

Triangle



Autumn 2008

Message from the Manse

Not long back from Greenbelt, (the Christian Arts Festival: 20,000 Christians, mostly sleeping under canvas, singing, talking, laughing, listening, watching, worshipping and generally enjoying themselves on Cheltenham Racecourse) and full of resolve to explore some of the ideas I picked up there and to read some of the books I bought. And before you know it, we're into a new Church Year, and a new Wolverhampton Methodist Circuit, and it's all go again! Why can't we be left in peace to carry on as before, we wonder?

One or two new projects have begun already. We have begun a monthly "Prayers and Bears" at Gospel Ash, giving an opportunity for parents to bring their toddlers along to share songs and a story with their teddies, and end with a prayer. Numbers are so far very small, but we have made a start! And at Wombourne we have launched a service of All Age Worship on the Sunday following our monthly Saturday "Kids' Club" (or Good News for Kids to give it its proper title).

By the time you read this, "Back to Church Sunday" will be upon us: another new idea! And more ideas are in the air: Cafe Church, Messy Church... Whatever next? It can all seem rather bewildering, even threatening.

Jesus says "I am making all things new." (*Revelation 21 v. 5*) It is his Holy Spirit who keeps us on the move, and encourages us into new ventures. Three people out of every five have no idea at all what goes on inside a Christian church: part of our calling is to help them to discover the love of Jesus for themselves. If we are prepared to take on a few new projects, we shall be in much better position to do just that. And we shall be true to our Christian calling too, to keep on serving Jesus Christ, who is always ahead of us as we follow him.

With Christian greetings,

Robert

(Rev. Robert Ely)

Springdale Vestry News

Summer is now drawing to a close after a rather disappointing spell of weather. I hope those of you who have been on holiday have returned feeling refreshed in mind and body. Welcome back from their special holiday to Norway, Robert and Teresa - it is good that all their expectations were realised.

There have been lots of activities at Springdale throughout the summer months. Springdale Wives held an exhibition of wedding dresses and christening gowns, the earliest from 1933. This was a wonderful display and created a hall full of memories from which £730.00 was raised for the Alzheimers Society.

The second exhibition by Springdale Art Group was held in June, showing how talented some of our church members are.

Thank you to Nicola and Helen for organising our Summer Fair which was again very successful despite a rather damp day. We all had a very enjoyable time of fellowship. Jackie Neilson very bravely had 15 inches cut off her hair; what a difference it made to her. This raised £218.00 for church funds. Hairstylist David Rowland from Wombourne very kindly gave his time and expertise free of charge - thank you David.

We were saddened to hear of the deaths of Rene Ashfield and Dora Clayton, valued members and founder members of our church.

We joined our friends at Wombourne for Holy Communion on the evening of 27 July - it was good to worship together and meet at the Lord's Table.

Emma and Lucy have returned from their visit to Rwanda. We look forward to hearing of their adventures and thank God for their courage in helping the young people of that country who have seen such suffering.

The holiday club was again a time of fun and learning for a group of about 40 children. The display of photographs show what a busy, happy time they all had, with crafts, a puppet show and bible stories. Thank you

to all the helpers who gave their time during this important week. The children who come to these events are the future of our church.

Exactly a year since Robert's inaugural service at Springdale the Wolverhampton Circuit inaugural service was held at Darlington St. Methodist church on 31 August. This is a time of change when we can learn about other churches in our wider circuit; meeting new preachers and sharing our faith as we grow together. We pray for Cecil King and all the ministers and preachers of our district.

Looking Forward

Soon it will be our Harvest Festival when we can give thanks and praise to God for all His goodness to us. Let us remember in our prayers those who have no Harvest and are always hungry.

Our church Anniversary weekend 11 and 12 October will begin with a concert on Saturday evening and the Sunday morning service will be followed by a 'bring and share lunch'.

As Autumn approaches and we continue to meet in fellowship to love and praise our God we can find the joy of living is found in the heart filled with thanksgiving.

Barbara Beynon

Gospel Ash Vestry News

Sometimes when you read in the Press a report on some local event you can tell that the reporter was not present – it is “Hearsay and Notices”. Excuse me if Gospel Ash report comes across as something like that because I have been absent most of the summer – oh, sorry, did I say “Summer”?! (I am writing this on 6 September and still it rains!).

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers in what turned out to be quite distressful, and still lingers on - but I am winning.

It was good to be back at the Singalong last Thursday and to feel the power of the Lord amongst us. Good too that the event keeps it's momentum. There were one or two news faces to be seen.

We are especially glad to welcome two members of the Smallman family, who were over from Australia for a wedding. They must be the fifth generation of the family who came to Gospel Ash in 1825 from Enville. The first man brought with him his congregation and class who had been banned from meeting in that village. The family have been the strength of our Church through both the 19th and most of the 20th Century. The name is honoured in a commemorative plaque on the sanctuary wall.

The Cradle Roll Service should have been a great occasion on 15 June, but unfortunately we clashed with Fathers' Day, so those who would have been there were busy doing what should be done on that day. Even so we had a good service. Robert gave us a very good presentation for our day and Margaret, our secretary, who is a very good cook, laid on a lovely tea. So who is complaining? Good fellowship, good food and good fun!

The much heralded Art and Card-craft exhibition was a great success. A good number of people came and the work was very much in demand – ninety pound was realized from the sale of hand-made cards; if the paintings could have been sold much more would have been raised. The occasion did help those who had attended the Classes to feel that their work was worthwhile.

We look forward to the Harvest Festival on 28 September when our minister Robert will be the preacher and the afternoon service will be followed by a tea. Do come and join with us.

Finally we extend our love and sympathy to Mrs Millward and her family on the death of her husband Trevor. They have farmed across the way for many years and have been lovely neighbours. Michelle came up through the Sunday School and stays on. Bless you all.

Bill Stubbs

Wombourne Vestry News

As I begin these notes from the Wombourne vestry I rejoice for all those who have had the blessings of safe travel as they journeyed to and from their holiday destination. For many, the summer has not brought the anticipated fine sunny weather, as we have experienced cold, windy and wet conditions at home. But, as they say, a break is as good as a rest and so I hope that you have had a good break if nothing else. Some of us will be taking an autumn break so perhaps the weather may improve for you.

At Common Road, the work has continued throughout the summer and we have rejoiced in a very successful Church Family week with a range of different activities organised and well supported.

We also spent time considering our church finances and organised a church presentation based upon the fact that The Responsibility Is Ours (TRIO). The church leadership team, acting together, informed the congregation of its concerns. The church members responded in a magnificent way by pledging through the offertory envelope scheme a huge increase in its giving (something in the order of a seventy percent increase!) It has been noted that for those members who continue to give cash on the plate, there has also been a significant increase in that giving also. We thank the members for their unfailing generosity and give God the glory as it now gives the Church Council greater confidence in planning for the future.

There have been garden parties and coffee mornings organised and supported during the past weeks and we again give thanks to all those involved.

In September, the way in which Methodism groups its churches together will alter and we become part of a larger group of twenty three churches. This must have led to many anxious moments for our Superintendent Minister, Rev. Cecil King, and his team, but again the leadership team thank God that we have the people committed and able to do this important work. Our mission work goes ahead and by His Grace others may come into a deeper loving relationship with the risen Lord.

The leadership team now look forward to the church celebrating Ladies Day on Sunday 21 September, when our 10.30 morning service will be led by Teresa Ely. Following that, we celebrate Harvest Festival on Sunday 5 October when our 10.30 morning worship will be led by our minister Rev. Dr. Robert Ely and the 6.30 evening worship by Rev. Graham Smith.

