

# Triangle



The quarterly magazine of the  
Methodist Churches of  
Springdale and Wombourne

**Spring 2014**

# Promises, promises

David Hotchkiss, editor



Hello and welcome. My thanks to all who have contributed to this Easter edition. Whether or not you have ever written for Triangle, do remember that we are always glad to receive items, be they news reports or features on subjects that interest you; poems, musings – pictures perhaps . . . ? Penny tells me her new kit should be able to handle photographs, so I have included some in this edition. Turn the pages to see if she is right!

Not so long ago there appeared two Christmas-present books by my bed, one the weighty Long Walk to Freedom by Nelson Mandela, the other Jennifer Saunders' very funny autobiography Bonkers. Guess which one your esteemed editor chose to tackle first. I will certainly get around to Nelson, but I need to resolve myself to it; to commit my scant reading time.

Resolutions were a talking point in the New Year, of course. Chris Collins, leading our Covenant service, asked if any of us had made any. We all denied it, and he concluded that perhaps we had decided that the best New Year resolution was not to make New Year resolutions at all. Quite so.

I write now in Lent, a time also in its way associated with promises. I will give up one meal a week, I will walk two miles a day, I will give up smoking (Smoking? Does anyone smoke any more? Isn't it illegal?).

These days, if you are barmy enough to ask a Christian what they are giving up for Lent, they will pin you to the wall and say: "It's not what you GIVE UP, it's what you TAKE ON!" To which the reply should be: "Yes indeed, brother. Now can you let go of my throat?"

Perhaps the difference between timeless resolutions and a six-week Lenten commitment is that one is more do-able than the other, and therefore more likely to get done, or at least begun.

Whatever we may have decided to do, it was done in the name of the Man who gave up his life in order to take on the world.

The deadline for the next edition of Triangle is

# June 29th, 2014

Articles can be given to me or your stewards, sent by post to David Hotchkiss, or emailed to [triangle\[at\]springdalechurch.org.uk](mailto:triangle@springdalechurch.org.uk)

# Resurrection today

The Reverend Christopher Collins



The past few weeks have been challenging for me. Firstly I was asked to think about what resurrection means today in a sermon as part of our series of sermons on the Nicene creed. Then, on the weekend of March 29 and 30, I was challenged by the Vice President of the Methodist Conference, Dr. Daleep Mukarji, to see the people, made in the image of the divine creator, behind the façade of cheap clothing and press headlines. I can't help thinking that these two challenges are inextricably linked.

The theologian Hans Frei says that it is hard to think about resurrection objectively because our whole way of seeing the world is through the resurrection. However, I am not so sure that I always do. To see the world through the resurrection should mean that we look for the possibilities for new life, the hope of the opportunity for difference. The possibility of release from poverty and oppression. The freedom to love and be loved. When Jesus calls the disciple Matthew it has been described



**Vice President of the Methodist Conference Dr Daleep Mukarji (centre) at Springdale with Brenda Shuttleworth, the Reverend Chris Collins, Diana Beaumont, Lesley Cook and Denis Beaumont**

as a resurrection experience. Matthew was lifted out of being Matthew the tax collector and resurrected from the abuse he would have got as a collector of taxes for the Roman Empire. Jesus didn't console him with empathy alone but gave him a new way of being and a new sense of identity.

Yet I think often it is the empathy line we can default to if we are not careful. We keep things going with sticking plasters instead of being bold and looking beyond the need for the temporary and quick fixes.

So what, then, could resurrection look like today? Perhaps it could be like a society where families are not torn between heating and eating. When foodbanks are made redundant. When we pay workers adequate wages in whichever country we buy our wares from. Just as Jesus' resurrection was not an easy victory, so seeing resurrection today won't be easy. It will require us to step outside our comfort zone and make our voices heard for those who cannot speak.

I hope, therefore, that as we celebrate Easter 2014, it will not be commemoration of what happened 2,000 years ago but will remind us of a different way to see the world and will give us the courage and conviction to act differently so that resurrection can be truly seen today.

