



Messenger

Market Drayton Methodist Circuit
Circuit magazine
Summer 2022

Message from Carolyn - Journeys

As the summer approaches I guess that a lot of us will be beginning to plan holidays and outings to make the most of the (hopefully!) good weather ahead. I don't know about you but when I travel anywhere I like to be really well prepared and often take much more than I actually need however hard I try to cut down! When I held various national roles within the Methodist Church I seemed to be travelling a lot of the time, often with very quick turnarounds, so to make things easier kept duplicates of all my toiletries in my case so that I didn't keep forgetting things! I used to try to see all my rail journeys as gifts of time to read and be still ahead of the busyness when I reached my journey's end but on a busy or overcrowded train that wasn't always possible!

We all have journeys that we have to make in our lives – some bring joyful anticipation of a well deserved holiday in a beautiful place, attending a wedding or meeting family and friends. Others bring anxiety or sadness when we have to travel to a family funeral, a dreaded hospital appointment or a scary job interview.

As well as physical journeys, each one of us is travelling a spiritual journey. Some are yet to begin their journey with Jesus and maybe searching for answers to questions or wondering what the Christian life is all about. Others may have recently started their walk with Jesus and are beginning to discover God's plan for their life. Some have been walking with Jesus for many years and have been through many ups and downs on the Christian journey...maybe having experienced great mountain top experiences and also the darkness of the valley in difficult times. We remember too, those we have loved who have completed their journey and are now at rest in the presence of Jesus.

Wherever you are in your Christian journey today, it is important to know that you do not travel alone. The church, is God's chosen way of demonstrating community to a fragmented and lonely world and there are always others who have gone a little further along the road who are able to give us help and support. Mark and I have been overwhelmed by the love and pastoral care that

we see demonstrated day by day amongst you and also by the loving support and encouragement we also receive from people.

We all need support, guidance and prayer at some point in our journey with Jesus so don't struggle on alone – if you need some help with spiritual matters at any time do contact Mark and myself, your pastoral visitor or life group leader, or one of the leadership team, so that we can pray for and with you.

And for those of you planning exciting trips in the coming months...happy holidays!

Carolyn



Above: At Newton Abbot Station as I was leaving for a trip.

Below: Travelling on GWR





Livestock Market Chaplaincy

Where do I start with this?

When we first visited the Circuit to prayerfully seek whether the Lord was calling up here to serve Him we meet with a few of the dear folk at Hinstock. Trevor and Robert mentioned about the large Livestock Market that there was at Market Drayton normally on Wednesday mornings and my spirit sensed an opportunity if we were invited to come. By God's grace we were!

Once we had moved in and we'd started I received the backing and blessing of the Leadership Team at MDMC and the Circuit to go for it – I did! So since Wednesday 29th September I've gone in most weeks to lurk with intent. In fact I've just counted up and it's now 27 times and by the time you read this it will be over 30. I go there in the name of the local church (you all) and in Jesus' name.

Over the weeks I have had many divine encounters, a lot of cheeky banter and learned an incredible amount from the amazing farming community. I've also tasted the local sausage and bacon baps, but that's another story and a whole lot more calories. Never mind, one must suffer for the Gospel ☺ The more I learn the more I appreciate our famers and all those who support them. I usually arrive around 10am and go straight to the café for my cup of tea. It is there that most of the connecting goes on as the different folk sit down over a brew and later the above-mentioned baps!





I then go and visit the various offices and chat with whomever is around and listen to their opinions, tales and challenges. I visit the various auctions and listen in wonder at all the strange in-speak that I'm still none the wiser about with the selling of cattle and sheep! I wander around with my little book to write down the names of the people I meet and about their stories. I gather so much interesting information and am learning all the time. I then often tell them I'll pray for them.

I have found the farmers to be a welcoming and appreciative bunch. On several occasions they've said how much they appreciate a clergyman who's bothered! I'm not quite sure what that means, but I think it's positive! I've been able to share with several farmers about the love of Jesus and I try, with the help of the Holy Spirit to be a listening ear and to show the Good Shepherds love to those whom I come in to contact with. I also enjoy wondering around and talking to the truck drivers. Being a transport enthusiast it really is fascinating and (as per one of the pics) I've been allowed to climb on board and marvel at the size and power of these cattle lorries.

Some weeks I don't get to have a proper conversation with anyone and then some weeks it's full on, but as I wander around I pray and chat with the Lord about all I'm seeing and smelling! I must be getting stuck in properly because when I get home Carolyn often tells be I smell of slurry! However, whilst I'm at the Livestock Market I hope I bring something of the love and fragrance of Jesus. I value your prayers week by week and for the interest that many of you have shown. If ever any of you want to visit then do let me know.



Blessings,

Rev Mark



BRIEF BIBLE BIOGRAPHIES

SOLOMON

Rev. Paul Clapham

Solomon had everything going for him. He was born into the royal family. He had good looks, good brains, a clever scheming, ambitious mother and loyal, devoted supporters and advisors.

