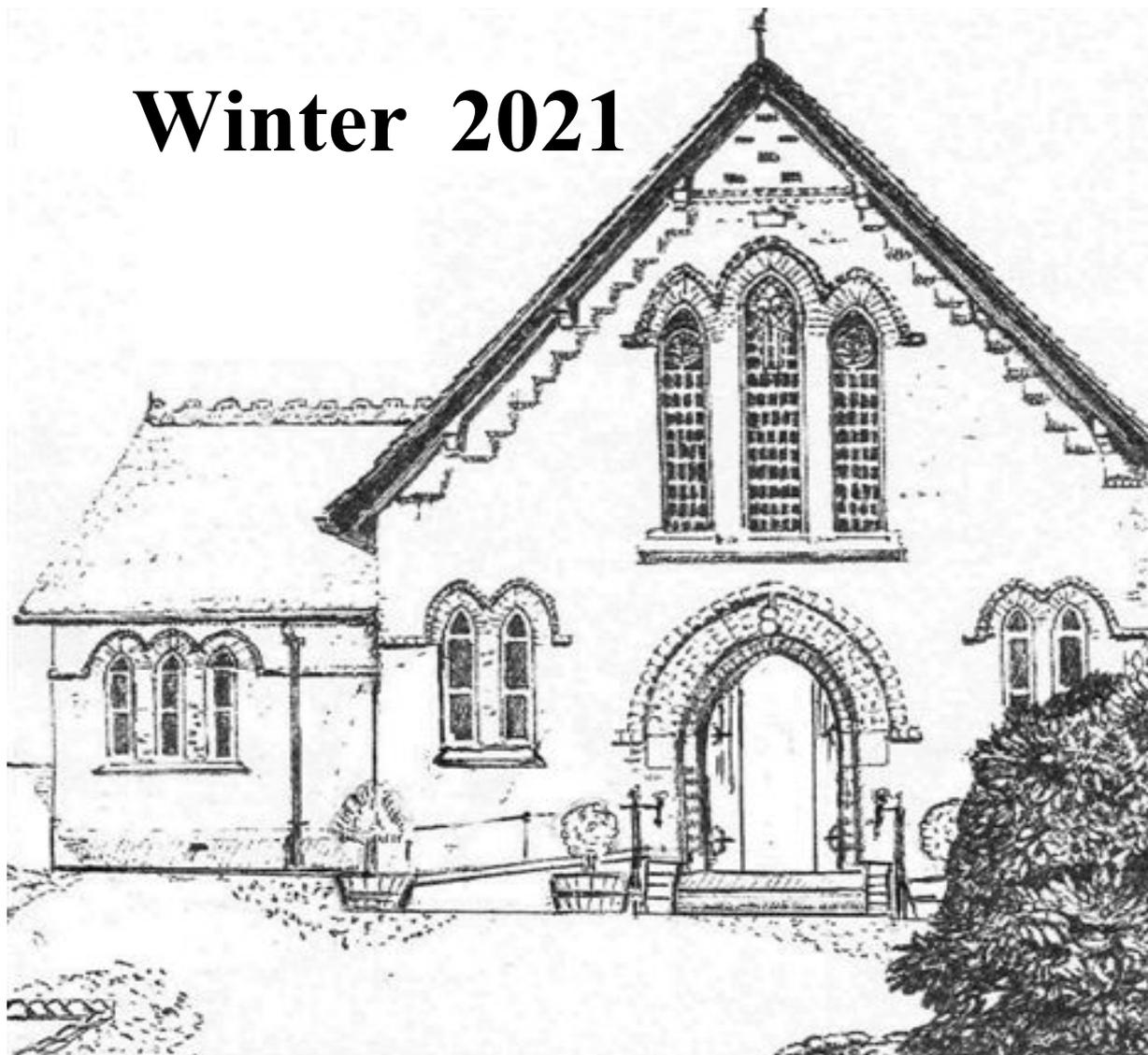


Winter 2021



OUTREACH

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FROM NORLEY METHODIST CHURCH

MORNING WORSHIP	10.45am
FOOD FOR THOUGHT	7.00pm WEDNESDAY ONCE A MONTH
HOLY COMMUNION	ONCE A MONTH
BAPTISMS & WEDDINGS	BY ARRANGEMENT WITH THE MINISTER
WEBSITE	http://www.norleymethodistchurch.org.uk
MINISTER	THE REVEREND ANDREW EMISON 41 FAIRWAYS, FRODSHAM, WA6 7RU TELEPHONE: 01928 733180

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Tel: 01928 733180
email: andrew@emison.net

Dear Friends,

At the time of writing in mid-November, I am just recovering from a COVID-19 infection. I am grateful that my symptoms have been mild, and I am mindful that in this last year we have lost people known to us to the disease and others who are suffering from “Long-COVID”. It was a reminder to me of all of these people and the fact that the virus is still affecting us. Throughout this time, well-meaning people have reached different conclusions about what should be an appropriate response.

I note with interest the way in which we have talked about “freedom” and “choice”. The way in which we talk about freedom and choice is driven by our understanding of who we are as human beings. The story of God’s love, recorded for us in the bible, told and retold through the history of the church right through into the experience of our own lives has a view of who we are as human beings. That view challenges popular views. Freedom is what the promises in the bible are all about. Freedom from slavery to sin but also freedom to choose new life that lies waiting for us down a “narrow path” that Jesus leads us along.

