

Messenger



Market Drayton Methodist Circuit

Circuit magazine

Spring 2019

Message from Ruth

*“The Church of Christ in every age
Beset by change but Spirit led,
Must claim and test its heritage
And keep on rising from the dead.”*

Fred Pratt Green

Rev'd Fred Pratt Green is one of the last century's most prolific Methodist hymnwriters. I, among many have noted his hymnody as more functional over worshipful, but they have and indeed will continue to serve the church for years to come. But this verse in particular sets us somewhat of a challenge...enough indeed for it to be the topic for presentation for candidating in years previous to my own. We always face change in life but we often forget what change looks like within the church, yet we are met with it time and time again. As churches within our circuit we are facing a number of changes in somewhat different ways. For Hinstock it is the change from being a circuit church, to being a class of MDMC. In many ways this means that little might change, but we recognise the challenge of this hymn verse that we claim and test our heritage, with the hope and promise of resurrection. For MDMC, the change is quite practical, as we explore new structures, new ways of working, whilst again, holding to that which makes us yet 'Methodist'. For Ashley, the change may be somewhat more external, as our ecumenical brothers and sisters will shortly find themselves again in interregnum until a new Rector is found.

In all these situations however, we must find ourselves rooted in that challenge to be Spirit-led. In order for that to be the case, then we must be ready and attentive to God's Holy Spirit, listening in prayer and diligent in reading the scriptures.

This Lent, you are encouraged (and maybe even challenged) to join in corporate prayer at MDMC, so that we might all be more able to be 'Spirit-led' through all the changes around us.

Each Wednesday from Ash Wednesday (6th March) through to Holy Week (17th April) there will be four opportunities to meet together for maybe just half an hour to pray together. Each Wednesday there will be led prayers at 6am, 11am, 4pm & 8pm. They will be predominantly the same, though there may be a slight family emphasis at the 4pm prayers to encourage children to attend and engage in praying together. The 11am prayers on the 27th March will be an opportunity to receive communion. On Ash Wednesday there will be the opportunity for 'ashing' where you can choose to receive the sign of the cross in ash with the words:

Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.

Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.

As we approach this season of penitence and repentance, may we all seek to be Spirit-led as we face the changes not just in our churches, but in our lives and in God's world, that we might truly be a resurrection people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ruth', with a small flourish underneath.

BAPTISMS AND MEMBERSHIPS

What an amazing weekend! It was SUCH a joy and privilege to be a part of the baptisms and membership service.

On Saturday morning, before the baptisms, Ruth and I took the four lads (Elijah, Jacob, Joe and Will) across to the Methodist Bookshop in Hanley, to choose themselves a bible to be presented with the following morning. *(This is a superb shop by the way - now the only Methodist Bookshop in the country - and pretty much on our doorstep! Well worth a visit if you haven't been!)* We had talked in Junior Fellowship sessions about



different bibles and translations and the boys excitedly started taking bibles off the shelves, comparing them, looking up favourite bible verses in different translations and sharing their findings and discoveries! In my head, I

think I'd thought that the staff must be quite used to customers of all ages visiting, but the lady serving that morning was absolutely overwhelmed by our boys, saying, "It brings joy to my heart to see boys poring over bibles!" When we explained that they were choosing gifts from church to mark their baptisms later that day, she beamed, punched the air in celebration, congratulated them all, then bought four Christian bookmarks, signed them, and gave them to the lads! We are so fortunate that it seems normal for children to be excited about bibles and their journeys and relationships with God, but this show of amazement and love made me realise again that we really do have something very special here at MDMC!

And that was just the start of the amazing weekend!

The baptisms and re-affirmations were a thrilling experience. The sharing of fellowship (and lovely food) in celebration afterwards. Then the services on Sunday morning, making new members and hearing the testimony of some of those who had been baptised the previous day (James in the 9:15am service, Elijah, Jacob and William in the 10:30 service – well worth listening to the recordings on the website if you missed any of them!)

I know we are at the very beginning of the year, but that is going to take some beating, not to be my favourite weekend of the entire year!

Many thanks to all who worked so hard, either “up front” or behind the scenes, and please continue to pray for all who took such amazing steps to and with God that weekend.

Kev





'I was born in Plymouth in 1938. My father was transferred from Plymouth dockyard to Rosyth dockyard because of the war and the need for skilled workers in the Fife yard.

Mother and I joined him in 1940. What has that to do with my baptism, or Christening as it would have been called? I remember as a little girl playing in the garden making mud pies. What was I using? A big scallop shell but it had a red cross on it. Many years later I realised that it was a baptismal shell, but where and when was I baptised? By the time my investigation began my parents were dead and those who might know were gone except mum's young brother who was unable to help but did proffer the information that as children they were sent to St. James the Less Church on Plymouth Hoe.