One way and another, it has been a very challenging Summer, and I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the leadership team, to thank all Church members for their continuing prayers and support that has enabled the mission of the church to continue. I would also like to take this opportunity to ask for your prayers and support for Back to Church Sunday of which you will be hearing more in the coming weeks.

Yours, on behalf of the leadership team and in His service,

Bob Hughes, senior steward

Wombourne Pastoral News

As I write this report it is so good to see some blue sky after all the recent downpours we have experienced (although the grass is much greener - can't have it all!)

To all who have been away on holiday - may you be fully refreshed. We have a challenging time ahead, as we heard from the Rev Inderjit Bhogal at the inaugural service of the new Wolverhampton Circuit at Darlington Street Methodist Church on 31 August.

There are so many of our church fellowship who have been in hospital in the past few months. We ask God to bless Pauline Hotchkiss, recovering from several heart attacks, and for David after his shoulder operation. We shall be thinking of him especially on 8 September when he returns for an operation on his other shoulder. We are so please to see Denis back after his spell in hospital. Our prayers are also for Gwen Herapath and Jack Cartwright, both having had cataracts removed, and for Bill Stubbs after his knee operation. We think, too, of Peter and Wendy Spreadbury and

Olivia Lanesfield, and trust that God will bless all these and any others who are in need of healing at this time. We pray that his strength and spirit will uphold them all and that they will sense his love surrounding them. We remember Florence Jackson who has had a long spell in hospital and will soon be moving to a home in Codsall - may she know God's love with her, as with all our housebound friends.

Since May we have lost Ron Piper, Pat Stoker's mum, Eve Price and Alice Crockett. More recently Joy Price's husband has passed away too. We continue to pray for Nell, Pat, Joy and Joyce and all their families as they mourn the passing of their loved ones. May they come to know the peace of God.

What a joy it was at the end of May to welcome Mark Nicholls and Becky on the baptism of their son Luke, and also to see Becky and Luke at Prayers and Bears - may God bless them all, especially Luke.

Congratulations to Gail and Martin Cresswell on their Silver Wedding Anniversary last week, and to others who have recently celebrated an anniversary or special birthday.

To any who have taken exams of any kind and left school for further education; especially to Lee Cresswell and Robyn Walker for attaining their A levels - we pray that they will be guided and blessed in their future lives.

Finally we remember Paul Hughes serving with the forces in Afghanistan, and any others known or unknown to us. God be with them.

May we all be blessed by God and know his assurance. As the words of a hymn we sang at Darlington Street on Sunday remind us -

*But God has brought us safely to this moment,
Has offered hope, and we will trust for more.*

Carol Walker, Pastoral Secretary

Springdale Pastoral News

As I write, September is almost upon us - and we're asking, "Where was the summer?!" Ah well, we're going on holiday in a few days time - will it be summer, I wonder? For those who have been fortunate to get away at some time, I hope it has been enjoyable, relaxing and refreshing, both physically and spiritually. Many of our church family are unable to get away for one reason or another, but you are all remembered in love, and trust that knowing you are remembered gives you strength and encouragement.

Thinking of our elderly friends we continue to think of Margaret and Geoff Race. Recently two of our elder members have gone to be with their Lord. Rene Ashfield on 18 June and Dora Clayton on 23 June - we remember the families of our two sisters, both long-serving members of our church and, in particular, the Women's Fellowship. Several of our church family have been in hospital recently - Shaun Philpott and Sheila Thompson both had surgery then had to be re-admitted following set-backs. Shaun is now much better and Sheila making good progress. Phil Staley has had two minor operations on his hands, now requiring a lot of patience" Hilda Willcox and Alison Mellor have been receiving treatment; Bryan Cook and Dave Woodward have also been in hospital for surgery, but now both are doing well. Many are also attending hospital, or have close family with ongoing appointments - we assure you all of our love and prayers.

On Sunday 28 June we welcomed the family and friends of Thomas Daniel Fereday as they brought him for baptism.

Congratulations to Diane and Dave Partridge as they celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary in June, and also congratulations to Claire Partridge who obtained a First Class BA Honours degree in Surface Pattern Design. To all our young people who have had exams - we hope you are all pleased with your results and now look forward to the next stage.

Well done to Laura Priest who was elected "Musician of the Year" from Wolverhampton University. She was granted a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, London, but has decided to finish her degree

course at Wolverhampton first, then hopefully take a Masters degree at the Royal Academy in possibly two years time.

To all who have recently celebrated a birthday, perhaps a “special one”, or any other celebration - our best wishes to you.

May God bless each and every one.

My grace is sufficient for you: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. 2 Corinthians 12 v9.

Gwyneth M Wade, Pastoral Secretary

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Betty Vaughan, who last Sunday (31 August) celebrated 50 years as a member of the Methodist Diaconate, formerly the Wesley Deaconess Order. Betty, or "Sister Betty", will be known to many Springdale folk from her years here. We remember her involvement in the Methodist/Anglican Communion services after the closure of St Oswald's (soon after we came to Springdale) and her service as vestry steward. Now retired (!) she continues to serve God through preaching and active involvement in the life of Brewood Methodist Church.

Wendy and Richard Gould

God has not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.

But God has promised strength for the day,
Rest for the labourer, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.

The Fairtrade Group in our new Wolverhampton Circuit invite you to our

JUST FAYRE

at St Andrew 's Church, Bilston Street, Sedgley, on Saturday October

11th from 11am to 3pm.

With

A Fairtrade Fashion Show with clothes from

Peopletree and Bishopston Trading

Refreshments, including light lunches,

Tearcraft

Traidcraft Crafts and Food

Fairtrade Clothes, Bags and Jewellery

Fairtrade T-shirts

Childrens ' Corner and Activities

Information

Alternative Gifts

AND

Our Chocolate Challenge – collect and bring along all the wrappers you can from any brand of FAIRTRADE CHOCOLATE. (We will present these to a ' Local Manufacturer ' as part of our campaign for more fairly traded cocoa products on our shelves.)

If you can help in any way (f rom baking a cake to helping on a stall) on the day please let Teresa Ely know.

But above all do come along and bring your friends!



BISHOPSTON
TRADING COMPANY

tearcraft
the fair trade catalogue of Tearfund



Greenbelt 08

How can I do justice to Greenbelt 2008 in a page of print? There was the sheer variety of it all:

Music – rock, jazz, folk, gospel, blues, classical and almost any other style you might care to imagine. I counted nearly 100 performers or groups...

Talks – over 60 speakers including Joel Edwards, John Bell, Ann Pettifor, Philip Yancey...

Worship – John Bell and Wild Goose Worship, Taize, Evening Prayer, Godly Play, Quaker Worship, Vigils, Chants...

An Adult Scratch Choir...

Comedy, Film, Visual Arts, Creative Arts...

Children's activities for 0-10 year-olds...

A Skate Park, Scratch Youth Choir, music and worship with 11-17 year olds in mind...

A huge range of campaigning organisations with information galore...

All the stalls where you can buy anything from doughnuts (now you know why I go to Greenbelt!) to hot dogs, fish curry to falafels, fair-trade goods aplenty, clothes, bags, belts, bracelets...

And of course the Greenbelt book and Music stores.