In 1 Corinthians 8, Paul is writing to a church in Corinth which is wrestling with what might be the appropriate response to the consumption of food offered to idols. Some Christians felt it was OK to eat (because the idols aren’t real anyway), others felt that it would be wrong. Paul sides with those who think that it is ok, but he urges them not to use the freedom that they feel to trip up others who don’t share the same view. So, in church, we’ve tended to say that we’ll put ourselves on the side of caution so that others are less fearful about coming to church.

Christians believe that God is in all things but beyond all things. God is “sovereign” (doesn’t have to ask anyone before God does anything), but God takes God’s ultimate, sovereign freedom and gives it up; bowing down and entering into time and history and, in Jesus, into the same *place* of our lives. That’s what we celebrate at Christmas; that God compromises God’s freedom in order to share life with us, to relate to us and to rescue us. That’s the subject of the great hymn of the early church recorded for us in Philippians chapter 2.

Next time we’re thinking about our rights, entitlements and freedom, let’s take our thoughts to a manger and a cross, explain them to Jesus and perhaps be gently challenged by that presence that comes amongst us at Christmas and know that in this story, we’ll find real freedom.

Grace and peace.

Andrew

So, What's Happened?

So much has happened since the last Outreach in Spring 2020 it would take the entire magazine to begin to cover it all. Sufficient to say we hope you will be pleased to see Outreach on the streets again as a sign of the new normal and catch up on some of the more recent events and plans

Congratulations to

- **Ruth Hosker and Alison Twinn** on their appointment from September as Church Stewards
- **Matthew Gough** who graduated on Friday 12 November – brilliant news. Well done Matthew.
- **Richard Ramsbottom** on his recovery from Covid
- **Oliver Dimelow** who has now passed his driving test so is raring to go
- **Phillippa Hickson** who is getting married next year and is looking forward to a Turkey wedding in the sun. She is one of Santa's helpers at Lapland till Christmas
- **Lewis Dimelow** who has now got his own wheels
- **Andrew Emison** on his recovery from Covid

Wilf Turnbull (who was 6 years old on 16th July, **Zack Bell** (who was 17 years old on 11th October) and **Harry Dale** (who was 11 years old on 29th October)

Thank You.....

- To **Richard Ramsbottom** for the notices produced every week during the pandemic that has enabled the Norley Methodist Church to hold itself together
- To **Margaret Hogan** and the pastoral visitors who have redoubled their efforts and phone contacts to combat the isolation and mental depression that Covid and lockdown can bring

- To **Barbara Garner** for her many years of exemplary service as Communion Steward. The church owes her a great debt of gratitude. thanks also to Michael, Lesley, Yvonne and Alison who have taken on her responsibilities during the Covid pandemic
- To **John Bell** for the wonderful and inspiring meditations and reflections produced alongside the notices for almost a year that did so much to help mitigate the effects of Covid.
- From **Jean Dunning** who says Thank you for all the love, prayers and support you have given her over the past 3 months.

In Our Thoughts.....

- In the last year we have lost a number of members, and our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of **Ken Dunning, Paul Barclay** and **Robert Gleave** where we publish their 'In Memoriam' articles in this issue. We have also lost **Alison Penny** and **Joan Bell** longer ago, and John has offered a reflection on Joan later in this edition.
- The death of **Mavis Dimelow** occurred as this edition was in preparation and we ask you to pray for John, Mary and the family at this difficult time.
- Remember **Pauline Gates** in your prayers, following Peter's move into Chapel Fields.
- **Joan Barclay** is slowly recovering from a dislocated shoulder in August using one arm for everything but is now out of her sling.
- **Joan Oultram** has just broken her arm and has it plastered 6 weeks before Christmas
- **Hazel Dale** has shingles and **Margaret Hogan** had a cataract operation on the 17th

Please remember them in your prayers.

Pastoral Piece

It's good to be back, and we give thanks for coming through the pandemic. Although many of us have seen changes, some were welcomed, and some were not.

We now endeavour to start a new phase of our journey, looking forward, not back.

As the Poem says

*God hath not promised skies always blue, Flower strewn pathways all our lives through,
God hath not promised sun without rain, Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.
God hath not promised we shall not know Toil and Temptation, Trouble and woe.
He hath not told us we shall not bear many a burden, many a care,
God hath not promised smooth roads and wide, swift, easy travel, needing no guide.
Never a mountain rocky and steep, never a river turbid and deep.
But God hath promised strength for the day, rest for the labour, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above, unfailing sympathy, undying love.*

Words byAnnie Johnson Flint.

I would like to thank our dedicated team of Pastoral visitors, who kept up the good work throughout the whole of the pandemic, and also thanks to other members of the church who came on board. Thanks to our minister Andrew for his support.

The following prayer is special to me, but I wish to share it with everyone.

*I said a prayer for you today and know God must have heard, I felt the answer in my heart although He spoke no word!
I didn't ask for wealth or fame, (I knew you wouldn't mind) I asked Him to send treasures of a far more lasting kind!
I asked that He'd be near to you at the start of each new day:
to grant you health and blessings and friends to share your way!
I asked for happiness for you in all things great and small.
But it was for His loving care I prayed the most of all.*

May god bless you all.
{ Pastoral }

Margaret Hogan

Keeping you safe if you make a pastoral visit by yourself.

You should tell someone where you are going and when you hope to be back and give that person your mobile phone number.

Pastoral visits should be made during daylight hours.

Hence if you are making a pastoral visit you must: -

- 1) take a mobile with you to be used, if possible, in an emergency
- 2) ensure someone will come looking for you if you don't return when expected

Keep Safe

First Wednesday Walks

First Wednesday walks continued during lockdown as virtual walks on Zoom, but by August were able to commence as actual walks.

