

The Link Magazine

April 2016

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MINISTER'S LETTER

ROCKS GO IN FIRST

A Professor in business management was teaching his students the importance of prioritizing. He did so using the following illustration. He pulled out a big wide-mouth jar and set it on the front table. He took out some fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar filled to the top until no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, his students 'Is this jar full?' They replied 'Yes'. He then reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel and poured the gravel in shaking the jar gently to allow the pieces of gravel to work themselves down into available space between the big rocks. Then he asked once more, 'Is the jar full?' The jar looked full. He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand and poured it gently into the jar allowing it to find spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, 'Is this jar full?' The students having grasped the message shouted 'No!' Then he took a pitcher of water and poured it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he asked, 'What is the point of this illustration?' One of the students replied, 'The point is, no matter how full your schedule is if you try really hard you can always fit some more things in it!' 'No' the professor replied, 'that's not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is, **if we don't put the big rocks in first**, we may never get them in at all.' The chief lesson is one of prioritizing.

Spring and summer time ushers in a lot of changes not least opportunity to travel on holiday, see family and even gardening. Increased summer activities bring in increased demand on our time. How time flies! There seems never to be enough time in a day to do all we feel we have to do. Talking to retired friends, they tell me, they are busy as ever if not more! As we go through life and its phases, adolescence, working and bringing up family, all the way through to retirement we are constantly pressed for time feeling as if we are fast being driven to the end of life on planet earth. It is critical for us to pause and reflect on our priorities. What really matters in our lives is that we can identify like the apostle Paul and say **"this one thing I do"**(**Philippians 3:13**).

On addressing the issue of priorities Jesus asks the question “*What will it profit a person, if they gain the whole world and lose their own soul?*” (Matt 16:26). According to Jesus, getting our souls saved or sorted in terms of eternity is the first rock that should be fitted in. Where we will spend eternity after the flitting transient life on planet earth is big priority that should be sorted out first. Our relationship with God is paramount and that needs to be sorted out first too. I take funerals and I get fascinated to hear or even asked to write eulogies. One thing that grips me is the different legacies people leave behind besides their memories. What legacy shall I leave behind when I exist from this life? How shall I be remembered? That is an important priority too.

We go through life cherishing our dreams and plans. Once we hit past retirement we begin to feel nostalgic about “what might have been”. Whatever stage in life we are we need to remind ourselves constantly that the past is history the future is more important. The most crucial is focusing on the right things. It requires prioritizing and dependence on God and praying with the psalmist “*Teach us to realize how short our live are. Then our hearts will become wise*” (Psalm 90:12).

I commend these thoughts for reflection as we continue to digest the “Five year Plan” in relation to Lidgett Park Methodist Church but more importantly in light our lives this side of eternity.

Wishing you every blessing

Daniel

WORSHIP IN APRIL

3rd April	10.30 am	Mrs Susan Howdle	
	6.30 pm	<i>Chapel Allerton Methodist Church</i>	
10th April	10.30 am	Mr Ted Britton	
	6.30 pm	Revd Dr Daniel Mwailu	Holy Communion
17th April	10.30 am	Prof. Peter Howdle	
	6.30 pm	<i>Roscoe</i>	<i>Circuit Service</i>
24th April	10.30 am	Revd John Mason	Holy Communion
	6.30 pm	<i>St Edmund’s Church</i>	<i>Ecumenical Service</i>

PRAYER FOR CHANGE

Publishes simultaneously in the magazines of our Covenanted Churches, St Andrew's URC and St Edmund's CoE

Lord God, make us people who recognise, nurture and act

towards a more sustainable world,

For the benefit of all who draw life from this planet.

Raise up campaigners who will speak out

for wisdom, restraint and compassion.

And teach us to partner you in protecting this precious world

And the lives of the most vulnerable of our global neighbours.

Tearfund's 'Hope for Creation' Prayer

LIDGETT PARK LADIES' GROUP

Our meetings start at 7.45 pm on alternate Thursdays and take place in the Community Hall. Refreshments are provided.

14th April Hilda Bonner was a contestant on one of the more intimidating of TV shows - "The Weakest Link". She'll be telling us how she "kept her cool".

28th April Neil Maroney will regale us with tales of his experiences in the "Textile Trade". He is of Irish origin and, I feel sure, has probably kissed the Blarney Stone!

Just a reminder that we hold our Coffee Evening (Open) in mid- May. If you are thinking of planting some seeds soon, please put in a few extra and bring along the young plants to be sold for Project funds. Thank you very much.

Lynne Pullein

NOW WE ARE GETTING OLDER

Blessed are they who understand our faltering steps and shaking hands.

Blessed are they who know my ears today must strain to catch the things they say.

Blessed are they with a cheery smile who stop to chat for a little while.

Blessed are they who never say "You've told me that story twice today".

Blessed are they who make it known that you are loved respected and not alone.

I can't remember who gave me this, but thank you very much. Ed.



Lidgett Park Methodist Church
Community Hall

LIDGETT PARK DRAMA GROUP

presents

‘PRESCRIPTION

FOR

MURDER’

by norman robbins

on Friday and Saturday

22/23 april, 2016

at 7.30pm

Tickets £6.00 (267 8506)

PROPOSALS FOR CHURCH CHARITY 2016 –2017

Leeds Autism Services

Leeds Autism Services, operating in the Leeds area was founded in 1988 as a Christian foundation charity.

Specific services for adults are offered aiming individually tailored packages of support, in order to assist people to achieve their goals.

