



TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH WOKING  
Weekly Newsletter  
Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2020

**Message from Rev Jackie Case**

Dear Friends,

Another week has passed in this strange half-life that many of us are living. In some ways it feels like walking through a well-lit tunnel the length of which we are not sure of. However, let us take some encouragement from the knowledge that every step brings us closer to emerging into full light and freedom. However, as the poor people of Leicester are discovering, the road to freedom is fraught with the possibility of setbacks and delays.

I read this morning in a local magazine 'The History of the Pandemic' which brought home to me two facts. Firstly, that pandemics, often referred to by our forebears as 'plagues', have been ravaging humanity since well before the birth of Jesus. There may have been a smallpox pandemic as early as 10,000 BC.

Despite our assumption that we are the most internationally mobile generation of the human race, the spread of plagues demonstrates that the demands of trade, commerce, war, conquest and migration have made some of our ancestors much more widely travelled than we might imagine. Secondly, the numbers who have died in such plagues have been huge: the 'Justinian plague' began in 500 AD and killed approximately 26% of the known world's (i.e. the Roman Empire's) population; the 'Black Death' beginning in 1347 AD and subsequent outbreaks until 1352, probably killed hundreds of millions worldwide and up to 60% of the total population of Europe. The term 'quarantine' was coined in Venice, a city frequently afflicted by plagues, and refers to the 40-day period of isolation believed to be the optimum time necessary to contain the spread of an epidemic. And we balk at 14 days! The last great flu pandemic of 1918-1919 provoked similar closures and isolation measures to those we have experienced, infected a third of the world's population and killed 50-100 million worldwide. Although by then they knew about bacteria, viruses were only discovered later. In the light of this, perhaps amid our present frustrations, we should be thankful for today's better understanding of bacteria and virus, which helps us

to know how best to combat pandemic and limit its spread, although admittedly actions may not always have been swift enough or strict enough, and resources such as PPE not available in sufficient quantities.

So, as our minds begin to turn to thoughts of emerging from pandemic lockdown and the re-opening of shops, offices, restaurants, bars, salons, places of entertainment, and of course, churches, what is it that we might have learnt from this once in a lifetime experience? As God's people, called to be prophets and priests, how has God spoken to us as individuals and to our churches through it? For me, returning to the tunnel image with which I began: we emerge from the tunnel in a different place to the one from which we entered it, and it would be foolish and wasteful to seek to go back. God's people have always been a pilgrim people, moving on according to God's prompting, and assured of God's faithful presence with us in new places. Like the patriarch, Abraham, we have set out, not by our own choosing, on an indeterminate journey to an unknown land, for certainly things are unlikely to return to the way they were. But like Abraham, we trust in God's promise: 'I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.' [Genesis 17: 1b – 2 NIV]

*Every blessing, Jackie*

**A Word in Season 15 – The Love Feast**

A service in which bread is broken and water drunk from a common cup\*.

Methodist Love-Feasts included hymn singing, testimonies and prayers.

*(The Making of Methodism, Barrie W Tabraham, Epworth Press, 2010, p192)*

\* Traditionally a two handled cup known as a loving cup, which was passed from person to person.

The Love-Feast was a common feature in the life of the early church but by Wesley's day had fallen into disuse. It was revived by the Moravians, who had a significant contribution into the spiritual development of the Wesley Brothers on their mission to America and the period immediately following their return. Love-Feasts were held quarterly, and sometimes monthly. Entry was by 'ticket only' and some were for women only, others for men, and others for men and women.

Money was collected for the poor, hymns were sung, some having been specially composed\*\*, and prayers were said. The most prominent feature was the sharing of personal testimonies. The 'loving-cup' was passed and the water sipped, this was usually

followed by plain cake or bread. As well as 'fellowship' being spiritually fed was a significant part of the experience. Within Methodism the Love-Feast has always been entirely separate from Holy Communion {sic}.

\*\*You will find Charles Wesley's Love Feast Hymn in StF 646, H&P 756.

Whilst participating in the 'virtual – Zoom' Love-Feast on Sunday, conducted by Rev Graham Horsley, I was reminded of the only other Love-Feast I have attended. It took place towards the end of June 1969; was it really 51 years ago? The Tutor Group I belonged to was invited to share in a Love-Feast on our last weekend before leaving Cliff College.

It was a powerful experience and each of us gave our 'Testimony' as to what we had achieved through our year of study and what we believed God was calling us to do in the future. I had completed my Local Preacher studies and knew that God had called me to preach. I was also becoming aware that I was also being called, not to the Methodist Ministry, as I had thought, but to teaching.

I was also reminded of the experience at Chesterfield station a few days later when twenty or so of us students, leaving for the last time, catching trains to the North, South, East, and West sang from the platforms,

"Down in the valley with my Saviour I would go, where the flowers are blooming and the sweet waters flow, everywhere he leads me I would follow, follow on walking in his footsteps till the crown be won.