The second non virtual First Wednesday Walk took place in September. Some 14 gathered at Little Budworth Country Park on the first Wednesday and proceeded to stroll the 3km of the circular woodpecker walk around the common in 3 separate socially distanced groups of 5, 5 and 4. Plans to enjoy each other's company in a picnic lunch were thwarted by the onset of rain just as we returned to the car park.

October First Wednesday Walk Peter and Sheila led a group of 10 of us in beautiful weather on the first Wednesday around Alyn Waters country park near Wrexham and afterwards we had lunch at a local hostelry. It was great to get out.

November's First Wednesday Walk was enjoyed by 11 people and led by Bruce around Griffith Park in Northwich off Manchester Road. This Park was created by Bruce almost 30 years ago from an old industrial settling lagoon for the Lostock soda ash factory and the 'Alloprene' chlorinated rubber plant.

Today it is a mature park with open grassland, mixed species woodland and well-maintained paths around what was the bund wall of the lagoon. It was a beautiful sunny day, and the walk was a delight stopping to admire the 3 works of art that had formed part of the project.

Bruce explained how the industrial wasteland had been reclaimed with a 2-foot clay cap to seal the lagoon; a covered trench around the whole site to drain off any alkaline seepage through the cap and safely deal with it; decontamination of the Carbon tetrachloride in the soil under the removed 'Alloprene' plant; 200,000 tons of soil on top of the clay to make the park; and the planting of thousands of trees and shrubs and establishing them over several years before the park was taken over by the local council for ongoing maintenance. Now 30 years on the park is fully mature and a pleasure to visit.

December's walk along the Whitegate Way led by John and Sylvia will have already taken place by the time you read this. Look out for details in the notices for January (5th) and for February (2nd). Join us if you can.

Summary of the June and September Church Council meetings

Church Council Meeting 22nd June 2021

The Church Council met via 'Zoom' and this is a summary of the main items discussed:

- Sunday morning services will continue a fortnightly basis during July and August.
- Streamed services and prayer meetings via Zoom continue. Norley@10 is 'back in Church' but is taking a break in July and August. Café Church will hopefully resume in the coming months.
- A few small changes were agreed to the Covid-19 congregational information
- A review of our 'non worship' weekly activities has been completed. Although nothing is likely to change in the next couple of months, it is expected that quite a few of our regular activities will return to normal once we return to a normal pattern of Sunday services and restrictions are relaxed. For example, providing refreshments after the Sunday service, flowers in Church and distribution, collection for the Food bank in Church should recommence relatively easily once we can re-organize the space in the Church and how it is used. As some will already know, the Craft Club has now closed. Some activities (such as the weekend away and the Open-Door lunches) are unlikely to recommence in their previous format – but alternatives may be considered
- We have continued to support external Charities throughout the pandemic with donations to Norley News, Methodist Connexional Property Fund, Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum, All We Can (formerly MRDF), Alzheimer's Society, Marie Curie Foundation, Mid-Cheshire Samaritans. We have made monetary donations to the West Cheshire Food Bank and also made regular deliveries of donated food (with thanks to support from Norley Stores). The recent Christian Aid week campaign raised just under £2000 across the Norley area (including the St John's Church, Norley, Christ Church, Crowton and ourselves).
- Finance and property items discussed are covered elsewhere in this issue.
- Within the wider North Cheshire Circuit, there is work going on around the re-opening of Churches and development of a Circuit Plan. The stationing process for 3 of our Circuit Ministerial appointments is now underway. Revd Christine Dutton is also leaving her post in July this year, to take up a national role linked to Queen's College, Birmingham.

Church Council Meeting 28th September 2021

The September Church Council meeting was held face to face – for the first time in almost 18 months! Here is a summary of the main items discussed and agreed:

- Information on Saro's CD is reported elsewhere in the magazine
- Some updates to our Covid 19 measures were agreed based on the updated risk assessment and 'roadmap to recovery'. These were: use of the lectern for readers, singing behind masks and rearrangement of the chairs in the Church back into rows – albeit keeping space between households. The Church Council also agreed the return to some face-to-face meetings and, all being well, the re-introduction of a Carol Singing evening before Christmas.
- The Spiritual Committee shared their decision to introduce a monthly midweek act of worship to be called 'Food for Thought' – bringing together elements of Café Church and Norley@9 which would include discussion based on topical themes.

- Our annual Church Return and Property Checklist were duly checked and agreed – with thanks to Bruce and other contributors for their completion.
- Updated policies for health and safety, for safeguarding and lone working were all presented and agreed.
- In the wider Circuit, we were informed that profiles for two Ministers will be submitted into the stationing process – to replace Rev'ds David Goodwin and David Bintliff, who will be leaving the North Cheshire Circuit next year. Rev'd Neil Stacey has been re-invited to stay in the Circuit as a Minister for a further 5 years and he will step down as Superintendent in 2/3 years' time.
- The next Church Council meeting will be held on 22nd March 2022.

Lesley Gough, Church Council Secretary.

Norley Annual Church General Meeting 11th May 2021

The Annual Church Meeting (ACM) took place via Zoom on the 11th May and 15 people attended. Decisions were made around appointment of stewards and representatives to the Church Council and donations to external charities. We were also updated on safeguarding and spent some time reflecting on the previous year and the way back to 'normality'.