They offer support and advice to individuals in a holistic and non-judgmental framework from 2 hours per week to 24 hours per day 365 days a year to their 64 service users. This is in their own homes, community settings or one of their own facilities. LAS are needing sensory equipment, new computer equipment, laptops and a vehicle to transport the people supported to activities which would otherwise be inaccessible to them.

LAS are currently trying to raise funds but have no patron and will be so grateful for your consideration of Leeds Autism Services as a church charity project next year. Church members will remember the article on Lester's art exhibition in the Link last year and also the Gift Service in December when we had an impressive description of the work of the service from the Fundraiser for the charity, Karl Wilson and also one of the beneficiaries, Michael (see the February Link)

Joyce Wood

We are all know Joyce and William's son Lester and all the work that Joyce puts in to promoting the cause of autism. If the church decides to adopt this charity Joyce and William would not be able to lead the fund raising because of their fulltime commitment to Lester and so we would need to nominate a leader and fund-raising committee. Ed.

Part of a letter from Joyce.

Dear Editor,

"God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and the weak things of the world to shame the strong". (1 Cor 1:27). Jesus does not only see people as they are but also sees what they can become by divine grace.

He will never learn to read or write, was the harsh verdict of the headmistress

regarding my son, Lester, then aged seven. It was true, he had poor co-ordination, his movements were clumsy, but his language was good and he could recognise numbers and understand the concept of money. To go through life illiterate was devastating news to me, but I was a Christian, and believed that my Heavenly Father loved Lester far more than I, his earthly mother, ever could.

I continued to think things through and reason with myself. If God, my loving Father cares about each sparrow that falls, did he not also want the very best for Lester? And what about God's promises? I reminded myself of such words from my Bible as "Anything you ask in my name", "Faith can move mountains" Surely if the thought of illiteracy filled me with dismay, then did not the creator, God, care even more?

As you read these words I am aware that you will have problems and trials quite different from mine. Take heart, trust in God, and believe him, He loves you and in his own way he will answer your prayers in unexpected ways.

In his book my friend Commissioner Harry Read (Salvation Army) wrote this verse which I find very helpful, and I hope you will too:-

"Christ sees and knows us as we are
 With all our weaknesses and shame;
 He also sees what can be,
 What honours bring to his great name
 From all we have become, he then begins
 To mould our lives for bigger, better, things.

Support for the project

At the Annual Church meeting, we will again be voting for the second charity to join Christian Aid as the 2016 – 2017 Project. I will be supporting the suggestion of Joyce Wood to support Leeds Autism Service and have agreed to speak on her behalf at the meeting. However, in doing this, I am not able to offer to be the Chair of the Project Committee for a second year nor be a member of the group. It will, therefore, be up to others to offer to take on this role . It would also be good if "new" members were prepared to support the fund-raising group and bring fresh impetus and ideas to the fund-raising events.

Margaret Farrar.

A GUIDE TO MANAGEMENT SPEAK (The Guardian Weekend 27/2/2106)

Reach out	To contact someone
Touch base	To contact someone
Route to	Talk to
Workshop this	Talk about this
Bubble it up	Pass on to someone more senior
Cascade	Pass on to someone more junior
Take this offline	Discuss outside the meeting
Circle back	Discuss later
Connecting the dots	Understanding something
Get your legs under yourself	Know what you are talking about
Ducks in a row	Organise information
Deliverables	Results
Content-rich	Contains information
Bottom out	To reach the lowest point
Helicopter view	An overview
Quarterback	To be in charge
The net net	The final decision
Scalable	It can be made bigger
To integrate across verticals	Talk to people in other departments
Tissue session	Discussing the details
Digging into the weeds	Discussing the details
Drill down/ deep dive	To explore an idea in close detail
Dial it up/down	Do more / less
A hard stop	A definite end to the meeting
Bandwidth	Your ability to work (eg 'I don't have the bandwidth for this right now')
Ceremony/ huddle/retrospective/ scrum	A meeting

This should make the next Church Council Meeting a bit more interesting Ed.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PEANUTS

Charlie Brown to Linus : 'What if everyone was like you? What if we all ran away from our problems? What if everyone in the whole world suddenly decided to run away from his problems?

Linus: 'Well, at least we'd all be running in the same direction

From: *The Gospel According to Peanuts* Robert Short (1966) page 70, Fontana Books



THORNER BROADSHEET

Our next Coffee morning at Thorner will take place on Saturday May 14th, 10-12noon in the TMC Social centre. It is in aid of Martin House, Children's Hospice, so please support this event if you can. Our usual bacon butties will be served. A BIG thank you to all who came from Lidgett Park and Oakwood church to support our March coffee morning, it was wonderful to see you all !

Our Lent Group which took place on Monday mornings throughout Lent here in Thorner was very well attended this year as last. We had people from the Methodist church, the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church and also a Quaker at every session. We've had around ten or more people each week and all have thought the course to be worthwhile and thought provoking.

Spring is here at last, and we see the sign of new life all around us as we've celebrated a very early Easter this year. It never ceases to amaze me, when contemplating Christ's Passion, just what God did for us on the Cross on that First Good Friday. Our God came to earth, to live our life and to die our death so that we, who believe in Him, may live eternally. A promise that we can read for ourselves (John 3:16).

After Good Friday came Easter Day! This is our Faith let us never be afraid to declare it. Alleluia, He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia! A Happy and Blessed Eastertide to you all from everyone here at Thorner Methodist Church!

