

# METHODIST CHURCH MUSEUM STREET

*A town centre Christian church committed to enriching individual lives  
and the wellbeing of community*



## Prayer for our Church

*We give you thanks, O God, for this Church to which we belong, the faith to which we bear witness and the fellowship that we offer. As we face the changes the future demands of us, may your Spirit challenge us to enlarge our vision of your Kingdom, binding us together as we step forward in faith in the service of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

*Amen*

## NEWSLETTER MAY 2016

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## FROM THE MANSE

***'When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.'* Acts Chapter 2**

Dear Friends,

One of the greatest but scariest joys of ministry for me is working with the local primary school. We have such a great time together exploring and discovering the Gospel in so many varied ways. It is one of the scariest times because they soak up everything that you give to them, keeping me in constant prayer and reflection before, during and after.

At the end of their Easter service when we had explored the passion and resurrection of Jesus I had entered into a conversation with a couple of young boys as to whether Jesus was real or not. Whilst trying to answer the young boys' questions with integrity and honesty, my attention began to be drawn to a young girl who was sat on the outside of the boys doing the questioning. I was drawn to her as I could see huge tears welling up in her eyes. I moved to speak with her and asked 'Are you ok?' She burst into tears as she sobbed 'Jesus is real, he is, I know him, he is real'. As I comforted her and reassured her that I too know he is real and believe, she couldn't understand why these boys didn't. She kept asking me, begging me to tell them that 'they would listen to me'. I explained that I had told them, but they had to come to that realisation for themselves with Jesus, but that we could pray with them and for them. The group of boys were quite happy to have a prayer with us and so we prayed. The group left with the little girl still being a great witness for Jesus, telling the boys all about him.

I tell you this story, as the passion and desire that little girl had that these boys should know Jesus, speaks directly to my heart. As you read this you will notice words are not my strong point, but words can't always convey our experiences of our journey with God. John Wesley wrote:

**“I observed many years ago, it is hard to find words in the language of men, to explain the deep things of God. Indeed there are none that will adequately express what the Spirit of God works in his children. But perhaps one might say, by the testimony of the Spirit, I mean, an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit”.**

### **John Wesley (The Witness of the Spirit)**

As we gather together this Pentecost, may the Holy Spirit give us the tongue and language to proclaim our Lord and Saviour to all.

May the Spirit of God reign in our hearts and in our lives now and forever.

Every Blessing

**Rev Kathy**

## **Thanks**

A very big “thank you” to all those who gave money or items to the appeal from the Suffolk Refugee Support Group. It is very pleasing to report that all the items we were asked to supply have been purchased and delivered. Again, many thanks.

**Grahame**

## **Sunday Parking**

This is a reminder to anyone who parks in the church car park on a Sunday morning. If you arrive to find the car park full, or if you feel you cannot comfortably get into a vacant space, the stewards have a few car parking permits which allow free parking in Black Horse Lane for the duration of the service. Please ask a steward when you arrive and put the permit in your windscreen, remembering to return the permit again after the service.

If you have any questions, please see Grahame.

## CHURCH DIARY

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup>	10.45am	Rev Michael Allen including <b>Sacrament of Holy Communion</b>
	6.30pm	Town Churches Service at Bramford Road
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Come and join us for coffee and a chat
	12.30pm	Hot Potato Lunch and Talk
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Come and join us for coffee and a chat
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	10.45am	Chris Finbow
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm	Property Committee
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Come and join us for coffee and a chat
	10.00am	Holy Communion
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup>	1.00pm	Ipswich Arts Lunch time Lecture: <b>“St Mary At The Quay: A Dramatic History” by Suzanne Hawkes</b>
Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Come and join us for coffee and a chat
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	10.45am	Colin Westren
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm	Tea and Talk
Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup>	10.00am	Come and join us for coffee and a chat
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup>	2.00pm	<b>Church Cleaning - All Welcome</b>
Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup>	10.00am	Come and join us for coffee and a chat
Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	10.45am	Diana Sawyer <b>May Church AGM Lunch and Meeting</b>
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	12.30pm	Community Lunch
Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Come and join us for coffee and a chat
Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Come and join us for coffee and a chat
Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup>	10.45am	David Welbourn
	6.00pm	Vauxhall Camp

## **From the vestry (and not before time!!)**

How the weeks go by, dates and deadlines missed and suddenly we are at that time between spring and summer. Because the date for Easter was so early this year we seem to have leapt forward in the Christian calendar and now we can look back on our Easter celebrations.

