

THE *Beckoner*

The Magazine
For Beckminster
Methodist Church

APRIL - MAY 2017

PRICELESS!



*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze*

Photo by Gordon Nicklin

William Wordsworth

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Dear Friends

As this season of Lent takes us on a journey of self-discovery, there will be times when we need to change the way we think or behave in order to have a new and deeper relationship with God. This journey culminates in the Easter events of Christ's death and resurrection.

When I was in my early twenties I decided one Easter to attend the Maundy Thursday service, Good Friday reflections and the Easter Day service. It was a life-changing experience as I had previously only attended the joy of the Easter Day service.

Maundy Thursday takes us to the Upper Room, where Jesus and his disciples shared bread and wine – an ordinary simple meal. Yet at this meal Jesus consecrated the bread and wine as symbols to remember Him. At this point He knew what was to come but His disciples were bemused. To re-enact this scene for us is to feel the anticipation, the expectation, even the weight of what is to come. It is a sobering moment.

Good Friday takes us not just to Jesus' death but reminds us of the injustice in the world today, where many are persecuted, tortured or even killed for being truthful, honest, caring people - all the traits of Christ's life. Christ's death is all the more compelling when we consider how He lived His life bringing life to others. A life for a life! He died for you and me so we may have life in all its fullness. Such a sacrifice leaves a feeling of gratitude, sadness and worthiness. It is a humbling moment.

On Easter Day the church is adorned with flowers, smiles and uplifting hymns, celebrating that Christ is alive. It is a day of hope and a realisation of how much God loves us in such an awesome feeling, the shackles of the past lifted. That sense of freedom and life fill the worship with joy and thanksgiving. It is an energising moment.

The changes we make in our lives through this whole experience are nothing compared to the changes that Christ made and makes in the lives of all people today. So, if you are able and willing to take up the challenge, you are invited to join us on this journey of discovery, change and challenge. Let this Easter time be the start



of your new adventure with Jesus as your guide and lifelong friend!

Easter blessings

Linda

IF I MET GOD

If I met God I might ask him
Why he wasn't doing anything about
Starving children in Africa
And cruel and oppressive regimes

If I met God I might ask him
Why he wasn't doing anything about
The disappearing rain forests
And animals that are nearly extinct

Then again, I might not
Because he might ask the same of me.

LIGHT AND DARK

Many years ago, on a visit to London with a friend, I made my first visit to the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square. Many pictures interested me and many painters were a new discovery. However, two have stayed with me forever.

One was Van Gogh. I found the way in which he got movement into his pictures, so that you could see the wind blowing in the corn and through the trees, was amazing. So much so that I bought a print of his *Cypress and Cornfields* and it still hangs in the dining alcove, its frame now looking old and weary.

The other was Caravaggio's *Supper at Emmaus*, which (though I haven't got a copy of it yet) has stayed in my mind. I thought it was amazing because of the way in which he could paint the light, which fell directly on Jesus' face. It shows a young man, seated at a table with a meal prepared, with hands pierced by nails, lifted in blessing bread, surrounded by peasants in workers' clothes, amazed and surprised as they recognise the Risen Jesus.

Caravaggio was born in Milan, was largely a self-taught artist, who rebelled against the very formal and respectful religious painting of the time. He brought realism to his art, painting Jesus, the Virgin and the disciples as real people showing real emotions. In all his work there was this wonderful light falling on the main feature of the painting, contrasting with the surrounding darkness. He worked under the patronage of princes of the church but often struggled to be accepted. He had a deep understanding of emotions and the ability to portray them. He painted joy and sorrow, surprise and shock, amazement and mystery, sin and evil, pain and suffering, remorse and repentance. His paintings reveal a depth of understanding of the Gospel. I found it there in his *Supper at Emmaus*.

However, his life was often a sordid mess. He was lonely and often felt rejected as a painter. He drank heavily and was often in fights. Eventually he killed a man in a duel and had to flee Rome. Bleakness appears in his paintings.



He was a tortured soul.

We have travelled through Lent and soon will celebrate Easter. Through Holy Week we shall travel the way of the Cross. Through the Gospel story we shall see the full humanity of Jesus, His love, His suffering, His sacrifice, His death. It is easy to sanitise it, to make it unreal and not reveal Jesus' full humanity. That destroys the mystery and wonder of the Cross. We need Caravaggio's realism to appreciate the depth of God's love and all the agony of it. But we also need to see His light, the light which is hope, redemption, new life and resurrection which is there in it all, and revealed fully in the joy that is Easter Day. We can find hope in the way in which this painter, in spite of all the dark things in his life, could show through his paintings the light that always shines – which is the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

It also says to us that however small and inadequate we feel, however unworthy we are, however much we have failed, God will still use us and let His light shine through us. But it all begins in the ordinariness of our lives, in the simplicity of our response and our using the gifts God has given us. That is where we find the risen Christ – in daily life, in eating together as the disciples at Emmaus found, as we come from living to His table. He blesses and breaks the bread and we see it is the Risen Lord.

Rev Glennys Bamford

TESS DAVIES – A PROFILE

Tess, our Pastoral Worker for the Elderly, has now been with us nearly a year and, during that time, has made a distinct impact on our work with the older members of our congregation. Working with people of all ages has, however, formed a large part of her life.

She was born and grew up in Wolverhampton where her family attended St. Matthew's Church and her earliest childhood memories of church life are of being taken to Sunday School each week. When the family moved to Fallings Park, Tess began attending Wimborne Road Methodist Church, where she joined the youth club during her late teenage years. While at Secondary School she was particularly interested in art but also came under the influence of a dedicated RE teacher, who sowed in her mind the idea of reading for a degree in Theology. It was also at this time that her life was changed after coming into contact with *Youth for Christ* and she accepted Jesus as her personal Saviour.

After taking her 'A' levels she decided to take a year out during which time she did voluntary work at the Women's Royal Voluntary Service. Being then unqualified, her work was mainly administrative but gave her an insight into the many problems encountered by families in crisis. Tess still felt called to follow her interest in Theology and was able to take a Combined Studies degree in Theology and comparative Religion together with Art at the Hertfordshire College of Higher Education (now Hertfordshire University), emerging with a BA (Hons) degree. Whilst there she was an active member of the Christian Union.

Following completion of her Degree she was offered a job in a local authority scheme in Harrow, which provided respite care for families of children with learning disabilities. This was followed up with a post in social services as a support worker in a Family Crisis Centre. Here she was able to offer support with some of the



problems experienced by people in these difficult circumstances, including teenage pregnancy, mental health, domestic violence and general lack of family support. Mothers and their families were provided with help and accommodation until they secured a permanent home.

