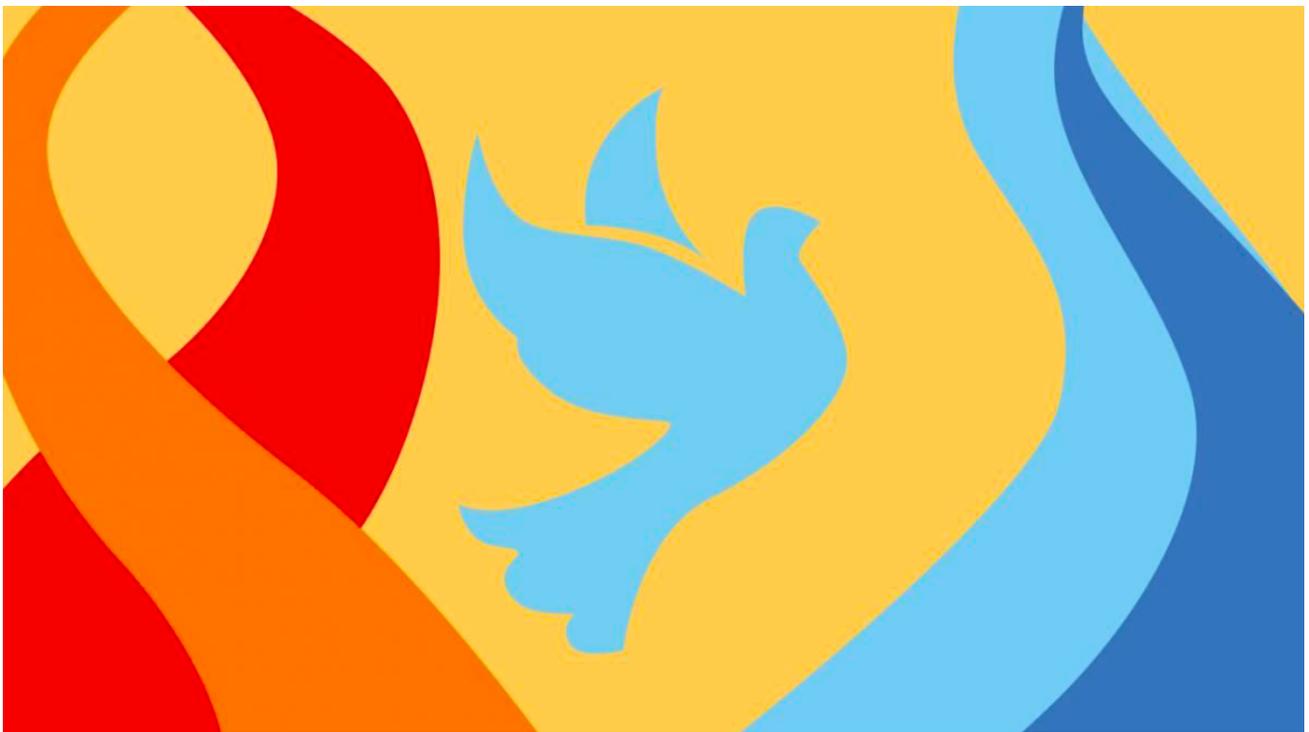


Con+ac+

**The Magazine
of South Essex
Methodist Circuit**

Pentecost & Summer Edition 2023



**Come, Holy Spirit,
Come!**

Come and discover the 'good news' that is happening
in these two families of faith and their local
communities.

Contact

Our Calling

The **Methodist** Church 

The Church exists for:

Worship: *to increase awareness of God's presence
and to celebrate God's love*

Learning and Caring: *to help people to learn and grow as Christians through
mutual support and care*

Service: *to be a good neighbour to people in need
and challenge injustice*

Evangelism: *to make more followers of Jesus Christ*

Priorities for the Methodist Church

In partnership with others wherever possible, the Methodist Church will concentrate its prayers, resources, imagination and commitments

- to proclaim and affirm its conviction of God's love in Christ, for us and for all the world.
- to renew confidence in God's presence and action in the world and in the Church.