God Bless,

Ann Johnson Thorner Senior Church Steward

Tel. 0113 289 3532

THOUGHTS TO PONDER

The belief in a supernatural source of evil is not necessary; men alone are quite capable of every wickedness"

Joseph Conrad

Beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive.

Colossians 3.12-13

MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIPS

A couple of years ago, the Methodist Conference asked a group to look at whether the church should revisit our understanding about marriage and relationships. As the group began to lead the discussion, it created such a furore that the Conference decided it needed to take a few steps backwards. Before any such discussion could take place, we needed to put in place some education about the Bible: how we read it; how we understand it; its context, culture and the effect of translations through the ages.

Discussions have been taking place around the Connexion for a report to go to Conference this year. I attended the Leeds District one on February 11th 2016. It began with some understanding about the place of the Bible. We were given several texts in three groups. The first were texts we would all agree with such as “Love your neighbour.....”. The second were ones that we might or might not agree with “I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven”. The third were ones we would definitely not agree with like don’t eat pork or prawns and always stone to death anyone who has committed adultery. The point of this was that you cannot take verses from the Bible and say that this is the word of God. Some people misquote the Methodist Church’s Deed of Union and say, “The Methodist Church acknowledges this revelation of Holy Scripture as the supreme rule of faith and practice.” That is not correct. What it actually says is “the divine revelation **recorded** in the Holy Scriptures....”. Scripture itself is not the revelation. The revelation is Jesus Christ. We worship God, not the Scriptures, important though they are.

So after this introduction about how we read the Bible, we got into groups of 5 /7 to discuss the questions before us. The first question was should we revisit the church’s understanding of marriage. In my group we all thought we should at least revisit the question, as attitudes to marriage and relationships have changed considerably over the last 50 years, never mind 2,000 years, and attitudes and opinions continue to evolve.

The next question was about same sex marriage. My group again was liberal in its outlook. We thought that the church should definitely revisit this issue, particularly as same-sex relationship is a hot topic in society and should be discussed as widely as possible within a Christian context. For the last 20 years “Methodism has fudged the issue.....a Methodist minister is able to hold a service of thanksgiving for a civil same-sex marriage but cannot hold a service of blessing. We are told not to be homophobic and to welcome people of all sexual orientation into our congregations, valuing their contribution to the life of the Church, but we must not fully accept the fact that they may expresstheir love in a physical relationship. What sort of mixed message does

that send out about our church?” (From a letter to the Methodist Recorder by Phil Royle.) We felt that the church was excluding those in same sex relationships and this was a hindrance to pastoral care and to the work of mission as well as a rejection of those whom God loves.

All the views expressed in the groups will be forwarded to the Conference. Not all the groups were as liberal as mine but I got the impression that the majority there were liberal.

Revd. Rick Ormrod, who led the discussion, is willing to lead another group within a church or circuit to discuss the issues and for their comments also to go to Conference.

Patricia Davies

INTERPRETING THE BIBLE

Whenever we try to understand what the Bible is telling us there are a number of important questions that need to be asked.

- What do the texts say?
- What might the texts have meant within the context of their time?
- What is it that the texts don't say, for example, in relation to current issues?
- Are there new considerations that might affect the way in which the Bible is used, for example, modern science?
- How does any particular text relate to broader themes in the Bible, for example, of love and justice, the treatment of the outsider etc?
- In the context of our own society is the Church using the Bible in a consistent way or do we apply it differently in different situations.

Texts do not interpret themselves, but are interpreted by human beings and people throughout history have committed grave ethical offences such as supporting slavery, oppressing women, fighting unjust wars, killing, torturing, and harming their fellow human beings, under the cover of “what the Bible says”. We need to remember that the texts as we now have them often come from more than one source (for example, the creation accounts and the accounts of the Flood), contain many contradictions and inconsistencies and are themselves the result of editorial activity.

We need also to remember that the meaning of language is affected not only by the

context in which it was used originally, but also by the context in which it is interpreted, for example, the way in which knowledge from other sources affects the understanding of the text. Thus, in biblical times there was no concept of gender orientation as we understand it, rather same-sex activities were seen as a choice of otherwise heterosexual people. The current evidence is that gender orientation is something innate and not chosen, which has very different theological implications. When Paul says that same-sex relations are against nature (*para physin*), which nature is he talking about?

The importance placed on Scripture by the Church has varied at different times and within different traditions. For the early Protestants the main emphasis was on Scripture (*sola scriptura*), whereas the Roman Catholic Church has always placed an important emphasis on the life and experience of the Church and reserving the right to interpret Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (John 16: 13-15). In Methodism the four pillars underpinning belief include Scripture, but interpreted in the light of tradition, reason and experience. The early Church and Jesus himself didn't hesitate to reinterpret texts from the Hebrew Bible (Romans 11: 8-9; Romans 15: 9-12; Matt 1:23; Luke 4: 17-21). In the Sermon on the Mount the teaching of Jesus is introduced with the words 'You have heard that it said to those of ancient times ----- but I say unto you' (Matt 5:21 – 5:48) and in his teaching on marriage and divorce Jesus modifies the teaching of Moses (Matt 19: 1-12).

We will need to see how the debate on same-sex marriage unfolds but at the moment it seems that the Church has put itself in the difficult position of affirming the equality of all people before God, affirming the quality of many same-sex relationships in terms of love and self-giving and yet withholding recognition of those relationships. Hopefully, the debate will not simply be a matter of throwing biblical texts at each other.