The main highlights were:

- *Stewards:* The current team of Stewards (Ruth Lane, Bruce Lane, Philip Garner, Michael Gough, Mary Dimelow, Lewis Dimelow) were unanimously appointed for a further year. Alison Twinn and Ruth Hosker will also join the team of Stewards from September. Yvonne Roughsedge remains as a Vestry Assistant.
- *Representatives elected by the ACM to Church Council:* Hazel Dale, Heather Davies, Saro Jesudason, Yvonne Roughsedge, Jean Dunning and John Dimelow were all elected.
- *Donations to external charities:* The following five charities had been nominated and were granted £200: West Cheshire Food Bank, All We Can, Alzheimer's Society, Mid Cheshire Samaritans and the Marie Curie Foundation.
- *Safeguarding:* Ruth Lane as our Safeguarding Lead summarized the safeguarding responsibility within our Church and how this has evolved to include vulnerable adults as well as children. Those who need to attend safeguarding training are currently able to access this training online – though face to face training will resume at some point. DBS checks are also being undertaken for those within key roles within the Church.
- *Ministry and witness of the Church and reflection on the last year:* We agreed that we are now entering a 'reconstruction phase' following the closure and impact of the pandemic – though setbacks may still occur along the way. A small working group agreed to begin reviewing other Church activities and considering if and when they may resume.

Lesley Gough, Church Council Secretary

Worshipping Safely

Some of the changes we've made are well known – although there's no harm in reminding you of them.

Before you enter the church use the hand sanitiser and put on a mask.

There's a one-way system through the church and you should proceed to the front of the church taking the first available seat sitting socially distanced from people not in your bubble.

We use hymn books and sing with our masks on.

At the end of the service people should leave, starting at the front and following the one-way system through the Open-Door Room and out through the side door. People should then move into the church garden before starting conversations.

Unfortunately, with the level of covid-19 cases at present it will probably be some time before our procedure changes and we think of serving refreshments after services. Some other changes we've made you may not have realised.

We have changed to two types of steward, one for the congregation and one for the preacher. The Congregational Steward will stay in the porch, record attendees, ensure people have used the hand sanitiser before entry, are wearing a mask and then direct them to a seat.

The Preacher's Steward will look after the preacher, remain with them until the service starts before sitting in the Open-Door Room able to see anyone entering via the back door and at the end of the service encourage people to leave quickly in single file using the one-way system and only stop for conversations outside the main church entrance.

Keeping you safe if you're alone in church

We've realized that, at times, church people or persons from outside companies e.g. electricity, gas companies will be in situations where they are 'alone' in church. So, we decided we needed to develop a procedure that, if followed, should ensure that the person who is to be alone in church should be safe.

So, if you will be in church by yourself, you should tell someone when you are going and when you hope to be back and give that person your mobile phone number.

Hence if you are going to be alone in church you must: -

- 1) take a mobile with you to be used, if possible, in an emergency
- 2) ensure someone will come looking for you if you don't return when expected
- 3) if working indoors, ensure external doors are locked. It is important to remove the key after locking the door, so, if you don't emerge and someone comes looking for you they will be able to insert their key in the lock.
- 4) only use equipment you trust and be sure that all the equipment, materials etc you expect to use can be handled safely by one person

Obviously 'telling someone' can be by a phone call.

Clearly the person who comes looking for you if you don't return when expected from being alone in church must come with a church key as the church should be locked.

Keep Safe

Operation Christmas Child – Shoebox Appeal

The Operation Christmas Child Shoebox appeal was originally set up by the Samaritan's Purse Charity in 1990. At Norley Methodist Church we have supported the appeal for many years – packing and sending shoeboxes full of toys, school, and hygiene supplies to children living in some of the poorest and most remote communities across the world and with them, sharing the message and love of Jesus Christ.

Last year the pandemic meant that donations and shoebox packing happened online only, but this year we were once again able to collect packed boxes and donations in Church on 7th November. A total of seventeen boxes were subsequently delivered to our local collection point in Northwich. These, together with the shoeboxes that some of us 'packed' online, will commence their onward journey very soon and we should find out which destinations and communities they reach sometime next Spring. Hopefully next year we will be able to re-introduce our 'Shoebox Saturday' packing session where we can come together to pack donated items into shoeboxes as a Church family.

The Samaritan's Purse website contains lots of information about their work and examples of the impact of the shoebox appeal. The website address is www.samaritans-purse.org.uk

I'm sure you will find the maps below of interest - they are taken from the report of the 2019 appeal and show the impressive scale and spread of the appeal worldwide. It really is remarkable to see how many children's lives are touched by this appeal - so thank you very much for your continuing support! *Lesley Gough*

Are we still solvent? (aka the Financial Report)

The simple answer is yes, for which the treasurer is immensely grateful to the many members of the congregation who kindly responded to his invitation to set up bank Standing Orders, make transfers or otherwise send their weekly offerings to ensure continued regular income to the church since the pandemic overwhelmed us in March 2020. But for these, we would have been in dire straits.

My last such report was in the Outreach edition of December (Winter) 2019, exactly two years ago. Since then, the mundane administrative processes of the church have been sustained by various means, enabling the annual accounts for the years 2019-20 and 2020-21 to be audited (with many thanks to Richard Ramsbottom) and presented to and approved by the Autumn Church Councils in 2020 and 2021. There was an appropriate balance in the deposit account on August 31st 2021 of £20,343, to cover known future expenditures and observe the required Reserves policy. Despite so many unpredictable ups and downs in both income and expenditure, we achieved modest surpluses of £516 and £820 in 2020 and 2021 respectively.

It is impossible in a short report to give all details; suffice to say that income from events and activities and consequent gift-aid refunds was missed but the money-

spinning solar panels continued on their merry way, oblivious of covid; some expenditures reduced whilst we were not using the premises though other charges, such as circuit assessment, insurance, essential maintenance and church cleaning continued to be incurred. For various reasons, not least the sadness of the death of beloved members, the church has benefited unexpectedly from personal donations and the current year, 2021-22, will be no exception.