Solomon probably contributed more to the Jewish scriptures than any other individual. He wrote the “Song of Songs”, the Book of Proverbs and the Ecclesiastes. He reigned for between 34 and 39 years from 961 to 922 BC (or possibly 965 to 931 BC). He was fortunate in succeeding King David and being in a position to consolidate the territory that David had secured. He established Jerusalem as the centre of the Israelite administration and worship. He used the resources collected (or looted) by King David to build the first Temple. The glory of the Temple was renowned.

Under Solomon the established borders of Israel reached their greatest limits and even allowing for the decided bias of the Old Testament historians, Israel became a serious political, economic and military power. Solomon’s astuteness, political and organisational skills had a great part to play in this.

He made an alliance with Egypt, in the process marrying Pharaoh’s daughter (1 Kings 3 ; 1). In fact, he made many alliances with the neighbouring nations. Each time he acquired another wife (1 Kings 11 : 1 - 6). Of course he had to indulge his wives (since with so many he couldn’t give them all the individual time and attention they needed) and so the religions which the Israelites were supposed to have left behind, or to have removed from Canaan were not

only re-introduced but even royally sanctioned by Solomon.

There is no doubt that he was a very successful political leader. He was also a religious leader. The

measure of his devotion to God can be measured by him building a Temple which took seven years to build. However, to put that into perspective, his own house took him thirteen years to complete.

The question for you is, was Solomon as wise as he was reckoned to be?
Did he use his wisdom to good effect in ruling Israel?

Read:

2 Samuel chapters 11 and 12;
1 Kings chapters 1 to 11;
2 Chronicles chapters 1 to 9;
Matthew 6 : 29

Outreach on Fairfields Estate

Earlier this year, we were challenged by Mark and Carolyn to begin exploring God's vision for outreach activity on the Fairfields Estate in Market Drayton. In a sense, this is nothing new. The desire of MDMC members to reach out to that part of town has been there for a long time – many of you will recall the Sunday afternoon Freedom Cafe outreach at Longlands School a few years ago, as well as annual carol singing visits. We feel strongly, though, that God is calling us to an increased focus on sharing the love and good news of Jesus with Fairfields folk, and that there is an urgent need to crack on with this.

This is certainly not a case of starting from scratch, as we already have excellent links with Longlands School (where two MDMC members, Kev and Rachel, are governors), and there are numerous families within our church with children at Longlands. 'The Zone' recently came under the control of the Academy Trust, which can only help, as they have a very clear mandate to use the building for purposes that will benefit the local community.

How do we fit into this? We shall see! We've done some prayer walking and thinking in recent weeks, and will be embarking on more of the same... One thing's for sure, though. As many of you know, it's four years since our precious Isaac was born very prematurely, only for us to lose him a month later. Ever since our traumatic experience of baby loss, we have felt really strongly that God would one day use us as part of his ministry to others who have experienced baby loss in various ways. We have been struck countless times by how many people are impacted by, and left traumatised by, baby loss, and because of our experience, other people have felt able to speak about theirs. We are passionate, therefore, about starting a baby loss support group, hopefully to be centred on The Zone, and intend to get this moving very soon.

We know that the calling to reach out to the Fairfields community is not one for us alone – there will be lots to do and we believe this will evolve to become a team ministry. While very much at an embryonic stage, there's a strong likelihood that we'll look to scope out some youth outreach, as well as a regular rhythm of worship at The Zone with some craft/musical/gospel content and

food (of course!). We'll be looking for ways to use the Bus to support ministry opportunities too.

Please pray for us as we continue to seek God's guidance and direction for this emerging ministry. Very soon we will arrange a meeting/prayer evening for people interested and sensing a calling to get involved, so please do look out for more information over the coming weeks.

We know that in this emerging ministry, as with all others, the struggle will '***not be against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (Ephesians 6)***' We also know that Jesus said, '***I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it'. (Matt 16)***

May he continue to prove the truth and power of this word through the ministry to which he is calling us, and maybe you too?!

Pete & Kat Williams

Tough Talk



What a joy it was back in March to welcome Ian and Jo from Tough Talk to share their powerful stories of how Jesus transformed their lives. It was such an encouragement to me to see them again. I had the privilege of working with them in 2016 for the first time when I was based in Lincoln. The team spoke to the various men's gatherings, but also ventured in to HMP Lincoln with me. They also came to see me down when we were based in Devon. Then here to us in Shropshire.

We had a great time on the Saturday 19th in the morning with a time of witness outside the Town Hall. Mark Savill supplied his excellent sound system and the music and testimony could be heard as clear as a bell across the centre of the town. I was so glad that several folk from the MDMC congregation supported Ian & Jo by gathering to form a little crowd and others then joined with us to from the public. Several guys lurked at a distance and came under the sound of the Gospel. I had a lovely chat with a stall holder afterwards about the Lord and encouraged him to seek Him.

In the afternoon it was another blessing to gather at MDMC with our lovely church youth who listened intently and had a go on the lifting equipment! Ian & Jo spoke to them about their commitment to Jesus through the local church. I was delighted that a neighbour came across to and had a chat with Jo afterwards.

In the evening we had a men's event at the Royal British Legion. Unfortunately it clashed with an England rugby match, but despite that we had a great time together as Ian & Jo shared their testimony and the Gospel. Several men responded.

