

Messenger



Market Drayton Methodist Circuit

Circuit magazine

Summer 2019

Message from Ruth

Dear friends,

Yesterday, I led worship for our Chair of District as he prepares to 'sit down' as we call it, because well...minister's never get to retire! Our Chair has been a true friend and advocate to me as I have undertaken by role here in in the Market Drayton Methodist Circuit and so, naturally I wanted to ensure that he and his wife had a good end to their time here.

I think we underestimate the importance of endings sometimes. I certainly did, until I experienced a bad one which has left an indelible mark on me. We're pretty good with it when it comes to the end of someone's life, although we often do our best to make that ending last as long as possible in the fear that we might lose the person entirely. This latter part is not true, for we can never lose love – and as scripture reminds us, that after all things have gone, all things have been destroyed and have faded away, "...these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." (1 Corinthians 13:13) Love remains.

I always cling on to memory as the best way to never lose someone, but of course we are deeply aware of the devastation of dementia. My Grandmother suffered for 8 years with Alzheimer's before she died. I recall that before she lost the ability to write, the one thing she would do is write little love notes to my Grandad on any scrap of paper she could find. Be it the back of an envelope or the edge of a newspaper, we would find these little notes saying 'I love Fred' or other such notes you'd expect from a teenager in love. It was so beautiful because even when her memory couldn't help her to know if she'd just eaten or who less familiar people were, she knew she loved my Grandad with all her heart. Love remains.

Love remains for the simple reason that its source is infinite and never-failing. My favourite verse in the whole of the Bible is this: “We love, because he [God] first loved us.” (1 John 4:19) This simple reminder is that all love comes from God. It is inordinately difficult to love without being first loved by another. For me, as with all Christians, the source, the fountain of all love is God, demonstrated through the life, death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ. Love existed at the beginning of all things...and it will exist at the end of all things.

And so...as John writes, “Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.” (1 John 4:7)

Love remains...

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Ruth', with a small flourish underneath.

MDMC MEN'S MINISTRY

To get things moving with the men's ministry we met together with other churches in town to discuss how we could increase activities of Christian men and reach other men in the town for Christ.

The aim is to build on existing relationships within and between the churches in the town as a foundation to then go into our community and reach out to those who don't yet know Jesus. Men and women are quite different in how they talk to one another. That makes it difficult to share the gospel at times. We need to find a way that naturally enables this.

We want to generate ideas of how to share the gospel and build faith as a group through personal testimony and also bringing in external speakers to challenge each other as to what it is to be a Christian man today.

Following the initial 'committee' meeting we setup a 'pie & pint' night at Market Drayton Rugby club to provide an opportunity to meet, have a chat and gain ideas of how we can move this forward. We also enjoyed a testimony in the form of an interview with one of our church's members. The night was well received by all who attended and generated plenty of ideas to go away and look at for the next steps.

We will definitely look to do a similar event again in the near future and make this a more regular thing, but also setup social events based around peoples' interests that will help to build personal relationships which will hopefully become avenues to invite people to, outside the church and have the pie & pint type events as something to invite them to.

So keep your eyes peeled for the next get together which will be advertised through the churches. If you want to know more, have some ideas or want to be involved in anyway please get in touch with John Bunce, Russ Townson or Robin Faul.



ECG is mainly a Methodist Christian conference that takes place each Easter time. It started 11 years ago, following in a similar vein to the “Easter People” conference which ran for years before that.

Each day follows a similar pattern, starting with all-age worship or quiet communion each morning, followed by a choice of bible studies (including teaching groups for toddlers, children, youth and 18-25s so all can learn and discuss in age-appropriate groups). All are welcome to attend a range of seminars and activities each afternoon (or to do nothing and enjoy the seaside!), then there are evening celebrations with great worship (again with toddlers, children’s, youth and 18s to 25s alternatives) each evening, followed by a range of evening fringe events to entertain and challenge late into the night!

This year it was held in Scarborough. The theme was “Solid Ground” for us to consider how to cling to God’s word in a rapidly changing world. Bible studies were led by Malcolm Duncan in one venue and our very own Ruth Jeffries (aided by Richard and Lucie Clarkson) in another! Evening speakers included James Adams, Jasmine Yeboah, Ian Coffey, Elaine Lindridge and Martyn Atkins.