It is worthy to record that, despite all the financial uncertainties, we did not shrink from making donations to church and external charities, either through amounts agreed by the Church Council and Annual Church Meeting or by special collections and appeals. Over the two years September 2019 to August 2021 the total was £5380.

We know not what the future holds in terms of the resumption of fund-raising events and activities, but we are blest with a legacy of generosity which we may utilise to advance God's mission through Norley Methodist Church.

John Bell, treasurer.

Property Matters

Immediately following the last property report in Outreach in Spring 2020, the Church was closed due to Covid and the internal property programme suspended essentially for 12 months and replaced with weekly checks by John and Lewis.

A Christmas tree was erected by John and Lewis in the garden and lighted for the Christmas season, and coloured LED lights used to illuminate the church windows from inside. The effect was so good this was continued after Christmas until the lighter nights were with us.

Alternate Wednesdays when the Molly Mop cleaners were not in the church have been used to carry out the annual boiler service, the 5Yr fixed wiring inspection, the Fire extinguisher servicing, and the PAT testing due every 2 years.

The trees on the High Street side of the Church were cut as agreed by John and Lewis and David Dale provided a skip and removed the cut wood. We had budgeted £200 for this work but John, Lewis and David refused to accept any payment for this job, donating their time and expenses to the Church. We are most grateful to them.

Removal of the trees on the High Street side enabled us to determine where slates needed replacing, so a drone hire was not required, and the work was done to replace them and secure slates on the roofs accessible from the Gambrell's garden.

Replacement of the rotten weatherboarding at the front of the church on closer examination revealed that the weatherboard was sound but a 4-inch-wide moulded decorative strip on the front of it had been made from softwood and had decayed in 140 Years until it was completely rotten all the way along the front and was falling off. This was replaced with moulded UPVC skirting strips, caulked, and then painted black.

Repainting of the corridors in magnolia, and the refreshing of the skirting boards was completed by the property steward.

Property proposals from the property stewards in addition to routine maintenance were approved by the church council for 2021/22 as

1. Complete installation of new sockets for the AV system

2. Upgrade the sound system
3. Complete the repairs to the Sunday School ceiling and redecorate it
4. Retile the disabled toilet
5. Install a replacement heater for the vestry (the current heater was condemned in the PAT testing)
6. Replace the floodlight on the High Street side of the church

Bruce 14/11/2021

Our support for the West Cheshire Foodbank has continued throughout the Covid 19 pandemic – both through food donations and monetary donations. We have worked closely with Dave and the team at Norley Stores to collect food and Michael has been taking a car boot full of food donations across to the Foodbank depot in Ellesmere Port approximately once a month. Most recently our Harvest collection raised just over £300 in monetary donations and just over 100Kg of food was also donated.

Thank you to everyone for your support – it really is greatly appreciated and makes a tremendous difference as the numbers of people using the Foodbanks continues to rise: Almost 3500 food parcels were provided by the Foodbank in West Cheshire in the 6 months to the end of June 2021 – enough to feed over 7000 people. The number of children in West Cheshire who are dependent on foodbank donations has increased by 23% over the last year.

We hope we will be able to set up our food collection box in Church before too long, but in the meantime, there is a basket near the exit door of the Church for any monetary donations and Michael and Lesley are willing to look after any food donations until the next 'run' over to the Ellesmere Port depot. Alternatively, you can continue to donate at Norley Stores.

If you are thinking of donating this Christmas, why not do a Reverse Advent Calendar? We will take food donations for the Christmas period during the week of 13th December and then again in early January – you may want to start and finish your Reverse Advent Calendar early if you would like the food to get to those in need for Christmas. Collected items can be left on a table in the Open-Door room on Sunday 12th December, or alternatively given directly to Michael and Lesley.

Finally, and once again, a huge thank you to everyone for your continued support!
Michael and Lesley

Solar Panels Update

Our solar panels have continued to work well through the pandemic.

We have just received the quarterly cheque for our power generation, and now in 9 ½ years we have received over £17,250 for our £7,540 investment – a return on almost 230% on our money – and the cash should just keep coming for another 15 years.

More importantly if the electricity had instead been generated by burning coal, some 32,000Kg of carbon dioxide would have been released to the atmosphere – our churches contribution to COP 26.

Bruce

CD donations from Saro

It started with an announcement in the notices '*On the request of my family and friends, during lockdown, I have recorded, pieces of music on the piano and the organ that I played when I was 16/17. I am extending the circulation of the CD to members of our church and friends*'

Many of us donated to obtain a copy. John Bell writes 'As a recipient of what is a delightfully eclectic mix of organ and piano pieces, I have thoroughly enjoyed listening to it.

I am thrilled to report that the amount received is £2215; this is an extraordinary achievement, and we express our enormous gratitude to Saro for her initiative and commitment. As many donors were able and willing to gift-aid their donations, and pending confirmation from others, a further £450 or more will be reclaimed from HMRC, giving a grand total of the order of £2700.

This is also and importantly a letter of thanks and appreciation to everyone who very kindly gave such generous donations, and (I am told) sometimes acquired CDs for their friends too. Very many thanks to you all on behalf of the church. I am sure that you will enjoy listening to it, and perhaps (as I did) find yourself unable to resist quietly adding your own singing, humming, or foot-tapping to the well-loved pieces so beautifully played'

Forthcoming activities for your diary

Our new venture of Food for Thought has been well received in October and November and is planned to continue for an hour on a Wednesday evening through the next 3 months, though sadly without at the moment refreshments. Do come and give it a try.