Yet that still does not begin to tell you what Greenbelt is. For many of us Greenbelt is the place where we can confront some of the issues that challenge our faith and begin to work through what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ in a world of poverty, injustice, violence and doubt.

But it also the place where we are with thousands of other pilgrims on that journey of faith, and that is immensely encouraging. It is the place where by acting together we can begin to make a difference through our campaigning. And it is fun! Yes really fun (even in the wind and the rain!), and it is liberating.

Greenbelt does not end there. Our experience at Greenbelt helps to build us up for life beyond Greenbelt wherever it is we worship and witness.

I will soon be booking for next year (28 - 31 August 2009). As I did this year, I will be making a group booking before 30 November to take advantage of discounts. If camping is not for you, there is always the option of booking accommodation in Cheltenham, or just coming for one day. How about it?

Teresa Ely

Penn Puppets - What's new?

I can't believe that Penn Puppets has been in existence now for over 6 years! It really is one of the most rewarding parts of my life, as it is, I am sure, for the other puppeteers from the Penn Churches too. Since Christmas we have been visiting schools to perform our latest production Captain Noah, written by Maureen Harper of St. Barts and featuring nine "human" puppets, an ark, eight animal puppets including Gordon the Gopher and a rainbow! We have also performed for Wombourne Kids Club and Lea Road URC Holiday Club.

Although we can't see the children's faces, we can tell by their laughter, silence or gasps that they really do listen to the puppets' message of God's love and care for all creation.

Recently we were also able to lead a workshop at Tettenhall Wood Special School, when we had great fun working with a class of children to produce "The Little Yellow Hen", which they were then able to perform to two other classes.

Looking to the future, we have recently recorded scripts for Christmas and Easter and another script for schools.

So are YOU free on Wednesday mornings in term time? Do you have a sense of fun and a passion for spreading God's very special message to even more school children? We really do need MORE HELP! Please speak to Lesley Cook at Springdale if you'd like to know more. Tel: 330614 or email lesleycook@btinternet.com

A date for your diary

A world of difference

Singer-songwriter, Garth Hewitt

In concert at Beckminster

Friday, 21st November

Tickets: £5

from Sue Lorimer - 01902 344910

This event has been organised by the South West cluster of the new Wolverhampton circuit.

Garth Hewitt, an Anglican priest, is director of the Amos Trust which promotes justice and hope for forgotten communities. Amos works with a network of community projects from around the world to raise awareness of, and provide support to responses that address the root causes of injustice and poverty. His songs are written out of his experiences with communities in Israel Palestine, South Africa, India and Nicaragua. Garth is honorary Canon of St George's Cathedral, Jerusalem.



Voyage

We convince ourselves that life will be better once we are married, have a baby, then another. Then we get frustrated because our children are not old enough, and that all will be well when they are older. Then we are frustrated because they reach adolescence and we must deal with them. Surely we'll be happier when they grow out of the teen years?

We tell ourselves our life will be better when our spouse gets his/her act together, when we have a nicer car, when we can take a vacation, when we finally retire.

The truth is that there is no better time to be happy than right now. If not, then when? Your life will always be full of challenges. It is better to admit as much and to decide to be happy in spite of it all.

For the longest time, it seemed that life was about to start. Real life. But there was always some obstacle along the way, an ordeal to get through, some work to be finished, some time to be given, a bill to be paid. Then life would start. I finally came to understand that those obstacles were life.

That point of view helped me see that there isn't any road to happiness. Happiness IS the road.

So, enjoy every moment. Stop waiting for school to end, for a return to school, to lose ten pounds, to gain ten pounds, for work to begin, to get married, for Friday evening, for Sunday morning, waiting for a new car, for your mortgage to be paid off, for spring, for summer, for fall, for winter, for the first or the fifteenth of the month, for your song to be played on the radio, to die, to be reborn... before deciding to be happy.

Happiness is a voyage, not a destination. There is no better time to be happy than... NOW! Live and enjoy the moment.

Author unknown

Going Anywhere?

Extending Discipleship, Exploring Vocation

What a mouthful! We call it "EDEV": but what is it? It's not so much a course as a process, designed for anyone who would like the opportunity to discuss with others what God is doing in their life, and what He might want to be doing. So we shall reflect together on that, and perhaps explore some new experience of Christian service, and do a little reading or some other form of study, and think about what it means to be a Methodist in 2008. It's another new thing! (See my "Message from the Manse".) Interested? We shall be meeting on the first Thursday evening of each month. Have a word with Val Campion or myself to find out more.

Robert Ely

Open House!

on Friday 7 November
from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
at 34 Bellencroft Gardens

Your chance to see the remodelled manse
with...

Traidcraft!

Cards, Crafts and Foods
Refreshments throughout the day

Robert and Teresa Ely

A Paraphrase of Psalm 32

The kind hand of the Lord is upon those whose waywardness is forgiven and whose defiant disobedience is forgotten. The kind hand of the Lord is upon those whose former pursuit of wrongdoing is not counted against them and whose hearts are turned toward Him.

When I tried to “show a brave face” and to pretend that I had not sinned guilt burned in my bones – I sighed in misery and the feeling did not leave me night or day. The hand of the Lord was heavy upon me so that I became physically drained of strength. It was like the of a hot summer day when you just want to lie down and melt away.

It went on like this until I could no longer escape my guilt and admitted the evil of thought and deed. I made my decision and came to the Lord and confessed my sins to Him. How wonderful you are, O Lord, you forgave me and took away the guilt and the power that sin had over me.

All God-fearing people should pray to you while you are known to be near; if and when they do, the floodtide of evil will not reach them. I have found you to be a safe harbour and that your kind hand will protect me. I am able to praise your name and sing the Songs of Zion.

The Lord speaks...“Yes, I will instruct and teach you how to follow the way of the sin free life, I will advise and watch over you. Take care to understand, do not be as those lacking commonsense and unable to follow the guidelines.” The Lord has shown me the consequences of evildoing but he has also shown that His unfailing love is in those who trust in Him.

So rejoice and be glad all that seek the way of holiness. You who are upright SING TO THE LORD.

Celtic Crosses

The island of Islay has three lovely Celtic crosses.

The first one we visited was at the ruined 13c. KILDALTON chapel, on the south east coast of the island, away from the sea, so some protection for the site. The cross is 8th century, ringed, of local blue-stone (which is actually bottle green). The quality of the carving matches the work carved by monks at Iona. Daniel fighting the lion, Abraham sacrificing Isaac, serpent boss work and four elephant-type beasts are all depicted on it. The carving is very sharp and clear to see. The chapel building is roofless but the site is well maintained with some interesting grave-stones and smaller Celtic crosses. A sense of peace prevails here. Outside the graveyard is a fenced area containing a smaller Celtic cross with a white mound adjacent. Thinking it was stones I was surprised to find a mound of scallop shells. A mystery!



The second cross we visited was at KILNAVE chapel on the north of the island. An isolated place down a track on the shore of the sea loch. The cross here is 8th century but very worn and weathered, facing the elements of Loch Gruinart. Any markings are barely visible. Once again the chapel is ruined, no roof, arch windows and doorway (extremely small) but structure is sound. It's built like drystone walling with no mortar. Amazingly it's still standing. The graveyard is used even now, and the site is well maintained.

The third cross we visited was on the west coast of Islay by Machir Bay at KILCHIARAN Church. This 15th century cross covered with lichen, is decorated with interlacing on one side and the cruxifixion on the other. At its base is a wishing stone. This church is derelict, boarded up and fenced off. A sad sight. However the cross and gravestones in the church yard are maintained well. This site lies in a field some distance from the sea, sharing with a sailor's cemetery containing the graves of 75 men drowned when HMS Otranto sank in a storm in October 1918. The graves are in 3 rows from cook to captain, kept immaculate. A very moving place.