And then it was the last meeting on the morning of Sunday 20th. What a great time it was to have them sharing in our 10.30 service at MDMC. It was another joy and blessing and their powerful words shared left a deep impression on a number of the congregation. We enjoyed a church family lunch and then sent them back off to London.

I don't think I stopped smiling all weekend! I'm so grateful to God that MDMC folk really got on board, hosted Ian & Jo for meals and invited others to take part. I was also given the necessary funds as people felt prompted by the Lord anonymously. Further evidence all round that the Holy Spirit is moving amongst us.



Big Blue Bus – A vehicle for the gospel?



There are times in the life of a church when we need to seek God and ask what He might have us do in the way of sharing the gospel message in the community in which that body of believers is ministering. After one such meeting, the vision of a bus that could go to the various outlining communities in the Market Drayton circuit came into focus. That vision seemed to be confirmed as believers from other churches said that they had felt called to the same idea.

So, a group was formed that procured and transformed an old double decker bus into a multipurpose space, a 'village hall on wheels' as one church member described it. Unfortunately, preparing the vehicle did take longer than expected as it was a big task reliant on the generously offered time and effort of volunteers to bring it to the usable condition.

Once ready, the bus was used a few times at various events and it made a great 'pop up' base for the church having small events shelters around it with various activities on offer, whilst people came on board for a cuppa and a chat. It was at these moments I saw glimpses of what this ministry could be.

The bus could be wonderful for the bigger community events, but it could also be used in a more low-key kind of way where you could pull up in a village and people could come and meet. Indeed, the idea of using this space for the likes of debt counselling was there even before we had heard of CAP.

Alas the bus was never used to the full potential for either the big community events or the smaller 'meet people where they are' type of ministry. As we were considering what the next steps for the bus were, Covid hit. This resulted in a two year no-man's land for pretty much everything. During this time the Leadership team (and others) were seeking the Lord for future church direction in which many questions were asked including, 'Shall we get rid of the bus?'

Whilst seeking this direction, we found ourselves unexpectedly seeking a new minister. The Lord brought The Lawrences to us, who, having experience of bus ministry, also brought a fresh enthusiasm and encouragement for what this ministry could be.

The bus now has an MOT, but to do anything with it needs people. It doesn't need lots of people all of the time, in fact to have a decent number of people for smaller amounts of time would really help make this work. Could you learn to drive it? Could you offer some time each week to go out with others to meet people where they are? Could you help maintain and clean the bus? If you feel called to any of this please speak to Mark Lawrence, Robin Perry or Robin and Rachel Faul.

These are exciting times for the gospel in and around Market Drayton in many ministries. This includes the fact that our Anglican brothers and sisters are also interested in working with us in this mobile area. We have spent too much in the way of time and resources to not see what impact such a ministry could have in our community – will you help to find out?



Christians Against Poverty Market Drayton Debt Centre

Christians Against Poverty offer free, confidential debt help to anyone who is concerned about the amount of money they owe. The Debt Centre in Market Drayton has been running for 7 years and has helped many people in the area to become debt free.

There are many different reasons for people getting into debt and there are extra pressures on people at the moment with concerns over job security, the increase in the cost of living and changes in benefits and this can add to people's worries about their finances. Being in debt can cause people to feel embarrassed, isolated and even suicidal, and many bury their heads in the sand and hope the problems will go away. It is so important to seek help and the local Debt Centre can offer assistance in a supportive way. All of the services offered are free, confidential and available to everyone of any faith or none.

The charity also run three free courses locally.

1. The Money Course – this is a three week course aimed at helping people get organised with their finances and covers subjects such as setting a budget, how to save and ways of dealing with debts. Over 10,000 people a year do this course nationally and many of them are not in debt. You can look at it as a kind of

MOT for your money! The course is available to anyone and is free, fun and very practical.

2. Steps to Employment Course – this covers subjects such as discovering your strengths, writing CVs and interview skills and is run in a fun way over a free lunch.
3. Life Skills - another course run over a free lunch which covers things like saving energy, shopping and cooking on a budget, staying healthy and how to keep healthy relationships.

If you are interested in finding out more about the services we offer or if you are interested in getting involved or supporting our work, you can contact Carolyn Lawrence - Debt Centre manager:



Tel: 07494 272 388 (usual working days Tue/Wed/Thu)

Email carolynlawrence@capuk.org

Or you can call our Freephone debt help line on 0800 328 0006 or visit our website www.capuk.org

Dates for your diary

ASHLEY METHODIST CHURCH

Bible Study – Thursday's at 10am

Jubilee Open-Air Service and Lunch – Sunday 5th June 10.30am

AGM – following the service on Sunday 31st July

MARKET DRAYTON METHODIST CHURCH

Wednesday Communions – 11am – 30th March, 27th April, 25th May

Worship at 6 – 6pm – 12th June, 10th July

Songs of Praise – 3.30pm – 5th June (Jubilee), 31st July, 28th August

HINSTOCK CHAPEL

Encounter @ Hinstock Chapel – 3pm – 12th June, 26th June, 10th July, 24th July, 7th Aug



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