As ways towards realising this priority, the Methodist Church will give particular attention to:

- underpinning everything we do with God-centred worship and prayer;
- supporting community development and action for justice, especially among the most deprived and poor - in Britain and worldwide;
- developing confidence in evangelism and in the capacity to speak of God and faith in ways that make sense to all involved;
 - encouraging fresh ways of being Church;
- nurturing a culture in the Church which is people-centred and flexible.

Contact

Mumblings from the Minister



St. Paul's Cathedral amidst the Whirlwind. Taken by the photographer Herbert Mason 77 years ago, 29 December 1940.
(Wikiimage via the Imperial War Museum and the Daily Mail)

THE dove descending breaks the air
With flame of incandescent terror
Of which the tongues declare
The one discharge from sin and error.
The only hope, or else despair
Lies in the choice of pyre or pyre –
To be redeemed from fire by fire.
Who then devised the torment? Love.
Love is the unfamiliar Name
Behind the hands that wove
The intolerable shirt of flame
Which human power cannot remove.
We only live, only suspire
Consumed by either fire or fire.

Contact

Sometimes when I'm looking for an inspiration on a topic I'm studying, I turn to the poets to see how they make sense of the subject. The words of the poets often make possible our seeing what otherwise could not be seen. Indeed, as someone has said 'Poetry is the struggle some make with language to stretch our speech [and we might add, imagination] and therefore ourselves, so that we might better say "this is how things are"'.

The poem at the start of this reflection comes near the end of T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. Eliot wrote the *Four Quartet* in the period from about 1936-1943. The later poems were particularly influenced by his experience of living through the bombing of London during the Second World War.

Many places in London were engulfed by smoke and flames at this time. You can see this with the above picture caption of St Paul's Cathedral and the surrounding area. Interestingly, the Cathedral itself was not destroyed by the bombing but much of the surrounding area in London was.

So T. S. Eliot as a poet lived through this period where his city was under attack, where every night people had to go into air-raid shelters, and where there was fire and destruction all around. And this is what the poem seeks to capture and portray.

What most readers of the *Quartet*, have often failed to notice, however, is that, T. S. Eliot is here taking his lived experience of London being bombed by planes –and in effect, casting fire on the city, and reinterpreting it in the light of the story of Pentecost in Acts 2. 'The dove descending breaks the air/With flame of incandescent terror . . .'

Luke's account of Pentecost tells us that

'When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance'.
(Acts 2:1-4)

For Eliot, read against the backdrop of the bombing of London and the experience of suffering and destruction, Pentecost is best understood as a **purgation** that can have a cleansing or transforming effect. And Eliot says,

Contact

this element of purgation, is yet another way in which Pentecost can now speak to us in a season of grief, destruction, war, far and pain.

So, says Eliot, far from being just a happy and celebratory event, even a pleasant experience, the coming of the Holy Spirit was also a terrifying event. Indeed, Acts 2 uses the language of violence: the coming of flame and violent wind filling the room where the disciples have gathered.

Purgation means 'cleansing', purging, purification, consecration, in the sense of making holy or wholeness. Or as the Oxford dictionary puts it to 'rid of unwanted or undesirable things.' In this sense, for T.S. Eliot, it includes riding the world of evils of war, violence, suffering and conflicts.

And we might understand our own purgation today as riding the world of sin, greed, violence, tension, fear, pain, unjust social structures, and war in Ukraine and elsewhere that lies heavily upon our world and the resulting effects of waves of despair and uncertainty.

But the dictionary definition also speaks of purgation as getting rid of 'unwanted or undesirable things.' Think back to during the COVID-19 lockdown experience – when we all had to stop – we learnt that we have filled our lives and creation with unwanted and undesirable things. That the things that mattered the most (to which we were denied) were relationships and closeness to our loved ones.

Today, I wonder, what might 'riding of unwanted or undesirable things' mean for you personally, right now. And then, collectively as a church, what might unwanted and undesirable things or undesirable use of resources mean for us now and going forward?

What about our world and society today? What needs purging and what counts as unwanted and undesirable things?