After several years of this work she returned to this area, taking a job in respite care with Wolverhampton Council. It was then she met Andrew and they married in 1990.

Their two daughters arrived in the next two years, following which she felt it necessary to give up full time work until they were old enough for her to resume employment and take a post as a qualified Teaching Assistant. During this time both Andrew and Tess worshipped within Bushbury parish churches. At St James' Church, they took on responsibilities for leading Worship and also a Mid-week Prayer and Study Group.

Some years later, Tess and Andrew moved to Codsall, when they took the decision to attend their local parish church, St. Nicholas. At this time, Tess began volunteer work with Age UK Wolverhampton. Throughout her life and career Tess has been helped and motivated by her Christian faith. When her daughters became more independent she sought ways of using her skills and experience of social work, along with a sense of calling to be of service to older members of our community. She did, of course, successfully apply for the post of lay worker at Beckminster and took to the work immediately.

She now obviously enjoys working amongst the older members, particularly in visiting them in their homes and helping to organise the activities of the Luncheon Club. Already she is giving some thought to ways in which the scope of the work might be widened. We wish her well and look forward to her sharing in our work for a long time to come.

Alan Causer

Steward's Musings

So far, I haven't responded to *The Beckoner's* invitation to write about my favourite hymn. I'm not sure what I would choose, but the hymns I enjoy singing most these days were mostly written by a certain John Bell. They are hymns which remind us very forcibly of what it means to be "Followers of the Way" in the present day.

They are, it seems to me, rooted in life, not in church. They speak of how faith, born, bred and nurtured in our spiritual base, shows itself in the world we inhabit, since we know that our faith cannot grow until it is tested in our lives outside church. The Jesus I read of in the Gospels spoke much more about life than about church: his followers had rigorous demands placed upon them in their everyday lives. As do we.

Recently, at the end of an Open Way meeting, we read together the words of John Bell's "Will you come and follow me?" Discipleship doesn't come cheap.

We have been strongly influenced in our spiritual lives by hymns we have been brought up with. Not only that, but the language we use to explain our theological view of life owes so much to hymns we have sung, that they have imprinted themselves almost on our hearts. It's not always a language which can be understood by the rest of the world, I know, but it is really helpful on a personal level.

Only a few days before the time of writing this, I was privileged to attend the lovely Circuit Service when Janet Anderson was 'admitted' as a Local Preacher, and I was struck by the reminder in the President's welcome letter that preachers have to be multilingual, because the language of the church is not always understood in the world. That is so true.....and yet we ask ourselves how John Wesley could use the language of faith to stir up emotions in the way he did?

Back in Grammar School days when we seemed to have assemblies every day, what hymn do I remember singing most? I had a cousin at a nearby school who claimed that



every week he was required to sing "I vow to thee, my country...". Not at Barnsley Holgate Grammar. Instead it was:

*Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see,
And what I do, in anything,
To do it as for Thee.*

Back in my local chapel, I would watch the members (miners, factory workers, an ex-dustman with Parkinsons) all singing heartily:

*A servant with this clause,
Makes drudgery divine,
Who sweeps a room, as for Thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine.*

In a sense, that fourth verse shows how all earthly action can be transformed into God's work. Those words give me strength in all aspects of life: simple everyday tasks, political protest, confronting social injustices, even in Church Council meetings!

John Ashwood

Hymns we have known and loved

Part Two

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

Picture the scene. A group of weary pilgrims sit on a grassy bank enjoying the quiet tranquillity of a vast stretch of water before them. The golden glow of the fast fading sun illuminates a cloudless sky. A lone star appears directly above twinkling in the firmament. All that can be heard is the gentle lap of the small waves against a rocky shore. The pilgrims begin to sing:

*O Sabbath rest by Galilee, O calm of
hills above
Where Jesus knelt to share with
Thee the silence of Eternity
Interpreted by love.*

Lines that could only have been contemplated at this particular spot on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

The date was Sunday 13 December 1979 and we had just celebrated an impromptu communion service led by the incomparable John Moxham together with 43 members and friends of Beckminster.

An evening that I shall never forget.

John Holt

And Can it Be

The words by Charles Wesley are inspiring. The way he asks questions with awed incredulity.

*And can it be that I should gain an
interest in my Saviour's blood?
Died He for me who caused His
pain? For me who Him His death
pursued?
'Tis mystery all! The immortal dies:
who can explore His strange design?*

Then the remainder of the hymn seems to explain how the human race might just understand this amazing love?

As a youngster, when I came to the line *My chains fell off, my heart was free*, I had a very clear picture of myself on my bike with my chains having fallen off, 'free wheeling' through the world! I think I prayed that the love of God would support me! I hope so!

For me this hymn has to be sung to the tune in Mission Praise number 11. My Mission Praise copy refers to Sagina 88 88 88 Thomas Campbell (1825-76).

Barbara Smith



Take this Moment

To choose and write about my favourite hymn has proved quite difficult. I think as we move onward in our lives our choice changes.

As a young child I think my favourite hymn was *Life and light and joy are found in the presence of the Lord*. Moving onward again, to marriage, baptisms and other services of celebration, chosen hymns at those times all become meaningful.

Now, moving on to the present day, I have no difficulty in choosing my favourite hymn. Although it has been around for a while, I actually only sang this for the first time about eighteen months ago and it moved me to tears. It still does!

This hymn, I feel, is a personal prayer which those of us who are older can probably relate to. I now use this frequently as a prayer in my 'quiet time'.

*Take this moment, sign and space;
Take my friends around;
Here among us make the place
Where your love is found.*

*Take the time to call my name,
Take the time to mend
Who I am and what I've been,
All I've failed to tend.*

*Take the tiredness of my days,
Take my past regret,
Letting your forgiveness touch
All I can't forget.*

*Take the little child in me,
Scared of growing old;
Help me here to find my worth
Made in Christ's own mould.*

*Take my talents, take my skills,
Take what's yet to be;
Let my life be Yours, and yet,
Let it still be me.*

*John L. Bell and Graham Maule
Hymn No. 513 – Singing the Faith*

*Submitted by
Pam Wilkes*





The Cross

Words: S. Conant Foster
Music: Ernest C. Winchester



This was the favourite hymn of my late father Frank Evans whom many of you will still remember. The following is a transcript of a note found in his effects:

"Since the age of 11 years, whilst I was a choirboy at All Saints Church in Sedgley, I have never forgotten a hymn which the congregation said as a prayer during Lent. I doubt that any of you know of it, it is called 'The Cross'. The words mean as much to me today as they did over 70 years ago.