Down in the valley with my Saviour I would go, where the storms are sweeping and the dark waters flow. With his hand to lead me I will never, never fear. Dangers cannot fright me if my Lord is near.

Down in the valley, or upon the mountain steep, close beside my Saviour would my soul ever keep. He will lead me safely in the path that he has trod, up to where they gather on the hills of God.

Follow, follow, I will follow Jesus, anywhere, everywhere, I will follow on".  
(WO Cushing)

This year I have completed 53 years of working with children and young people, in education, child-care and children/youth work, and am now a School Governor. Later in the year I will receive my Certificate for completing 50 years as a Local Preacher, I became a Fully Accredited Local Preacher

in June 1970.

If it had been technically possible for us to give our testimony on Sunday, I would have reflected on the past 50 years. In that time through all the valleys and mountains of life, the good times and the bad, Jesus has always been with me. I have not always recognised that at the time but in spite of my mistakes, doubts, fears, and lack of faith I know I have always been loved and never been alone, for Christ has been the answer to my every need.

As a world, nation, and individuals we are passing through one of those valleys where, 'the dark waters flow.' However, we are not alone, our Lord is travelling with us, guiding, encouraging, strengthening, supporting, and empowering every moment.

So dear Friends, at this time:

*May the road rise to meet you, may the wind be always at your back, may the sun shine warm upon your face, may the rain fall softly upon your fields and, until the next Newsletter, may God hold you in the hollow of his hand. (Celtic Blessing-adapted!)*

Graham Warr

### **Song to support Communion inspired by Trinity**

Our Resound Worship song writing challenge for May was to write a song to support Communion as we do it in our local church. So, the song I have just published on my Youtube channel was written very much with Trinity in mind. It is designed to be played/sung through Communion as we often have a song playing as we start taking the sacrament, and right through, till all have received. The big cross hanging high in the front of the sanctuary was the picture I had in mind in the chorus.

The link if you would like to listen to it is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZ1iqesWHlg>  
Glen Penfold

### **'The new normal'**

I had a lovely surprise last Monday. Costa Coffee on Goldsworth Park has re-opened, albeit for takeaways only. Dad and I have 'indulged' a few times since, our first 'proper' coffees in months. It's the little things isn't it? A smidgeon of normality in the week, although as Paul wincingly tells me it will be worse for my bank balance!

My two best friends were both furloughed over the Summer. One is an optician, the other a dental hygienist. The optician is number 8 or 9 in the list of professions most susceptible to Covid viral load. The hygienist is number 2. Whilst I have been savouring

my Flat Whites this week, and looking forward to the day when I can come back into the Church, the optician has been waiting for the call to go back to work without a satisfactory childcare plan in place for her school age boys, & worries about a clinically vulnerable husband, and the hygienist has been fitted with a special respirating mask, eye protection, and a face shield. It's a crude example I know, but lockdown easing for me; coffee and an optimism about returning to work, is potential anxiety, discomfort and risk for them. I suppose that is the reality of post lockdown life isn't it? Don't take things for granted. Savour the small things. Think of those whose jobs put them at risk. Be grateful for being alive and well and able to enjoy the sunshine amidst the showers.

Xx

Dan

### **'The Wey Forward' – Deadline for Copy Extended to 5<sup>th</sup> August**

I had hoped that we would be able to produce a hard copy of Issue 17 of The Wey Forward for September – November but we will have to have another electronic version this time around.

The copy deadline was due to be midnight 5<sup>th</sup> July but given we won't be going to the printers the new deadline will be 5<sup>th</sup> August. As always if you have something ready to send please don't wait for the actual deadline.

Very best wishes,

Sue Howson

### **Did you get the answers right to Valerie's Quiz last week?**

1. Chewing gum
2. Ten
3. Minnesota
4. Kojak
5. Pork Pies
6. Kirov
7. Cologne
8. Cougar
9. Margaret Beckett
10. Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
11. Amy Johnston
12. The Gospel according to St John
13. Aegean Sea
14. Foot
15. Burned at the Stake

### **If so, have a go this week too!**

- Who was prime minister of Britain from 1834- 35 and 1841 – 46?
- Where is the Gluteus Maximus in our body?
- Word that begins with HE and ends with HE?
- Which is the largest of the Windward Islands?

- What kind of bird is a Kite?
- Where does The Sargasso Sea get its name from?
- Another name for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints?
- Which is Canada's second largest city and chief port?
- A Swiss painter and graphic artist 1879- 1940
- When was the Falkland's War?
- Who wrote the novel Les Misérables?
- From what flower does saffron come from?
- What is a palindrome?
- Who commissioned the Doomsday Book?
- What instrument was played by the late Jacqueline du Pre?



Artwork by the mystery artist mentioned above.  
Image from Wikimedia.