



LINK



STONELEIGH METHODIST CHURCH

Minister: Revd. Emma Cusack Fd.A; DipHE

August/September 2020



Gopal



Lesley's 'Memories of Cambridgeshire (see inside)



Catherine's son Patrick and Grandson Timothy, with jumper knitted by Catherine!

And Catherine was monitoring a bird's nest for several weeks. She writes: "They have now fledged. I got too close to them and all five of them shot out of the nest. I quickly found 3 and put them back, but later that day none were around. I gather that when they fledge the parents continue feeding them for about 3 weeks. I hope they did, I feel very guilty."

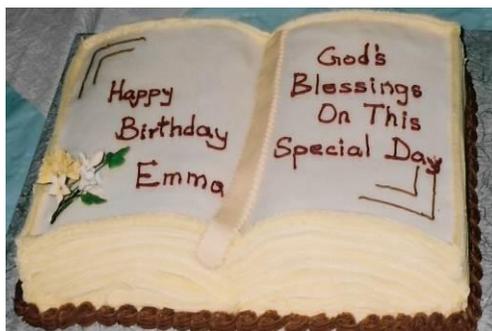


Dear friends,

For the first time, like many other events during lockdown, the Methodist Conference happened over Zoom from June 25th – 2nd July. This year, all probationer ministers were received into full connexion on Saturday 26th June and, for the first time, every individual had to connect from their homes to respond to make their responses, and to hear the resounding affirmation “They are Worthy”.

That moment struck me and caused me to reflect more on how the pandemic has changed so much in relation to our lives. Fifteen years ago, on the same date was my ordination which was on my birthday and remembering how the whole week leading up to it was special. It was three days after a major surgery and I had to be cushioned with pillows and driven from Richmond to Lea Abbey for the ordinands’ retreat and then to Torquay for the reception into full connexion and ordination in Teignmouth in the afternoon.

There were delegates from each of the churches in the circuit and they all travelled in a minibus (30 in total). The circuit booked a restaurant, brought a cake which was an opened bible – half with birthday wishes and the other half with ordination wishes and paid for everyone – a three course meal. Very Special Memory indeed.



The pandemic has been out of our control and caused many plans to be abandoned.

What I am trying to put across is that this situation has enabled me to be more appreciative of God's blessing. You may be reflecting the same – how we used to do things and what we cannot do anymore but being assured of Jesus' strong presence with us always. I find the words of the following hymn reassuring and I hope as we prepare to reopen our churches in spite of all the challenges we face – Be strong and know that He Is Lord!

*Father I place into your hands, the things I cannot do
Father I place into your hands the things that I've been through
Father I place into your hands the way that I should go
For I know I always can trust you*

*Father I place into your hands my friends and family
Father I place into your hands the things that trouble me
Father I place into your hands the person I would be
For I know I always can trust you*

*Father we love to see your face, we love to hear your voice
Father we love to sing your praise, and in your name rejoice
Father we love to walk with you and in your presence rest
For we know we always can trust you.*

Jenny Hewer ©1975 Thankyou Music, CCL 19650

Every blessing,
Emma

An Update from Whitechapel Mission

Whitechapel Mission has continued to operate throughout the Covid-19 crisis and greatly appreciates the support and prayers it receives from friends across the District.



These difficult times have brought some significant challenges but also provided blessings and opportunities we couldn't have imagined.

The pandemic has required substantial changes to the way the Mission operates. Volunteer groups who routinely worked in the kitchen and in clothing exchange have not been available since before the national lockdown - and social distancing requirements have meant we have had to adapt the way we work. But Tony, Sue and a small team of Centre staff – (Michelle, Ramesh, Charley, Gary and Lukasz) supported by a few individual volunteers - particularly Tony and Sue's daughter, Jess, and Deacon Terry, have worked with immense dedication and commitment - keeping the Mission open to serve the needs of guests throughout the lockdown.



A takeaway service (full English breakfast and a lunch pack) has been provided for up to 400 guests each morning. The Government initiative to provide hotel rooms for the homeless

during lockdown has made an impact on the numbers sleeping rough on the streets but the Mission has seen an increase in guests (both men and women) struggling to cope with the economic impact of lockdown and in need of food.

We have not been able to provide showers and life skills support during the last two months but staying open to provide a basic food service has been vitally important and is making a real difference supporting many desperate and hungry folk in our community.

The Whitechapel team have worked together with an amazing camaraderie and selfless devotion to serving the needs of our guests which reflects the Methodist commitment to practical Christianity and is truly humbling. Although the crisis initially created concerns about income for the Mission, we have been blessed to continue to receive donations from individuals and corporate organisations which allow our work to continue. We hope and pray that the initiative to provide shelter for rough sleepers will continue beyond the Covid crisis and have a lasting impact on homelessness - but it is clear that even if this happens there will continue to be a need for our work to support those destitute, hungry, lonely and in need in East London. As more of our staff team come back to work over the coming weeks we will be thinking about how best to develop the services we offer to fulfil our mission to serve Christ in the world – reaching out to those in need in our neighbourhood.