In my early twenties I tried to obtain a copy of the music and so approached the then organist and choirmaster at All Saints asking if they could help with my quest but was informed that there was no copy left in their library.

I then remembered that the Reverend Harold Marley who was Vicar there in the Thirties had moved to the Loughborough District and I wrote to him explaining my quest but a few weeks later I received a letter from St. Albans where he was then the incumbent. He thanked me for my letter, remembered the hymn but could only suggest that I got in touch with the British Library where he understood were kept copies of all sheet music but again I had no help from this source. That I thought would be the end of my search but it was not so.

During the Seventies at a routine meeting at work I discovered that the gentleman from Head Office who was conducting the meeting was also a church organist and so asked him if he could help to find a copy of the hymn. He immediately recognised the hymn and thought that he had copies at home and would do his best to help. Within a week he sent me three copies for which I thanked him most sincerely. Now I am more than content and many times have the words been of great comfort to me in times of stress, sickness and tragedy. I leave you with my hymn and prayer, may they be a comfort to you also."

The Cross

1

Father, I kneel to Thee,
Kneel and appeal to Thee
Bowed by the cares and the burdens of life.
Meekly I pray to Thee,
Asking the way to Thee
Seeking a rest and a shelter from life.

2

Thoughts are distressing me,
Sins are oppressing me,
Darkness o'ershadows the path to Thy door,
Lighten the way for me,
Shed but a ray for me,
Father of Mercy, I kneel and implore.

3

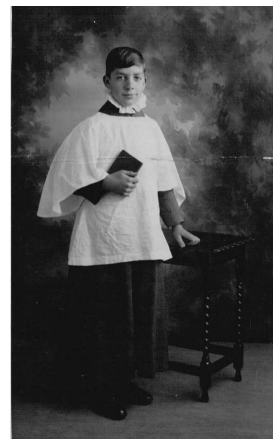
Fly, O my doubting fears!
See, 'tis a Cross appears!
High in the heav'ns it is flooding the night:
Shedding a ray for me,
Pointing the way to me -
Marking the path with a halo of light.

4

What is more beautiful!
Come ye undutiful!
Those of you torn by the pangs of remorse,
Showing the way to you,
Lifting the load from you,
High in all glory is shining the Cross.

5

Hasten, repenting ones,
Come, ye relenting ones,
Come while the angels illumine the course;
Waiting on high for you,
Shining so nigh for you,
Calmly is burning the light of the Cross.



Roy Evans

I Vow to Thee My Country

A hymn which always stirs memories for me is not in our present hymn book. I read that it was thought to be too triumphalist for modern days. This is the hymn which begins "I vow to thee my country all earthly things above" and sung to the beautiful tune taken from *Jupiter* by Gustav Holst.

When the Second World War ended, I was twelve years old. Most citizens knew of someone who had lost their life in the fighting of this terrible war or had their homes bombed. So, the Armistice gave a wonderful feeling of joy and relief throughout the whole population. All the schoolchildren of Wolverhampton attended a Service of Thanksgiving held in the Molineux stadium. I remember that my school head boy read the lesson and, of course, we all sang the hymn "I vow to Thee my country".

I know that I was not alone in being quite affected by this wonderful Service and the atmosphere and this hymn always brings back to me memories of the occasion.

*I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above,
Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love;
The love that asks no questions, the love that stands the test,
That lays upon the altar the dearest and the best;
The love that never falters, the love that pays the price,
The love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.*

*And there's another country, I've heard of long ago,
Most dear to them that love her, most great to them that know;
We may not count her armies, we may not see her King;
Her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride in suffering;
And soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase,
And her ways are ways of gentleness and all her paths are peace.*

John Anderson



FOUR DAYS IN BURGUNDY

The weakening Autumn sun cast long shadows as we drove along the edge of the broad river valley. We had driven almost a thousand miles since leaving home, stopping on the way for three nights to break the long journey. Now we were heading for the place about which we had thought for many years. The turning we needed to lead us to our goal appeared on the left of the road. We were driving on the right and, after all, it was France! The sign was stark and simple with just the village name. Conversation in the car ceased, quite something as one of the passengers was Rev Glennys Bamford! We turned and followed the narrow road as it wound its way slowly towards a discreet turning on our right now climbing more steeply as the ancient village church came into sight. Here the road carried not cars or trucks or even motor bikes but young people, casually dressed, and all walking in one direction.

The car park sign directed us to our left and, as we looked for a parking space, a large camp site with already erected tents came into sight. Once the car was parked, the three of us (whose ages put together equalled the combined ages of at least ten of the majority of the others with whom we were now walking) went with the flow. Crossing the road to the place for which we were looking, gave no clue about its purpose. Squat and simple, even stark. Now there were some young people especially but also 'oldies' like us everywhere. Turning a corner of the building there was a large simple notice with letters at least sixty



centimetres high (two feet – but we are in France!) says “SILENCE”, an instruction one member of our party with Yorkshire Nonconformist independence at first failed to recognise! As we entered this stark building, resembling a large aircraft hangar, we collected our papers. Inside the noise was the sound of people moving about.

We chose to take a seat on one of the benches lining the wall, put there especially for oldies, like us. In front of us now was a short terrace with about eight steps leading down to the large central area, where younger, more ambulant, people were beginning to gather. Organ music now broke the silence with some beautifully appropriate Mozart and, from our right, white clad men entered the building, one at a time, as if they were gliding. We were in Taize and these were some of the monks that make up that community. Each seemed to have his own place, some seated on simple chairs, others kneeling as they faced the direction of the rising sun.



The organ music stopped and there was silence. On the wall across from us an electronic screen flashed a number. We turned to our papers and our book to find the chant indicated. The music then led us into singing a verse from a Psalm. We sang in German on this occasion but, later, we were to sing in French, Latin, Polish and other languages – even English! The words were like mantras and the sound building and fading. At other times we

sang verses from the New Testament, all straightforward and without commentary. Worship flowed without any introductions, instructions or even an offering. We heard Bible readings, usually three versions, one after the other, and always one in English. There was no sermon, simply about ten minutes silence. No, I didn't think I could have either but I tried and the silence drew me in.