In early February we began our Lenten preparation by joining with members of St Mary in the Elms on a Thursday morning and meeting in the vicarage. Father John is keen to share with Museum Street as much as possible and we were met with a smile and a cup of coffee. The meetings were either at 10.30am or at 7.30pm on the same day, enabling people to attend either (or both!) as the evening group studied the Psalms. The study material used with the morning group was one of the York Courses entitled Glimpses of God. The discussion was varied, sometimes difficult to generate and at other times the members joined in with ease. Through these gatherings we got to know each other better.

After the Palm Sunday service, Derek moved quietly into his sabbatical and our Easter Sunday service was led by Rev Tony Brooks. The decorations for Easter were different and varied this year. We give grateful thanks to those who gave of their time and expertise to give us a meaningful display.

Since last writing from the vestry we have had a CLT meeting and a church council. The council discussed the question about the timing of the Covenant Service (either January or September). Arguments for remaining in January was advocated by David Welbourn and Martin Ellis reasoned for September. This is not yet resolved but for this year the Covenant Service will remain in September. This item will be raised again. If you have strong feelings on this subject please talk either to the stewards or any member of CLT.

It was reported that Synod in its wisdom had changed its date from the second Saturday to the third Saturday to meet - which clashes with our Harvest celebrations. With the agreement of Council and Dorothy and Alan Taylor it was agreed to bring our Harvest weekend forward to September 10<sup>th</sup>. This will take the form of Saturday evening meal after which Alan will speak and also lead worship on Sunday.

Other visiting preachers are being sought to lead worship on our Church Anniversary and Harvest Festival services in 2017.

Dr. Valerie Ogden, a Mission Partner working in Fiji, is to visit the circuit on 14<sup>th</sup> September at Bramford Road for an evening engagement and on 15<sup>th</sup> September at Seaton Road for a morning meeting.

The town Churches services – which included a Bring and Share tea – have, for the time being, ceased. The Circuit services will continue and will commence at the usual time of 6.30p.m.

The service to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity will be at Museum Street on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2017 and the guest speaker will be Rev. Leslie Griffiths.

The next report will hopefully be during the holiday period and if you are going away to somewhere new - **how about a short report for this Newsletter telling the church of your experiences.**

Until the next time.....

## **ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING**

You are reminded that the Annual Church Meeting will be held on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May at about 1.30 p.m. following lunch. It is an important meeting for all members of the church and it is hoped there will be a good attendance.

One important aspect of the meeting is the election of representatives to the Church Life Team, and also to agree the Church Stewards for the next year.

The Church Life Team meets approximately nine times during the year, and the meetings are held during the evening, usually on a Monday. The team discusses all aspects of the life of the church and makes recommendations to the Church Council. If you would like to be nominated to be a representative from the church, you should send a nomination form, signed by the proposer and seconder and nominee to the Church Council Secretary, Grahame Lindsay, to arrive by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May. All three signatories must be members of the church. There are three places to be filled. In the event of an election, the person with the most votes will serve for 4 years, the second highest for two years, and the third highest for one year.

Nominations are also needed for Church Stewards. Again, if you wish to be nominated, or you wish to nominate someone else, the nomination form, signed by the proposer, seconder and nominee must be with Grahame Lindsay by Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May.

At the meeting we shall also be electing representatives to the Church Council and Circuit Meeting for the next year.

## **Visit to Ipswich Mosque and community Centre of 12<sup>th</sup> April**

About thirty Christians including a group from our Church, visited the Ipswich Mosque on the 12<sup>th</sup> April.

We were requested to take off our shoes before entering the community hall where we were warmly welcomed by members of the Islamic community in Ipswich. The visit can be described in three parts.

### **The introductory talk on Prayer**

The first was a talk by a young Muslim about prayer and what we were going to observe when we went into the prayer hall. Prayer is one of the 'Five Pillars' i.e. the five tenets central to the Islamic faith. He indicated how important it was in Islam and how vital it was to the individual spiritual life of Muslims, for they are given a feeling of inner happiness, peace and comfort, and because in prayer they are entering into a close relationship with God. He emphasised the importance of 'intention' i.e. the fact that the worshipper should remove from his mind all distractions, so that the whole of one's being is concentrated on God. The pattern of prayer, or the 'raka', consists of patterns of movements including bowing, kneeling and prostrating indicating how we should be humble before God. This formal prayer is called 'salat'.

He said that the devote Muslim says prayers like this, whenever possible, five times a day before sunrise, noon, mid-afternoon, after sunset and before midnight, though this can be done at home or indeed anywhere e.g. at work, in a shop etc. there are also times when a Muslim can be less formal than this in prayer, as Christians can be, and can pray for themselves and for others. In this talk we were shown how integral prayer is to the devote Muslim.

At twelve fifteen we heard the sonorous tones of the 'muezzin' calling – in Arabic – people to prayer and we went into the prayer room.

