



Sunday 2nd May

Connecting church family within the Market Drayton Circuit; Market Drayton, Ashley and Hinstock, during the restrictions of Covid-19

Market Drayton Methodist Circuit

# Newsletter

## Notices

### MDMC CHURCH COUNCIL

Members of the MDMC Church Council please be reminded of the meeting by Zoom on Wednesday 5th May at 7.30pm. Details have been sent out to all members.

### RUTH'S FAREWELL

As you are aware, Ruth and the family will be leaving us in the summer. We are now starting a collection to buy a farewell gift from the Circuit. If you are able and willing to put towards this, please pass your donation to Gail who is collecting on behalf of MDMC, or Rod who is collecting for Ashley. The closing date for donations to be made is Sunday 20th June.

In addition, if anybody has photos of events that the churches or Ruth has been involved in over the last 6 years (such as Buttercross to Bethlehem, gospel choir, circuit anniversary celebration, 10K, Ruth's 40th birthday party etc) that you would be willing to share, please pass them to Helen Perry Thank you.

### JEAN SALT

#niteblessings

*When you've run out of strength,  
may God restore you. When you  
think you've come to the end of the  
road, may you discover that you've  
only reached a bend on the  
journey. May you have the  
resilience to rise one more time  
than you fall, and may your heart  
be set on hope.*

Malcolm Duncan

Please pray for the family of Jean who died peacefully at home on Friday 16th April. Her funeral will be take place at Ashley Methodist Church and Bradwell Crematorium on 4th May in the afternoon. The family have asked that messages of condolence should be sent to Jean's home

### YOUTH WORK AT MDMC

With the Covid rates reducing significantly, the National Youth Agency have relaxed some of the guidelines to allow more children's and youth activities to take place again!

Would you be prepared to help run our church children's and youth work?

We will need helpers both for our Sunday morning junior church groups and for our evening outreach youth club groups. Please pray into these opportunities and if you feel led in any way and wish to find out more please contact Gail about Junior Church help and Kev about youth club help. Many thanks.

### 'FOODBANK—5 A DAY'

Foodbank is launching a 'Five a Day Appeal'. They are asking the community if they will 'Sponsor a Spud' and be 'Fruit and Veg Champions' by regularly giving each week/month towards the purchase of fresh fruit, vegetables and potatoes for food bank families

If you are able to help, please see the Foodbank website at <https://marketdrayton.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/> for ways to donate. Standing order/gift aid forms are available to download and can also be collected from the Foodbank or posted out to you upon request (phone 10630 654007 for postal forms) Please reference your donation with 'FAD Appeal'.

## MD CIRCUIT WORSHIP

### Online

*First streaming at 10.30am on Sundays, then always available*

⇒ [mdmc.org.uk](http://mdmc.org.uk)

⇒ [ashleymethodist.co.uk](http://ashleymethodist.co.uk)

⇒ YouTube – search MDMC

### Weekly Zoom Prayer

**Thursdays, 7.30-8pm**

Meeting ID: 771 3865 0306

Passcode: i10m9R

### In Church

#### MDMC

*10.30am every Sunday*

*Please book in by the Friday:  
Internet: [mdmc.org.uk/calendar-or](http://mdmc.org.uk/calendar-or)  
Phone: 01630 655957 and leave a message with your name and a contact number and the names of those in your group/bubble who will also attend.*

#### Ashley MC

*10.30am 1st & 3rd Sundays*

## PHONE WORSHIP

**0808 2812514**

Free Methodist church Dial-a-prayer

**0808 281 2478**

Free Methodist Church Dial-the-news (both updated on a Thursday)

*If you would like to contribute to this weekly Newsletter, please send items by Wednesday evenings to Al Savill [notices@mdmc.org.uk](mailto:notices@mdmc.org.uk). Tel: 07966295413. Please send testimonies, prayers, news, notices, activities etc.*

# Vocations Sunday

John 15: 1-8

Reflections by John Hay—The Methodist Church

I remember the first winter in my last house, when I was horrified by what the council workers did to the beautiful oak trees lining the Crescent where I lived. It looked devastated, like a nuclear bomb had gone off nearby. I nearly wrote in to complain. I needn't have worried, of course – they did know what they were doing and by the end of that summer the trees were back, only better, with more strength and shape from the new growth.