I thought on the Biblical texts and focused on the words with nobody to interrupt my thoughts. We sang some more and prayed, including prayers for our families, friends and you, our worshipping community in Wolverhampton, focussing also on War Zones, areas of Deprivation or Natural Disaster. Prayers for 'home' included the UK, France, many other European countries, Russia, North and South America as well as Asia and Africa.

All too soon we were struggling to our feet to make our journey back to our Bed and Breakfast accommodation. We had been drawn all this way to experience in worship what Rudolph Otto described as having "a sense of numinous," a vibrant sense of the "other." We

felt enveloped in a cloud that was embracing and awesome. On Sunday we shared in a truly ecumenical Holy Communion with other people from which denomination or country we knew not, but with whom we knew a sense of the sweetest fellowship none the less!

It was so refreshing to gather with a congregation made up of virile young people tempered with the likes of us, but mostly young, and to see so many males gathered in worship. We had been to Taize, that remarkable religious community sitting on its little hill about five miles from the city of Cluny. This ancient town is where, perhaps, the most important religious revival the church has experienced, had its origin. But that's another story. Cluny was also where we had our overnight accommodation in a house with medieval foundations. No doubt we shall return.

Rev. Ivor Sperring



BECKMINSTERAMA

Open Way

Alternate Tuesdays at 8pm



Dates and venues to be advised in Church Notices.

Contact Hilda Evans Tel: 421777

Apr 18 Engelberg 7.00pm

May 9 83 Coalway Road 7.30pm

May 23 Engelberg 7.00pm

Monday Focus

Everyone is welcome to join us at Monday Focus at 8pm on Mondays in the Beckminster Coffee Bar.

Apr 10 Lent

Rev Ivor Sperring

Apr 24 Blood Bikes

Alan Greenman

May 8 90 Years of Wolverhampton

Phil Jones

May 22 Walk and Meal

June 5 AGM followed by

Music, Music, Music

-The Pearsons

Contacts: Ann Holt Tel: 650812

Margaret Nicklin Tel: 742537

Emmaus Group

Meet Thursdays at 7.45 pm. All welcome

Contact: Janet Anderson Tel: 337404

Apr 6 222 Jeffcock Road

May 4 4 Highlands Road

MESSY CHURCH (I)

Monthly — Fridays

3.30 - 5.45 pm. Fun for all the family

Contact Wendy Ashwood Tel: 831637

This is a typical week in the life of Beckminster Methodist Church.

- All groups meet at the church unless otherwise stated
- New members are always welcome at any group

Sunday

10.30am Crèche and Junior Church

10.30am Morning Worship

6.30pm Evening Worship

Monday

9.30 - 12.30pm Art Group

10.30am Prayer Meeting

2.00 - 4.00pm Art Group

6.15pm Brownies

8.00pm Monday Focus

Tuesday

9.45am The Toddler Group

1.30pm Art Group

4.15pm Dinky Divas 'N' Dudes

6.15pm Brownies

8.00pm Open Way

Wednesday

11.00am Luncheon Club

5.45pm Rainbows

6.30pm 'Soaring Spirits'

7.30pm Horticultural Society

7.30pm Happy Feet Dance Group

Thursday

9.45am The Toddler Group

2.00 - 4.00pm Take a Break

5.00 - 6.00pm Tai Chi

7.45pm Emmaus Group

7.00 - 9.00pm St. John's Ambulance

Friday

3.30pm Monthly Messy Church

7.00-9.00pm Gateway Group (weekly)

Saturday

Communion Services

The sharing of bread and wine takes place on four Sundays a month, either during the morning or evening worship or as an early Sunday morning service at 9.00am on first and third Sundays. Everyone is welcome.

Girls Uniformed Organisations

Rainbows 5 – 7 yrs

Wednesdays 5.45pm

Brownies 7-10 yrs

Mondays & Tuesdays 6.15pm

Various activities according to age – include crafts, cooking, badge work, swimming, service to others, pack holidays, hikes and camps.

Contact: Julie Tonks

Tel: 01952 461006



Take a Break

Thursdays weekly during term times

2.00 – 4.00pm

Indoor bowling. For people wanting to meet new friends and try something different. All welcome.

Contact: David Jones

Tel: 762408



Crèche and Sunday Club

Whilst the crèche allows parents of very young children to worship together, the five departments of Sunday Club explore the Christian faith in exciting ways appropriate to their age.

Toddlers

Tuesdays and Thursdays,

9.45 – 11.15 am.

Approx. 40 Toddlers with Mums, Dads, carers or grandparents meet for mutual support whilst toddlers play.

Contacts:

Barbara Bennett Tel: 341877 (Tuesdays)

Jennifer Cromie Tel: 338320 (Thursdays)



Luncheon Club

Wednesdays 11.00am – 3.00pm

25 housebound people and helpers meet for coffee, lunch and tea. A short entertainment and epilogue. An opportunity to meet people, chat etc to relieve loneliness. A caring service provided by volunteers (who are always needed)

Contact: Tess Davies Tel: 07789 260953

Boys Uniformed Organisations

Beavers 6 – 8 years Thursday 6.15 – 7.15 pm

Cubs 8 – 10 years Monday 6.15 – 7.45 pm

Scouts 10 – 14 years Wednesday 7.00 – 9.00 pm

All groups meet at Scout HQ in Skidmore Avenue, for badge work, crafts, games, various activities and service. Camps.

Contact: Sheila White Tel: 332134

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THE GOOD OLD DAYS

One Friday evening a few weeks ago I was flicking through various Freeview channels on the handset for our television. By chance I came upon Freeview 9 (BBC Four) which was showing a programme first televised in the late 1970s. It happened to be a performance of *The Good Old Days*, which for nearly thirty years had been a popular BBC television light entertainment programme.

The *Good Old Days* was based on a typical old time music hall show and performed from the Leeds City Varieties, situated on The Headrow. It recreated an authentic atmosphere of Victorian and Edwardian music hall with songs, sketches and acts of those eras and performed by then present-day artistes (Arthur Askey, John Inman, Max Bygraves, Bernie Clifton, Ken Dodd - with one of his 'tickle sticks' – Moira Anderson and Eartha Kitt to name but a few) all in the style of the original old time entertainers. The first act on every show was always eight members of former Players Theatre in London singing and dancing lively choruses and routines.