# Essential preparation

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*The Reverend John Jackson was superintendent minister of the Darlington Street circuit for a number of years. He went on to the Whitechapel Mission in the East End of London. It was while here that he began his radio ministry, which lasted more than four years. During that time he had a regular audience of more than a million listeners. His short talks were timely, topical and lit by homespun reminiscences – simple and always profound.*

*He and his wife moved back to live in Wombourne when he retired. Sadly, John did not live very long, but Florence, who became a member at Wombourne, had a very active ministry in the church and the village. The following is from one of his talks, which of course predates modern communications technology!*

“Staying in a lovely South Staffordshire village on convalescence at the home of my son-in-law and daughter, I found my grand-daughter both a tonic and an alarm clock.

“One of the fascinations of staying there is that my son-in-law is a radio ham enthusiast – one of those chaps who speak to Hobart, Hong Kong and Bombay from their own back room. (Or should that be Halifax, Huddersfield and Bradford? I’m not sure.) Recently, he has added another item to all the amazing gadgets and whatnots – he’s got a directional aerial. This aerial is on the roof of the house and yet, sitting at his radio receiver and transmitter, he is able to cause his aerial to rotate and point to any point on the compass that he wishes. I gather this can give greatly improved results and makes a considerable difference to the whole undertaking. It’s quite fun to stand in the back garden and to watch this aerial go round and back until it is pointing in the best direction for what is required at any given time. All of which made me think.

“The old Jews used to think that for them to get in touch with God it helped if, when they spoke to Him in prayer, they turned towards Jerusalem. When they were beaten in battle and taken captive they still, at prayer time, turned towards Jerusalem.

“I’m not thinking so much now about praying, but rather about preparation for prayer. Getting lined up, focused and prepared before the actual prayer itself is ever offered up. Especially I am thinking of the preparation which Jesus said we needed to make before we made our requests known.

“He said that reconciliation – the making up of broken relationships, the forgiving of others – has to be attended to before we say our prayers. Over the years as a minister I’ve known nothing more sad than broken homes and families – staying broken because no one would forgive, and even staying broken so long that the parties involved have almost forgotten what it was all about in the first place.

“Perhaps this is the day for you to prepare for your prayers to reach their destination by preparing the way in an act of forgiveness. Perhaps not having done so is the reason why you are beginning to wonder why there seems to be so little or no real response to your prayers of late.

“If you went to that other person in forgiveness and said: “There’s nothing between us now”, then when next you said your prayers God would say the same to you. What a difference it would make.

“A prayer – there’s only one will do: Forgive us our trespasses as we also have forgiven others their trespasses against us.”

# Trampling the poor

The Rev'd Ruth Gee, President of the Methodist Conference



It wasn't acceptable in the time of Amos (8th century BC) and it isn't acceptable now.

This isn't about party politics.

This isn't about scoring points.

This is about basic morality.

This is about according respect to human beings.

This is about feeding the hungry.

This is about facing up to the fact of our divided society, recognising inequality and injustice and doing something about it.

This is about truth and justice.

The society Amos described was one where the wealthy were complacent, more concerned about maintaining status and power and improving their own economic security than about those who were losing out. When I read Amos I recognise what he describes because I have seen it and heard about it all over Britain.

Wherever I have travelled this year I have asked the same two questions: Do you have a food bank here? Have you seen increased need for it?

Wherever I have travelled the answers to both questions have been "yes". I am not hearing about small increases in need; I am hearing about huge leaps in demand and food banks that are struggling to keep up.

I am hearing about generosity of giving in terms of time and food. I am hearing about, and talking to people who are falling into debt for the first time in their lives because of the "bedroom tax".

I am hearing about, and talking to people losing benefit payments because they have not been able to make a phone call, because they have no credit on the phone, because they have no money.

I am hearing about, and talking to people put into accommodation that has no heating and no furniture and no lighting because they have no money to put into the meter. I have talked to women being exploited because they need money for their families.

Once, when I was a teacher, a colleague described me as a bad tempered Old Testament Prophet when he heard me reprimanding a student who had failed to give in work on time – yet again. Now, I really am like an angry Old Testament Prophet.

This is not acceptable. In a country which the Prime Minister has described as wealthy, we cannot continue to ignore the needs of those who have the least resilience. I see those affected by poverty becoming poorer. I see the failure of those in power to acknowledge the facts.

We are trampling the heads of the poor into the dust of the earth and pushing the afflicted out of the way (Amos 2:7).