The imagery of fire in Luke's account of Pentecost can profoundly speak to us today. Charles Wesley speaks of 'holy fire' and this is how we must understand spiritual purgation. Pentecost fire is not a destructive fire, of the like that we have seen in recent times – whether to do with environmental destruction of the Amazon forest, the Australian bush fire, or of human catastrophes like the Grenfell Tower fire disaster.

Instead, Pentecost fire burns away all that is sin and death-dealing in our world. Pentecost is first and foremost, a time of consecration – of making

Contact

holy, and renewing. The Pentecostal fire burns away fear and the waves of despair we are experiencing and ultimately permit our renewal, holiness, love and hope. It is about beauty out of the ashes! Or as the hymn writer puts it, 'beauty from brokenness'.

Only then, says Luke, can we effectively participate in the Spirit's work of Christian witnessing. As the theologian Gene Rogers writes, the fire of Pentecost also performs in us the 'work of pointing and marking'. It is for this reason that 'fire becomes one of the chief hallmarks of the Spirit's witness, the witness to witness as it were'.

The fire of Pentecost does two things at once: it burns away chaffs and imparts radical grace and love. This is why T.S Eliot's poem finishes with love: 'Who then devised the torment? Love/Love is the unfamiliar Name/Behind the hands that wove/The intolerable shirt of flame/Which human power cannot remove'.

It is this holy love that creates us to be Christ's witnesses for the world. At Pentecost, the fire of the Spirit makes us witnesses to tell one person at a time the good news that, (to quote John Wesley), 'All need to be saved. All may be saved. All may know themselves saved. All may be saved to the uttermost.'

Rev Moses



Gracious God, you raised up John and Charles Wesley
to lead the people named Methodist within the Body of Christ;
their followers to be bridges of angels;
and countless others, who have burned with love.
Add us now to their number, so that in faith and holiness,
we may rejoice in your grace, repent of our wrong-turnings and
together find hope in your kingdom.

Contact

Stir up the gift of your Spirit in us and all your people:
may our inward ear be opened and a flame of sacred love burn
in our prayer and praise, our proclamation and our service, till all
receive the good news of your salvation.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The Revd Kenneth Howcroft,
President of the Methodist Conference, 2014/15**



At the Coronation weekend the nation was in the grip of the events of the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III and the beginning of his reign as our new monarch. As might be expected, the ceremony did not lack pageantry, symbolism, or a glittering display of opulence and power. Like many others I very much appreciated having the Coronation liturgy to hand which gave helpful background information.

For me the highlight was the succinct yet powerful message by Archbishop Justin, on the call to SERVE. As the Archbishop stated, *"The King of Kings, Jesus Christ, was anointed not to be served, but to serve... and creates the unchangeable law of good authority that with the privilege of power comes the duty to serve."*

With or without the privilege of power, we are all called to a life of service by virtue of our faith and discipleship. Jesus modelled the example of the Servant King who lays aside power and majesty to kneel and wash the feet of his disciples, and calls all who follow him to do likewise - not necessarily or exclusively foot-washing - but offering assistance and practical help in every possible way to one another and to our neighbour. A social media sound bite that caught my eye recently, defined 'neighbour' as *'not just a geographical*

Contact

location but a moral concept'. Service then becomes doubly binding for us as Christians.

Charity, it is said, begins at home as does Service. The life of our churches, for example, depends on the service of all. Those who do routine acts of faithful service daily, weekly, monthly – cleaning the building or grounds, getting things ready for a service or event, work with children, faithfully providing service week after week for years, often unnoticed and un-thanked. Irrespective of any position you might (or not) hold in other areas of life, this is what truly counts in the end. Doing something for another without thought of recognition or recompense but in a desire to be true to Jesus.

How about we make it an intentional habit to appreciate these 'hidden' acts of service as we do the more visible ones? I wonder whether such an attitude of appreciation would encourage more acts of service both within and outside of our church fellowship?

We stand at a time in the Church's calendar when we look ahead to the celebration of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit which had a massive, life-changing impact on the group of early believers. They were galvanized into lives of action and service which was powerful in bringing thousands of people to faith. Thousands of years later we continue to receive the benefits of that first outpouring of the Holy Spirit. There is a lot from their example we could incorporate into ours, not least to journey this time prayerfully in sincere anticipation that we may feel afresh the Holy Spirit at work in us to lead us too into lives of action and service.