The invited audience was always dressed in period costume and joined in with the singing, especially *Down at the old Bull and Bush* – sung by the whole cast to close every programme. Each show was compered by Leonard Sachs, who as Chairman, sat in a pulpit-like structure at the side of the stage to announce every act. He was always first on stage, entering through the curtains, waving a large silk handkerchief in flamboyant style and gestures. One by one, he proceeded to announce the artiste(s) using complicated, tongue-twisting adjectives to describe the type of person or act that was about to be performed. There was always much inter-play between artiste(s) and audience whether they be comedian, singer or other speciality act. The atmosphere was electric as everyone present entered into the spirit of the evening's entertainment.

I recall such TV programmes with much pleasure as a few years ago as I had occasion

to visit the City Varieties during the televising of one of these shows. The reason for this being that, at the time, I was researching and writing a musical play on the career of the famous male-impersonator, Vesta Tilley, to be performed by my musical/acting group at our local Methodist church in Sheffield. I had previously looked at writing about Marie Lloyd but found her life story was far too bawdy (with her having had three husbands and her singing of some rather 'saucy' songs) to present in a church hall. On the other hand, the story of Vesta Tilley (real name Matilda Alice Powles) was much milder and followed her career from early girlhood in Worcester (where she was born in 1864 in Commandery Street) to her farewell performance on the London Coliseum in 1920.

Due to the age range depicted in her career I split the part of Tilley between a young girl of ten and a more mature actress in her early twenties, Rosemary Bray. She was one of our church members and played the part brilliantly. Rosemary had been specially trained for the part and musical numbers by former male impersonator on the professional stage, Miss Elsie Prince, who happened to live locally. It also helped with publicity that the show was produced to coincide with the centenary of Vesta Tilley's birth in 1964. The man whom she married in 1890, Walter de Frece, was later knighted for services to his country in the war effort (WW1). Vesta then became Lady de Frece so her life was almost what one might describe as a 'rags to riches' story.

For authenticity in the script I needed to try and recapture the atmosphere of a music hall so, one Sunday evening when I knew they would be televising the show, my colleague and I went up to Leeds and managed to bribe one of the commissionaires with a fiver to let us in the back door. We sat at the back of the theatre to watch the show out of sight of TV cameras. (These only covered the front few rows in which costumed members of the audience were sitting!) It was a great experience and gave me plenty of material to work with whilst writing the script.

For a start, I decided I would try and make the performances of my play *Onstage, Miss Tilley!* as much like an authentic music hall show as I could. This was largely done by writing in a part of a 'Chairman', who seated at the side of the stage, was able to announce each of the scenes



in sequence. It so happened the gentleman who played the role of the Chairman was the grandson of a man who had actually been chairman at a local music hall some fifty years earlier. A nice touch as he was able to use the same hammer and gavel as his grandfather to announce each of the scenes!

The story was told in 'flashbacks' from when Matilda (Tilley) was a young girl and helped her violinist father, known as Harry Ball, who ran an old hall in Worcester. She first appeared onstage at nearly four and by six had surprised and shocked some folk by appearing in male clothing. This soon became accepted and became very popular, later for her to appear at provincial halls in the Midlands as 'the Great Little Tilley'. The gender ambiguity of her name started to cause problems with audiences so she and her father were asked to come up with another. They chose the name of Vesta Tilley and she was billed as this for the first time in April 1878. (Vesta referred to both the Roman goddess of hearth and home and also Swan 'Vesta' safety matches!)

Early on she performed songs of Sims Reeves, then a celebrated tenor, and some sentimental pieces about little boys. As she got older she followed other male impersonators into songs about young men behaving either embarrassingly or badly – *Following in father's footsteps; Burlington Bertie; The girls I've left behind me;* and *Naughty Boy!* Along with these during the First World War were a number of military characters. She and her husband ran a military recruitment drive, when she sang such ditties as *Jolly Good Luck to the girl who loves a*

soldier; and *The Army of Today's Alright!* She also performed in hospitals and sold War Bonds.

Without doubt, Vesta Tilley was loved by thousands of men and women and became a household name. On achieving this status she made an effort to underline her femininity to protect herself against criticism.

She wore the latest ladies' fashions off stage, glamorously clad in furs and jewellery, as befitted her role and status. Her farewell tour took a year to complete around the provinces between 1919 and 1920 but she made her final appearance, aged 56, at the London Coliseum.

One of her main reasons for retirement was her husband wanted to become an MP and she had been outshining him as a public figure. For the remainder of her life she lived as Lady de Frece, moving to Monte Carlo upon Sir Walter's own retirement from politics as an MP for Ashton-under-Lyne and, later, Blackpool. She died in London in 1952, aged 88 and is buried alongside her husband at Putney Vale Cemetery, where a black granite memorial marks the spot.

It was rather ironic that some years ago I happened to be speaking to a branch of the Black Country Society in Kidderminster when I received an unexpected surprise. Another speaker that evening was a lady who gave a short resume on the life of Vesta Tilley. It turned out she was actually Vesta Tilley's own niece! I later went to visit her in her flat in Finchfield to discuss her aunt in more detail and, at the same time, allowed her to read my original script. She was most complimentary and I felt it was almost like obtaining Tilley's own approval of what I'd written. She said it had brought back to her so many happy memories of a great lady!

Keith Cheetham

DIAMOND DAYS...

*"Love and marriage, love and marriage,
It's an institute you can't disparage...!"*

Just recently, no less than four couples at Beckminster have celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversaries – Alan and Betty Causer's 60th anniversary was on 4 September 2014 and, more recently, Donald and Janet Rushton (29 December 2016), Billy and Hazel Story (19 January 2017) and John and Ann Anderson (9 March 2017). The Anderson's granddaughter, Claire, got married on 4 March this year so it was double celebrations for their family! Sixty years of marriage is an incredible achievement especially when many couples these days barely make it to their Silver 25th anniversaries!

Alan and Betty were married at Slater Street Methodist Church, Darlaston; Donald and Janet at Trinity Methodist Church, Wolverhampton; Billy and Hazel at Whitechurch Parish Church, Dublin; whilst John and Ann's wedding was held here at Beckminster.

The latter three couples are also long standing members of The Marrieds' Circle at Beckminster, a group started around the mid-1950s by Sied and Beryl de Wit. The idea came from a need for young married couples, often



Alan and Betty Causer

with families, to get out and have some time for themselves - and any new couples who came to the Church were also invited to join. Members of Questors Youth Club were also roped in to



John and Ann Anderson



Billy and Hazel Story

provide free babysitting and I like to remind Liz Berry, nee O’Gorman, that she was a regular babysitter for the Grahams!! She also sat for Ken and Margaret Morris. The Marrieds Circle would meet at Beckminster every Thursday evening as a prayer and discussion group and regularly had speakers, either from the Church itself or outside of it. Not all members were from Beckminster’s congregation though – Tom and Madeline Jones brought their neighbour along who was a Buddhist!