Stan Pearson

FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PEANUTS

(Robert Short, 1966, Fontana Books page 29)

Linus: The way I see it, "The cow jumped over the moon" indicates a rise in farm prices. The part about the dish running away with the spoon must refer to the consumer. Do you agree with me Charlie Brown?

Charlie Brown: I can't say. I don't pretend to be a student of prophetic literature.

Mrs D'S DIARY – a trip around the world continued.

Vancouver and San Francisco

Did I tell you about the naked farmer? I don't think I did. He likes to carry out farming tasks completely starkers even in the depths of winter. Several years ago, the main Rocky Mountaineer train track ran into Vancouver and was re-routed and now runs alongside the edge of this farmer's field. He was somewhat upset by this and, to show his displeasure, he waits until the train appears and then does a full frontal appearance for the benefit of its passengers. Today cameras at the ready – huge disappointment (thankfulness by a few), no man, no full frontal. So we arrived in Vancouver deprived of one of the train's more unusual sights.

Our first full day was spent exploring Stanley Park in a horse drawn carriage. In we clambered to discover that the horses pulling the carriage today were called Dudley and Denzil, rare grey shire horses imported from, of all places, Yorkshire (or York-Shire as our guide called it) England. The park covers almost 1000 acres and is almost entirely surrounded by water. It was named after Lord Stanley, the Governor-General of Canada. At its dedication, Stanley dedicated it to 'the use and enjoyment of people of all colours, creeds and customs'. Such largesse did not cover the human beings residing in the park who, with one exception, were evicted. One resident, Tim Cummings, was allowed to continue living there until his death in 1958.

Unlike other large city parks, Stanley Park owes more to the evolution of nature than to the design of man. Much of it remains as densely forested today as it was in the 1880's. There are almost 500,000 trees in the park, some of which stand as tall as 70 metres and are many hundreds of years old. The park has many attractions, not least is the sea wall surrounding it. It has been extended several times and is now 14 miles long from end to end. On the landward side there is a skateboard path, bicycle path, bridle way and pedestrian pathway, not always well signposted as we found to our cost. Most importantly, the park has a teahouse which was just the place to relax, drink tea and eat cakes. The park also has several memorials, one of which was dedicated to those Japanese Americans who fought on the Allies' side in the Second World War. It was a wonderful place and it didn't surprise us to find that it was named the best park in the world in 2013.

Every person to whom we mentioned that we were visiting Vancouver said you must go Granville Island, so we did. In the early 1900's Granville Island was a home to

factories, industrial plants and saw mills. However, it fell into decline after the 2nd World War and became an eyesore. It was revived in time for Expo 1986, which was held in Vancouver, the central attraction being a public market. Housed indoors, there are endless rows of stalls that sell fresh produce, gourmet foods, baked goods, seafood, crafts and numerous other things, together with every type of restaurant you could mention. We wandered around a bit of a dazed by the huge variety of things on offer. There are lots of other things to do on the island, including two local breweries and a local artisan *sake* maker, but we only had time to explore the market.

On our last full day in Vancouver we visited Gastown. Gastown grew from a single tavern founded by Jack “Grassy” Deighton. It has been able to retain much of its Victorian architecture while incorporating décor boutiques and some of the best culinary fare in Vancouver. As well as its wonderful architecture it has one of the few remaining steam clocks in the world, first installed there in 1977 as part of an attempt to revive Gastown as a historical neighbor. It blows steam out every quarter of an hour and blows out as many times as the hour strikes, except it didn’t when we looked at it! It blew out steam randomly, which completely confused a group of Japanese tourists who were waiting eagerly to take photographs. Shortly after we left Vancouver the clock was removed for a complete overhaul. We spent the evening with Clive Langley dining in a restaurant overlooking the waterfront. We had a table by the window and the food and the company were both excellent.

So a short flight to San Francisco, having got through American immigration control at Vancouver airport, we arrived in time to experience the Friday night ‘snarl up’ that is the San Francisco traffic.

Walnut Creek.

We spent the weekend with friends in the San Francisco Bay area, in a small town called Walnut Creek. Saturday was a day of bliss for Hayden as we had a tour of the wineries in the Napa Valley just north of San Francisco. The temperature was unseasonably hot in the 70’s so we were able to sit outside and look over the valley while sipping the wine. California has such a large market for its wines that very little is exported. The French have for years been rather snobbish about the quality of Californian wines but have in recent years begun to acquire some of the small vineyards. Tattinger and Moet Chandon have started producing high quality Californian champagne and as we ended our tour of the Tattinger vineyards we sat on

the terrace outside the Chateau Tattinger (built in the late 1990's) where we had a great view over the Napa Valley, a great way to end our vineyard tour. On the way home we visited California's version of 'Old Faithful'. Not exactly impressive, but after a few glasses of wine and champagne who cares!

Well, Sunday had a most unusual excursion. Taking a wrong turn can be interesting or frustrating but few find you outside the gates of San Quentin Prison, called the death prison as there are more prisoners on death row than in any other American prison. Our unexpected arrival brought about surprisingly little reaction from the armed guards at the gates. Perhaps it was the hysterics being exhibited by four crazy Brits at finding ourselves here that persuaded them we were not about to ram the gates. We were heading for Muir Wood where they have some very large and very old redwood trees. The oldest tree in the wood had its beginnings in 900 AD. Don't ask me how they know, but they do.