Prayer

At Pentecost, promises old and new are fulfilled.
The ascended Jesus becomes the baptizer,
drenching his followers with his Spirit,
creating a new community where Father,
Son, and Holy Spirit make their home.
Revived and filled with the breath of God,
women and men, young and old,
dream dreams and see visions.

The Spirit renews our hearts
and moves us to faith,
leads us into truth,
and helps us to pray,

Contact

stands by us in our need,
and makes our obedience fresh and vibrant.
God the Spirit lavishes gifts on the church
in astonishing variety—
prophecy, encouragement, healing,
teaching, service, tongues, discernment—
equipping each member to build up the body of Christ
and to serve our neighbours.

And so we await your coming into our hearts, O Holy Spirit.

We remember before God King Charles and Queen Camilla praying that the Holy Spirit will inspire them into all compassion, wisdom and service for the well-being of all their subjects.

And we graciously bring before God, all known to us and to Him alone, who at this time are going through difficulties and challenges: sickness, bereavement, loss, relationship woes or problems of employment and financial need. May we He equip us to be the instruments of His compassion as we meet their needs through acts of love and service.

In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Rev Felicity

Good things come in small packages! St Paul's Prayer Breakfast.



Contact

In 1738, at a Moravian meeting house on Aldersgate Street, John Wesley experienced his evangelical conversion, when he discovered he did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation. That evening was to change Wesley and much of England with him. It was known as The Evangelical Revival.

Travelling widely and preaching outdoors Wesley left behind committed people he formed into Societies. These *eventually* gave birth to the **Methodist Class Meeting**. Small groups of Christians, meeting weekly using Wesley's 4 principles based on the New Testament. They were, personal growth within an intimate fellowship; accountability for spiritual stewardship; bearing one another's burden and speaking the truth in love as they disciplined one another.

It's a sad fact, whilst some in the secular and commercial world were discovering the benefits of people meeting in smaller groups, British Methodism was generally discarding them whilst Cell UK (now Network Church, Harpenden) was to breathe new life into Wesley's innovation.

Prayer Breakfast isn't referred to as a Class Meeting but in many respects, it functions as one. The group meets weekly, first in the local cafe for chat, drinks and food, and then an hour later at St Paul's. Bucking a trend, the group is numerically larger than it was when it began in 2006/7; is always 25% of the membership and often rather more. An indication of how many believe prayer is foundational to the life of the Church. It's a safe place to talk and pray about faith and how we live the Scriptures; of our personal and corporate faith journeys whilst actively concerned for issues of social justice at home and abroad; often thinking and praying for where God is leading us, going forward. But importantly, as a group we've seen, shared and experienced answered prayer. It's this that's a source of encouragement and hope as we continue to journey together.

Rev Allen

The word "hello." is written in a vibrant, multi-colored cursive font. The letters are connected and flow together. The colors transition from teal on the left, through yellow, orange, red, and purple, to blue on the right. The word ends with a period.



Introducing Hannah Harris, Our New(ish) Circuit Administrator

I'm Hannah, the new circuit administrator for the South Essex Circuit. I thought this might be a good way to introduce myself to those of you I haven't met yet!

I live with my husband Tom and 3 children George (8), Joshua (6) and Betsy (1) in Canewdon, Essex. We moved to Suffolk over lockdown but quickly realised the importance of being near to family and moved back to Essex a year or so later. I am a qualified primary school teacher and have been a private tutor for the last 6 years. I worship at Rochford Methodist Church, where I have gone since I was a child.

In August 2022, my darling daughter Betsy was diagnosed with a cancerous growth near her spine after she stopped using her legs one day. In the absolute depths of despair, we turned to God and started to pray. Everyone else I know prayed too.

There were so many moments throughout this whole period when it was so clear to me that God was with us. Some were very obvious- the fact that the tumour was caught and hadn't spread, the fact she had 'favourable genetics'; dreams; a rainbow at just the right moment; money appearing in my husband's account the day after we were worried about how we would afford the very expensive London accommodation; a letter in the post I wasn't expecting entitled 'God of the Impossible'.

