

Issue 12

7th June 2020

# Together as One

Newsletter of the Methodist Churches in Hungerford, Lambourn,  
Newbury and Thatcham during Coronavirus Pandemic

## Verse for the week

'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.' Acts 2: 17

## Pentecost 2020

This week we celebrated Pentecost and remembered God the Father sending the Holy Spirit through Jesus, an action, like all God's actions, of the Trinity. This celebration is not just a once a year event, it is for all year and for all time. The Holy Spirit is God's continuous presence, an active, dynamic presence, moulding, shaping, creating and re-creating.

One of the advantages of online worship, and there are certainly disadvantages too, is that worshippers do not need to be in the same physical space or even the same time zone. At Pentecost we worshipped with more than 550 others including those from Germany, Uruguay, Switzerland, Brisbane, Cambridge Massachusetts, Eswatini and many parts of the UK from Plymouth to Belfast. And that is only those who chose to identify themselves. It really did feel like being in the crowd gathered from every nation under heaven on the first Christian Pentecost to ask 'what does this mean?', to hear Peter's sermon and then to ask, 'what must we do?'

Many things left an impression from this service including an interview with Nicky Gumbel about the three-fold increase in people attending the Alpha Course since it had to go online. He confessed to thinking that Alpha wouldn't work online but being delighted when God proved him wrong. [Click Here](#) Then there was this line from the talk referring to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on God's people then as now - 'this out of this world experience sends us out into the world'. The fire that fell on Pentecost and the wind that blew violently meant the followers of Jesus could no longer stay where they were. The message of Jesus, the light and the hope of the Good News went out onto the streets and to every corner of the world. Is the Holy Spirit sending us out again from the safe and familiar because our meeting places are no longer available to us? Is he sending us out into the digital, virtual world too with all its risks and opportunities? In the dangerous words of a great Salvation Army hymn we also sang at Pentecost, 'we need another Pentecost, send the fire today'. Fire and wind are dangerous: be careful what you pray for!



Photograph taken by Rosie Greenhalgh

With love and prayers, Peter.

## Newsletter next week

Next week's newsletter is being prepared by Karen Frost to give me a week off. So look out for that. Please send your contributions to [pastoraldevelopmentworker@outlook.com](mailto:pastoraldevelopmentworker@outlook.com)

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## The power of memory

I am sure there are things you have been missing during this period of necessary lockdown. They will differ depending upon many things - your personality and preferences, whether you are living alone, your access to technology, your health, your financial position and many more. I know there are some people who are really enjoying this time, although I suspect that is only a short term enjoyment and there are still things they are missing. One thing I am



image: [www.freeimages.co.uk](http://www.freeimages.co.uk)

missing is cricket on the radio. It is the soundtrack to my summer and has been all my life. I grew up with Test Match Special and its long line of eccentric and distinguished commentators from John Arlott, Brian Johnson and E. W. Swanton to Jonathan Agnew, Geoffrey Boycott and Phil Tuffnell. Hearing particular extracts of commentary will transport me to a particular summer and often a particular location where I first heard the commentary - don't get me started, I have probably lost a lot of you already! Last Sunday the BBC broadcast the

whole of the commentary of the Cricket World Cup Final between England and New Zealand from last July. Listening to the final overs again at the same hour of the evening transported me to the precise spot in West Wales where we were nearly a year ago. Even though I knew the result I still felt quite a lot of the same tension, disbelief and elation that I felt on the original occasion. Such is the power of memory, especially emotional memory. I am sure there will be experiences in your life that are suddenly brought back to vibrant life by a sound, a smell or a passing remark, even if cricket commentary doesn't do it for you.

I think memory is a powerful gift from God, one which is even more important when we can't experience things directly. The Bible regularly encourages us to remember or 'not to forget' for good reason.

### Amazing Grace

Another uplifting lockdown choir performance to share [Click Here](#)

### MHA Sunday

MHA (Methodist Homes) Sunday is on 14th June. This staff of this organisation have been on the frontline during the pandemic and its expertise has been sought by the media. This is an excellent time to consider supporting the work of MHA. For details and to share in the online MHA memorial and remembrance service for the over 400 residents and 3 staff who have died during due to Covid-19 [Click Here](#)

### Bible Month a reminder

Bible Month starts today. Please do send in your thoughts, questions, comments and responses to what you read. They can be in any form - draw, paint, write or record something.

Rachel Borgars (Circuit Superintendent) is hosting a study group exploring the book of Ruth via Zoom on the four Thursdays of June at 7.30pm. There is still time to join in. Please contact her by Email [rachel.borgars@methodist.org.uk](mailto:rachel.borgars@methodist.org.uk) or telephone 01256 895878.

### And finally

What did the buffalo say when his son left for college? Bison.

My business partner wanted to open a pub on the top of Ben Nevis but I told him he was setting the bar too high.