We ended the day and our visit to Walnut Creek by having afternoon tea at our hotel, The Fairmont in San Francisco. It was one of the few buildings to survive the 1903 earthquake. The interior is very ornate and Edwardian in character, but too much so in my opinion. The afternoon tea was sumptuous and our friends and their daughters did it full justice. The venue gave us the opportunity to discuss earthquakes. Everybody in San Francisco knows there is another 'big one' coming but they remain sanguine about it. It so happened that the week we were in the city the schools were having their annual 'earthquake awareness week'.

It is not the damage caused by the earthquake they worry about most but the fire storm afterwards. There are very stringent regulations covering the siting and attachment of any gas pipes or appliances. The greatest concern comes from the fire hazards caused by petrol and other flammable liquids. Californians love their cars and any attempt to reduce the amount of traffic on the state highways has had little success.

San Francisco City.

I love, love, love San Francisco. Here we are in the city itself. Boy is it hilly, I mean hilly! As our friend Karen said, "You know a city is hilly when they carve steps in the pavements to make walking up easier." OK, I am not that naïve, if you are staying in an hotel and its address is Nob Hill, then you expect an incline. What you don't expect

is an everlasting series of inclines, seemingly each one steeper than the last.

Our first day in the city saw us do all the usual touristy things. A tour of the harbour, a boat trip round the bay, a visit to Fisherman's Wharf and several trips on the cable cars. Let me begin with the cable cars. First, nobody tells you that you take your life in your hands when you go to get on them. The cars travel down the middle of the road, the 'bus' stop is on the pavement and to get to the car you have to cross the traffic. In theory vehicles have to give way to passengers trying to get to the cable cars but would you risk life and limb on the off-chance that several tons of machinery hurtling towards you will stop to allow you to cross? No and neither did I. The trouble is that if you do stand there waiting for a gap in the traffic, the cable car either goes without you or the brakeman shouts at you for dithering.

Secondly, having risked life and limb to get to the cable car you find the step on to it is so high you can't make it without, not to put too fine a point on it, a shove on the backside. Totally undignified, but necessary. Thirdly, there is the ride itself. Our first trip was to Fisherman's Wharf down by the ocean. You must have seen the journey on many a Hollywood film. Hill after hill after hill interspersed by crossways where the road levels off and the cable cars stop for passengers. Don't ask me to describe the ride, terror has a way of dulling all the senses. Fourthly, the noise, cable car brakemen like nothing better than ringing the bell. Clang, clang, clang goes the trolley indeed, but the bell!

Traffic can travel on the cable car route, but must give way to the cable cars. Frequently they don't and the brakeman rings his bell evermore furiously and loudly to warn them of the car's approach. Despite all the above, we travelled on them every day and loved every minute of it!

Today was a rare fog-free day in San Francisco. The most heard sound in the city is the fog horn warning the ships that they are approaching the harbour. There still stands at the entrance to the bay a fully operational lighthouse.

The Bay area covers almost 7,000 square miles and is home to 7 ½ million people. Its most famous structure is, of course, the Golden Gate Bridge. It took almost 4 years to build and was finally open to vehicular traffic in 1937. It crosses the Golden Gate Strait and connects the city of San Francisco to the county of Marin to the north. It has featured in many films and is one of the world's most well-known manmade structures. As you may have already realized, I am addicted to harbour tours so we

naturally took a tour round the bay. Our particular tour did not include a 2 hour stay on Alcatraz; one prison visit was enough for us. We did, however, go under the Golden Gate Bridge, twice in fact. I felt sorry for the other bridge, the Bay Bridge, which also crosses the same stretch of water but barely gets a mention.

Once back on land we explored Fisherman's Warf, which was a bit of a disappointment as it has been gentrified in recent years and has lost a lot of its old world charm. Sadly, as in many places commercialism has won over quaintness.

Those of you awaiting the 2nd coming will be saddened to hear that it has already happened. It took place at 1000, Hollister Avenue, San Francisco on 5th June 2007. How do I know this? It is thanks to Patricia, a travelling companion on the number 28 bus taking us to Golden Gate Park. She had witnessed it apparently and was keen for us to pass on the message to our friends back home. She was particularly insistent that the next time we had tea with the Queen (which would be our first) we appraised her of the situation.

What were we doing on the 28 bus? We were visiting the Japanese Garden in the Golden Gate Park. I was extremely keen to see this and had recently read a novel about a Japanese garden and I knew that this garden had had a very chequered history. The garden was originally intended to form part of a temporary site at the World Trade Fair in 1894. After the conclusion of the fair a Japanese immigrant and gardener approached the city fathers to convert the temporary exhibit into a permanent park. His only condition was that he be allowed to build a house for his family. He and his family lived there until 1942 when they were interned in Iowa. Hagiwara had died in 1925 but his daughter managed to transfer to several prominent San Francisco citizens over 3,000 specimens from the garden. The garden was left untended until 1952 when, as part of a reconciliation process it was redesigned by Nagao Sakurai. A Japanese tea house was built and in 1974 a plaque was given to the garden in honour of Hagiwara with the surviving members of his family attending the dedication, the first time they had returned to San Francisco since the internment.

All Japanese gardens have 3 main elements, Trees, Rocks and Water. Sadly, they also all have steep steps leading you to heaven. Entrance to the garden includes tea at the teahouse, one of the few human-made structures in the garden. The origin of the tea ceremony dates back to 1203 AD. The teahouse is located by the water and is surrounded by views of different aspects of the garden. The whole garden was

wonderful, just an oasis of peace and calm. Everywhere you went you could hear the sound of moving water. There wasn't the colour you would find in an English garden, but everywhere you went there were trees, rocks and water all arranged in different shapes and sizes; it was enchanting. One outstanding area was the Garden of Tranquility. This was a garden for seeing rather than visiting. You were not allowed to wander through it but to look at it and achieve a feeling of serenity. Perhaps not a feeling uppermost in Haydn's mind, as he asked yet again if we had seen enough. I finally agreed it was time to go after a 3 hour sortie around the garden. We declined to take the 28 bus back to the hotel but instead splashed out on a taxi.