The advent candle ring will be in the Church thanks to Michael and Lesley from Advent 1 which is on the 28th November, and John Bell is preparing an Advent liturgy which we will use in each week of Advent. Arrangements have also been finalised for the candlelit carol service at 4pm on the 19th December and singing around the Christmas tree on the 22nd. Do come and help the church celebrate the coming of



Norley Methodist Church

Food for Thought

*Come and enjoy
fellowship, worship and discussion
in the church*

at 7.00pm on Wednesdays:

*8th December led by Ruth Lane
19th January led by Andrew Emison
16th February led by Michael Gough*

Christmas and come to the Christmas Day service at 9am and bring a Christmas present.

December 19th
Candlelit Carol Service
 **4.00pm** 
Everyone Welcome

Norley Methodist Church
We're singing Carols Around the Christmas Tree
December 22nd from 6.00-7.00pm
Come and join us
Everyone Welcome



Christmas Day
  
9.00am Family Worship
Come and celebrate with us

Annual Covenant Service

The New Year for Methodists starts with the annual covenant service where we commit our year to God's will. This important event this year is on January 9th. Do join us if you can

Bruce

Craft Club News

The Norley Church craft club began more than twenty-five years ago set up by Jean Dunning. It flourished, inspired by Jean and also Joan Bell.

Members joined forces to make the millenium banner which hangs in the Church. They also made all the lectern falls and covered the hassocks used at communion.

Over the years members have come and gone and interests changed. More recently the group became involved with fund-raising for the Petty Pool Trust and St Luke's Hospice and other local charities.

Over the last few years numbers have reduced, and with covid restrictions, all became more difficult. Therefore, I'm sorry to report that Norley Craft Club will not be meeting anymore but we have had a good time which we won't forget.

Alison Twinn

Choir at Norley

Due to restrictions and lockdown, we were not able to rehearse as a choir. We were getting organised for Easter, as such we could hope fully sing for Easter services next year providing situations improve by then.

We have missed meeting as a group, singing, having coffee and cake and putting the world to right. We hope we can renew the fellowship we enjoyed.

My thankful memories of Joan's contribution to our harmony choir. She was a strong alto and yet was able to sing descants with Jean for hymns and especially for carols.

We will miss Ken who always came to the rehearsals, patiently listened and gave us valuable constructive criticism. He always encouraged me and appreciated my contributions.

We will always remember Joan and Ken with affection.

Saro Jesudason



Joan – a reflection



Of all the possible photos – there were hundreds from which to choose over many years – this one above all, taken at home on Christmas Day 2020, was not only recent but seemed to me to capture the person we will ever treasure and remember.

Joan's unexpected and sudden death, for nothing prepared us for it and she was gone in an instant, came as a devastating blow to family and friends alike. So many people – some of you reading this now – expressed their disbelief. One Saturday, Joan and I were enjoying a lovely walk along the Whitegate Way on a beautiful, chilly January morning; the next, the family and I were mourning her loss.

We celebrated Joan's life in a wonderful service of thanksgiving which, sadly, just a limited number of friends were able to attend in person, but we were joined by scores of others across the country (and indeed, further afield) through the streaming facility. It is ironic that the coronavirus which inhibited numbers at the chapel enabled many

people, including Joan's cousins, who would not have been able to make the journey, to share in the service.

At Norley, we have already missed Joan's very distinctive musical gifts, both accompanying and singing, and the loss of her significant contribution in catering activities will yet be felt. Tributes came pouring through my letterbox which quite overwhelmed me: I read words I knew to be true, but even I hadn't known the depth of gratitude so many people owed to Joan – not least when they were teenagers – for the influence she had and the inspiration she gave them.

We all thank God for Joan, her life and being who she was, and I thank you – members of the Norley congregation – for your constant love and support in these past months.

John Bell

IN MEMORIAM

Robert Cooper Gleave

22 October 1932 – 10 August 2021



Robert was born at Yewtree Farm on 22nd October 1932. Robert was a farmer all his life following in his father's footsteps. Robert was a regular worshipper at Acton Methodist Chapel until it closed in 2019. He was one of its Stewards for most of his adult life.

Robert went to school at Miss Sutton's in West Road and then Sir John Deans. Robert was a keen rugby player and played at Winnington until a wrist injury stopped him. Robert was in the table tennis team for the Chapel and that was where he met Christine.

They were married in 1956 and went to live at Lady Heyes where Trevor was born in 1961. The following year, Robert's father died to Robert and family returned to the farm at Acton where Philip was born in 1964.

Robert was very keen on amateur dramatics and was a member at Acton for many years and then at Frodsham and Cuddington.

Robert was elected a member of the Parish Council and Acton Bridge Community Association for many years and also played Bowls and billiards.

Robert retired from farming in 1989 and then moved to the barn conversion then in 2000 downsized to the bungalow.

Robert was awarded as runner-up in the 2001 Mayor's award scheme for his work and commitment to Acton Bridge Community Association and to the Chapel. Robert was known as the man who would always help whenever asked.

Robert and Christine enjoyed the many family holidays that they spent in a caravan or log cabin. Later they went on several cruises and latterly an apartment in Porthmadog where Robert had to make several journeys on the Ffestiniog steam trains.

With the closure of the chapel at Acton Bridge, Robert and Christine transferred their membership to Norley Methodist Chapel where they were made very welcome and enjoyed the fellowship and made new friends.