It isn't acceptable, it is iniquitous and we will continue to challenge political leaders, whatever their party allegiance, because that is what we are called to do as followers of Jesus Christ. Jesus who was anointed to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim the release of captives and to let the oppressed go free (Luke 4:18).

# Wombourne vestry news

Louise Wright, senior steward

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First of all, I would like to thank everyone who helped to make our church ready for Christmas. I know it seems a long time ago, but our church once again looked lovely with the Christmas trees, window decorations, and Advent ring and Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus in the porch.

The carol service was well attended. We had the traditional service of readings and carols with the choir, and coffee and mince pies to follow.

And now we are in Lent, with the Lent meditations and lunches taking place in the churches of Wombourne. At the moment we are enjoying some beautiful spring weather, with daffodils everywhere. We do think about parts of the country where people are still suffering after the floods and devastation of the winter storms. Our prayers are with them.

We also think about the Reverend Alan Francom, who passed away recently. Like many of you, we have nothing but fond memories of Alan, for his ministry, his humour and his loving kindness. We pray for Maureen and family at this sad time.

This is my last report from the vestry and I would like to thank everyone for supporting me, especially the worship assistants, leadership team and the stewards past and present, and everyone who works so hard in our church. Thank you to Pat and Judy for arranging the flowers every week, the distributors, the ladies and gent who clean the church, the painters and decorators, the gardener – the list could go on and on!

We all work together to make our church a place where we can come together in worship and in fellowship with each other. Thank you all. God bless . . .

## Keeping it in the family

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At the Ounsdale Sixth-Form Presentations in December, Sophie Tudor (granddaughter of June Horton from Wombourne) received the Holroyde Prize for overcoming physical and mental barriers to gain good A-level results.

Way back in 1981, June's son Robert (Sophie's uncle) was also awarded this prize for dedication to the Sixth-Form, having written the end-of-term plays and editing the school magazine.

# A storm of love and power

Bob Hughes on the great Welsh revival of 1904/5

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Just after eleven o'clock on a Wednesday evening in 1904, a solo voice rang out with the hymn "Here is love, vast as an ocean". Maybe a thousand people were crowded into Ebenezer Chapel, Abertillery, at the time, leaning over the galleries, packing every pew and squeezing into every spare corner. They had been there for more than four hours in a service of intense emotion. Meetings like this were taking place night after night across Wales, with fervent prayer and passionate singing, and no regard to the clock. It has been recorded that in a little over a year, 150,000 people had made a new commitment to Jesus Christ.

This great movement began in small ways. For instance, at a youth meeting in February, 1904, a young teenager named Florrie Evans declared publicly that she "loved Lord Jesus with all of her heart". With these words, the Spirit of God fell upon the meeting and the fire quickly spread to other young people in the Cardiganshire area. Yes, a storm had hit the churches, yet for so many, it was a storm of love and power which completely transformed their lives.

One young man, Evan Roberts, had gone down the pit at the age of 11 and there was a terrible explosion and fire which was so close to him that the heat singed the pages of the Bible that he took with him to work. On his preaching missions in later life, he took this Bible with him. Evan would press home to his congregations the conditions for the transforming work of God to be accomplished: 1 – confess all known sin; 2 – deal with, and get rid of, anything "doubtful" in your life; 3 – be ready to obey the Holy Spirit instantly; and 4 – confess Christ publicly.

What happened? Souls were saved, individual lives were changed and society itself was changed. There are men and women in Welsh churches today whose parents' or grandparents' testimonies were that they were converted in the revival of 1904/5.

Not only were individual lives changed by the power of the Holy Spirit, but whole communities were changed. Public houses became almost empty. Men and women who used to waste their money getting drunk were now saving it, giving it to help their churches, buying clothes and food for their families. Stealing and other offences lessened and often a magistrate came to court and found that there were no cases for him to consider.

So what of today? We witness our churches closing down through lack of support. We see congregations that are becoming older and dwindling in number. We see the ills of society played out before us in our newspapers and on radio or television. Our society is moving further away from God and the consequences are for all to see. If ever there was a time for revival, then surely it is now!

Let us pray to God for revival. He will hear us. And let us again consider the points listed above given by Evan Thomas as being important in establishing God's kingdom of peace here in our community.