On the last day in San Francisco we went to the one place everyone said we should visit, Gironelli's ice cream parlour in Union Square. Union Square is just slabs of concrete, no statues, no fountains, nothing to distinguish it. However, the ice cream at Gironelli's is something to behold. Enormous, filled with everything you could want in an ice cream and more, more, more. Wonderful!

Shortly after we left Union Square a mentally deranged man started throwing bottles into the road by the square. The police went to arrest him, he resisted and so they shot him dead. The second amendment to the United States Constitution lives on:

'A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed'

Tonight we fly to New Zealand, 18 hours and 2 days away.

Jennifer

THOUGHTS TO PONDER

Let us not underestimate how hard it is to be compassionate. Compassion is hard because it requires the inner disposition to go with others to the place where they are weak, vulnerable, lonely, and broken. But this is not our spontaneous response to suffering. What we desire most is to do away with suffering by fleeing from it or finding a quick cure for it. **Henri Nouwen**

The root of the matter is a very simple and old-fashioned thing, a thing so simple that I am almost ashamed to mention it, for fear of the derisive smile with which wise cynics will greet my words. The thing I mean – please forgive me for mentioning it – is love, Christian love, or compassion. If you feel like this, you have a motive for existence, a guide in action, a reason for courage, an imperative necessity for intellectual honesty. **Bertrand Russell**

WHAT IS THE POINT OF METHODISM?

An eight-part series on Methodist identity today by **John S. Summerwill**

3. What makes Methodists tick

Methodism has never claimed to have unique Methodist doctrine: to the contrary, it has always been at pains to emphasise that its doctrine is orthodox and unoriginal. The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are used in its liturgies and quoted in its Catechism. The Deed of Union (1932) sets out the doctrinal standards of the Methodist Church in a few hundred words of general statements, whose brevity indicates that there is little that is controversial.

'The Methodist Church claims and cherishes its place in the Holy Catholic Church which is the Body of Christ. It rejoices in the inheritance of the apostolic faith and loyally accepts the fundamental principles of the historic creeds and of the Protestant Reformation. It ever remembers that in the providence of God Methodism was raised up to spread scriptural holiness through the land by the proclamation of the evangelical faith... The doctrines of the evangelical faith which Methodism has held from the beginning and still holds are based upon the divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures. The Methodist Church acknowledges this revelation as the supreme rule of faith and practice.'

This statement, which represents the common ground shared by the 'high church' Wesleyans and the 'low church' Primitive Methodists in 1932, seems to suggest that there is really nothing very distinctive about Methodism at all: it is just mainstream Protestant evangelicalism. This hardly does justice to the true catholicity of the Methodist inheritance. Several recent biographers of John and Charles Wesley have noted and explored the influence on their thought of the early Church Fathers, who provided one source of the Wesleys' somewhat mystical focus on inward holiness and their sacramentalism. Although John Wesley was a child of the Reformation, he softened the emphasis on Original Sin and distanced himself in various ways from some of the doctrines and emphases of Luther and especially of Calvin.

So what is distinctive about Methodist doctrine and life?

Some of the central convictions of Methodist thinking were very well summed up by William Fitzgerald in a book in 1903 as the 'Four Alls':

- All need to be saved (universal sin)
- All can be saved (universal grace)
- All can know they are saved (assurance)
- All can be saved to the uttermost (Christian perfection).

They form the core of John Wesley's preaching and are prominent themes in Charles Wesley's hymns. Methodists are so familiar with them that they may take it for granted that these are what all Christians believe. In fact, only the first can be considered universal. That all *can* be saved was the doctrine that caused the deepest rift among the early Methodists, dividing the Arminian Wesleys from the Calvinistic

George Whitefield, who believed that Christ died only for those predestined to be saved. The conviction that Christ died for all and that no-one is beyond the reach of God's saving grace underpins Methodists' optimistic view of the world and inspires commitment to mission and evangelism. Calvinists reject this view.

The doctrine of assurance is founded on scriptural promises and on the experience of the warmed heart, which the Wesleys took to be evidence of the Holy Spirit 'bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God' (Romans 8:16). The authority of personal experience, something that Wesley learnt from Moravian pietism, was added to the authorities of classical Anglicanism — scripture, tradition and reason — to produce a style of Christianity that was both classical and dynamic, theological and experiential. It later spread to the Salvation Army and Pentecostalism. Many Christians in other traditions are very sceptical about the presumption that we can know in this life that we are saved.

The last of the Four Alls, known variously as 'Christian perfection', 'Christian holiness', 'entire sanctification' or 'perfect love', is the most distinctively Wesleyan. John Wesley insisted that Jesus would not have said 'You must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect' (Matt. 5:48) if that was not possible for every Christian. He claimed that what it meant was nothing less than what everyone prayed for in the service of Holy Communion: '... cleanse the thoughts of our hearts that we may perfectly love Thee.' The Methodist concept of holiness has much in common with the goals of the religious life in Catholicism. The key difference is that Methodism does not consider such goals attainable only through a contemplative life in a community of celibates: it expects them of every Christian. The holy life is to be lived in the secular world, in marriage and family life and in one's secular occupation. The Holiness Churches, especially in America, are the principal standard-bearers for this Wesleyan doctrine.