Peace and calm surround these sites, the beauty of God's world here has barely changed over centuries and all the sites and crosses are still giving spiritual comfort to all who visit.

Also at BOWMORE the Round Church .Built so there were no corners for the devil to hide. A light, airy church plainly decorated with wood paneling and a tiered gallery. On my visit there was a Flower Festival with a few



wedding dresses and wedding photos of couples married in the church over the decades. This church stands at the top of the hill (on the main street) looking down over Loch Indaal. This round church is one of only two round churches in Scotland.

Jackie Neilson

Northumberland

Northumberland is a wonderful county to explore. It has countryside, moorland, sea, lovely beaches, castles, gardens, big houses and estates. There is lots to see. Who wouldn't be impressed driving the tidal road to Holy Island? The sheep wandering all over the place, lots of birds singing, wonderful blue sea (especially as the sun was shining on our visit). A small community live here which is isolated as an island - twice a day. It's so peaceful here, so relaxing. We walked from the car park to Lindisfarne Castle. A fair trek.

The castle was converted into an Edwardian house in 1903. Its only a small residence but has spectacular views of sea and land. Well worth the climb up the steps. The enclosed garden viewed from the castle is The Gertrude Jekyll Garden, planned by the lady herself, a friend of Edwin Lutyens, owner of the Castle. The herbaceous borders were a mass of colour and perfume, busy with insects, but protected from wandering sheep. The time passed quickly, we had no time to wander round the village or Priory as we had to cross the tidal road before it was too late.

Jackie Neilson

Best Kept Secrets

"The Bridge" is the free booklet issued to residents in the Bewdley area every month. In the August edition the following article appeared:-

One of the best kept secrets of The Methodist Church of Great Britain is that it owns an exquisite collection of modern art. This collection comes to Bewdley in October 2008 and will be displayed at various venues in the town for one month.

The display will take place from 4 October - 2 November at the Church of St Anne's in the centre of Bewdley, and in Bewdley Museum, from 10am - 4pm Monday - Saturday and from 2pm - 4pm Sunday.

John Fellows

Gifts Children Bring to the Church

Children have much to bring to the congregation. Children bring:

- a special spontaneity within congregational life that keeps us smiling, demands flexibility, and adds spice to our life together
- the ability to see things as they really are
- all senses worship of God
- freshness in hymn singing, in celebrating God's love
- new understanding of the world as seen through their eyes
- a reminder of our own vows as we witness their baptism
- their own confusion, isolation, discouragement, fears, loneliness, and pain
- a filling of a void for people who are childless, whose children are grown, or whose grandchildren live far away
- the ability to make us shed tears because of their vulnerability
- an unhesitating faith and absolute acceptance of God's love
- questions that we forget to ask or are afraid to ask, that push us to think about our own theology, and that press us to articulate our beliefs in new ways. (Children keep us honest)
- an openness to God
- the ability to unlock love with a simple look
- a way to connect us to today's real world
- a challenge to an "old" way, consideration of a "new" way
- pure, unadulterated JOY!

Children are God's unique gift to us. Do we have the awareness to accept and embrace the gift?

*Taken from
Ministry: a
guide; The
Church*



*Children's
practical
Methodist*

From the Methodist Recorder

While we have received communications that strongly affirm our future plans we also appreciate and understand the views and concerns that some of your readers have expressed over NCH's name change to Action for Children. I would like to reassure Recorder readers that we are absolutely determined to move forward in a way that continues to recognise and celebrate our heritage.

NCH has a long and proud history of nearly 140 years, born out of the passion and vision of the Methodist community and its determination to help the most vulnerable and disadvantaged young people in society to achieve their full potential. Our trustees, staff and volunteers are absolutely committed to these values and our new identity has been developed with constant reference to them.

As readers will appreciate, the needs of the children and young people we support have changed over the years, as has the society they live in, and the environment in which we must make our best efforts to raise money for our work. While we are well known in some communities, there are other key groups who are unaware of what we do. Only 1% of the general public have heard of us. This makes it very difficult to fund-raise beyond the church and to campaign to bring the concerns of the children and young people we work with to the attention of the wider world.

Please be assured that our decision to change to Action for Children (a name which is part of our heritage as we were NCH Action for Children for some years) was not taken lightly. We fully researched the change at every stage with people who know our work and care about what we do including children and young people, staff, and, of course, representative groups from the Methodist community, and such consultation will be ongoing.

We will invest thoroughly and wisely in making the changes we have planned and we are very grateful that we have received specifically earmarked financial support for this.

We thus look to increase voluntary income which is absolutely

essential to us for not only does it maintain our independence but it provides the funding to allow us to campaign on behalf of children and young people and to develop innovative services and solutions which the state is unwilling to fund until they can be proven to be effective.

We want all our supporters to be part of this exciting time for us, and the next chapter in our history in which we will continue to support and meet the needs of the most vulnerable children in society and be a fearless campaigner on their behalf. We look to refresh and renew our relationship with Methodism and so I would encourage anyone with thoughts on these changes to contact us at brand@nch.org.uk, or to contact me personally at will.morrey@nch.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Revd Will Morrey, NCH Faith Communities Adviser (*Used with permission*)

THANK YOU MRS THOMPSON!

I'm not too sure how long Mrs Sheila Thompson has been involved with Springdale Junior Church, but Nicola Jones can remember being taught by her so I'll let you try and work it out!

The love, support & commitment that Sheila has given over the years to children and their families and the other Junior Church teachers is enormous. Her quiet & gentle kindness and encouragement will always be remembered and I'm sure, knowing Sheila, that this will continue for many years to come.

Owing to illness, Sheila has recently had to resign from her duties at Junior Church; however, it is wonderful to see her back worshipping at Springdale. We pray that her health continues to improve.

So, Sheila, a great big THANK YOU from all of us at Junior Church.

Sarah Philpott

Methodism in Wolverhampton and Bilston (2)

Donald H Ryan

**Noah's Ark Chapel, Wolverhampton,
and Temple Street Chapel, Bilston**

Wesleyan Methodism begins to grow

The Wesleys did not have their own resident minister for many years. John Wesley visited the Wesleys in the Spring from time to time. Between Wesley's visits they were dependent on Wesleyan itinerant ministers coming from the Staffordshire Circuit. For the day-to-day fellowship, the faithful Local Preachers had pastoral oversight of the society and led Sunday worship. When an Itinerant Minister came to visit the Wolverhampton Society he always received overnight hospitality with John Smith, a locksmith in Coven. John Smith's house had only one bedroom, a sitting room, a small workshop and a small garden. The minister was given the use of the bedroom and his horse was stabled in the village. The family 'camped' in the sitting-room, sleeping as best they could in the cramped conditions. So concerned were John Smith and his wife to provide better accommodation for the travelling preacher they resolved that by hard work, thrift and 'God's Blessing' to extend their humble home. This they did and the travelling preachers for many years stayed with them and the next two succeeding generations.