We absolutely loved it and have already booked back in for next year! In 2020 it is again being held in Scarborough from 14th to 19th April and the theme is "Vision". I whole-heartedly encourage all to attend if you can!

- Kev



“It was great fun going to the youth group. The preaching was great and I was prayed for and it made a difference in my life.” – Evie



“ECG was good because it is a community of other people my age going through the same things as me. It led me to feel more confident about asking for prayer and my faith in general.” – Izzy



Ashley Churches Together

Churches Working Together for Christian Aid Week, May 13th-19th 2019

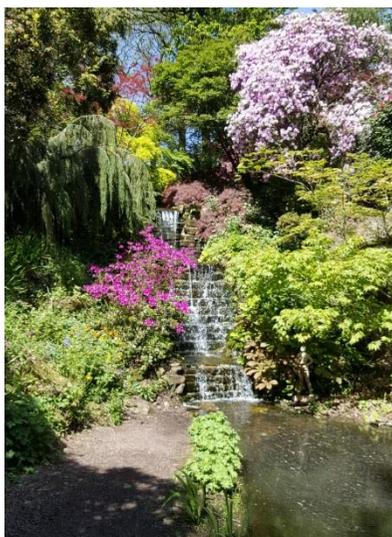
Earlier in the planning process for this year a decision had been taken by the Christian Aid Committee that there was to be no door to door collection in the local area for 2019. However as there has never been a greater need for Christian Aid Week than at present, it was agreed that this year a collaborative effort from the three main Christian Churches in the area would be a fruitful way forward. And four events were organised:



A Heritage Walk which took place on a lovely sunny Monday morning enabled people from the three churches to walk, talk and laugh together whilst at the same time learning something about each other's church buildings, history and culture.

An impressive sit-down poached salmon lunch followed by strawberries and cream, prepared by Jill Bester, allowed the conversations to continue as everyone enjoyed eating and drinking in a friendly and informal way.

The **Dorothy Clive Garden Visit**, took place two days after the walk but on an equally warm, sunny day. Those attending were able to view the wonderful colours of the azaleas and rhododendrons and the golden cascades of the laburnum arch. Our small display at the Garden attracted some small donations and conversations about Christian Aid activities elsewhere in surrounding areas.



A **Musical Evening** on Friday featured some excellent singers and instrumentalists from Ashley Methodist Church with the current minister giving wonderful renditions of the recently deceased, Doris Day songs. George Formby, Lonnie Donnegan, Elaine Paige, Marty Wilde and a number of other contemporary artistes were represented at what was a hugely entertaining evening. Thanks for this go to Rev Ruth Jeffries, Aimee Derham, Jonathan Baddeley, Paul Savill and Jill Harrison.

The culmination of the week came on Sunday evening with a **Churches Together Songs of Praise** at St. John's. The evening was introduced by Rev Sara Humphries and led by Fr Anton Madej. When the combined congregations of our separate churches sang together, we all felt something special was



happening and the worship was further heightened with a poem from Roger Bloor, a song from Rev Ruth Jefferies, 'Happy Day' sung by the Anglican Church choir and ending with A Celtic Blessing sung by the Catholic Church choir.

