

Methodist News

(Keswick and Cockermonth Circuit)



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DECEMBER 2009, JANUARY, FEBRUARY 2010

Jennet's letter:

Over the course of the next few months I have to put together my plans for the sabbatical I will be taking from July to September in 2010. All Methodist ministers are required to take sabbaticals – the first in the tenth year of ministry and then every seven years - because the Connexion recognises that if we are to go forward in ministry, sometimes we need to take some time to step back. There is of course a great Christian tradition of stepping back out of the hurly burly of everyday life in order to reconnect with God. When we were on holiday in Southern Ireland during the summer, we learned about the monks who made their home on the remote and inhospitable island, Skellig Michael, in the sixth century. Few of us will feel called to follow such an austere way of life, but we can learn from those who are. We need to 'get away from it all' if we are to hear God's voice and discover how God is seeking to mould us into the people we are created to be. It's noticeable that Jesus himself in key moments in his life made time for quietness, drawing away from the crowds, spending time alone high in the hills, so that he could focus on the presence of God and be made ready to meet the demands that would be made on him. A group of us have been on a 'Journey into Prayer' over the last few weeks and, not surprisingly, many of the approaches to prayer that we have been discovering involve that stepping back – stepping back into silence, stepping back from using words and even stepping back from the activity of the mind and emotions to open up that place deep within where our relationship with God can deepen. But we don't then stay there – it's the place we go so God can begin the work of making us ready to move forward, just as it was for Jesus. If you missed out on the Journey into Prayer and feel God may be calling you to that deeper relationship, will you join us so that together we can open ourselves to God and to the transformation that will prepare us for God's work in our world today?

Shalom, Jennet

'PASSION PLAY'

We are delighted to be hosting a performance by **the *Riding Lights Theatre Group*** in Keswick on the evening of 6 March. Riding Lights productions are a professional Christian theatre and music group who tour several productions each year which they write, direct and perform. This is something not to be missed, so put the date in your diary now!

Further details, tickets etc to follow.

The Leprosy Mission

We had a very good visit from John Roughly in October, when he cooked up some very interesting vegetarian recipes for us and shared with us some of the things the mission is doing in the world. It was such a shame that despite plentiful early publicity, so few people managed to turn up on the night. Those that did had a most enjoyable evening of tasty cooking and John's usual Tyneside wit.

We have lost a few staunch TLM collectors this year, but have also gained some, so our 60 plus faithful "L box" collectors have so far donated £1140.-- . With another month or more to the end of the year we are well on target to reach last year's total.

A big thank you to you all on behalf of all those suffering from leprosy and the effects of it. Not only can the disease be very disfiguring, but it can also divide and destroy families and cause severe hardship for those involved. As well as multidrug therapy, TLM is working to rehabilitate families and provide training and education for those affected – another step on the path of Christian tolerance and understanding.

Please keep praying for this vital work and keep filling up those little red "L" boxes! I have plenty of spares if anyone would like one. See me in church on Sunday.

Blessings Mary Stocks

CIRCUIT CHARITY

For 2008-9 this was Action for Children. Three Churches informed me of their contributions.

Total amount was £3550-27. By far the largest part of this was from Keswick.

For 2009-10 the designated charity is Methodist Homes for the Aged.

Norman Howarth

Lead me from death to Life,
from falsehood to Truth.
Lead me from despair to Hope,
from fear to Trust.
Lead me from hate to Love,
from war to Peace.
Let Peace fill our heart, our world, our universe.
Peace, peace, peace.

Satish Kumar (from 'Peace in your Pocket')

KENYAN CONNECTION

Firstly, I'd like to say a big thank you again for all your support for the stall. During the last 3 months there has been an increase in the amount raised which will be most welcome in the current dire drought situation in Kenya.

Mary received a letter from Barbara at Maua Methodist Hospital recently. She writes of the rise in fuel costs to run the hospital generator, and that she cannot remember Maua being so hot and dry, not even in the drought of 1984. Rivers have dried up and water has to be pumped up from bore-holes – adding to the electricity costs. Apparently the met office has predicted that there may well be heavy rains to come, but this is not entirely good news as the meagre crops will then be washed away, together with causing damage to vital roads for supplies and access. On top of this the government has had a mass recruitment drive and many clinical officers and nurses have left. She asks us to pray for stability for the next few years as they seek solutions to the problems they face, as there is no way they can match the salaries that the government has offered.

.....Kenyan Connection stall and V.A.T.....

'VAT' you ask...?!! Surely not!! No, this isn't some imposed tax by Her Majesty's government, but just a reminder that everything we sell on the stall has this important value added element to it... So when you enjoy your Kenyan Connection breakfast marmalade, or a nice slice or two of our delicious tea-breads and naughty cakes, or maybe some biscuits, it is a **Value-Added-Treat**. It won't diminish those indulgent calories, but it will help keep those little ones in Kenya fed, clothed and educated. Please keep supporting us to help them, and don't forget to remember these struggling people in your prayers too!

Janice Westley (Lorton Street)

Excuses for not attending church.

I came across the following item* when I was turning out some papers recently. Unfortunately I cannot give credit to the original author as I had obviously quickly hand copied it from-I-know-not-where in the distant past. Please forgive me if you've read this before, but I not only found this rather humorous, but thought provoking too. Perhaps we should apply this principle to other areas where we give 'plausible' excuses for not doing certain things.