Others were more subtle, and I realise them with hindsight- timing, the doctor that told us to get her legs checked just in case, the fact we were in the middle of moving back to be near family, and a very well timed job with the Methodist church that interviewed the day my maternity leave ran out!

It was as if He was saying again and again, 'I'm here, just listen to me!'

I feel so blessed and grateful that our prayers have been answered- Betsy is thriving, she is now almost walking and we have been told she will make a full recovery. Miracles do happen and I intend to bring my children up to know precisely what God has done, and continues to do for us.

Contact

I've really enjoyed working here so far and have appreciated how helpful and welcoming everyone has been. I'm looking forward to meeting more of you soon.

Hannah

Introducing Student Presbyterian Steve Mayo



I was born into a Salvation Army family at that time living in Bournemouth in Dorset, and this remained my denomination for some 48 years, of which the last 16 years was spent as an ordained Salvation Army Officer (minister). I led churches in both South Wales and London during that time.

Before becoming a Salvation Army Officer, I completed a 4-year apprenticeship in mechanical and production engineering, becoming a fully skilled manual miller, which involved machining parts for

aeroplanes/helicopter/oil rigs etc.

In 2017, I came into the Methodist Church as a lay Pastor/Preacher and have had pastoral responsibility for a number of churches in the Southend and Leigh circuit.

In 2018, I strongly felt God calling me into presbyterial ministry and I started the candidating process. I am now a 2nd Year student presbyter studying part-time at the Queen's Foundation College. The South Essex Circuit is my 'link' circuit which I attend as part of my formation and training.

My wife Dani and I, have been married for 31 years and we have 3 daughters, Shannon (27), Megan (25) and Ellie (20).

I enjoy brass bands and have played a brass instrument since I was 7 years old. I currently play in Southend Band on bass trombone.

We rescue caged hens and enjoy watching them enjoy their retirement!

Steve

Contact



Testimony

Ahead of us, golden leaves floated,
As doves, gently fluttering,
Glittering and dazzling upon the eye,
As the soft honeyed autumn breeze brushed by,
They flew, as her words floated out,
A song of sunlight before the approaching dark,
A song that poured forth from her soul,
A sparkling shower in the flickering light,
Rich beyond any human measure.

Beneath her cloddy earth-bound words,
Beneath, shining out,
Her song of pure joy, love and delight,
A strong, deep, timeless song,
Burst out from her inner self,
Exploding into the dark fringed wooded mass
Encamped around,
Ringing clear and pure, despite her fears,
That yes, God remains a mystery,
Elusive and separate some may think,
But somewhere out there -
The angels' song resounds, repeats,
Floats, unheard, unseen,
Except, in moments like this we hear their cries,
Their promise,
"That God *is*, that God is *here*".

Rachel K Gallehawk

Contact

Be Still, My Soul

Something holy happened today
To one not religious in a particular way;
To one more accustomed to bustling streets
 than to airy buildings with unfilled seats.
To one who reveres the hallowed place,
*(Being sceptical still of the pious face
Of the orthodox believer from the singing throngs
 and of quirkish dogma that fuels the songs
 in glorification of sectarian divide;
Of those grimly certain that God's on their side.)*

To one who possesses no such certitude
Remains yet the essence of the doctrines thus eschewed;
A glimpse of that not temporal, of that yet undefined,
A fusion of the spirit with the boundaries of the mind.

To this self-confessed agnostic it came hauntingly today,
From the fingers of the organist as she began to play.
Across the transept, down the nave,
 through time immemorial: womb to grave.

The boy sopranos, clear and shrill
 had begun to sing and the world stood still.
Shafts of sunlight, intensely yellow
Caught the faces of the voices deep and mellow –
 the baritones, at first almost mute,
But suddenly riper, as autumnal fruit.

"Finlandia", full-throated, now echoed all around,
As long-forgotten yearning clutched at strange, familiar
 sound.

Between stained glass and marble the joyous music swirled
And a hymn for non-believers lit a flame for all the world.