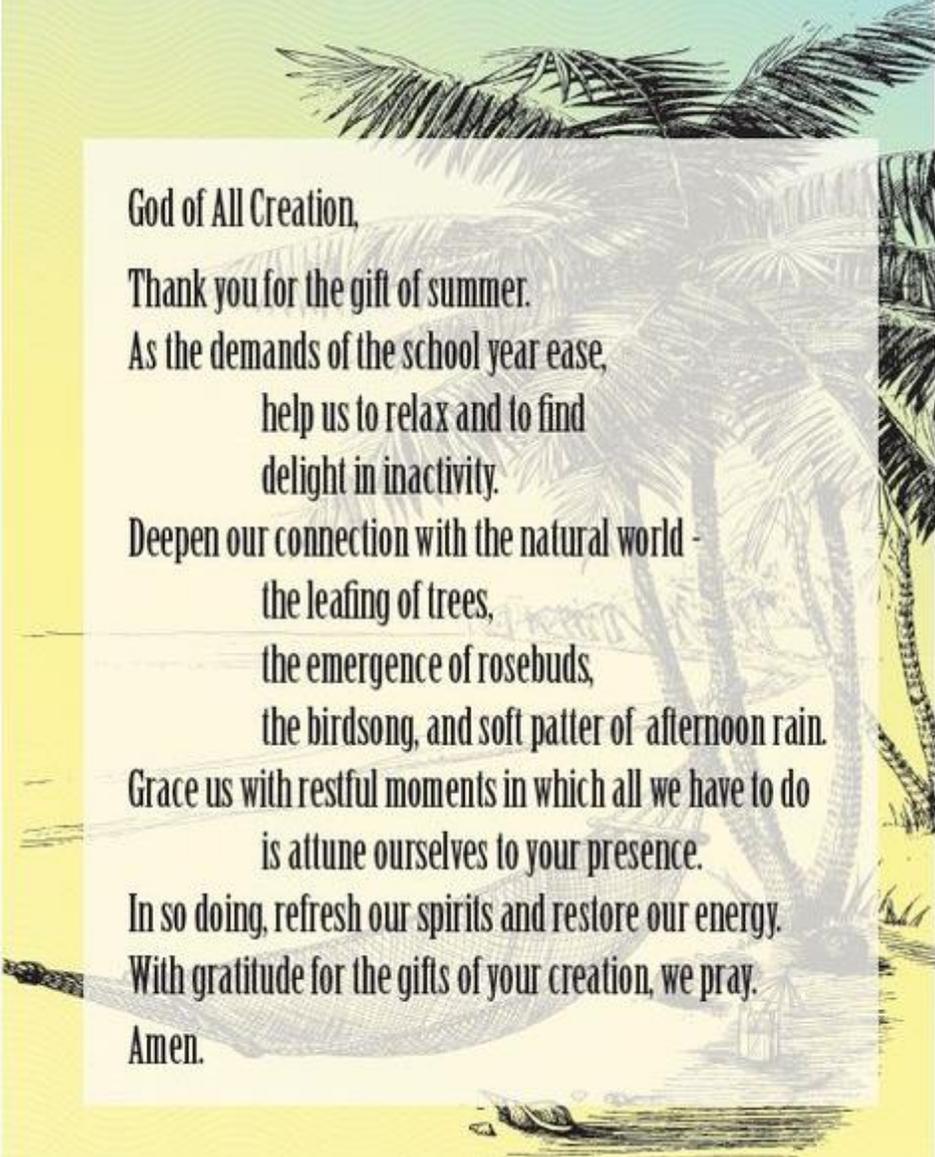
The total raised in the course of the week for Christian Aid now stands at £1500.00. We thank all of the generous donors and sponsors for their contributions and assistance. Also, all members of the respective churches who did so much to make the week an outstanding success. Finally, we wish to thank Loggerheads Coop, Morrisons at Market Drayton and The Dorothy Clive Garden and Barrington's Accountants all gave significant support to the charity. We hope to repeat this programme of events next year.

Thank you to you all,

Peter Shone, St John The Baptist, Church of England

Keith Harrison, Ashley Methodist Church

Bernard Bester, Our Lady and St John The Baptist, Catholic Church



God of All Creation,

Thank you for the gift of summer.

As the demands of the school year ease,
help us to relax and to find
delight in inactivity.

Deepen our connection with the natural world -
the leafing of trees,
the emergence of rosebuds,
the birdsong, and soft patter of afternoon rain.

Grace us with restful moments in which all we have to do
is attune ourselves to your presence.

In so doing, refresh our spirits and restore our energy.

With gratitude for the gifts of your creation, we pray.

Amen.

Dates for your diary

30th August - District Chair Welcome, Tunstall

27th October – 10:30am Circuit Service @ MDMC
led by Rev. Helen Kirk (new District Chair)

20th October – 10:30am CAP Service @ Ashley

ASHLEY METHODIST CHURCH

22nd September – Harvest Festival (TBC)

MARKET DRAYTON METHODIST CHURCH

7th July – MDMC GCM – following the 10:30am service

13th July – Christian Aid Concert – 7pm

29th September – Church Anniversary

6th October – Harvest Festival

HINSTOCK METHODIST CHURCH

8th September – Harvest Festival

13th October – Church Anniversary

Please note Rev. Ruth Jeffries will be on Annual Leave 3rd – 11th August inclusive. If you require anything urgent during that time, please contact a steward in the first instance.



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HINSTOCK



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