How then can Methodists grow into holiness and attain the fullness of Christian love? This is where the organisational features of the church come into play, for they are designed to assist. Lay leadership, for example is important not only because it expresses the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers—which is dear to the heart of all Protestants—but because it gives practical expression to the belief that all are called to salvation and to holiness of life. Local Preachers provide a lay ministry of preaching and conduct of worship that has never been just a stop-gap measure because of a shortage of ministers: it is a ministry in its own right intended to witness to the belief that God calls people from all walks of life to preach the word and so help others to come to faith and grow in it. From the very beginning Methodists have met in small groups, often lay-led, originally 'bands' and 'classes' which met for prayer and mutual examination in spiritual growth. These have become in time house-groups for Bible-study, discussion and fellowship. Only a minority of Methodists engages in them today, and the intense pietism that they once encouraged is rare now. Their value continues to be that they assist the process of growing in holiness, which is seen in Methodism as a social and communal process, not a purely individual one. Methodists, in other words, see themselves as having a communal identity, not just an individual one. Christian holiness or perfect love cannot exist in isolation: it requires

relationships for its expression and growth. The Circuit system and Connexional system likewise give contexts in which love can be expressed practically on a wider basis by allowing redistribution of resources, the stronger churches and circuits supporting the weaker ones, and by the exercise of efficient stewardship of what God has given.

Hymn-singing, too, contributes to holiness. It is valued by Methodists because it enables the expression of many emotions that are part of the developing Christian experience: guilt, fear, hopelessness and self-deprecation; the dawning of faith and the joy of forgiveness; the sense of assurance; the flowing and ebbing of faith through the vicissitudes of life's pilgrim experiences; the aspiration to the holy life in this world and the next. Methodist hymn books, from Wesley's day to the present, have always been arranged thematically according to both experiential and theological themes so that they aim to be, as John described them, 'a little body of experimental and practical divinity'. Methodists have learnt the doctrines through them. Hymns allow the active participation of all, and they strengthen the sense of community. The growing use of non-Methodist hymns and songs, and diminishing use of Wesley's hymns, constitutes some risk to one of the chief sources of nurture of Methodist identity. Worship songs that lack theological depth hinder growth in holiness rather than nourish it.

Much of what is distinctively and maybe uniquely Methodist is not readily visible to those outside Methodism, and perhaps too familiar to Methodists themselves to be noticeable. Misunderstanding can arise when people of different religious traditions use common theological words not quite grasping how differently they are understood by others. For example, Methodist definitions would be significantly different from Roman Catholic definitions of words like 'confession', 'religious', 'saint' and 'catholic'. The word 'faith' in particular is slippery. To Roman Catholics, and to some other Protestants, 'faith' has reference to 'articles of faith' or credal statements: 'the faith' is what one believes; faith is the opposite of doubt. For Methodists credal propositions are relatively unimportant: one may believe yet lack the 'warmed heart', like John Wesley before his Aldersgate Street experience. 'Faith' is therefore better defined as a personal commitment made in trust. It is not the opposite of doubt; it is not certainty; it has little or nothing to do with theological assertions. It is, in Wesley's words, 'a sure confidence that a man has in God'. This is a Reformation understanding of faith with the addition of a distinctive Methodist emphasis: that faith 'working by love' produces holiness. *Singing the Faith* is a profoundly unmethodist title for a Methodist hymnbook!

A Methodist understanding of Methodist identity, then, is likely to contain a sense of being part of a community of people who have experienced (or hope to experience) the forgiving love of God, and who seek in response to live in a manner that expresses a growing and maturing love for God and other people, to be expressed in practical ways. Methodists do not consider themselves to be the exclusive recipients of this grace, or deserving of it: it is a gift God intends for all humankind, and therefore to be shared as widely as possible.

FRED'S QUIZ (ANSWERS ON PAGE 27)

Each of the following clues leads to two words; one of them is one letter longer than the other. Find the answers then rearrange the extra letters to form the name of a district of Leeds. The number of letters shown applies after adding the extra letter. For example, Cautious and tired (5) Weary: wary E

1. Attractive female relative (5)
2. Generate or reduce to ashes (7)
3. Develop and go round (7)
4. Nobleman is before time (5)
5. Musical group is dull (5)
6. Street where meeting arranged (6)

I AM MALALA

(Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb, 2013, pages 419-420, Little, Brown & Co: New York).

Dorothy Carr noticed the following passage when reading this book, which has something to say to us all. The Taliban bullet that hit Malala, as well as causing brain damage, destroyed her hearing on the left side and cut the left facial nerve leaving her with a paralysis of the left side of her face. Ed.

We human beings don't realize how great God is. He has given us an extraordinary brain and a loving heart. He has blessed us two lips to talk and express our feelings, two eyes to see a world of color and beauty, two feet which walk on the road of life, two hands to work for us, a nose which smells the beauty of fragrance, and two ears to hear the words of love. As I found with my ear, no one knows how much power they have in their each and every organ until they lose one.

Do we agree with this?

The danger in all religions is the drift from the inward to the outward, resulting in a focus on the shell at the expense of the kernel. ***Mona Siddiqui***

PROJECT NEWS 2016 (*The latest news from the Project Committee*).

By the time you read this, I hope you have all enjoyed the Mad Hatter's Tea Party and that more funds have been added to our total!