An example of an early Wolverhampton Wesleyan Local Preacher is Mr Henry Ryley who was a locksmith in Upper Brickkiln Street. Until 1781 the Staffordshire circuit extended beyond Wolverhampton to Birmingham in the south and Shrewsbury in the west. When Henry Ryley was planned to preach at Shrewsbury he left his house after he had finished his day's work on the Saturday evening and walked to Shrewsbury. On the Sunday he preached 3 sermons and then walked back to Wolverhampton in time to start his daily work early on the Monday morning. The road to Shrewsbury, like most of the roads at the time, was an unmade track with many 'foodpads' [highwaymen on foot] and highwaymen [on horses]. On one occasion Henry Ryley was attacked on his way to a preaching appointment. The pugilistic skills in wrestling and boxing which he had learned before his conversion to Christianity enabled him beat off his assailants and continue his journey.

Noah's Ark Inn

Noah's Ark was a famous old inn much frequented by farmers, butchers and tradesmen especially on market days. In the Inn they transacted business with the dealers in thrashed grain. They ate hearty meals and drank large amounts of ale. Noah's Ark Inn was, in Wesley's day, an old fashioned inn which stood where the Posada now stands in Lichfield Street. It had a great gateway but no gate. The inn front had a 'flat-faced shop-like window' that had small panes of old antique green glass through which glowed the warm welcome of the blazing fire burning in the large open fireplace. In the yard was stabling for the horses with space for the farmer's traps. A passage way went down the side of the inn into an area with Tudor type houses with overhanging upper storeys. Beyond the houses the passage led into Wheeler's Fold and then on into the Angel Inn yard and the Swan Hotel yard where John Wesley had a table brought out for him to stand on whilst he preached on March 17, 1761. During Wesley's visits to Wolverhampton the Wesleyan Society was growing. On March 23, 1768, Wesley writes in his Journal that only those who could not get into the house made a little noise.

Noah's Ark Chapel

During the late 1770's and early 1780's the Wesleyan Society began to out-grow its meeting room in Rotten's Row which prompted the local Wesleyan leaders to buy a piece of ground in Wheelers Fold even though the three main inns of the town would surround them. The plot of land was irregular in shape and measured some 380 square yards. The new Noah's Ark Chapel was a plain rectangular building measuring 38 feet by 32 feet. The entrance was in the centre of the front of the building with a window on either side and five arched windows above. The pulpit was on the wall opposite the entrance. There was a choir gallery opposite the pulpit. In the central body of the chapel were the seats rented by some of the families. The rent-free seats were at the sides with men and women sitting separately on opposite sides. As was the custom in early Wesleyan Methodism there was no organ to lead the choir and worshippers. Instead they had instrumentalists who led the singing. The instruments that were often used were string instruments such as harps, fiddles or dulcimers, which were plucked, and wind instruments such as flutes, cornets and sackbuts, which were an early form of the trombone. We know that Mr Coley,

the father of the Heath Town Lock maker played a valuable flute. There was a second flute player along with fiddlers and trombone players in Noah's Ark Chapel orchestra. Among the members of the choir were Jeremiah Wynn, a counter tenor, who was to become the Mayor of Wolverhampton in 1852/53, and Robert Perks the edge tool manufacturer who employed over 100 men plus some women. On one occasion the choir and musicians went on strike. They left the choir gallery and went and sat in the body of the chapel. The Superintendent minister was equal to the revolt and looking straight at them announced the hymn with a clear stern voice:

'Let those refuse to sing
Who never knew our God.'

which is 487, in its altered form, in Hymns and Psalms. The Revolt ended.

Noah's Ark People

Whilst there are no minute books in existence we know that one of the first stewards of the chapel was Mr Henry Ryley, the local preacher, and that William Bayliss, a manufacturer with a factory in Monmore Green, was a steward. Dr Edward Hayling Coleman FRCS, a Medical Practitioner and surgeon in Wolverhampton with a surgery in Salop Street, was an enthusiastic worker at 'The Ark' and a Local Preacher for very many years. One of the outstanding women of Noah's Ark Chapel was Miss Esther Loxton, a maltster who lived to be 85. Esther was, for around 50 years, a class leader and Sunday school teacher in the Noah's Ark and Darlington Street Chapels. Another leading officer and Local Preacher for 50 years was John Tyrer. He had come to Wolverhampton from London and was a well-known artist working on wood, canvas and especially on japanned ware. Although his business had hard times he became successful and took over Fearncombes the japanners in Dudley Road. The jubilee of his 50 years as a Wesleyan Local Preacher was held in the New Village Chapel in Ettingshall where his fellow preachers presented him with a purse of 50 guineas. Among the other noted workers and preachers at Noah's Ark were William Philpotts, a 'brass-dresser'.

Taking the Wesleyan concern that people should have access to books took an important lead in promoting Wolverhampton's Free Library. When it opened in Queen Street in 1878 it was one of the first 'Free' public libraries in England. Other members of 'The Ark' included William

Parke, who was born in Brewood in 1792 and went to Brewood Grammar School. When he was 15 he was apprenticed to Joseph Smart, the printer, who had his business in the former Angel Inn in High Green, Wolverhampton, and the proprietor of the Wolverhampton Chronicle. In 1828 William Parke became a partner in the firm and in 1831, with George Robinson, bought the 'copyright' of the Chronicle but later sold it to concentrate on his printing business. William Parke eventually left the Wesleyans and went to the Parish Church. Mr William Brown a grocer in High Green was the Sunday school treasurer. The last Noah's Ark Sunday School Anniversary was held on April 11, 1824. The preacher at 3pm and 6 30 pm was Rev Henry S Hopwood of Stourport. The numbers of children in the Sunday school were 'Boys 230, Girls 236'

Among the outstanding visiting preachers to 'The Ark', apart from John Wesley, was Gideon Ouseley, the great Irish Charismatic Revivalist who became famous for preaching astride his white horse. In his native Ireland he preached both in Irish and English. Attending one of his services in 'The Ark' was the illiterate Richard Phipps, a collier from Broseley, who was 'soundly converted' to the Christian Faith. He began his elementary education at 'The Ark' and later at the Hell Lane chapel. With his wife he managed to save £23. With some of the money they bought green groceries and other provisions to stock a shop. They purchased a cow and Richard started a 'milk round'. He then extended his business by becoming a coal merchant and baker in Pipers Row employing 3 men. With his profits he had houses built. He became a Wesleyan Class Leader with 3 classes under his care. So successful was he in his business that he was able to lend the trustees a £1000 annuity to pay off the debt on the newly built Darlington Street Wesleyan Chapel. By the time of his death at the age of 90 in 1887 the trustees had paid him back £993.15.0d.

Noah's Ark Chapel could not hold all of the increasing numbers in the congregation. The building could not hold more than 500 people so the trustees decided to hire The Old Meeting House in John Street as a 'chapel of ease'

A famous Wesleyan preacher, Rev John Newton, visited Noah's Ark Chapel and was a catalyst that brought together what many people had been thinking when he eloquently told his hearers to "get out of this

nasty dirty place". In the yard outside the Chapel was rotting horse manure. The inn yards and the passage that led to the chapel were in a foul and unhygienic condition. The trustees decided to look for a better site on which to build a new chapel. A site was found and the new chapel was built. The preacher at the last service in Noah's Ark Chapel in 1825 was Dr Edward Hayling Coleman.