Thank you again for all your prayers and support.

Michael Spurr
Chair Whitechapel Mission Trustees.

Heaven

What will it really be like? Will it really be like one of John's visions in Revelation?

Some of us have been skimming through Revelation (much too difficult to study) and one of those ice-breaking, ancillary questions was

'What was the most memorable concert you've been to?'

This question caught my imagination, and so I've been asking several people what memories they had, and it's been such fun. Pat has written her bit, but most people I had to question closely. Marion remembered going to see Cliff Richard – she

was given tickets for seats really close to the stage, and it was brilliant. Jeananne went to the same series of concerts with Geetha, and could only see pin-sized people! Lesley doesn't go to concerts much, but she did remember going to see Status Quo, before they really got



going, at the Toby Jug, now demolished, on the Tolworth roundabout. It was a stonkingly good event. Jeananne remembered the great time she had at a worship event at Guildford Cathedral, as there was a large crowd of people all enjoying the worship together; that reminded me of the amazing worship at Easter People.

Graham said the best concert he'd ever been to was Paul Simon – it was a very good production,



whereas the particular Sting concert he saw was just a lot of songs being played with no feeling or emotion. Graham's friend said the worst experience he had was when we talked him into escorting a group of teenage girls to see Britney Spears.

Tom says he's usually uplifted by the music, unexpectedly if it's a new piece to him, and meeting up with friends makes it even more enjoyable.

Pat's memories of concerts

Without wishing to bore everyone with all the concerts I have enjoyed I have chosen two very different occasions - both Colin and I love live performances.

One I remember vividly was the first 'pop' concert I ever attended to see The Beatles at Tooting Broadway. I went with a schoolfriend and, as you can imagine, it was seething with hundreds of screaming schoolgirls all standing on the seats, which meant that no-one could see and you certainly couldn't hear anything either! . As it was the first of such events I had been allowed to go to, I was astounded by the volume of sound and decided that it wasn't worth paying all that money as I couldn't hear The Beatles or any of the other acts either. It was certainly an experience.



The other concert that remains forever in my memory was a totally different experience at the Royal Albert Hall, when my brother was singing with the Combined Welsh Male Voice Choirs at their biennial Festival. My sister in law had booked a box for the whole family and we enjoyed canapes and bubbly before the performance and shared a family meal afterwards. Fortunately, as my brother sings bass he was very close to the box we were in, so we were able to be very involved with the music. My brother had to learn Welsh as many of the pieces were sung completely in Welsh, though whether he understood all the words I am not too sure! It was a wonderful evening.

Pat

(Vivienne continues:)

The result of my research is that' whereas I have not been particularly uplifted by the vision of Heaven and worship in the Bible, now, when I think of a gathering, friends and family around us, crowds of other people around them, all singing (or listening), all joining in or being quiet, all focussed on the Glory of God, all of them hearing their own favourite music (because it's heaven and anything is possible) – this becomes a fantastic vision of heaven.



Thanks for all your input. Sorry I couldn't speak to everyone.

Vivienne

Memories of Cambridgeshire.

Last year we spent a lovely week in Cambridgeshire. We were blessed with great weather and apart from a short visit to Cambridge itself we spent all our time out in the wetlands and waterways.

During one such day we were sitting in a hide watching the water birds and enjoying the peace and quiet when we realised there was a nest of swallows just above us and the parents, unperturbed by visitors, were swooping in and out of the narrow openings to bring food to their young.

Many pictures were taken. As we continued our travels, I was struck by the beautiful hedgerow berries and hips all glistening in the sunshine - more photos. Returning home, I decided to try and create a picture to remind me of this wonderful week away from the stresses of life and here is the picture I painted. Now the freedom to just go where you please is a distant memory, and going away still seems a bit too risky, it's nice to have my picture (and photos) and the promise of good times to come.



Lesley

Quality Time with our Teenage Grandson

A weekend in Berlin

by Gopal and Geetha

Photos on back inside cover. Thanks to Gopal for the striking front cover photo

One of the saddest aspects of life under lockdown has been 'distancing' from our grandchildren whom we have not seen, let alone hugged, for many weeks. This is why last year's trip with our eldest, Tarrin, (16 years old at the time) is especially memorable. He had just completed his GCSE exams and we offered to take him away, without his parents or brothers, to a place of his choice. He chose to go to Berlin. (We later learnt that he had a German girlfriend!)