Dave Quinney

Contact

On Silver Wings

A torrent of foaming white
Singing a secret song of life
Water, that gushes, and plunges
Into a pool of green stilled depths.

In this rushing river of sound and light
Lies a stone as smooth as silk
Constant, where rings ripple out
Ever-increasing; ever decreasing
Reaching out, changing lives.

The winged messenger darts ahead
On wings, so fleet, so soft a sound
A silvery shimmer, a flash of colour high above
Like willow trees we bend with the breeze
As time runs like water through our roots
We will fade away, and yet
Our spirits will soar, soar
So swift, so fleet
On silver wings above.

Rachel Gallehawk



Borders and Belonging: The Book of Ruth for Brexit, Migrants, Ireland and the rest of us.

Since the beginning of Lent a group of us having been meeting fortnightly, on Monday nights, to read a theological book. I'm a great a believer in loving God with our 'mind' as well as with our 'heart' and 'soul'. We all need to "keep on feeding the well" within us if we're going to continue growing and equipping ourselves for what living and acting rightly and faithfully means.

Contact

The book we've been reading is "BORDERS AND BELONGING – THE BOOK OF RUTH: A STORY FOR OUR TIMES" by Pádraig Ó Tuama and Glenn Jordan. This has had us looking again at the Old Testament Book of Ruth through the eyes of these two men who have been at the forefront of reconciliation through the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland and who have been deeply troubled by renewed tensions following Brexit, not to mention the growth of barrier-building here and across the world to keep others out.

Ruth is a star of the Old Testament. A woman of outstanding virtue who, instead of taking the easy path of going back to her own family when she is widowed, sticks with her mother-in-law Naomi through thick and thin. But, unlike Naomi, Ruth isn't a Jew. Worse – much worse - she is a Moabite. And, mainly because of historic prejudices, long memories, and notions of national self preservation, the Moabites are hated by the Jews. To deal with them, help them, respect them or promote their welfare was a no-no. They're never seen as individuals, but lumped together as an unwelcome race of outsiders.

Moabites, Syrians, Afghans, Iranians, Bulgarians, Latvians, Mexicans, Nigerians – the sorts of people we don't want over here, do we? Brexiteers and remainers shout each other down. Ireland – north and south - are suspicious of each other and of Britain. Political discourse, leadership and action in the UK and across the world seem to be marked by rancour, division scapegoating and a lack of humanity and morality. So, we build walls, barriers, send out patrol boats and make it as difficult as possible so as to dissuade people from even thinking about it. Even within our own country, intolerance now seems to be the norm and empathy for those who are different, or think differently, or vote differently becomes impossible. Dialogue with them can seem dangerous. Our better selves are pummelled into insensibility and our better nation loses its way. But, as in the days of Naomi and Ruth, people are desperate, and cross borders looking for food, looking to escape torment, looking for hope, looking for a future.

And into this impossible situation comes Ruth, a Moabite from Moab, as the Bible refers to her, reminding us that she is doubly cursed. What can *she* do? And what can she reveal to us about how *we* might, just possibly, find a different way forward from the diatribe of hatred and fear. And, against all the odds, she succeeds. She not only succeeds in her day to make a new life for herself and Naomi and to become a woman renowned for her loyalty, fortitude and integrity, but she becomes, despite being a Moabite from Moab, one of the direct ancestors of the Messiah, the Christ.

Contact

How did she do it? How might *we* do it? Well: *read the book* – preferably with others (I was going to say you're welcome to join us, although we're half-way through the book! But you are welcome, all the same – get in touch with me!). It's short, pithy, wonderfully written, fed by great Biblical insight and background, and packed with theology and reflection that come out of the real world and lived experience. There are excellent discussion questions and prayers for each of the 8 chapters to help you. I think this is a book for our times and is essential reading, I would say! The change in the rhetoric and action has to begin somewhere. So why not with us?

*"Borders and Belonging – The Book Of Ruth: A Story For Our Times",
Pádraig O'Tuama and Glenn Jordan, Canterbury Press, 2021.*

Rev Moses

Bible Month 2023 – The Book of Revelation



Bible Month is an annual campaign that celebrates scripture by inviting the whole Methodist Connexion to *feast* on one particular book of the Bible together.