# 60 years of Scouting at Springdale

Janet Stanley, Group Scout Leader



This year is the 60th anniversary of the formation of the 21st Wolverhampton Scout Group at Springdale, which was registered on April 30, 1954. A number of activities have been arranged to make it a memorable year. An anniversary badge is being worn by all members of the Group, for this year, on their uniform. It is based on the design previously used on our anniversary commemorative badge. Some of you may have had the 40 years or 50 years badge.

Church Parade on Sunday, April 12, marks the formal acknowledgement of the anniversary, including the cutting of an anniversary cake with the congregation and members past and present. As it happens, our meeting night falls on the actual anniversary date, so on April 30 all sections will have a “60”-themed meeting with a barbecue to mark the occasion.

We are also planning a table top sale in April and a barn dance in May.

A firm favourite in the group’s calendar of years gone by has been the Patshull Ac-



**The 25th anniversary day at Gospel End in 1979 . . .**

everyone is welcome to come along and join us on the Saturday afternoon.

In September, we are off to Blackwell Adventure for a group weekend camp. This has been a popular weekend in the past, giving our members and leaders a chance to mix and take part in various activities.

In addition we have the many district events that each section participates in, so as a group we are busier than ever. Our membership is one of the healthiest in the district thanks to the hard work and dedication of our volunteer leaders, who have more than 100 years of service to Scouting between them!

In 1994, the 40th Anniversary, Colin Turton, Group Scout Leader wrote:

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*“What has been achieved in 40 years? Just still being an active Scout Group is no mean achievement, when reliance is made entirely on voluntary leadership and the commitment of a few. Without this the group would have gone the way of so many – to that camp site in the sky!*

*“What of the next 40 years? It will certainly be different from the last 40, not only things like the uniform, but in updating the training programme to keep abreast of advancing technology. Perhaps going to camp in a minibus will be as outdated then as going on the back of a lorry is now.*

*“It is to be hoped that the basic ideals as foreseen by Baden Powell in 1907 still prevail in 2034. There is no shortage of boys wishing to join the movement, certainly at Beaver Scout and Cub age. Could this interest be matched by voluntary leadership? If it cannot, at Springdale, the group will not be celebrating in 2034.”*



**... and cutting another cake to mark 50 years in 2004**

What has been achieved over 40 years still rings true over 60 years. We are halfway through the next 40 years since Colin's words and, yes, we have certainly seen some differences from those past days. Uniform has had some changes but is still recognisable as the Scout uniform and we continue to wear a black and white neckerchief. Badges have changed and while there are still traditional badges such as Camp Cook and My Faith, badges can be gained in such topics as Information Technology, Street Sports and Martial Arts.

We no longer go to camp or on days out in a minibus, we need coaches now or the willingness of parents to transport. We continue to have boys and also girls wishing to join the group and look forward to new volunteer leaders joining to take us through the next 20 years to 2034.

Thank you to all past and present leaders, members and associates of 21st Wolverhampton – we couldn't have this celebration without you.

# Wombourne pastoral news

Pauline Hotchkiss, pastoral secretary

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Looking back recently, I realised how many lovely surprises I've had since Christmas. Good News for Kids celebrated its tenth anniversary in September. Junior Church had closed about a year before that. Those children and young people who were regulars at Junior Church would be in their late teens and early twenties now. So why am I looking back?

It is wonderful to meet up with people I have not seen for 12 months at the Christmas Eve service, and my first surprise was the two lovely young ladies who arrived with their mum. They greeted me fondly and I felt very pleased when they told me what they were doing. Tracy, the eldest, is a junior doctor at Russells Hall Hospital. She always wanted to be a doctor. Emma, her younger sister, was in my beginners' group in Sunday School, as it was then. I remember clearly that Emma was quite positive she was going to be a vet. Emma will soon be completing her training to be a vet. She told me it takes longer to train to be a vet than a doctor. Everyone who remembers them will want to join with me in congratulating them and offering our prayers for their future.

Not long after Christmas I met Julie Hill, a former member of the Junior Church Staff. She was so proud to tell me that Louise had just moved to Russells Hall as part of the caring team in the theatres, looking after patients who had just received surgery. Well done Louise. Our love and prayers are with you as you carry out such an important role.

Gill Groves tells me her daughter Katy Taylor (nee Groves) is expecting her first baby in May. Our love goes to you, Katy, and we pray that all goes well with you, your husband and the baby.

