Please note that Deacon Jenny is on leave. She will be back from 1st July.

The next newsletter will go out for 3rd July. Please send me your items by Thursday 30th June *Joyce*

Contacts

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General enquiries and prayer requests

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