### **The observation of prayers in the Prayer Room**

The prayer room was carpeted, designed with individual sections of carpet the size of a prayer mat and pointing towards the 'qibla' wall (the eastern wall), in which was the 'mihrab' (niche in the wall) which was pointing towards Mecca so that all the worshippers were facing Mecca. This had been explained to us earlier (this is where the Ka'bah, their most sacred building is and the part of the world which saw the birth of Islam). The worshippers, in unison, led by the Imam, then followed the set pattern of the 'raka', reciting parts of the Qur'an, as they participated in the ritual. This lasted for about half an hour.

## **The follow up**

We then returned to the community hall for tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits – in plenty!! So far we had been largely concerned with prayer but this provided us with the opportunity for more open discussion of Islam. The following points, among others, were made:

God was one, and two of the main names to describe Him were merciful and compassionate but he was also judge, and this was important.

Jesus and his mother, the virgin Mary are held in great regard in Islam. The imam at this point recited part of the Surah (chapter) of the Qur'an which speaks highly of both Jesus and Mary.

This was most impressive. Jesus is accepted as a great prophet like Adam, Abraham, Moses and finally Muhammad, but cannot be God or God's son because God is one and by his nature cannot have a son.

The divisions of Islam were discussed. The majority of Muslims in the world are Sunnis, the minority Shi'ites and there is much tension in the world between them as we note in the media. History has shown that there has been much tension in Christianity too.

The Muslim community is disturbed by the 'bad' press it is receiving at the moment when in fact it is a peaceful religion.

This leads to my conclusion. Hans Kung, the outstanding Roman Catholic theologian, writes:

“No peace among nations without peace among the religions.

No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions.”

It is hoped that visits like this, and the dialogue they provoke, can help towards a greater tolerance among other faith communities and that peace which we all strive for. We are extremely grateful for the hospitality, courtesy and kindness shown to us when we visited the Ipswich Mosque community on the 12<sup>th</sup> April.

## **Get Together, Tuesday 9 April – Suffolk Refugee Support**

If you want to know the difference between an Asylum Seeker, Migrant and a Refugee, ask one of the 25 folk who were at April's Gettogether, to hear Karen Lawson talk about the subject and the Suffolk Refugee Support Group. Grahame Lindsay, in his morning service 10 days earlier had given us an outline of the Support Group's work and shown a short video highlighting their work in the community. He also asked for donations of primarily toiletries for newly arrived refugees.

Karen put some meat on to the bones and provided more information regarding the global situation, especially relating to migrants coming to Europe, mostly from Syria, from whence 4 million have fled since the onset of civil war.

The main aims of the SRS are to provide help and advice to asylum seekers, to help refugees to integrate fully into the community and to challenge intolerance towards them. They provide a drop-in advice and advocacy service; employment and training; English language courses; an international women's group; men's sports & social group and a friends group.

At the end of the evening we were pleased to hand over to Karen a considerable amount of requisites, in fact all that Grahame had requested on his "wanted" list and, in addition, the sum of £50 was collected on the night.

As a slight aside, Karen thanked us Methodists for the work which All We Can (formerly Methodist Relief & Development Fund) does in supporting work in the Jordan refugee camps which are housing thousands of Syrian refugees.

As this was our last Get Together of the season, a big thank you to Jackie & Alan Wells for the hard work that goes into organising each meeting and also to all the refreshment providers.

MAH

## **Thank You**

We say "Thank you" to all our friends for your enquiries, good wishes and prayers over the past few weeks.

Everything is progressing most satisfactorily, and we are very grateful to the NHS.

John and June

## **The Life of the Church**

### **Sunday Services**

10.45 am Morning Service (creche available)

Holy Communion usually on the first Sunday Morning of each month and on the third Wednesday of each month at 10.00am  
Baptisms and weddings by arrangement with the Minister

### **Weekly Events**

Wednesday 10.00-11.30 am Come and join us for coffee and a chat

Saturday 10.00-11.30 am Come and join us for coffee and a chat

### **Other Meetings**

Hot Potato Lunch and Talk

First Wednesday of each month at 12.30pm

Get Together Monthly Second Tuesday October to April at 7.30pm

Tea and Talk Third Tuesday of the month 2.00pm except August

Youth activities Please contact Chris and Maggie Finbow (680306)

Community Lunch Fourth Tuesday of the month 12.30-1.30 pm except August

House Group Monthly. Please contact Colin Westren (743724)

Items for the next Newsletter should be with Barbara Wearne by

**Wednesday** 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Email - [msmcnewsletter@live.co.uk](mailto:msmcnewsletter@live.co.uk)/[barbwearne@hotmail.com](mailto:barbwearne@hotmail.com)