More recently, while organising our Vintage Afternoon Tea in aid of FKC, I visited shops in the village to ask for posters to be displayed. The Fairy-tale Cake Company was yummy! A delightful young lady told me that she used to go to Junior Church and remembered being an angel in the Nativity play. I asked who were the teachers and was amazed when she said one was "Pauline". She did not recognise me, but I would not have expected her to. Her name was Sophie Caldwell and she also remembered Janet and the stick insects brought in for a visual aid. She also remembered Rosie. I had been quite friendly with her mum. Sophie was a very pretty child, with lovely white-blonde curly hair, and she sang like an angel. She stopped coming to Junior Church due to a tragic accident. She told me that she still had the teddy that we sent to her after the accident. She is still singing as a solo singer.

We hear of other former members quite regularly. We often welcome Michael Hughes, the young son of Jonathan and grandson of Joyce and Bob, to Craft and Chat. He is a competent carpet bowler (even at three). We also see Ellie James (nee Moyle) and her one-year-old son, Iorie, at Café Church, once a month. What a delight he is.

Elizabeth Martin, Alison Pike's daughter, has just started up her own business. Tigerlily Beauty is a beauty treatment service. We hope that it all goes well for you, Lilly. Edward (Teddy), Alison's son, is busy visiting universities, ready for when he finishes school in July. We hope all goes well in gaining the right grades and for the right university.

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Forgive me for dwelling so long on “our” young people, but they are still ours, and I pray that they know that too.

Our prayers are with those who are in hospital, or who are due to go in. We remember especially Cathy Anderson, who has returned to hospital. It was a joy and a blessing that she was able to be at home to celebrate her and Paul’s golden wedding on March 30, with their family and friends. We pray it will not be too long before she is out of hospital for good. We remember Sue Moyle, who will have been in hospital for a knee replacement, and that she is fully recovered in time for her son Philip’s wedding on June 7. We ask that God will bless Philip and his wife to be, Dorothy, as they make their commitment and for their lives together.

Our prayers continue to be with Amanda and the children, and with Amanda’s dad, Ron. They are coming to terms with the recent death of Jean, Amanda’s mom. We ask God to grant you peace and comfort as you come to terms with your loss.

In March the Prayer Circle prayed for those who had lost loved ones, especially for the family of Gwyneth Herapath. A wonderful thanksgiving service was held for her on February 14. Of course we were also saddened to hear of the death of the Reverend Alan Francom. Our special prayers go to Maureen and the family. We also had news that Maureen had fallen and broken her hip. At the time of writing she is still in hospital. We pray this will soon be healed and that she will be back with her family. We also remembered those who are sick and in need of God’s healing hand. We always remember our older loved ones who are no longer able to care for themselves and are in residential care. God bless them all.

Our monthly visits to The Maltings continue. We have just celebrated Maundy Thursday with our friends there, singing some favourite Easter hymns. Carole Walker made a card for each of the group and we gave them a gift of a small Easter egg. We also visit Himley Mill Nursing home each month and minister to the residents in two of the units there. They always appreciate us being there.

Many thanks are due to Denis, our Lay Pastoral Worker, and all the Pastoral Group visitors, for the work they carry out in caring for us all in many ways.

Several people have celebrated special birthdays or anniversaries recently and to them we offer many congratulations, including Joyce and Bob Hughes who have their golden wedding in June.

It was a delight to welcome Pauline and Philip Bridgewater to Common Road. Philip is a local preacher who is on the Kidderminster circuit. Their membership will be transferred from Broadwater Methodist Church to Wombourne. They have moved to live at The Maltings.

My prayer for you is that this Easter you will welcome Jesus again into your hearts. “Not on the cross, but risen from the dead”, bringing the gift of fresh hope and new life.

# Springdale vestry news

Sheila Sanders, senior steward

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I write this after a few days of very pleasant sunshine, with the delightful spring flowers bursting forth, and it is easy to forget that only a few weeks ago many people were surrounded by the misery and chaos of flooding. We must still keep those affected in our thoughts and prayers as they continue to clean up and recover.

As I reflect on the time since the last Triangle I realise what a busy life we lead at Springdale. So many activities, meetings, and committees take place that I really haven't got the space to comment on them all.

