



CROSSGATES METHODIST CHURCH November 2020 Newsletter

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Fireworks

What do you think of when someone says 'November'? Bonfires, fireworks, remembrance, saints and souls... Amongst my collection of quotes I have this one that links two of those: fireworks and saints.

“Saints are God's fireworks, rising like rockets from the darkness of the world. They're people who live Christian lives of colour, energy & sparkle; people fired with the love of God, who let themselves go and allow themselves to be utterly burnt up and consumed for the sake of the glory of God. And in doing so they light up the darkness of the world around them with a lovely beauty. There's nothing damp and boring about saints for a good firework is not damp. It is dry as tinder, and when it is touched with fire, it lets itself go and allows itself to be totally used up in producing that which is lovely and of good report.” (Michael Stancliffe)

Perhaps we think we're not saints, or that we don't have that kind of colour and energy. So what about sparklers? They're fun, cheaper and safer than a full blown firework. No matter who we are, all of us are called to be saints and need to sparkle with God's love. So, if you don't feel you can be a firework kind of saint, perhaps you can be a sparkler kind of person who shows the light of God's love to people.

Firework, or sparkler, may you shine with God's love.

Blessings
Helen

Returning to our Building

As we look forward to our 2nd service in Church, I have to say it did feel good to be back in the building with others, even though the numbers are very limited I think everyone who came enjoyed it and said they felt safe. Cedric and I are 'tweaking' slightly the way we get you in and out, otherwise everything will go ahead on Sunday as previously. However, I am afraid we cannot accommodate people's wishes to sit in certain pews. We have measured distances very carefully in order to get the maximum number of people in taking into account the 2 metre distancing. I did not miss the hymn singing as much as I thought I would, as Helen had organised the service with plenty on the screen and choirs sang the hymns, the words of which were on the screen, so we could sing along in our heads and hearts.

I would like to say a huge thank you to Cynthia and John and Norman and Jennifer Ellis for helping Lynda and I to get the pew cushions washed ready for when we can fully open. A special thank you to John for putting so many of the covers back on the foam pads as this is not as easy as it sounds!

Best wishes to you all, I hope you are keeping well. ***Barbara Lloyd***

Church Finances

Thank you to everyone who has continued to send in their collection during this difficult period – it has been a wonderful help. Please continue to do so if you are able, by posting cheques to the Church's address or to Linda Booth. Please include at least one of your offertory envelopes so if you are a 'gift aider' this can continue to be claimed. Please sign up if you are a tax-payer and haven't done so already.

The Church's full year accounts have now been prepared for the year 2019/20. Unsurprisingly, annual income from collections is down by £5,000 and receipts from lettings are also below last year. This means that £5,500 from our reserve fund has had to be spent. Some difficult decisions have also had to be made and donations to charities and other organisations have been temporarily reduced. Our subscription to Sunday Link has been cancelled but this can be reviewed in the future.

Once again many thanks to everyone who continues contributing to funding our Church.

Alison Lambert & Amanda Brow

Year of Prayer

The Methodist Conference has declared 2020/2021 a year of prayer. We will be offering some ideas on ways of praying in newsletters.

Read the psalms.

In the Book of Psalms, we have 150 ready-made prayers. Found in the middle of the Bible, these prayers are inspired, sacred Scripture that for generations have been prayed by both Jews and Christians. The authors of the psalms call upon God for rescue, praise him for his greatness, and pour out their hearts with honesty and raw emotion.

The psalms range in tone from elation to desperation and capture just about every human emotion in between. The psalms can help us pray when we have no words of our own. As you pray the psalms one by one (try saying one each day), mark the ones you find most meaningful in your own prayer life.

Go back to your favourites, the ones that help you express your own struggles, sorrows, joys, and emotions. God has heard these prayers many times. The beautiful thing is that he will know exactly what they mean coming from you.

St Gemma's Hospice, Light up a Life 2020

Sponsor a light in memory of your loved one.

Light up a Life is a chance to remember and celebrate the lives of loved ones by dedicating a light this Christmas. Your light will shine brightly on the beautiful St Gemma's Hospice trees, throughout the festive season. This year the service of dedication will be broadcast live from the Hospice on Sunday 13th December at 5pm. It will be a chance for reflection, celebration and remembrance; with music, readings and a visual roll call of all the names that have been dedicated.

For further information and to sponsor a light visit
www.st-gemma.co.uk or phone Sophia Last on 0113 218 5506

The History of Methodism in Cross Gates (Part Three)

The church was enlarged in **1907** by the addition of transept, chancel, lecture hall, vestries etc. with an institute beneath. Within the enlarged church the pulpit was moved from the centre to the side and the choir stalls and organ were also repositioned. Total cost of the extension was £3260: seating accommodation was now 652 - a magnificent and far-sighted scheme at a time when the membership was still only 64.





In **1926** more land was bought at the back of the church (cost £210) for a caretaker's house and school extension. In **1929-30**, following the purchase of a further plot of land for £180, a Sunday School extension was built at a cost of £2,474 (including furnishings) and a new organ installed in the church at a cost of £1,292.

1932 was a memorable year for Methodism with the Deed of Union combining "Wesleyan", Primitives and United Methodists into one Methodist Church. It was also the jubilee year of the Cross Gates Church (known for its first 50 years as the "Wesleyan Methodist Church" but from 1932 as simply the Methodist Church). During the Jubilee Year past ministers of the church were invited to conduct services. The year's jubilee celebrations ended with a Thanksgiving Service on Tuesday 6th December 1932. In these fifty years the church membership had grown from 62 in 1893 to 245 in 1932 and the number of Sunday School scholars from 90 to 450.