But we almost didn't make it! We are well-seasoned air travellers and normally plan things properly. However, we had a dreadful senior moment when we did not allow sufficient time (put down to arithmetical error!) to drive to Gatwick Airport and pass through the Departure checks. We were already formulating Plan B when we parked the car just 20 minutes before the flight was due to leave. Thankfully the flight was delayed, and the gate was still open. So, we were on our way.

We did most of the main sights using the hop-on, hop-off tourist bus. But this article is not meant to be a comprehensive guide to Berlin - just a taster. More interestingly we should like to share Tarrin's reactions to some of the places that we visited. Our first concern was whether he could tear himself away from his Smart phone and actually talk to us. Yes, to both - he did, with one exception; he used his phone to prioritise our way around the zoo. This has one of the largest collections of zoological and animal species in the world and clearly there wasn't time to see everything.



One of the first things Tarrin told us was that he had studied Historical Civilisation for GCSE. He lacks knowledge of recent history and this was evident from some of the questions he asked us. - “What was the Cold War?”, “Why was the Berlin Wall built when Russia was on the same side as us during WW2?” He was fascinated by the answers which, in effect, represented a ‘live’ history lesson.

Our first stop was for a coffee in a café overlooking the Brandenburg Gate, one of the city’s most iconic sights, but also a sad symbol of the division of Berlin and the rest of Germany.

It formed part of the Berlin Wall.

This was built in 1961 by communist East Germany, and guarded by thousands of border control troops, to prevent its citizens from fleeing to the democratic West. The West



Berlin side of the wall had artwork completely covering the wall, while the East Berlin side was blank because people were not allowed to get close enough to paint anything. Almost all the wall was removed in 1989 and it now only

exists in places.

Tarrin was disturbed by the way in which families were physically separated from their loved ones for many years and also by the way in which so many escapees met tragic deaths while passing through the ‘no man’s land’ between East and West.

We visited the museum at Checkpoint Charlie which was one of the busiest official border crossing points. On display were



many more examples of living history. Tarrin was particularly amused that US President Kennedy, in his "Ich bin ein Berliner" Cold War solidarity message had mistakenly called himself a jelly doughnut by including "ein" before *Berliner*! We also saw the impressive Victory Column with Victoria, the Goddess of Victory, in the centre of the Tiergarten. This commemorates the Prussian victory in the Danish Prussian War in 1864.

We grandparents traded a visit to the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in return for visit to a trendy coffee bar recommended by Tarrin's girlfriend. The deal was that we did both. The Church was severely damaged in a bombing raid in 1943. In December 2007, a former British pilot who carried out World War II bombing raids over Germany, joined a campaign to rescue the Church from decay. It has been rebuilt but the damaged spire of the old church has been retained. The ground floor has been made into a memorial hall inside of which there is a cross made from nails recovered from the roof timbers of Coventry Cathedral which had been severely damaged in a German air raid on 14 November 1940.



In conclusion our trip was intended to be fun time with our grandson; it was much more than that. We shared time, thoughts, and some good restaurant meals together (the Germans eat well!). I, Gopal, didn't know my grandparents in

India while growing up in Stoneleigh so this is why this weekend away, which so nearly didn't happen, was such a special experience.

PS: GCSE Result: Ancient History A*; Modern History – still much to learn!

Sovereign God,
You are our light and our salvation,
to you be glory and praise for ever.
We thank you for the Cross and the wonder of Christ's
love for us: he is the light of the world.
Anoint us with your Spirit as you call us into your
marvellous light.
May our lives bear witness to your truth and our lips
proclaim your praise.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.
Steven Wild, Cornwall District Chair.



Our congratulations to Helen on her successful house move – she found a marvellous team of people who did everything for her, while she had a great day out!

Moving House

Well, I'm in my new home!

What a hot day it was. I was lucky. Jo very kindly offered to take me "away from it all" and took me to Wisley for the day.

We had a lovely day out, stayed in the shade, appreciating the cool breeze. We got to Swallow House as arranged at around 4:30pm to find that Mark and his team were still carrying furniture into the flat. They had not been allowed access until 2:00pm. I ran away to my son's place until about 6.30 when I was told it was "safe" to try again.

It was so lovely - my support bubble came with me and we were able to sit in my garden, then went on to order takeaway pizzas to soak up the champagne bubbles! My granddaughter stayed over, and we had breakfast in the garden. Met several neighbours too whilst eating our cereal.

There's quite a muddle to sort out. Quart into a pint pot springs to mind! One of the team was here for the afternoon Thursday and two will be back on Monday for another three hours. Hopefully I will have Wi-Fi up and running by then and I will have a landline working too.

18 days in!

Had to get a new TV and change broadband suppliers – all very challenging. It is really exercising the poor old brain. There's a load of new equipment - including a dishwasher - and I'm still getting used to the drying facility of the washing machine. The microwave is much more powerful than I am used to, so the veg are slightly overcooked and my Ovaltine milk overboiled (but only once!) and – Yes, I am still an Ovalteeny!