As well as the weekly meetings, the couples would meet on the last Saturday of each month for a relaxing coffee evening for a more social aspect and everyone would take it in turns to be hosts.

Throughout the 50s, 60s and early 70s, yearly trips for all the families were made to a farm at Llanmynech, on the border of Montgomeryshire, Powys and Shropshire. Apparently, the farmer and his wife were Methodists but how the connection was made is not known. Margaret Morris remembers the offspring of The Marrieds playing around the haystacks so it suggests these outings were probably made on a Saturday during the school summer holidays.

Other outings were made to Sutton Park too. On one occasion the convoy of cars set off for home only to come to a halt a mile or so up the road because someone realised they had left their baby behind at the picnic site!

Sadly, many of those involved with The Marrieds Circle have now passed away and the weekly meetings ceased a good few years ago. However, the remaining members still meet for a coffee and a chat once a month.

In these modern times, the institute of marriage may not be as revered as it used to be so all at Beckminster would like to say many congratulations to all four couples on their long marriages!

Hazel Graham



Donald and Janet Rushton

Don't forget!
copy deadline for
June - July Issue
May 7th 2017

CHRISIAN AID HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR OVER 70 YEARS
It was originally founded to help alleviate the plight of refugees in Europe

**THIS YEAR WILL CELEBRATE THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY
OF CHRISTIAN AID WEEK**

The focus will be to help alleviate the plight of refugees world wide!

Many thanks to everyone who has supported us over the years and continues to do so today by your **ACTION** your **GIVING** and your **PRAYERS**

**BECKMINSTER WILL BE WORKING IN CHRISTIAN AID WEEK THIS
YEAR MAY 14TH TO 21ST 2017**

We are reprinting the following article written by Daleep Mukarji - erstwhile Director of Christian Aid:-

Why we do what we do



What is it Christian Aid does, and why?

How are we different from other international aid agencies?

A little history may help answer these frequently asked questions.

Christian Aid was founded in 1945 when Christians wanted to offer relief and reconciliation in post-war Europe.

From its early days Christian Aid has assisted people and communities on the basis of need, regardless of race, religion or nationality.

Today it is the official relief, development and advocacy agency of 41 sponsoring churches in Britain and Ireland, and it is part of the worldwide church community. Christian Aid is, self-evidently, a Christian organisation.

The board, appointed by the sponsoring churches, is trustee of the vision, purpose and values of Christian Aid, supplying a mandate to work for poverty eradication. We are active in some of the world's poorest countries.

What we believe

Christian Aid's work is founded on Christian faith and powered by hope. It acts to change an unjust world through charity, providing practical love and care for neighbours in need. It is driven by the gospel of good news to the poor, and inspired by the vision of a new Earth where everyone lives in justice, peace and plenty.

We help those in need

Christian Aid follows the teaching of Jesus Christ, who commanded his followers to love their neighbour and work for a better world. Jesus identified with the poor, excluded, weak, sick and oppressed. He said he wanted everyone to have life, abundantly, hence, 'We believe in life before death'.

Christian Aid is prophetic, outspoken and on the side of the poor and marginalised; we are agents of change.

Christian Aid believes everyone is created equal, with inherent dignity and basic rights. When people are dehumanised – denied food, water, dignity, justice, education, healthcare and chance for an income – Christian Aid stands with them in the struggle to realise their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

We are inspired by great Christian visionaries like South African anti-apartheid and humanitarian justice activist Desmond Tutu, US civil rights movement leader Martin Luther King and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, participant in the German resistance



against Nazism.

We believe in the just and sustainable use of the earth and its resources so that the greed of one generation will not create poverty for the next.

We are proud of our Christian identity and heritage. It defines who we are and how we work.

What we do

We cross divides of religion, race and nationality, acting as the good Samaritan and going the extra mile to proclaim release to captives.

Wherever we can make a difference, Christian Aid works with and through local organisations – our partners. For many years Christian Aid has worked with partners of all faiths and none who share our vision of championing the eradication of poverty and injustice.

We work in around 50 countries, for example Afghanistan, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Colombia, Nigeria, Kenya and Brazil.

We are frequently not alone: Christian Aid often works with sister agencies, such as Action by Churches Together International, in disaster relief activities.

With our partners and allies, we uphold a commitment to honesty, professionalism, mutual respect, accountability and diversity.

We are committed to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Code of Conduct, meaning we never link aid with evangelism.

Our staff share the diversity of nationality, faith and ethnicity yet are all committed to the essential purpose of Christian Aid and its role as a Christian relief, development and advocacy agency.

Christian Aid is a voice for the poor, not afraid of getting political.

We believe that God does not want poverty, injustice, discrimination and unsustainable development in the world.

So we campaign for change, challenging structures and systems that make and keep people poor. The values of justice, peace and love must challenge the world's values

and our own, prompting us to re-examine how our lifestyles and decisions affect others.

That is our charitable purpose and part of our Christian vocation. It does not mean getting involved in party politics but it does mean confronting with the truth people who have the power to change things. Christian Aid does not try to hide its anger when poor people are exploited.

Hope into action

Whether they have a faith or not, people support Christian Aid because they know we have the courage and integrity to take the difficult positions.

They expect us to deliver good-quality aid that tangibly helps people in need. They know we are a bold, incisive, effective, efficient, results orientated, growing and ambitious organisation that equips and encourages people to put their faith into action.

All our work is based on the spirit of partnership. We want people to pray for us, to act, to give and to get involved with us in a variety of ways.

Together we can have great influence and impact. We will educate and mobilise people from all kinds of backgrounds to build a global movement that can change the course of history.

Our faith tells us that ending poverty and suffering is not simply a dream but an imperative from God. It gives us the confidence to turn this hope into practical action.

Working with others is vital to the nature and purpose of Christian Aid, and we take seriously interfaith and intercommunity dialogue and cooperation.

We are part of the commitment by churches in Britain and Ireland to help build a more inclusive, just and sustainable world community: one world – our world – where all people can live with dignity."



THE ALDERSGATE EXPERIENCE

After his return from a rather unsuccessful stay in America, John Wesley was devastated at his sense of failure. His brother, Charles, had experienced similar feelings of frustration with his own earlier return from Georgia and came back a sick man. On arriving back in London in May 1738 the brothers went along to a religious society on the 1 May. They both very much felt at a crossroads in life.