As you will already know, the next event is the Hog Roast on Sunday May 15th at 1pm. Tickets for this are £7.50, including dessert. The event is open to all and we would love to see as many people as possible. Vegetarian and gluten-free options are available – please let us know if you require one of these when you purchase your tickets. We will eat outside if the weather permits or in the Community Hall if not.

A new addition to our events list is a Young Musicians Evening on Friday June 17th. Those of you who came to this event last year, will remember the wonderfully talented young people brought together by David Wilks, who has again been kind enough to organise this.

A reminder of our summer programme -

Saturday July 16th : Dance Evening at the Immaculate Heart's Queen's Hall, with Rebecca Todd and the Little Big Band.

Thursday July 21st to Saturday July 23rd : Festival Of Flowers, in Church, when the theme of the displays will be Countries of the World. As two years ago, we are hoping that this event will draw in a wide audience from all over Leeds. The Church will be open from 10 – 4 each day and scones and tea or coffee will be served. We are grateful to our “Flower Ladies” for offering to give of their time and talent for this and we look forward to a repeat of the success of the previous Festival.

As always, many thanks to you all for your support and also my own thanks to those, both on the committee and others, who give so freely of their time and commitment to ensure that enjoyment and fun are part and parcel of our fund-raising efforts.

Margaret Farrar.

HOW TO START THE DAY?

This letter appeared in The Independent newspaper on 14 March from Barbara MacArthur, Cardiff.

Overheard while drinking coffee at my local greasy spoon:

Student to counter server: “ I’d like to order a breakfast. I want three eggs, two rashers of bacon, two sausages, two slices of black pudding, three hash browns, two rounds of toast please, and beans.”

Counter server to student: “ How many beans? “

ANOTHER SMASH HIT! (From our drama correspondent, Malcolm Speed).

The annual trip to Fantasy Land has just taken place. Yes, the Lidgett Park Drama Group Pantomime. This year's production was Aladdin. These productions are



synonymous with high quality exhibitions. This year's extravaganza was certainly no exception. The scenery was superb, the lighting spot on, costumes elegant, and the cast fantasmagorical. The action started in Widow Twankee's New Robotic Washeteria. For a while, the truculent opinionated washer threatened to outshine the villains - Irving Theaker's Abanazar, and Catherine Johnston's Mrs Wong. However, the

ability to Boo and Shout loudly meant that the proper outcome was ensured. The hero and heroine were magical, superbly aided by an imperious Emperor, gregarious Genii



Herald, charming Chaperone, and not forgetting



the young captivating Jewels of the cave. The show was fast paced, hilarious, with the very familiar adlibbing techniques so well honed by Pat Brooke, Ian Russell and the effervescent Mary Patchett. Perhaps a bit of smoke for the genies ? But we quibble. Pantomimes are for the young at heart, hungry for fun and entertainment. Our audience were ready for a feast, and they finished quite replete. The jokes were corny, the comedy slapstick, the singing was awful.....a **Fantastic night for all.**



WHO'S WHO

Ministers	Rev. Dr Daniel Mwailu	2681757
Church Stewards	Anne Millett	2666910
	Pat Brooke	2678506
	Betty Ashton	2935832
	Daphne Barton	2664999
	Jan Sanders	2933700
	Jenny Dalton	2934588
	Ruth Albiges	2665482
	Val Faint	2663433
Church Council Secretary	Susan Philo	2685204
Church Treasurer	Alan Wittrick	2613392
Treasurer's Assistant	Jackie Bennett	2684914
Senior Property Steward	Peter Bennett	2667380
Senior Communion Steward	Val Faint	2663433
Room Bookings (long term) J	Jackie Bennett	2684914
Room Bookings (one-off)	Patricia Davies	2663090
Junior Church Contact	Peter Bennett	2667380
Pastoral Secretaries	Kathy Benson	2941059
	Val Faint	2663433
Worship Consultation	Patricia Davies	2663090
Organist/Lidgett Singers	David Wilks	2932960
Car Rota Organiser	John Wells	2661952
Church Notices	Pat Brooke	2678506
Editor of The Link	Stanley Pearson	2736463

Benevolent Fund Secretary	Barbara Holmes	2686499
Christian Aid Organiser	Heather Fry	2933784
Churches Together Rep	Barbara Belsham	2737192
Link Distribution Manager	Joyce Toms	2933693
Church Flowers	Margaret Lee	2663876
House Groups	Margaret Mattocks	2668727
	Stanley Pearson	2736463
	Gerry Leake	2664856
Stewardship Envelopes	Paul Nolan	2663160
Gift Aid Secretary	Garth White	2730313
Ladies Group Secretaries	Lynne Pullein	2665303
	Margaret Huskisson	2666781
Badminton	Jackie Bennett	2684914
Church Walking Group	Peter Harper	2662310
Drama Group	Carol Russell	2698341
Simply Stitching	Audrey Gabbitas	2664979
Women's World Day of Prayer	Pat Nolan	2663160
Church Cleaning	Angela Bowers	07749877933
3rd Roundhay Brownies	Jan Ridsdale	2684873
Candy Stripes	Office	2757697
Play Centre Group	Jeanette Bartle	07985569146
Toddler Group (Thursday)	lidgettparktodds@hotmail.co.uk	



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QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Attractive female relative (5) Niece: nice E
2. Generate or reduce to ashes (7) Create: cremate M
3. Develop and go round (7) Revolve: evolve R
4. Nobleman is before time (5) Earl: early Y
5. Musical group is dull (5) Band: bland L
6. Street where meeting arranged (6) Avenue: venue A

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