

Issue 28

25 October 2020

Together as One

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

Verses for the week

I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. (John 10:10)

Ponderings...

I've been pondering what to write in this newsletter. Do I pen something serious, or something funny? Do I find some quotes about a particular subject? Shall I write about Autumn or reminisce about warm summer days which already seem so distant? Here's a few thoughts.

We're all getting older. Grrr, I hear some of you say. Well, it's true! We're all older than we were yesterday, whether we're 1, 21 or 81! Take a look at the quotes at the side of this page. You might recognise yourself, or already embrace the ideas; perhaps you'll chuckle or maybe there's something to strive for as we head further into Autumn. As the leaves are falling off the trees, acorns and conkers scatter the ground. This weekend I scuffed through my first pile of leaves of 2020 (at Claremont National Trust garden as seen in the photo.) It's one of my smaller yet greatest enjoyments along with puddle jumping (which drives Richard mad!) and reminds me of long walks with my Dad in Ashtead Woods. I would guess we've all found delight in many more simple pleasures since Covid-19 altered our daily lives. What is your simple pleasure?

Whatever our age (physical or spiritual), we are promised an abundant life – see our bible verse at the top of this page. As a follower and friend of Jesus, we're not immune from life's struggles but I hope we can find joy in the smallest of things as well as the largest. Always, we are promised a deep abiding peace. This peace is beyond what we can achieve on our own by breathing deeply and counting to 10. Have you noticed that peace during these current times is the most wonderful blessing ever?

With my love and blessings

Karen



Photo: Karen Frost



BrainyQuote

Harvest Festivals & Gifts

Thank you to all who donated to West Berks Foodbank Harvest Appeal. Our donations totalled 99.9kg, which equals 210 meals for those in food crisis.

Seasons of my Soul—part I (by Marilyn Britt)

Sharing from Thatcham... “Seasons of my Soul” study book revolves around conversations in the second half of life.

I quote from the resource: “It will support and affirm us on our ongoing spiritual journey by providing the opportunity to explore and share with others key aspects of our lives and experiences. It adds that it will enable us to explore and deepen our faith and discipleship by discussing and challenging inherited assumptions, nurturing the wisdom we already possess and finding new meaning in aspects of our lives.” It did and Karen and I met weekly (no-one else was able to join us), socially distanced. There were 8 themes and four are listed below in week order.

Identity - to explore who we are and what that means for each one of us.

Memories – to explore our past as we remember it now.

Transition times - to explore the changing scenes of our lives. This was the week we spent a lot of time talking and in particular looking at a poem, we had to leave some of the activities for the afternoon and do them for homework! We shared them the following week. Photographs of attempts are here.

Wisdom – to explore our own wisdom and what has helped us discover it. (*I really liked the quotation that went with it by Aldous Huxley, Texts and Pretexts, 1932 – “Experience is not what happens to you; it’s what you do with what happens to you”*).

After an opening prayer, we read a bible passage and using the questions provided reflected on the reading. There followed a range of activities from which we tried to do two each session.

The questions were penetrating and really made me consider my past, where I am now and think about the future. I realised that God has been with me every step of the way and now recognise the prompts that encouraged me to try new and different activities.

There will be more about the resource in November.



Photo: Marilyn Britt

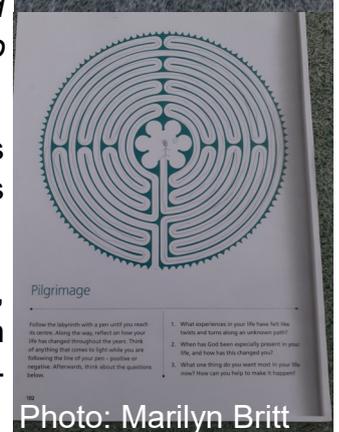


Photo: Marilyn Britt

Daily Hope



A free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Faith in Later Life
CONNECTIONS

Have you rung Daily HOPE? It's brilliant (in my opinion!). It's FREE from your phone line. Hymns, stories behind your favourite hymns, reflections and prayers, and now—chair based exercises! It's a fantastic faith resource for those of us who don't have computer access and now we can keep our bodies active too! Let me have your feedback. (Karen)

And finally

I threw out my old vacuum cleaner today. It was gathering dust.