IN MEMORIAM

Paul Barclay



Paul Barclay was born on 2nd October 1936 to Gilbert and Bessie at the hospital in Chester. Still in his infancy, the family moved to what was to become their lifelong home on School Lane. He was educated at Norley School, then at Kingsley Top School before moving to secondary school at Holly Bank in Chester which saw him commuting from Delamere to Chester every day.

He then proceeded to night school where he learned his trade as a joiner. Medical issues meant that Paul was not able to serve national service so he committed himself to the family business run by his father and Uncle Richard.

Joan had known Paul all their lives having first met at Sunday School and when G&R Barclay (which became G, R & P Barclay) would come to the farm to do works.

They were to marry in 1960; the beginning of a marriage which was to celebrate its Diamond Anniversary just last year in 2020, a marriage then of over 60 years. They spent their honeymoon in the Isle of Man, a favourite place of Paul's and together they delighted in the birth of Andrew in 1961 and Jeremy in 1965.

As a couple they followed in Paul's father's footsteps and became Sunday School teachers and shared in the varied programme of the Wesley Guild.

They shared together in the annual Sunday School trip to Rhyl on the first Saturday in June.

As the family grew, they enjoyed holidays together often returning to the same place at the St. Moritz in Llandudno, where, fortified by the excellent food they would enjoy pitch and putt and cricket.

Paul's roots in Scotland meant that they also grew in their love for their time spent in Castle Douglas in Dumfries and Galloway.

Paul loved motorbikes. He enjoyed riding, always remembering to remove his helmet on entering the family home so as not to scare Andrew but enjoyed biking and the incredible spectacle of the TT Races on the Isle of Man. (Now we know why the honeymoon was there).

The family business grew until at one point there were ten staff and Paul was known for his craftsmanship.

In his spare time he enjoyed (proper) crown green bowling, captaining the Norley Second Team and then latterly at Cuddington.

He enjoyed the speedway races at Oulton Park to which he travelled on his bike, snooker at the Crucible (except that is when slow players were playing).

He also enjoyed football and was devoted to following Manchester City. If Paul ever had frustrations in any other part of his life, it never showed, unless that it was all vented through his sharing in the varying fortunes of City and more locally, Northwich Victoria.

Paul and Joan spread their wings beyond North Wales and Scotland to enjoy holidays in Canada where they saw Niagara Falls, to Jersey and to Austria.

He even shared in the trip to the palace garden party some years ago.

Paul was a confirmed Liberal all his life and took an interest in not only his interests but those of others. He would stay up all night to watch the election specials.

Paul was committed to his faith expressed at chapel. What "Wisden" is to cricket, Paul was to chapel services. I am amazed and ever so slightly scared by his careful chronicling of hymn choices, attendances, and lengths of sermons.

Paul was a faithful Methodist, husband, dad, and Grandad and will be sorely missed by all those who knew him.

IN MEMORIAM

Kenneth Dunning



Tribute to Ken Dunning, delivered on October 22nd 2021, at his funeral and service of thanksgiving at the Vale Royal Crematorium chapel

It is an immense privilege for me to offer this tribute to Ken Dunning – one of the Methodist Church's uncrowned saints – and, in his honour this day I wear my Vice-Presidential cross.

The youngest child of a large family, Ken was born at Darnhall, Winsford, but they soon moved to Wharton; he attended Wharton Primary School and Over Council School before winning a scholarship to Verdin Grammar School, where he started on the day WW2 broke out in 1939. He worked in the Northwich Goods Station office of the Cheshire Lines Committee railway from leaving school until National Service called him into the Fleet Air Arm in 1946, first at Melksham, Wiltshire, then at Stretton near Warrington.

Deciding that the railway didn't pay enough, when he was demobbed in 1949 Ken joined ICI Winnington, following in his father's footsteps. He spent most of his 32 ICI years there in the logistics department, with a short spell at the end based in the Cunard Building in Liverpool, and after retiring, being called back to a role in Manchester for a final stint. He was still just 53 and voluntary opportunities beckoned in abundance.

Ken became a governor of Norley Primary School and was instrumental in securing the county's agreement to build the new village school in Hough Lane. He assisted Jean in delivering 'meals on wheels' in Frodsham. He served as a member of the county Valuations Tribunal, becoming Chairman and then Vice-President. This involved hearing appeals from householders and businesses against the imposed community charge and council tax: whether they won or lost, Ken would certainly give them a fair hearing and reach a balanced judgement.

He took up cross-stitch, a craft requiring both attention to the minutest detail and phenomenal patience, as the blank, unmarked canvas is gradually clothed with coloured threads and a fabulous picture unfolds. His output for 40 years was prodigious, as visitors to Byways well know from the beautiful pieces which adorn the walls.

But another pleasure lay in store when his mother-in-law, Mrs Hindley, soon came to live with Jean and Ken; she observed, 'Ken, what would you have done in your retirement if you hadn't had me to look after?' Ken's parents may not have been regular church-goers but they ensured that all their offspring attended the Methodist Sunday School from a very early age. Such grounding led Ken to an unwavering Christian faith which held fast for the next 90 years or so.

He became a local preacher 'On Note' in 1949 and following the period 'On Trial' and completion of the 3 exams (Old Testament, New Testament and Christian Doctrine), became fully accredited in 1951. He was one of Mr Wesley's preachers for 70 years in the circuits now known as North and Mid Cheshire, and though retiring from regular preaching in 1996, continued active participation in worship at Norley. He read the lesson just weeks before he died.