*If you took the excuses people use for not going to church and applied them to other important areas of life you'd realise how inconsistent we can be in our logic.

eg – 10 reasons not to wash...

- 1) I was forced to as a child.
- 2) People who make soap are only after your money.
- 3) I wash on special occasions like Christmas and Easter.
- 4) People who wash are hypocrites – they think they are cleaner than anyone else.
- 5) There are so many kinds of soap I can't decide which one is best.

- 6) I used to wash. It got boring, so I stopped.
- 7) None of my friends wash.
- 8) The bathroom is never warm enough in winter, or cool enough in summer.
- 9) I'll start washing when I get older and dirtier.
- 10) I can't spare the time to wash. *

Hmmmm! Janice W.

FREEDOM.

I'm writing this on November 9th when the celebrations are being held for the 20th anniversary of the breaking down of the Berlin Wall. That brought freedom for many millions of East Germans from years of oppression and tyranny and great joy was to be seen in their faces on the television on that day.

Yesterday, many of us, I'm sure went to church and took part in worship – read our bibles and sang hymns and had fellowship with other believers. As I think of our religious freedom, I compare our situation to that of our brothers and sisters in other countries who are persecuted for being Christians. Can we imagine how lonely they must feel? I don't think we can begin to imagine what it must be like to live in a country where such activities would bring us into conflict with the local police and just because we believed in Jesus we could be put into prison, without trial – maybe tortured – or even face death?. This is what is happening to so many millions in many countries of the world where freedom of religion and speech is not allowed, and just being a Christian brings persecution and danger.

Recently a small group of folk came together in the Garden Room at Lorton Street and wrote Christmas cards to send out to these persecuted brothers and sisters of ours – it may be the only card that they will receive – we don't even know that they will be allowed to receive cards and that for them this Christmas may indeed be a very lonely one. BUT we can pray for them and their families who often suffer great hardship as a result of them being imprisoned.

We're a small group here at Christian Solidarity Worldwide – Cumbria Group, meeting 4 times a year when we keep ourselves up-to-date with the worldwide situation on the persecuted church, and we also write cards at Christmas and Easter. We try and follow the CSW in 'being a voice for the voiceless' – if you would like further information about the Group – or CSW – please do contact me – either at 01900-828018 or by email at hazel.tomlinson@btinternet.com

Thank you – and God bless you - Hazel Tomlinson

GLEANINGS FROM OTHER CHURCH MAGAZINES.

Did you know?

Did you know that there are now as many Christians in China as communists! Many Christians in China are so keen to tell their friends and neighbours about the Living Lord, that they pass the messages on even though it may mean persecution.

Are we like the Chinese Christians - Willing to pass the message on?

“Nature is the living, visible garment of God.” *Goethe*

A Christian is a keyhole through which other folk see God. *Robert E Gibson*

The Christian on his knees sees more than the philosopher on tiptoe.

Dwight L Moody

From the Church Notices:

Churchyard maintenance is becoming increasingly difficult. It would therefore be appreciated if parishioners will cut the grass around their own graves.

Thursday night – pot luck supper. Prayer and medication to follow.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and the deterioration of some older ones.

The choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.

Please remember in your prayers any who are sick of our church.

On Tuesday at 4pm there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk please come early.

Next Sunday a special collection will be taken to defray the cost of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the new carpet will come forward and do so.

The Church Garden Party will be held on May 10th.

The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the church hall after the service.

FROM THE REGISTERS:

Keswick

We welcomed by baptism:

16 August - Hannah Jessica Garty and Jodie Redpath

16 September - Scarlett Olivia Allen

18 October - Beth Mae Humble

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Dec 14 7.30pm Local Preachers & Leaders of Worship Meeting, Lorton St

January 30 'Going for Growth' District day led by Rev Steve Wild at Penrith Methodist Church, 10.00 am to 3.00 pm – following on from the District day held earlier in 2009

March 6 Riding Lights at Keswick, 'Passion Play' – venue to be confirmed.

March 10 Circuit Meeting at Brigham

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas Eve:

Keswick

10.00 pm Carol singing in Keswick Market Place for Christian Aid

11.30 pm Holy Communion - Rev Jennet McLeod

Cockermouth

11.30 pm Holy Communion - Rev Sue Edwards

Christmas Day:

Keswick

10.00 am All Age service - Rev Jennet McLeod

Cockermouth

10.00 am Christmas Day worship at Cockermouth URC Church

10.00 am Christmas Day worship at Brigham – Rev Sue Edwards

EDITOR'S NOTE / REQUEST.

Articles in 'WORD' if possible please. However, 'WORD' is **not** used to produce the final magazine. Please do not use fancy formatting as this can be very difficult to transfer.

Got some unusual material? Please 'phone me to discuss how it can best be achieved. Please email or 'phone with any other suggestions.

The Methodist News links the Methodist Churches of the Keswick and Cockermouth Circuit.

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Please note that this magazine is issued quarterly with the preaching plan. Copy for the next edition must be with the editor by **Saturday 13th February** - earlier would be very helpful.