Subsequent enquiries with Anglican colleagues and even a visit to the hoe produced nothing. Then, as a final effort, last year I placed into the computer the church, the town AND THE YEAR, 1938. Up popped a picture of a most beautiful Anglo/Catholic church, evidently one that was prized in Plymouth but underneath the fateful words "Destroyed the first night of bombing on Plymouth and all records lost." Everything fits but all the evidence is circumstantial. I was baptised but where and when is a mystery.



So, on Saturday I was able to say this was my second baptism but this time I know when and where and I'm a METHODIST, by choice. Maybe God had his own plans for my life as his preacher and so directed it in the way He wanted me to go.'

- Edna Perry

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY

Reflections on my first few months as a Debt Coach

The Market Drayton office of Christians Against Poverty was set up as a Churches Together initiative some four years ago. It is one of over 300 such offices across the UK. The Market Drayton office not only supports people with debt problems, but has also introduced help for the unemployed (CAP Job Club), and for those with life-controlling issues (CAP Fresh Start). It also offers courses on practical help with budgeting, cooking and the like through its Lifeskills courses.

I began my work as a Debt Coach during 2018 and have begun to see more and more clients with debt problems who have contacted CAP for help. In the first 3 weeks since Christmas alone, I have had three new clients booked in for appointments.

With each new client there is a series of three or four visits during which I get to understand their problem, and with advice from head office will come up with a way forward to get them free from debt. After these visits, my work is done and I hand clients over to caseworkers at the head office to support them for as long as it takes to become debt-free.

I have to say, from my experiences so far, I have been taken aback by just how big an issue debt is with so many people, and how many people are affected by debt problems. Making ends meet is not easy for lots of families, particularly where unemployment exists. Often it may only take one or two minor things to go wrong to throw someone into debt, and once in it, things can quickly spiral out of control, with clients helpless to do much about it. Where clients are receiving benefits, it's difficult to see how they manage to exist, let alone deal with any debts they may have. There are some who think that people have only themselves to blame for

being in debt, and should 'get a job and sort themselves out'. This is so very often far from the truth. I'm learning that situations are usually far more complex than that.

When I began working for CAP I felt I had a good grasp of what debt is. I think we probably all do. What I didn't grasp was what it really means to be living in poverty, and the impact it has on people's lives. The most obvious impact I have witnessed with many clients is the stress and strain debt and poverty can bring on a family and all members of that family. Clients' wellbeing and health are often severely affected, relationships often become strained. It's a dreadful situation to be in. Debt can become an overwhelming problem, an all-consuming problem, particularly when they can see no way out.

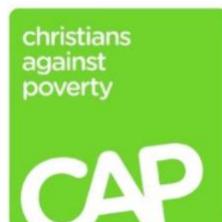
Hopefully this is where I believe we're helping. Practically we can assess their situation and help them get a clear picture of how it might be improved. But most importantly, we can give them our personal support, we can show them that there are people who really do care about them, and we can show them there is a way out of their predicament. Knowing there can be an end to their problems, although not necessarily easy or quick, can give a huge lift to clients. It can give them hope, it can give them peace, and it can give them a future to look forward to. I believe that is exactly what Jesus would want for them.

-Keith Harrison

If anyone needs help from CAP, we can be contacted on 0800 328 0006

Keith can be contacted on 07722 036796

Information on a free CAP managing money course, can be found on the next page.





A free course to help you manage your money better and learn to budget, save and spend well

Course Info

budget. save. spend.

CAP Money is a free, three-week course that teaches people budgeting skills and a simple cash-based money management system. The 3-part course is designed to help people get in control of their finances, so they can save, spend wisely and prevent debt.

With over 6,000 participants a year, CAP Money is the biggest face-to-face adult money education course in the UK.

Dates for this 3-part course:

Tuesday 9th April

Tuesday 23rd April

Tuesday 30th April

Venue: Parish Rooms, Church St, Market Drayton. TF9 1AF

Time: 7pm

This course is FREE but please book to reserve a place.

Contact Gill Carley 07855 460655 or Keith Harrison 07722 036796

'I thought money will always be in charge of me! But I was wrong. Now I am in charge of my money. Through the CAP Money Course I am able to budget and pay my bills on time for the first time in years. Thank you, CAP.'

CAP Money Delegate

www.capmoneycourse.org

THE CALL TO PREACH

Paul Savill

I had always seen my ministry as music; my song writing and worship leading, and had never really thought about “preaching as such, even though it had been mentioned numerous times. Then, about nine years ago, Roy Ellis asked me, “What’s behind the music?”