Ken led worship with great dignity; he regarded it as a privilege. He read the scriptures in rich baritone with understanding, expression and care. Always meticulously prepared, he shared the gospel and his faith with conviction and honesty. Congregations listened when Ken was in the pulpit or at the lectern. Many times, as I came years later to the same churches, people would enquire, 'you're from Norley aren't you – how is Ken Dunning?'

Methodist connections also led Jean and Ken to join the Northwich and District Festival Choir for many years and Ken served as its chairman. They shared the joys of choral singing and Ken was never without his tune book at services.

In the church, if Ken's first love was, by his own admission, preaching, he was not idle in other activities. He served as church steward, treasurer – keeping the most immaculate records in copperplate handwriting, church council secretary, welcome steward, circuit steward (twice, in different circuits, as Norley was shuffled from one to another), member of the District Policy Committee and Synod. Jean and Ken jointly served as manse stewards in the Chester and Stoke District, ensuring that circuits kept manses up to scratch – a role never entrusted to men alone!

In recent years Ken was a faithful and ever-present member of the Norley congregation, never missing a service, willing to offer constructive critique and encouragement to preachers in training and, as required, acting as the organist's reliable helper.

In the early 1950s, across a crowded Norley chapel, Ken's eyes fell upon the attractive teenager, Miss Jean Hindley, he in the pulpit and she in the choir. Love at first sight but how to tell her? With immense good fortune – these things are meant to be – he realised that she too worked at ICI Winnington, as a telephonist, and one day, in the corridor, having crafted a letter of introduction in his copperplate handwriting, slipped it to her – 'can we meet sometime?' Jean has the letter to this day.

Jean and Ken married in 1954 – they would have celebrated 67 years later this month – and made Norley their home. Ken was lucky to survive a serious motor-cycle accident not long after they were married and was off work for 8 months. In due course, Tim and Nicola became part of the family, and Ken became Grandad to their children, Daniel, Simon and Matthew and Great-Grandad to Archer. He enjoyed their company and was truly proud of them all, not least as the Dunning name continues uniquely through Ken's family line. Above all, Ken's devotion to Jean knew no bounds from that first romantic sighting to his last dying breath, peacefully at home, 70 years later.

Some of the information I have shared came from notes Ken himself prepared in 2007, which ended, 'I hope that Jean and I have many more happy years together': 14, as it turned out, during which, at different times, they circumnavigated the globe by air and cruise ship. If I may be permitted a personal touch, Jean, Ken, Joan and I contrived to have an evening dinner together in Auckland, New Zealand before they joined a ship, and we were there on holiday in February 2005: physically, we were just about as far from home as it is possible to be, but united in our mutual friendship.

This is the final bit which Ken, our father figure at Norley, was too modest to write himself. Always well-dressed – he didn't do scruffy - Ken was held in the highest esteem and commanded the greatest respect by all who had the privilege to meet and know him. He was not one to push himself forward, or throw his weight about, but ever willing to accept responsibility when asked. He offered wise counsel and exercised sound judgement in all things.

When he spoke in meetings, such as Church Councils, he often articulated what others were thinking but too scared to voice: those moments when the pattern on the carpet suddenly has a compelling fascination for most. Ken could be forthright in a kindly way when the circumstance demanded it; just ever so occasionally Jean would gently chide him with a tap on the knee and a single word, 'Love!'

In our early years in Cheshire, Ken was always my 'go to' man if I ever needed to know more about a particular person. I'd just had a slightly odd conversation with someone and duly consulted Ken: his memorable reply was, 'John, there's no point in knocking when there's nobody in'. Wisdom indeed which also revealed Ken's sense of humour. In the book of the Acts of the Apostles (11: 24), the writer says simply and profoundly of Barnabas when he came to Antioch, 'He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith'. Such was Ken Dunning. He radiated goodness and faith all his life – at his work, in the church and with his family and friends.

We shall all miss him, but we praise and thank God for the fullness of his long life and rejoice that he is now at peace.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

© John Bell: October 2021

Church Calendar

December 2021 – February 2022

Date	Time	Preacher	Activity
November			
30 th	2.00pm		Pastoral Meeting at Howell Croft
December			
1 st	10.30am		First Wednesday Walk. Contact lane706@btinternet.com
5 th	10.45am	John Bell	Advent 2
7 th	7.30pm		Church Leadership Team Meeting at Howell Croft
8 th	7.00pm	Ruth Lane	'Food for Thought' led by Ruth Lane
12 th	10.45am	Andrew Emison	Advent 3 Holy Communion
19 th	4.00pm	Andrew Emison	Advent 4 Carol Service
22 nd	6.00pm		Carols around the Christmas Tree until 7pm. If wet-in the church wearing masks
25 th	9.00am	Andrew Emison	Christmas Day – bring a gift you've received
January			
2 nd	10.45am	Philip Garner	
5 th	10.00am		First Wednesday Walk. Contact lane706@btinternet.com
9 th	10.45am	Andrew Emison	Covenant with Holy Communion
12 th	7.30pm		Local Preachers' Meeting on Zoom
16 th	10.45am	Dean Lawson	
19 th	7.00pm	Andrew Emison	'Food for Thought' led by Andrew Emison
23 rd	10.45am	Andrew Emison	
30 th	10.45am	Liz Holmes	
February			
1 st	10.00am		First Wednesday Walk. Contact lane706@btinternet.com
6 th	10.45am	Ken Martin	
13 th	10.45am	Andrew Emison	Holy Communion
16 th	7.00pm	Michael Gough	'Food for Thought' led by Michael Gough
20 th	10.45am	Charlotte Truman	
27 th	10.45am	Andrew Emison	
28 th	7.30pm		Circuit Safeguarding Officers Meeting