By Christine Holdstock with help from Michael Teal
(Look out for Part Four in the next edition of the newsletter)

Leeds South & East Foodbank **helping local people in crisis**

In September our contribution to the Food Bank Distribution Centre at Hunslet (which included our Harvest Festival gifts) amounted to 8 container/baskets of food and toiletries. This is probably the largest monthly amount our Church has given. A great thank you to everyone! Because of the Corvid epidemic the individual food outlets have had to close for safety reasons and items have been delivered direct to clients. The Food Banks operate a referral system and in order to get help from our Food Banks a voucher is issued from one of the referral partners, who then contact the Food Bank who then make parcels available. Referral partners include Support Workers, Citizens Advice, Council Offices, Ground Work or Green Doctor.

However, this month has seen a steady movement to get all outlets re-opened. St John & St Barnabus Church (Belle Isle) is now open on Fridays (13.30-15.30pm), with Seacroft Centre (Tuesday 12.30–16.30pm) and Epiphany Church, Gipton (Tuesday 10-12 noon). Drighlington, Morley and Beeston hope to open shortly.

As outlets open, South and East Leeds Food Banks will no longer be offering direct deliveries to clients' homes. However, *if Leeds goes into 'Full Lockdown' this may change again!!*

If you are able to contribute food or toiletries, please contact John Best (01132 647283 or email jvbest39@hotmail.com, who will gladly collect from you.

Christian Aid

For the first time in our history, we have seen a health crisis emerge that impacts us at the same time as the communities Christian Aid work with. Coronavirus continues to have devastating effects across the world and Christian Aid is very grateful for the generous response to their emergency appeal and to Christian Aid Week in May. They ask us to continue supporting some of the poorest and most marginalised communities by:

Give – give a gift to your global neighbours at caid.org.uk/neighbours

Act – ask the UK Chancellor to champion debt cancellation for the world's poorest communities by letter or at caid.org.uk/debtpetition

Pray – you can download prayers at caid.org.uk/autumnpray

Black History Month

A new area of the Methodist Church website marks Black History Month. The page includes personal testimony and blogs from BAME members of the Church, prayers and information on events. Read about **Thomas Birch Freeman**, a nineteenth century missionary from Britain who helped to build the Methodist Church across Africa.

Born in 1809, Thomas Birch Freeman was the son of an English mother and an African father, who it is believed was a freed slave. Originally working as a botanist and gardener at Orwell Park, near Ipswich, Thomas Birch Freeman was dismissed when he began preaching for the Wesleyan Methodist Church. In 1837, he volunteered as a missionary, and was sent to the Gold Coast (today known as Ghana) where he established churches in the Gold Coast and further inland. Thomas' journey throughout Africa in 1842 is often viewed as being the beginning of the Methodist Church in Nigeria, Benin and Togo.

Thomas later became the civil commandant of the Accra District. Whilst never learning to speak an African language, Thomas Birch Freeman baptised over 1500 people in 1877 alone. Thomas died in Accra in 1890, and his obituary in the Minutes of Conference (1891) notes that:

“His funeral was attended by a vast crowd, who had learnt to love him for his work’s sake. Mr. Freeman was a true missionary, loved and respected by all. His mellowed piety, patience, resignation and humility were characteristic. He served his Church faithfully, and as his reward gained the love of all the people of the Gold Coast.”

Page 67, Minutes of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, 1891.

In Memory

The family of the late Revd Dr Liz Smith (Chair of the former Leeds District 2007 – 2016) who died in August 2019, has commissioned a series of paintings in her memory, now on permanent display at the Bexley Wing, St James’s Hospital, where Liz received treatment for cancer over many years. Inspired by the skies and moorland of mid Wharfedale the four works in pastel are by the Ilkley based artist, Lucia Smith (no relation). Liz’s astute observations of the natural landscape fed her faith and informed her theological understanding. An accompanying explanatory panel includes lines from Liz’s own verse which were read at her funeral.

Christmas Greetings: Why not send Christmas greetings to the Church family via this newsletter and support Action for Children at the same time. You will reach everyone and save money on cards and postage. In return for a small donation your messages will be printed in a special Christmas edition of the newsletter. The deadline for messages is **Friday 11th December** and can be sent to Tracy via any of the methods below. Donations should be sent to Linda Booth (clearly separated from your collection), brought to a Church service or posted to Church.

Newsletter: Please email contributions for the Newsletter to Tracy Dick tracylouisedick@gmail.com. Deadlines coming up: 19th November, 11th December (special edition) and 21st January 2021.

Free phone service to hear prayers and news from the Methodist Church:

Listen to a prayer: 0808 281 2514

Listen to news: 0808 281 2478

Content is updated weekly on a Thursday evening.

Service Options: If there are any people or situations you would like included in the prayers in worship, please let me know by Saturday morning, (having got permission from the individual to be named in our prayers).

Please do contact Helen if you would like to receive details of worship via email or would like to have printed worship sheets delivered.

Condolences: to Aleck, Tracy and Jessica Dick on the death of Aleck's Auntie Janet. Janet was a 100 years old and died peacefully in her nursing home after a long life, well lived. Please remember her in your prayers.

Please remember in your thoughts and prayers: All those people in our prayer book and those we know who are unwell, in hospital, in Nursing Homes, going for tests at Hospital, recently bereaved and who find this time of year particularly difficult.

CROSS GATES METHODIST CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

We are a group of people who are seeking to celebrate and share God's love for all.

Through Worship, Witness and Service in the Community we aim to follow Christ's example of open arms, hearts, minds and doors