My family are being very supportive and dealing with quite a few necessary bits and pieces and explaining "how to" repeatedly to many of my queries

I am blessed with very helpful and kind neighbours who are happy to give me advice and information and help.

There is still a lot of sorting to do but I feel I am settling in and making this flat into a haven of content. I do feel I am blessed to have finally got here.

So glad to be able to join in the Zoom services, prayer group and the Fellowship rendezvous. It does help to keep in touch See you in Church, hopefully fairly soon.

Love and Blessings, *Helen*

Congratulations to one of our old members – Stan Shepherd – who has recently celebrated his 100th birthday.



Jo Barker's comment on social distancing

Tribute to our nurses

I'll tell you a tale, that's been recently written.
Of a powerful army, so Great it saved Britain.

They didn't have bombs and they didn't have planes.
They fought with their hearts and they fought with their brains.

They didn't have bullets, armed just with a mask.
We sent them to war, with one simple task.

To show us the way, to lead and inspire us.
To protect us from harm and fight off the virus.

It couldn't be stopped by our bullet proof vests.
An invisible enemy, invaded our chests.

So we called on our weapon, our soldiers in Blue.
"All Doctors, All Nurses, Your Country needs you".

We clapped on our streets, hearts bursting with pride.
As they went off to war, while we stayed inside.

They struggled at first, as they searched for supplies.
But they stared down the virus, in the whites of its eyes.

They leaped from the trenches and didn't think twice.
Some never came back, the ultimate price.

So tired, so weary, yet still they fought on.
As the virus was beaten and the battle was won.

The many of us, owe so much, to so few.
The brave and the bold, our heroes in Blue.

So let's line the streets and remember our debt.
We love you, our heroes,
Lest we forget.

Matt Kelly 2020

submitted by Pat Petley

What's going on – Opportunities to worship together:

At this time Stoneleigh are producing a service on paper each week, produced by various local preachers. Richard normally records his service and puts it on YouTube:



the link for which would be on the News/Service sheet.

Alternatively, if you have Facebook, you can follow Paul Timmis and Steph at Worcester Park, or there are many other services available.



Colin and Pat join with their church in Ireland. Vivienne and Graham usually visit Vivienne's sister's church in Chipstow, or Philippa's church in Leeds. Some of our members visit Stan Brown's church in Surbiton. All of them have a variety of worship and preaching. The following are useful links:

<https://shmc.online.church/> - Surbiton Hill Methodist Church



<https://www.facebook.com/pg/christchurchsaintphilip/events/>



<https://gatewayleeds.net/> - St Marks Church, Leeds

<https://www.tidenhamparishchurch.co.uk/whats-going-on/sunday-services/>

Tidenham Parish Church - over the river from Chipstow

There will be an online circuit service to begin the New Church Year. Further information will be given nearer the time.

Online Circuit Service on Sunday 6th September at 3:00pm

CONTACTS



Minister

Rev. Emma Cusack Fd.A;
DipHE
020 8393 2322

Stewards

Lesley Lee

Contact Steward
Jeananne Holtorp
07729 028850



Leadership Team

The Minister.

Lesley Lee
(Steward)

Jeananne Holtorp
(Pastoral Sec,)

Denise Gould
(Property Rep)

Gloria Davis



Church Council Secretary

Denise Gould

Pastoral Concerns

Jeananne Holtorp
07729 028850

JMA Secretary

Catherine Draper

Bookings

Denise Gould
020 8393 2155

Church Pay Phone

020 8393 9743

Protecting God, when we fall, you quietly pick us up; when we fear, you gently hold on to us; when the future looks bleak, you nudge us onwards, until at last we find ourselves in the place you would have us be.

*From word in time Methodist prayer book
Friday 17th July 2020
Bruce Thompson, Lincolnshire District Chair*

If you would like an item to be in 'The Link' please send it to

Vivienne Ridgway
vivienne@ridgworld.com

Articles for inclusion in the next LINK should be with Vivienne by September 10th

The right to edit or omit articles is reserved to SMC, The Minister and Stewards

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of SMC as a whole

Photos from Gopal and Geetha's trip to Berlin

The Berlin Wall



*The Victory Column with
Victoria, the Goddess of Victory,
in the centre of the Tiergarten.
(This commemorates the Prussian victory
in the Danish Prussian War in 1864.)*



The Brandenburg Gate



*Painshill
Park,
with Pat
and Colin*



Link Magazine,
for Stoneleigh Methodist Church,
Stoneleigh Crescent, Stoneleigh,
Epsom, Surrey KT19 0RT
www.stoneleighmethodist.church