Bilston and Wesleyan Methodism

In his Journal dated Saturday November 9, 1745, John Wesley, after leaving the Macclesfield area, came to Penkridge where he stopped at an inn and had a conversation with a 'poor, drunken, cursing, swearing landlord, who seemed scarce to think whether there was either God or devil'. After Wesley had spoken the landlord changed and was full of thanks and blessings. On leaving Penkridge Wesley would travel along the road that went through Oxley and Bushbury. At Heath houses he would turn towards Bilston, bypassing Wolverhampton. Wesley says 'It was exceedingly dark when we rode through Bilston. However, we did not stick fast till we came to Wednesbury town-end. Several coming with candles, I got out of the quagmire and, leaving them to disengage my horse, I walked to Francis Ward's and preached on 'Fear not ye, for I know ye seek him that was crucified.' Wesley would have taken his text and theme from the angels, conversation with the women at the empty tomb in Matthew 28:5. Even though Wesley did not stop at Bilston on this occasion the fact that he mentions passing through and that he went to his friend's house and preached there is significant to Bilston's Methodist story. The next time he mentions visiting Bilston is on Wednesday 21 March, 1770, and preaching at 10am. After his sermon he went on to Bilbrook where he preached at 1pm and then doubled back to Wolverhampton in time to preach at around 5pm. Whilst Wesley does not mention any other visits it is probable that he visited Bilston on other occasions.

In the intervening 25 years many people heard the 'Word' preached by the Wesleyans in Bilston.

For many Bilston people life was hard and violent

The population of Bilston was about 3000 people, which were made up of two classes, the gentry, rich land, mine and quarry owners and the down

trodden agricultural works, miners, quarrymen and the craftsmen who made buckles, locks or glass. They were poor, hard working people whose hot passions found pleasure in bullbaiting, cockfighting and unregulated fist fighting. The ancient Anglican Church of St Leonard's was frequented by the gentry, landowners and the employers but does not seem to have been a place that the workers felt welcomed in. In 1754 it is recorded that 'Serious riots and villanies (sic) of various kinds have been frequently committed within the liberty of Bilston.' The record goes on to say that the inhabitants 'in vestry assembled on this 10th of March, do agree that the authors of all and every kind of riots and villanies (sic) shall be prosecuted at the expense of the parish.' Some years later the 'vestry' agreed to build a strong room to put offenders in. Even so, the people of Bilston do not seem to have been as violent or destructive as the mobs in Wednesbury or Darlaston.

Conditions improve

At the time of Wesley's first visit to Bilston the Rev Edward Best was the vicar of Wednesbury and the minister at St Leonard's in Bilston. His care for the welfare of the people under his charge went a long way to quell the worst excesses of lawlessness. He was instrumental in freeing the parishioners from the heavy levies that they had to pay to the churchwardens of the Mother Church of Wolverhampton. He was also successful in discouraging violence and riotous behaviour.

By the time Wesley next visited Bilston at least two of the men who had heard him in Wednesbury were staunch God-fearing Methodists. They were Stephen Hipkiss 'a burly miner' and Samuel Ferriday. Wesley first preached in Bilston in the half-timbered home of Samuel Ferriday at the south end of Wood Street and Market Street, opposite Pype Hall. A regular visitor to the Methodists who met in Samuel Ferriday's home was the ardent Methodist and friend of the Wesley's, Francis Ward, of Wednesbury. Near to Ferriday's house was The Globe Inn.

The popular 'mine host' was a jovial and rotund Mr Mason who disapproved of the 'singing Methodists'. At his inn there met a musical group made up of local tradesmen and well-to-do people who used to sing bacchanalian glees and ditties. Whenever the Methodists held their meetings the glee singers, encouraged by Mr Mason, went and sang outside

Samuel Ferriday's home their favourite loudest drinking songs to drown out the hymn singing from inside.

Wesley and the Bilston Methodists are mobbed

Whilst John Wesley was preaching to the large number of friends who had crowded inside the house at 10am on the March 21, 1770, a great mob assembled outside and enjoyed their favourite pastime of 'baiting the Methodisses'. They shouted for the preacher to be brought out. Undaunted, Wesley and the congregation prayed that God would turn the hearts of their persecutors. This enraged the crowd outside and some of them began to throw stones at the windows and beat on the door with cudgels. John Wesley said he would go outside to meet the mob but his hearers tried to dissuade him. When they saw that he was determined, they too went out with him. It is reported that the crowd shouted, "No preaching", "No Sermonising", "Shut Up", "Down with psalm singers". Then a well-known bull baiter pushed his way through the mob and threatened to knock Wesley down. Wesley calmly looked him in the eye and gently said, "If I have done thee harm, strike man, and spare not!" The bull baiter and his cronies left, leaving Wesley free to address the multitude.

Bilston Wesleyan Methodism begins to prosper.

From Wesley's first mention of Bilston in 1745 to the opening of Temple Street Wesleyan Chapel in 1787 Methodism flourished in the homes of the faithful. In addition to Stephen Hipkiss and Samuel Ferriday, the Methodists also met in the homes of Peggy Taylor in Hangman's Row (now Warwick Street) and Mr Homer, the enameller of Homer's Fold. The commitment of Peggy Taylor to the Wesleyan Methodist Society is one of many glowing enthusiastic deeply held beliefs in the centrality of Christian Faith in the lives of working class folk. She had a weekly Wesleyan Class Meeting in her humble and welcoming home. In her house she kept a small shop selling 'suck' at a penny-an-ounce. Suck was boiled sugar and treacle flavoured with mint, horehound [*Marrubium vulgare*] or other herbs which, when cooled, was a sweet that children enjoyed. Her aim was to support the effort to build a Wesleyan Chapel in Bilston. Although there was already a Free chapel of the Lady Huntindon's Connexion which had been open for some time meeting Lane it was not a Wesleyan Chapel.

Peggy called the Methodist women of Bilston to her home for an afternoon tea meeting with a view to discuss ways and means of raising the money for a chapel. Because she had limited means the progress was going to be slow.

Miss Anne Loxdale comes to the rescue.

Anne Loxdale, a Methodist lady of some fortune who had been converted under John Wesley's ministry and who was a friend of Peggy Taylor, came to the rescue. The Loxdale family received their wealth from coal mining in the Bilston area. Thomas Loxdale had two sons and three daughters. The second daughter was Anne, who was baptised on October 1, 1755, in Shrewsbury. Much to her Anglican family's misgivings, she and John Wesley regularly corresponded. On one occasion Wesley dissuaded her from making what he considered to be an unsuitable marriage. In 1784 Anne Loxdale gave the land in Temple Street and headed the subscription list to build the first Wesleyan Chapel that became known locally as Loxdale's Chapel. The chapel was not very pretentious, looking more like a house than a chapel from the outside. Inside an unusual feature was a space under the choir and musicians' galley to stable the preacher's horse during the service. The great day for the Bilston Wesleyans came in 1794 when the Rev Joseph Benson, a celebrated Wesleyan Minister, opened the church. The Rev Dr Thomas Coke, the founder of the Wesleyan Foreign Missions, also preached at the chapel and met Anne Loxdale.

In 1793 Mrs Brookes opened the first Sunday School in Bilston, which she held in her own home until the numbers grew too large and additional rooms were added onto the chapel to accommodate this vital piece of Christian work and evangelism.

The first trust deed was dated January 31, 1801, by which the Chapel and the Ground were conveyed to Samuel Ferriday, William Underhill, Jacob Owen (the father of a future vicar of Bilston), Stephen Hipkiss, Aaron Timmings, John Bagnall, B Wooley, Edward Bagnall, Alexander Gordon, John Barnett, Charles Morris, and John Hinchcliffe for 999 years from April 1, 1748, upon trust for securing the Chapel for Wesleyan Methodists. Anne Loxdale went to live with her sister Sarah who was married to the

Rev Thomas Hill, the incumbent of Crosby. Whilst Anne was at Crosby The Rev Dr Thomas Coke proposed to her and they were married at Trinity Church Liverpool on December 16, 1811, but sadly she died on December 5, 1812.