“It’s about sharing the Gospel” was my reply.

“Well isn’t that preaching?”, was Roy’s follow-up question.

I found that a real challenge. I had studied at Regent’s Bible College in order to strengthen my scriptural understanding to help with my writing, and though I had ‘shared a message’ on a few occasions I thought that these were opportunities to go along with the music. There was weight to what Roy has asked, so this time I needed to seriously consider this prompt and take it before God.

As a member of the Methodist Church the route to take is to speak to your minister and go ‘on note as a Methodist Local Preacher’ to test the call, then to go ‘on trial’ and preach regularly, including assessed services, and to follow the Faith and Worship course. Though I have mixed feelings about this course (which has since been updated), studying the Bible is always a good thing for anyone wanting to follow Jesus – and that has been challenging and rewarding. (Note that we will be running Bible School with Peter Davies in June studying Colossians, so get Tuesday afternoons or evenings on your calendar!). We are a bit out of the way here and so engaging with the course proved difficult, and I am indebted to Chris Ambler (*Superintendent of the Stoke North Circuit*) for his help and encouragement in completing the F&W assignments as he took over as my tutor. The support and encouragement of our Local Preachers and

the church and circuit family has also been a real blessing. Others have supported me – and us as a family – in many and varied ways over this time. You know who you are... thank you.

As we started 2018 the need to complete my training, including a lot of assignments, became more pressing. Partly because the Methodist rules and partly for my own sake; it had been hanging over me for a while and I knew that Dad would have wanted me to see this through to accreditation. I asked my Life Group to hold me accountable to this, and on 10th December the Circuit Local Preachers Meeting found me 'ready and suitable' for accreditation as a Methodist Local Preacher, which was ratified by members of the Circuit Meeting.

The last stage is the Accreditation Service, so there will be a special circuit service on Sunday 3rd March at MDMC at 4pm followed by tea – to which you are all welcome.

So... it has been a journey of nine years or so since Roy first asked that question. There have been ups and downs but through the "process" of training as a Local Preacher I have felt the call to preach confirmed and trust that with God's help I will continue to preach faithfully as equipped and enabled by the Spirit.

What is God calling *you* to? Is He wanting to equip you for preaching, leading worship, or some other ministry? Are you open to the prompt of the Spirit and the call of God? Where will He take you next?



THE BLUE BUS MINISTRY

At the beginning of January, MDMC heard some ideas from Rachel, Ruth and Chris for how the Blue Bus might be used in the future as part of an ecumenical partnership project. It will be discussed further at the upcoming MDMC Church Council meeting on 6th February, but we would encourage you to have a listen of the recording from the prayer meeting to hear the ideas raised to use the bus within a 4 Rural Youth project run by the Diocese of Lichfield. Listen to the prayer service at:

www.mdmc.org.uk/sermons/prayer-for-the-bus





Ashley Churches Together

Christian Aid Week Events

This is a 'churches together' initiative from St. John the Baptist Church, The Catholic Parish of Our Lady and St. John the Baptist, and Ashley Methodist Church.

Mon 13th May – **Heritage Walk & Lunch** – Ashley Catholic Church

Wed 15th May – Dorothy Clive Gardens visit

Friday 17th May – **Music Concert** – Ashley Methodist Church

Sun 19th May – Songs of Praise

Further details for all events will be available in the near future



EASTER EVENTS

Lent Prayers @ MDMC, 6am, 11am, 4pm & 8pm every Wednesday of Lent beginning on Ash Wednesday (6th Mar).
Ash Wednesday prayers will include opportunity for 'Ashing'.

16th-18th April, 'Journey of the Cross': A prayer journey @ Ashley, times TBC

Maundy Thursday (18th April)
Evening Service, Market Drayton, time TBC

Good Friday (19th April)
12pm, Service @ Ashley
Ecumenical act of witness, Market Drayton, time TBC

Easter Sunday (21st April)
8.30am, Early Communion service
followed by a shared breakfast @ MDMC

Dates for your diary

ASHLEY METHODIST CHURCH

25th February – Ashley Church Council – 7.30pm

MARKET DRAYTON METHODIST CHURCH

6th February – MDMC Church Council – 7.30pm

3rd March – Local Preacher Recognition Service for Paul Savill – 4pm

21st April – Easter Day Early Service – Holy Communion & followed
by a shared breakfast – 8.30am

28th April – Circuit Service/ Easter offering – 10:30am

1st May – MDMC Church Council – 7.30pm

COMMUNITY EVENTS

12th May – Market Drayton 10K



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HINSTOCK



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