Our Christmas Fayre took place at the end of November when just under £2,000 was raised for church funds. Thanks to all who gave time and energy to help.

The joint Advent service took place at St, Michael's and during the weekend of December 13, 14 and 15 the churches in Penn held their Christmas tree festival at Springdale. It was a great success with more than 40 trees displayed and donated and decorated by local people and businesses. A great deal of hard work went into this weekend by the working group and committee and our thanks go to them all. Money raised was donated to Alz Café and the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd ministry to the homeless, and cheques were presented at the PEC Covenant renewal service which this year was held at St Bart's. During this service our minister, the Reverend Christopher Collins, was installed as the new chairman of Penn Ecumenical Council.

A representative from the Haven attended our annual toy service and I am sure we can still remember the rousing "Hallelujahs" at the end of the Junior Church nativity presentation. The Christmas Eve service with the orchestra was well attended and heralded the Christmas morning service led by Chris.

Springdale hosted the Christian Aid quiz and also the Women's World Day of Prayer service.

Quite recently a new initiative has started at Springdale on Mondays, 9.30am to 11am. Mums, grandmas and carers arrive for "Tots Stay and Play" with their delightful children and a great time is had by all.

As with all families we have happy times and sad times and we all feel the loss of Alison Mellor who died at the end of January, aged 33. Alison had suffered for so long but was an inspiration to us all. Throughout her illness her love of the Lord shone out and she was a joy to be with.

It was with great sadness that we very recently heard of the death of the Reverend Alan Francom. He was much loved at Springdale. We give thanks to God for his wonderful life and ministry especially in this circuit and send our love to Maureen and family.

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The ecumenical Lent house groups have commenced and this year's course is entitled "Christ and the Choclaterie" based on the film Chocolat. Here at Springdale the lent liturgies will culminate on Easter Sunday morning with the joyous news of Christ's resurrection when we will cover the cross with flowers.

This is my last report from the vestry as senior steward. It has been a great privilege to serve the Lord in this role and to work with a very supportive team during a busy year and I thank them most sincerely. Sheila Evans and Dorothy Clulow will be retiring as stewards and I thank them for their years of service. Phillipa Cooper will be senior steward and we look forward to new stewards being nominated at the Annual Church Meeting on May 4. With every blessing .

## Springdale pastoral news

Jane Rawlings, pastoral secretary

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As I am writing this, British summer time is about to begin and, amazingly, the sun is shining. Let's hope this is a sign of things to come and we have plenty of days of sunshine to look forward to.

It has been a difficult time at Springdale since my last message, following the devastating loss of Alison Mellor in January. Alison was taken from us at such a young age, but she touched many people on her journey. Alison lived life to the full and let nothing stop her from achieving what she wanted. Her loss has affected many people throughout the circuit and the wider Christian community and she will always be remembered for her unfaltering smile. We continue to remember Alison's family in our prayers as they journey through the grieving process. May they take strength from the fact that God is by their side making the journey with them every day.

Dot Barton has recently suffered the loss of her dear husband, Sid. Over the last few years Sid has suffered with his health but whenever he was able would support Springdale and enjoy an afternoon or evening of fellowship among us. Our prayers are with Dot and the rest of the family and we ask that God will grant them peace and comfort as they come to terms with their loss.

At the end of December we heard the exciting news of a new arrival within the Staley family. Proud parents Kathryn and Thomas Welsh announced the birth of Henry Philip, a further grandchild for Judy and Phil. What an excellent way to start a new year. I am sure over the last few months there have been many sleepless nights but also looks of joy and amazement that a new life can bring.

Congratulations to anyone who has recently celebrated or is looking forward to celebrating a special birthday or occasion. May you have a wonderful time.

Easter is almost upon us, when we remember the sacrifice our God made for us. Take strength and joy from this amazing gift as we travel forward with the risen Christ.

# Going begging

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There are many references to beggars in the Bible and, of course, they still exist today. Jesus told us that the poor would always be with us, and indeed they are, some of them visible on our shopping streets.

But what if you're begging is not for yourself?

Pauline Hotchkiss found out what that was like when she approached the shopkeepers of Wombourne to ask for ingredients and prizes for the Afternoon Tea she organised in aid of Wombourne's church project, Friends of Kenya's Children (FKC), which funds an orphanage and school.