Through a menu of carefully curated resources, training and learning opportunities, churches and circuits are encouraged to taste and see the goodness of an individual text; enjoying some of its unique flavours, considering its origins, appreciating its place alongside the rest of scripture, and savouring the unique contribution it might make to our faithful living and learning today.

Con+fac+

Typically, churches engage with Bible Month during **June** and many of the resources and training opportunities are timed accordingly. It is possible, however, for churches to choose a different month in the year in which to engage with the materials if that works better for their local calendars and needs.

The Bible Month book this year focuses on *30 days with the book of Revelation*. This is the latest toolkit in the Bible Month series and one that will guide you and your church into a deeper understanding of a complicated, apocalyptic book with its wild imagery and promise of salvation. It's a great place to start your Bible study of Revelation. This can be a resource for a group Bible Study or a preaching series for your church during the summer month.

Bible Month resources are produced as a partnership between The Methodist Church (methodist.org.uk) and LWPT (Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust lwpt.org.uk). You can find out more here:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/the-bible/bible-month/>

I was recently asked by Forging Men (a Christian group in Billericay which seeks to reach out to un-church men) to recommend a speaker for their summer meeting) and the speaker that immediately came to mind was my spiritual director and close friend, Rev Dr Cannon Alan Hargrave. Alan is profoundly thoughtful speaker and knowledgeable on the topic of grief and spirituality (check out some of his books on Amazon). Although Forging Men's meetings are for 'men', on this occasion all are welcome, men as well as women. Alan is also preaching at **Western Road** on the morning worship on **23rd July 2023, 10:30 a.m.**



FORGING MEN

Doing it badly:
MEN & GRIEF



Alan Hargrave

Monday 24th July 2023 - 8pm
St Mary Magdalen, High St., Billericay CM12 9BA

Alan Hargrave was born in 1950, in a terraced house in the middle of Leeds. He studied Chemical and Biological Engineering before working for ten years with the Anglican Church in South America - first in economic development with indigenous people in northern Argentina, then planting churches in Bolivia. He returned to the UK in 1987 to train for ordained ministry. In 1993 he became the first vicar of Holy Cross, a church plant on a council estate on the edge of Cambridge. In 2004 he was appointed 'Canon Missioner' of Ely Cathedral. He retired in 2016 and now lives in Nottingham, near his family. Alan's books include: 'An Almighty Passion', which illustrates the great doctrines of God with stories from ordinary life, 'Living Well: finding a rule of life to revitalise and sustain us' and 'One for Sorrow', a brutally honest account of how he, as a vicar, coped (or often failed to cope) with the tragic death of his son, Tom, from cancer. Alan is passionate about mission, justice, equality, community, laughter, sacred space, rule of life, cricket, golf, pottery, narrowboats, his children and grandchildren, his wife, Annie, and, of course, the Almighty.

Free entry - refreshments available
sign up for our regular emails here: bit.ly/forgingmen

'Forging Men' is a group for men in the Billericay area - open to all for friendship & discussion. We usually meet on the last Monday each month.

   @ForgingMen

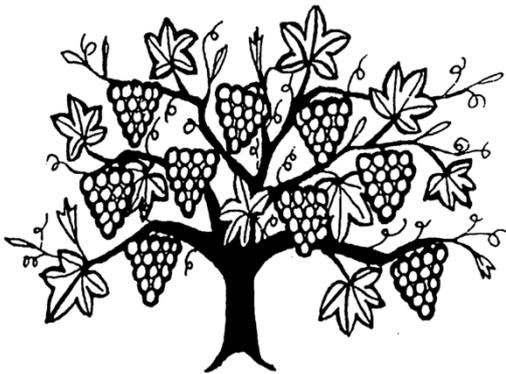

CHRISTIAN VISION FOR MEN
A CVM MEN'S GROUP

Contact



For more information see
<https://onebeautifulworldfestival.blogspot.com/>

Christ Church, Wickford, took part in the Wickford Arts Festival recently. We hosted a concert with Yardarm Folk Orchestra which was very well attended and was a great evening of entertainment. The money we raised from the evening went to support Christian Aid.