At the time Charles was recovering from an illness and staying at the house of John Bray, a Moravian, who lived in a place called Little Britain, just off Aldersgate Street. It was on Whit Sunday, 21 May, that as he was falling asleep, he overheard Bray's sister say to someone – "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and believe and thou shalt be healed of all thy infirmities." These words immediately struck a cord with Charles and he soon felt himself at peace with his Maker.

John went to see Charles that evening and learned of his news and rejoiced for his brother's sake. Yet he felt dismayed that he also did not feel the same way himself. Prior to his conversion, Charles spotted a text which, in his own case as a musician and writer of hymns, was to prove more than prophetic. It said "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even as a thanksgiving unto our God!" (He was, as well as his preaching and other attributes, to go on to write over 7,000 hymns.)

Three days later John underwent a similar experience himself which would not only change his own life but very soon begin to change the face of England. The event took place at a small religious society meeting to which he had been invited. John recorded in his Journal for that date, 24 May 1738: *In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the 'Epistle to the Romans'. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed, I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the laws of sin and death.*

Of that day, Charles Wesley wrote of his older brother, John, "Towards ten, my brother was brought in triumph by a troop of our friends and declared "I believe!" This event and date have been commemorated ever since as John Wesley's conversion. During this time, John also worshipped in the Chancel of nearby St Paul's Cathedral between 24 to 26 May 1738. (An area not normally open to the public.) In the north-west corner of the churchyard is a statue of John Wesley, erected in 1988. Each of these events are still remembered both in London and around other parts of the Methodist Connexion. In the calendars of the British Methodist Church and United Methodist Church the event of John Wesley's conversion is publically commemorated in church services on the nearest Sunday to 24 May, called *Aldersgate Sunday*.

This year, Wesley Day (24 May) falls on a Wednesday. In London a pilgrimage will begin at St Paul's Cathedral at 5.00 pm for Evensong. The procession will then make its way back to Wesley's Chapel in City Road via what is termed as the *Aldersgate Flame*. (This is a large modern bronze sculpture which contains a facsimile of Wesley's Journal for the 24 May 1738. It stands outside the Museum of London and is more or less sited on the place of John's conversion.) Followers will then proceed to Bunhill Fields, a large burial ground for Non-conformists, to visit the grave of Susannah Wesley, mother of the Wesley family, who is buried there. Finally, at 7.00pm a Service will be held across the road in Wesley's Chapel, City Road, which stands immediately opposite Bunhill Fields. (There is also a possibility that a re-enactment day may take place in John Wesley's House, adjacent to Wesley's Chapel, when some of the stewards dress in period costume and serve period food.)

Over in Bristol, the norm is to commemorate Wesley Day at the New Room (the first Methodist Chapel built by John Wesley). However, development work is at present in progress and is outlined in a separate article in this magazine.

Cornwall was always a favourite place for John Wesley to visit during his journeys around the

country. Two favourite places where he stopped off were what is now known as Wesley's Cottage, in the small hamlet of Trewint (signposted off the A30 at Five Lanes) and at Gwennap Pit, near Redruth.

Firstly, Trewint was a favourite stopping place and in the early 18th century the cottage was home of stonemason, Digory Isbell, and his wife Elizabeth. They welcomed Wesley and his preachers, and Digory extended his premises to contain an upper and lower room which preachers could use at any time. John often preached there from the stone porch. On Sunday 21 May 2017 at 4.00 pm Rev Alistair Bolt (from West Penwith Circuit) will be preaching from this porch. The graves of Digory and his wife, Elizabeth, can be seen in the nearby churchyard of St. Nonna's, Altarnun. After the service at Trewint the party will take tea at Altarnun parish hall and at 6.30 pm listen to a choir perform in the church, followed by a commemorative Service. (This church is the second largest on Bodmin Moor and was mentioned in Daphne du Maurier's novel *Jamaica Inn*.)

Gwennap Pit is one of Methodism's most unusual sites. It originated from collapsed tin mine workings which created a large green hollow and was first discovered by John Wesley in 1762. It soon became his favourite open air preaching place in Cornwall and he went there on eighteen occasions, always on a Sunday afternoon. In 1806 work commenced on remodelling the Pit as a memorial to John Wesley into its present conical and tiered shape leading down to a central pivot. Afternoon services are held every Sunday afternoon during the months of July and August. It is quite an atmospheric experience.

These are just some of the activities which have been scheduled to take place to commemorate Wesley Day but there will be many other Methodist churches or sites which will take the opportunity to remember the conversion and works of our founder, John Wesley, so many years ago.

Keith Cheetham

NEWS OF THE NEW ROOM, BRISTOL

Editorial note: Over recent months, the New room (the very first Methodist chapel built by John Wesley) has been undergoing some extensive and much needed developments. It is on schedule to open on 10 April and two events have, so far, been planned:- A rededication service in June (attended by the President and Vice-President of Conference followed by a Royal visit in June.) The following background information has been provided for us by David Worthington, Manager at the New Room. It is hoped a number of our members will wish to visit Bristol later this year to see the results of all the work. We wish them well!

"2017 will see the most substantial change at the New Room, Bristol, since the 18th century with the opening of the new three-storey visitor centre in the Horsefair Courtyard of the New Room. The new building will accommodate a 40-seater café and shop on the ground floor, library and archives facilities on the first floor and the conference/education centre on the second floor.

All floors will be served by a lift and stairs and there will be a linked entrance to the new and expanded museum above the chapel.

The museum will tell the story of the Wesleys and Bristol in the 18th century and how the movement grew and developed across the country. It will feature many original objects and furnishings from Wesley's time at the New Room as well as newly commissioned interactive displays. There will also be a focus on the expansion of Methodism to America through the respective works of George Whitefield, Thomas Webb, Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke, each of whom had a significant Bristol connection.

To conclude the tour, legacy rooms within the museum will prompt visitors to reflect on how many of the issues that Methodism addressed in the 18th century continue to challenge and demand responses from us today."

David Worthington

SINGING THE FAITH

- 1800 STYLE

Contrary to popular belief hymn singing is a relatively recent development in terms of western Christian history. It reached its peak in the Victorian era when an astonishing 400,000 hymns were estimated to have been composed during her sixty-four year reign. Its popularity then was largely due to the influence of the nonconformists, principally the Methodists, who employed it to great effect, initially in their great outdoor meetings and later in their chapels. There had been small hymn collections published earlier but it wasn't until 1780 that John Wesley's original *Collection of Hymns for the People called Methodists* was printed. It still took until the 1820's before the singing of hymns in the Anglican church was officially sanctioned.