Pruning and cutting back is essential to the process of growth. Particularly to fruit bearing plants like the vine. Jesus knew it, hence the wonderful image of John 15 v1-8, which has much to say to us this Vocations Sunday.

*O thou who camest from above  
the pure celestial fire to impart,  
kindle a flame of sacred love  
on the mean altar of my heart!*

*There let it for thy glory burn  
with inextinguishable blaze,  
and trembling to its source return,  
in humble prayer and fervent praise.*

*Jesus, confirm my heart's desire  
to work, and speak, and think for thee;  
still let me guard the holy fire,  
and still stir up thy gift in me --*

*Ready for all thy perfect will,  
my acts of faith and love repeat,  
till death thy endless mercies seal,  
and make the sacrifice complete.*

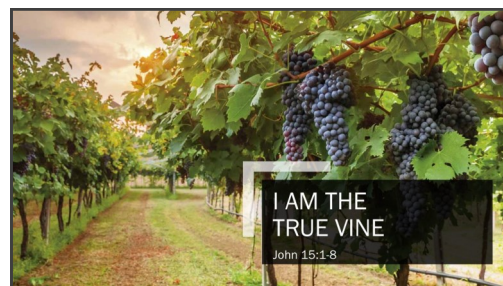
Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

## Prayer

Compassionate God,  
Be with those who need you. The unloved, the friendless, the oppressed, the sick, the dying, the bereaved.  
Take your love where we can't, or won't, reach.  
Make your Spirit known in the worst places and times, so that all may benefit from the sacrifice that Jesus made for humankind.  
It is in his name we pray. Amen

## A Prayer to Start

Dear Father  
Quieten our minds  
Still our hearts  
For your living ways are all we seek  
Strengthen our lives  
Inspire our spirits  
In your living waters flow endless grace  
Amen.



In the Old Testament the vine is a symbol of Israel, but it is usually mentioned in the context of having been allowed to run wild, for example

in Isaiah 5. Vines in the Middle East were (and still are) fast growing and if left unchecked would grow in all directions, with lots of branches, meaning that the fruit bearing branches produced lots of small, poor quality fruit. Quite simply, to produce a good crop, there needed to be regular ruthless pruning, particularly in its early years. Jesus says that he is the true vine, the true Israel if you like and he exhorts his disciples to abide in him, to allow God who is the gardener to prune back those useless and tangled branches, so that good fruit will be produced.

Many of us in the Church (and I include myself too) could learn from this. We take on too many jobs, have too many roles and hats to wear and consider ourselves indispensable. Who else would do it, if not me? The place would fall apart without me, we say. Well maybe we should just try it. Step back. If you do have 3 roles, try giving up 2 and give your all to the one remaining role. I am not necessarily the best person to invoke garden wisdom, but even I have noticed that you create a space in the garden something else will soon grow there. Perhaps by hanging on to those 2 extra roles we not only reduce the quality of the fruit we produce, but we are preventing others exercising their calling and ministry.

On this Vocations Sunday, when we are asked to reflect on the part we play in the ministry of God's Church, we should consider what needs pruning in our lives, so that the Vine produces abundant, sweet fruit. Sometimes less is more.

## Weekly Circuit Preachers

2nd May	Ashley MDMC Online	Paul Savill Pete Williams Pete Williams
9th May	Ashley MDMC Online	No service Peter Mitchell Mike Shingler



## Circuit Contacts

During Ruth's Sabbatical (Apr-Jun)

- ◆ Please contact your church leadership team.
- ◆ For pastoral issues, contact;
  - \* Ashley—Jill Harrison
  - \* MDMC—Vanessa Savill
  - \* Hinstock—Edna Perry