The result was overwhelming. Many of the village's businesses were only too willing to be part of the project, offering materials for the tea itself or prizes for the raffle. On her first attempt, Pauline walked out of the big Sainsbury's store with the promise of strawberries and cream, and a look on her face that said "miracles do happen". This continued throughout the village, and we present below a list of the businesses who were happy to help.



Of course there were some people who were unable to help, for whatever reason, but the great majority of those approached were generous to a fault, and we hope to report on the outcome of the April 12th event in the next edition of Triangle.

In the course of her "begging", Pauline was also offered ten big bags full of school uniforms by Wombourne Toys, which will either be sent directly to Kenya or be used by another overseas charity.

We thank God for the generosity of those who so willingly offered to help what we believe to be such a worthy cause.

***The businesses who helped were: J Sainsbury, Bromley's Butcher, Heath's Orchard, Co-op Blakeley Heath, Co-op High Street, Co-op School Road, JRK Computer Supplies, Niche Gifts, Boxley's Butchers, GM Home Discount, Irene's Dress Shop, WV5 Hairdressers, Fairytale Cake Company, and Taylor's Fruit, Vegetables & Flowers. We also thank Debbie and Alan Peace for the loan of china and all the individuals who helped make this event such a success.***

# Ask Chris . . .

Chris Collins answers your questions

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In the busyness of church life there are often few opportunities to ask me questions of things that puzzle you. I am going to tackle two questions I have recently been asked in this edition of Triangle. If you have a burning question that you would like included, please let me know and I will try to answer it in the next edition!

## **Why do we wear a cassock?**

The Methodist Church is a beautifully rich and diverse church drawn from different Christian traditions. Some of our heritage included an understanding of church life that mandated the wearing of a cassock and other clerical wear. Others found them to be unnecessary. So each of us who lead worship, preach and preside have to make up our own minds. I decided that wearing a cassock was an important element of the role I inhabit because when I lead worship, when I preach and I preside at the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism, I do so as someone authorised to fulfil a representative role. I represent Christ to the world through the church and the world and church to Christ. And that is not about “me” but about the role I am given. For that reason I choose to wear a cassock so that attention is drawn away from me and towards God. So it has nothing to do with building up status but everything to do with denying any perceived status.

## **We’ve not shared the peace recently, why is that?**

A sharp-eyed worshipper noticed that for the past few services of Holy Communion we have not shared the peace with each other. It is true, with the exception of Mothering Sunday, when traditionally the austerity of lent is relaxed, I have not encouraged congregations to share the peace with each other. This practice comes out of a tradition of trying to keep our lives and worship simple during the penitential season of lent. On Easter Day we will return to the practice of sharing the peace which is an important aspect of a service of Holy Communion. The symbolic act of sharing the peace is to signify an intent to be at peace with each other before taking Holy Communion.

# The Lay Witness Movement

Carole and Eric Walker

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Thank you for all your prayers for the Lay Witness Movement. We are pleased to tell you that the weekend planned for March went ahead on the Isles of Scilly. Unfortunately, this will be the last weekend to be held, as the movement is coming to and end due to lack of interest.

However, we are indebted to all those who have shared their faith with churches all over the country during the past 37 years. This door now closes, but God will open another, of that we can be certain.

# The second 10 Commandments

With thanks to Carole Walker

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**1 Thou shalt not worry, for worry is the most unproductive of all human activities.**

**2 Thou shalt not be fearful, for most things we fear never happen.**

**3 Thou shalt not cross bridges before you come to them, for no-one yet has succeeded in accomplishing this.**

**4 Thou shalt face each problem as it comes. You can only handle one at a time anyway.**

**5 Thou shalt not take problems to bed with you, for they make very poor bedfellows.**

**6 Thou shalt not borrow other people's problems. They can better care for them than you.**

**7 Thou shalt not try to re-live yesterday, for, good or ill, it is forever gone. Concentrate on what is happening in your life and be happy now!**

**8 Thou shalt be a good listener, for only when you listen do you hear ideas different from you own. It is hard to learn something new when you are talking, and some people do know more than you do.**

**9 Thou shalt not become bogged down by frustration, for 90 per cent of it is rooted in self-pity and will only interfere with positive action.**

**10 Thou shalt count thy blessings, never overlooking the small ones, for a lot of small blessings add up to a big one.**