Life On the Vine: Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit in Christian Community

Saturday 22nd July 10:00 – 16:00 pm we shall be hosting a day at Home retreat at

Queens Park. The focus of the day on our theme of the year based on Galatians 5:22-25. In John 15: 16 we are told to bear fruit in our lives as Christian and for the kingdom.

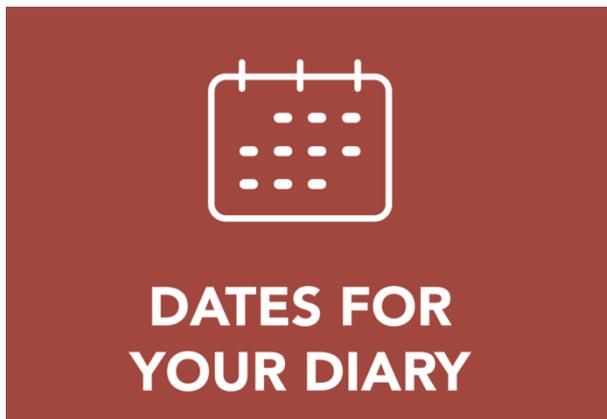
What does it mean for us to be fruit-bearing Christians? How are you bearing fruit for Jesus this year? For John, to bear fruit means close communion with the Father through Jesus and then sharing in Jesus's work of giving life to others.

Contact

Paul in Galatians 5:22-23, a passage known as the 'fruit of the Spirit', helps us further on this. He identifies fruit-bearing as cultivating virtues – such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control'. These virtues, Paul tells us, are not religious codes or moralistic lists of "do's" and "don'ts". Instead, they are a product of living a life inspired by God's Spirit. That is, it is the Holy Spirit within who forms us in godly virtues.

We shall be exploring each of the fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23 and what each of them means for spiritual, mission and discipleship. Come and join us, if you can.

Rev Moses



Circuit Meeting

Wednesday 20th September,
at 7:30 pm. Venue is TBC

Circuit Local Preacher and Worship Leaders' Meeting

Tuesday, 27 June, 7:30 pm, at
Langdon Hills

The Pure Celestial Fire

Finally, to return to the theme of Pentecost fire at the start of the magazine. Charles Wesley's hymn, 'O thou who camest from above' is my favourite hymn. Indeed, it was the hymn I choose to reflect upon at my pre-ordination testimony service few years ago. It is unusual for a Wesley hymn, in that, it carries one image, that of the fire burning on the alter, all the way through. The hymn expresses a deep passion, for me at least, for personal holiness (consecration) and social holiness – and desire always to work and speak and think for God.

My preferred tune to it is the more meditative tune of 'Hereford' instead of the jollier tune of 'Wilton'. Here are the words for you to meditate and pray.

Contact

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)

Contact

ST ANDREWS METHODIST CHURCH HERONGATE



For all that has been – thanks. For all that is to come – yes.
(Dag Hammerskjold)

Service of Thanksgiving

**For the life and witness for the past 44
years of St Andrews.**

Saturday 24th June 2023 at 12:00 pm

Brentwood Road, Herongate, CM13 3PN.

The service will be followed by a barbecue.

With sadness it was decided on 8th February 2023 at Church Council meeting that worship services would cease at Herongate. We are now a very small company, and each member will now continue his or her Christian journey within the larger fellowship at Billericay Methodist Church either at Western Road or Queens Park.

However, we believe we have much to celebrate and thank God for as we look back through the years of our church's life. We are trying to contact the many people who would like to attend a Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration. Please pass the word around your own contacts who have good memories and would like to attend the service. *Revd Moses Agyam.*

Contact

A big thank you to all those who have contributed to this Pentecost and Summer edition. However, it would be great to have more contributions from churches and individual so that there are less contributions from me! The next edition of Contact will be out in time for Harvest. So put your thinking caps on for suitable seasonal articles and stories and send them to the usual address.

moses.agyam@methodist.org.uk