As the Wesleyan Society continued to grow the Temple Street Chapel was enlarge in 1812 and in 1825 a new site was bought for a much larger chapel.

To be continued

New Circuit Magazine

A new circuit magazine has been proposed by Rev Cecil King which will be edited by Christine (Tina) Kinch. It is hoped that the magazine will be produced three or four times a year, depending from the input from the Circuit. The first full edition will come out in time for Christmas. Everything that our churches are doing in addition to normal services can be included. The deadline for copy will be Monday 1st December, 2008, the day after the deadline for Triangle!

Any photos will be gratefully received - they need to be in "jpeg" format and must be copyright cleared, just as for Triangle. Pictures that you take yourself will be fine. Old or new photos can be scanned in if they are not digital.

"People stories" are also needed from across the circuit if they would benefit from a wider audience than, say, individual church magazines. Press releases from Methodist Press Office, MRDF and Christian Aid are not required, just local news.

The magazine will be in full colour and will hopefully help the new Circuit bond together. It also needs a name - nothing corny, but something that will stand the test of time. Ideas for a name or anything else for inclusion may be sent to Tina Kinch or christinegeorge[at]newbredgewv6.fsnet.co.uk.

Hymns written by... Wordsearch

B I L R O U G H A P D G J K T F D F N K H
 T G Y I W D V J L P E O G I U Y T R E E C
 Q W A R A D C G J W A R T U K G S X R V E
 K R W O W J V N I J A H R J G H H B X C H
 P F T E T O U L F N S T U Y E W E W E Y C
 I G H D T S L E T F G B T T R R Q W F H S
 N A A K A I F D F J E O N S T D D O E J Z
 A F H L A S H X H K D C G K J C T K I R L
 R T Y M A X S W L K N A L N F B Y N O E L
 W E S L E Y D F J E D M E S T O N K H E A
 A S S N C U L L E N S E A M V Q J S H K S
 J C D O O L V K J D Q D D A B Z V W R H D
 N R Y S A A L J D R A A M L O H S I H C V
 G E H W G E J H S I S I O E M X G N G R B
 D B S A C F H E A C S D F G Y F O E R F J
 X A N R V R I D S K E T H E O J P H J U T
 C F J K L H G F S A Q E F V D Y E N N I B

Find the words listed below in the grid above. Answers can be found on page 43.

Bilrough	Edmeston	Kendrick	Smale
Binney	Faber	Kethe	Watts
Burns	Grant	Lowry	Wesley
Caswall	Herbert	Noel	White
Chisholm	Hewer	Perry	Williams
Cullen	Kaan	Rawson	Zscheck

A Brave Lady...

Many readers will be aware that Jackie Neilson had her long locks cut off at Springdale's Summer Fair this year. In doing so, Jackie raised £218 for the Development Fund. Her hair was sent to the Little Princess Trust.



Circuit Events

Christian Aid Transformation Day - we have the power to change things; this event will show you how: at the Birmingham and Midland Institute in Margaret Street, Birmingham City Centre: 10am - 4pm on Saturday 4 October. To register: ring Christian Aid on 0121 200 2283.

Trading Fairly, Living Justly - Presentations, tastings, sales: at St Andrew's Church, Sedgley: 11am - 3pm on Saturday 11 October. Keep your fairly traded chocolate wrappers and bring them that day; they will be taken to Cadbury's to show Cadbury's that many chocolate eaters want the chocolate they eat to be fairly traded.

Caring for People and Property - Presentation and question and answer session by Methodist Insurance: at St John's Church, Parkfields: 9.30am - 12.30pm on Saturday 18 October.

Safeguarding Children and Young People - Training and up-dating for Church Safeguarding Officers: at St John's Church, Parkfields: 9.30am - 12.30pm on Saturday 1 November.

Deciding how to use our Resources - Circuit meeting at Fallings Park Church: 7.30pm pm Monday 17 November.

Garth Hewitt: "A World of Difference" - At Beckminster Church, at 7.30pm on Friday 21 November: tickets £5 each from Sue Lorimer at Beckminster Church Office - 01902 344910.

Preparing for Christmas - Coffee and Christmas carols at Darlington Street Church: 10am to 12 noon on Tuesday 2 December.

For all matters concerning the new Wolverhampton Methodist Circuit, please contact Rev Cecil King:
Beatrice.King[at]btinternet.com

How Lucky We Are...

If we could fit the entire population of the world into a village consisting of 100 people, maintaining the proportions of all the people living on Earth, that village would consist of 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 Americans (north, central and south), 8 Africans.

There would be 52 women and 48 men, 30 Caucasians and 70 non-Caucasians, 30 Christians and 70 non-Christians, 89 heterosexuals and 11 homosexuals.

6 people would possess 59% of the wealth and they would all come from the USA..

80 would live in poverty, 70 would be illiterate, 50 would suffer from hunger and malnutrition, 1 would be dying, 1 would be being born, 1 would own a computer, 1 (yes, only one) would have a university degree.

If we looked at the world in this way the need for acceptance and understanding would be obvious. But consider, again, the following:

If you woke up this morning in good health you have more luck than one million people, who won't live through the week.

If you have never experienced the horror of war, the solitude of prison, the pain of torture, were not close to death from starvation, then you are better off than 500 million people.

If you can go to your place of worship without fear that someone will assault or kill you then you are luckier than 3 billion people.

If you have a full fridge, clothes on your back, a roof over your head and a place to sleep, you are wealthier than 75% of the world's population.

If you currently have money in the bank, in your wallet and a few coins in your purse, you are one of 8 of the privileged few amongst the 100 people in the world.

If your parents are still alive and still married you're a rare individual.

If you can read this message then you are extremely lucky because you don't comprise one of those 2 billion people who can't read.

And so?

Work like you don't need the money.

Love like nobody has ever hurt you.

Dance like nobody is watching.

Sing like nobody is listening.

Live as if this was paradise on Earth.



**Springdale Methodist Church
Christmas Fair
Saturday 6 December
12 noon - 2pm**

**Santa's Grotto,
Tombola, Cakes,**



**Books, Toys,
Raffle, Craft,**

**White Elephant,
Refreshments, and lots more besides!
Come and join the fun!**

Lea Brook Methodist Church

Lea Brook Road North, Wednesbury, West Midlands, WS10 7LY

www.leabrookchurch.co.uk

Telephone: 0845 643 4149

1 September 2008

Dear Friends,

It is our joy and privilege to invite you to join with us for an inspirational start to the 2008 Christmas season. We have pleasure in announcing the visit of international Christian singer song-writer Graham Kendrick and the Graham Kendrick Band for one night only on Sunday 7 December, 2008, at Dudley Concert Hall. Graham Kendrick will perform songs from his new musical 'Dreaming of a Holy Night' together with his band, a locally arranged choir and up and coming vocalist Philippa Hannah [the voice of Mary on the album].

Presented under atmospheric lighting and with evocative visuals, the music expresses a heartfelt longing for a different kind of world - where the peace and goodwill we associate with the best of the Christmas season becomes a reality for everyone. With words from the Gospel accounts and echoes of traditional carols it explores history's greatest story both from the inside - through some of its characters, and from the outside - looking back in awe at the incarnation, whilst longing for the fulfilment of what began on that holy night.