Before then singing in Anglican churches was largely confined to metrical psalms, as hymns were considered rather vulgar. The attitude was summed up by the view of one clergyman who said that "No man should pretend that he could make better hymns than the Holy Ghost. His collection is large enough; it wants no addition. It is as perfect as its author and wants no improvement". Singing was frequently unaccompanied and led by a precentor, usually the parish clerk. He often read out each line before the congregation joined in – a lengthy process which led to Samuel Johnson complaining, after attending a service in 1662, that it had taken an hour to get through a single psalm. This process was known as "lining out" and continued in some churches until well into the 19th century. Indeed the Methodist Conference in 1856 voted against the practice being abolished.

Only the wealthiest churches had an organ until the Victorian era. In others the accompaniment, if any, might comprise a small choir, supplemented by a few instrumentalists, who performed in a gallery at the rear of the church; hence their name "West Gallery bands". The instruments might include clarinets, bassoons, flutes and sometimes stringed instruments.

When the psalms were sung the congregation would turn round to face the gallery band. The standard of performance was very amateurish, best illustrated in a Thomas Hardy short story set in 1840 or thereabouts. The band in question had, during the Christmas season "been out on one randy after another almost every other night" and as a consequence were not best prepared for Sunday worship. Added to this, due to the extreme cold in the church, they secreted in a gallon of hot brandy and beer, keeping it warm in a bass viol bag. Consequently when the vicar gave out the last hymn the leader struck up the favourite jig of the night before, "The Devil among the Tailors", and called upon every man to kiss his partner under the mistletoe. Understandably the vicar was not amused and the following week sent for a barrel organ, equipped to play twenty two tunes, to replace them. Though the account is fictional it has about it the air of being only a slight exaggeration of the truth. It was certainly true that around this time many of the gallery bands were replaced by barrel organs with a very limited range of tunes.

John Wesley's Journal records that he however was not enamoured of some of the gallery traditions or some of the tunes. After a visit to Neath parish church, where he had been invited to preach, he wrote in his Journal -

"Greatly disgusted at the manner of singing. 1. Twelve or fourteen persons kept it to themselves, and quite shut out the congregation. 2. These repeated the same words, contrary to all sense and reason, six or ten times over. 3. According to the shocking custom of the modern music, different persons sang different words at one and the same moment: an intolerable insult on common sense and utterly incompatible with any devotion". (One wonders what he would have made of some of the present day hymns and songs)

Dissenting congregations had however incorporated hymns in their services since the



middle of the 18th century, encouraged by those written by Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley, probably the two greatest hymn writers in the English language. Watts is credited with composing some 600 hymns and Wesley with at least ten times that number. One of the first English hymnals was produced in 1764 for use in the Countess of Huntingdon's chapels.

Wesley's *Collection*, sixteen years later, claimed that it contained "all the truths of our most holy religion, whether speculative or practical", Charles being by far the chief author. The early Methodist hymns, unlike the rather stilted metrical psalms, were highly emotional and dramatic, as befitted the exciting movement that led to their composition, but they incurred the displeasure of the established church on this account. Only later did the Anglican church come to appreciate the biblical and doctrinal qualities of the upstart Methodist hymns and adopt many of them themselves.

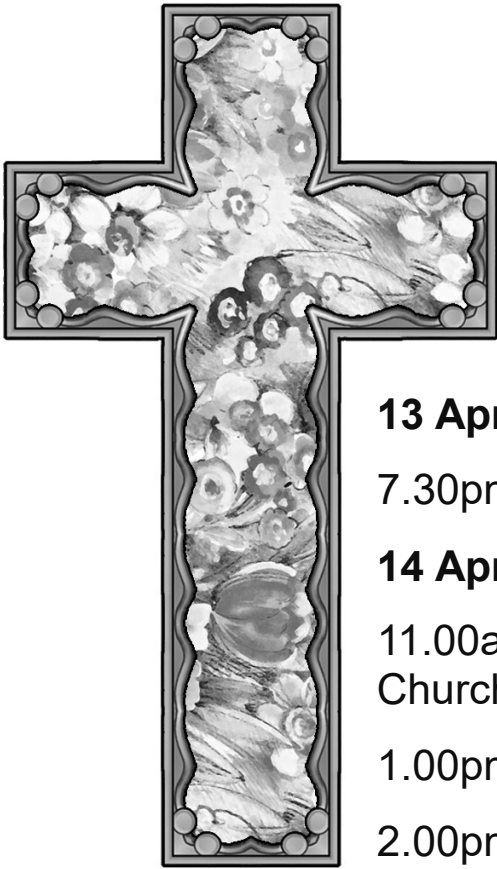
The charge of emotionalism was further encouraged by, in particular, the Primitive Methodists' enthusiastic singing which led to them being christened "The Ranters". Such was the enthusiasm with which they took up the new habit of hymn singing that one anonymous

anti-Methodist tract published in 1805 complained that the typical labourer was returning from work and taking "his wife and children from the wheel and other useful employments in the house" in order that they might sing hymns together. George Eliot's *Adam Bede*, published in 1859, but set at the turn of the century, refers to Methodist singing on the village green and Charlotte Brontë's *Shirley*, set in 1811, describes the singing in the Wesleyan chapel and then quotes heavily from *Wesley's Collection*.

Hymn singing may have only taken off in the established church just before Queen Victoria ascended to the throne but it still continues today, almost two hundred years later, sometimes in a very different form and with very different instruments. Some would say we Methodists have a lot to answer for!

Alan Causer

I am greatly indebted for most of the above information to the book *Abide With Me* (1997) by Ian Bradley, a lecturer in the Department of Theology and Church History of the University of Aberdeen.



Easter Services at Beckminster

13 April Maundy Thursday

7.30pm Holy Communion

14 April Good Friday

11.00am All Age Worship at Lea Road Community Church

1.00pm Frugal Lunch for Christian Aid

2.00pm Service of Meditation

15 April 10.00am for 10.30am

Hot Cross Bun Distribution

16 April Easter Sunday

8.00am Holy Communion led by Rev. Linda Bishop

9.00am Easter Breakfast

10.30am Morning Worship led by Dr. Janet Anderson

6.30pm Holy Communion led by Rev. Linda Bishop



Any views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the editorial team, Beckminster or the Methodist Church. All details published in this newsletter were accurate at the time of going to press.