The event will be both inspirational for Christians, and where their maybe not-yet Christian friends and guests can encounter the Nativity story in a fresh, creative and challenging way.

We are looking for groups and individuals to join us as part of the choir for the event. Everyone is welcome - regardless of age and previous singing ability! Rehearsals commence Tuesday 30 September, 2008, at 7.30pm at Lea Brook Methodist Church. They are scheduled primarily for Tuesdays and Thursdays (with occasional Fridays and Sundays). For further information please call us on the ticket line 0845 643 4149.

Tickets for the event are priced at £10 each (no concessions) and will be on sale from 1 September, 2008, on a first come first served basis. All bookings should be made via the ticket booking line on 0845 643 4149 or alternatively by email to info@leabrookchurch.co.uk. Early reservations are advisable. Full payment is requested before tickets will be issued and all monies are non-refundable. Group bookings are more than welcome but should be co-ordinated by one group leader.

We are also looking for churches who are prepared to run Alpha Courses or similar tasters, either later in December 2008 or early January 2009, in response to not-yet Christians who may be challenged by the event. If your church is willing to offer this or already has something arranged, please email us at info@leabrookchurch.co.uk so that a comprehensive offering across the local area can be compiled.

We look forward to you joining us - either in the choir or in the audience, for a fantastic start to Christmas 2008.

With every good wish,

Martyn Palfreyman
Lea Brook Methodist Church



Wombourne Methodist Church Bazaar

Saturday 22 November

10am - 12 noon

Wombourne Community Centre

Admission 30p

China, Glass, Christmas Bulbs, Toys,

Homemade Jams and Cakes, Refreshments, etc.

Please come along and support us and have a lovely morning!

New Testament Mnemonic Devices

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians,
Matthew, Mark, Luke and John Act 2 Corny (at the)

Galations, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians in the Bible.
General Electric Power Company

Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews
Then Timothy Titused Phi lemons Hebrew (and finally)

James, 1st Peter, 2nd Peter, 1st John, 2nd John, 3rd John, Jude, Revelations.
James, 2 Peters, 3 Johns and 1 Jude found Revelation.

Jim Sea

Poem of Hope

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves,
"Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?
Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God.
Your playing small doesn't serve the world.
There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't
feel insecure around you.

We are all meant to shine, as children do.
We were born to make manifest the glory of God within us.
It is not just in some of us, it is in all of us, everyone.
And as we let our light shine,
We unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.
As we are liberated from our own fear
Our presence automatically liberates others.

Smile!

A man was driving to work when a lorry jumped a stop sign, hit his car broadside, and knocked him out cold. Passers-by pulled him from the wreck and revived him. He began a terrific struggle and had to be tranquilised by the medics.

Later, when he was calm, they asked him why he had struggled so. He said, "I remember the impact, then nothing. I woke up on a concrete slab in front of a huge, flashing "Shell" sign. And somebody was standing in front of the "S"!"

Giving

"What, giving again?"

I asked in a daze.

"And must I keep giving,

And giving always?"

"Oh no", said the angel,

Whose eyes pierced me through:

"Just stop when the Saviour

Stops giving to you!"

If it weren't for marriage,
men would go through
life thinking they had no
faults at all.

Notice on the door of a
plastic surgeon's office:
"We can help you pick
your nose"!

If YOU really want the last word
in an argument, try saying:
"I guess you're right."

God doesn't call the
qualified, he qualifies
the called.

Life in the kingdom is
not a hundred metre
dash: it is more like a
marathon.

If you don't love someone, then act
like you do. Eventually the feelings will
catch up with your actions.
C S Lewis

Lessons from Life

Many people have contacted me to say how much they appreciated Roland's 'Lessons from Life', and ask 'why are they no longer in the Methodist Recorder'? Unfortunately Roland is no longer able to write them. He is suffering from dementia and has had a severe stroke, and so is completely disabled.

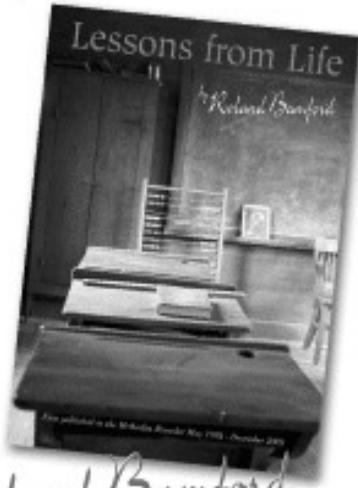
However, with the help of friends & the cooperation of the recorder, where the articles first appeared, we have been able to bring together collection of 37 articles into a small book to enjoy once again or for the first time.

Roland loved writing them. They express his personality. His greatest joy was people. He cared about them and he cared for them. He observed life and how ordinary things touched their lives. He was able to relate to old and young. Children loved him and found he talked to them without condescension. The old found in him a sympathetic friend. He was able very naturally to pray with people and meet their deepest needs. Yet he had an ordinariness about him that related to anyone. He talked to everyone he met, often to the annoyance of his family when we had other things on our minds. He was able to minister successfully as a prison chaplain, industrial chaplain, and most of all as a hospital chaplain. He considered this ministry as an immense privilege.

All this came out also in his preaching. It always started with some ordinary incident that had happened to him, or that he had observed. It was laced with his Lancashire sense of humour and the congregation would be laughing at the stories he told. In fact he often said that he married me because I laughed at his jokes. However then he would carry the congregation to some profound truth that was the whole point of the exercise.

Glennys Bamford

To learn more about this book, its motivation and how you can get hold of one (£3.99), please email [hope4all\[at\]live.co.uk](mailto:hope4all@live.co.uk) Re: Lessons from Life. All profits from the sale of this publication will be donated to Christian Aid.



by Roland Bamford

B I L R O U G H P H
 Y E G E C
 R W R R E
 W I A R H B H
 E O L N T Y E C
 T L T T R W S
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Dates for your Diaries

28 Sept	Back to Church Sunday		
11 Oct	Fair Trade/Justice Day	St Andrew's, Sedgley	11am - 3pm
11 Oct	Church Anniversary Concert	Springdale	7pm
12 Oct	Church Anniversary	Springdale	10.30am & 6.30pm
18 Oct	Back to Church Sunday Barn Dance	Springdale	
21 Nov	Garth Hewitt Concert	Beckminster	
23 Nov	World Church Sunday - Rwanda Presentation	Springdale	10.30am
2 Dec	Coffee and Carols	Darlington Street	10am - 12 noon
6 Dec	Christmas Fair	Springdale	12 noon - 2pm
7 Dec	Parade	Springdale	10.30am
20 Dec	Punch and Carols	Springdale	7pm
21 Dec	Carol Singing	Start from Springdale	7.30pm ish!
24 Dec	Candlelight Service	Springdale	7pm

Deadline for the next edition of Triangle is
Sunday 30 November.

**Please would all stewards, pastoral secretaries,
 etc., etc. make a note in their diaries so as not to
 miss this deadline. Thank you.**

Remember! No photocopies! Please check copyright and gain permission where necessary! Email if you can - it makes things so much easier for us! Thanks!

Please hand in your articles directly, or via your stewards, to **Helen Cooper** or **Sarah Philpott**. Articles can also be sent electronically (preferred) to [triangle\[at\]springdalechurch.org.uk](mailto:triangle@springdalechurch.org.uk) or via the link on Springdale's website, www.springdalechurch.org.uk