

Dear Friends

Hello and how are you feeling today?

I'd like to thank everyone I've met so far for the wonderful welcome, the support and the patience with which my many questions have been answered.



As the newest Lay Outreach Worker for Tewkesbury Church and Apperley Church, the last few weeks have started me following a pathway I had not previously envisaged, and I'm looking forwards to the journey ahead.

It has been several years since I was the 'new person' in a job, or anywhere really, but I have discovered that the emotions I had of old seemed to have reappeared! I have experienced excitement at the prospect of the work ahead; enthusiasm when considering the range of potential opportunities open for both me and the Church, and intermittent episodes of apprehension and self-doubt regarding my ability to become an effective Outreach worker. I pray to God, asking Him to guide me and give me the tools I need to serve Him as He intends.

Can you remember the last time that you were the new person in a group and the feelings you experienced in the beginning?

The bible encourages us all to welcome others and to show compassion towards 'newcomers', whether they are 'new' to the church community or 'new' to faith. We are encouraged, and perhaps challenged, to be non-judgemental whilst accepting 'newbies' with openness, love and respect. Every one of us has gained different knowledge, skills and experiences during our lives so far, which we can bring to share with others. I am optimistic that as a Church community; we can employ a collaborative approach to future developments within our circuit. The potential barrier to this co-operative approach may be the time we have available or at times, the willingness, to do this.

Although the words written by Paul in his letter to the Roman's differ depending on which version of the bible we are reading, the message remains the same in Romans 15:7 saying:

- *'Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.'* (The Bible NRSV, Oxford Press. page.159)
- *'Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.'* (The Holy Bible NIV. 2011. Hodder & Stoughton. Page. 865)

Through my experiences as a current street pastor and previously, whilst working as a learning disabilities nurse with people who could act in a way which was seen as 'challenging' to themselves, others or their environments, I am aware that reaching out to interact and initiate a conversation with people who appear to look or act differently to the social norms that we are accustomed to, can cause some initial apprehension. Whether we mean to or not, it is easy to make initial assumptions about the people we meet based upon their appearances, actions or ways of communication, which unfortunately, can unconsciously lead us to look the other way.

When did we last stop to reflect upon how we felt or reacted upon seeing a person who appeared 'different'? How did the person present themselves to the world? Were they dressed in alternative fashions; covered in tattoos; same sex couples showing displays of affection; living on the streets in soiled clothing, or something else?

I believe that as a part of our human nature we can feel anxious or frightened if witnessing verbal or physical altercations between people, particularly if their angst or focus is directed towards us, or we may find it upsetting when briefly looking through the window of the daily lives experienced by people who do not share the lifestyles or commercial commodities that society generally recognizes as indicators of success.

As Christians, I feel that we do try to be welcoming, patient and empathetic towards others, refraining from viewing those around us

with suspicion, judgement or distain based solely on their physical appearances, actions or our perception of their roles within society.

Within our Church community and family, I feel blessed and thankful that I have been welcomed as a 'newbie' and offered the hand of friendship by those I have met. I do feel that together we can reflect upon God's grace and compassion towards all His children; holding out our hand in welcome to strangers who are yet to become our friends and acquaintances.

Thanks be to God for our blessings, strengths and individuality.

Jan Hoskins

Lay Outreach Worker

Outreach.Tewkesbury@glosccircuit.co.uk

A PRAYER FOR THE NEEDS OF THE WORLD

**Loving God, we rejoice in the signs of your presence in the world:
for every child who has a home, we praise and thank you God;
for every war that has an end, we praise and thank you God;
for every wound that has been healed, we praise and thank you God;
for every debt that is no more, we praise and thank you God.
And for the dawning of hope for all people, we pray:
where there is hunger and there is need, your kingdom come, O
Lord;
where there are walls and barriers of hate, your kingdom come, O
Lord;
where the poor pay the price, and the rich take the profit, your
kingdom come, O Lord;
and where the earth lies wasted, and the skies are polluted, your
kingdom come, O Lord.
Amen**

Richard Sharples, superintendent presbyter, Cleveland and Danby Circuit

Dear Friends

Welcome to the Summer edition of Crosspoint. We are well and truly into long summer days now and I hope you are enjoying the season. 90% of the time my early morning outings are accompanied by a blackbird perched on the same branch of a tall conifer singing his heart out rain or shine. His song is so beautiful I have to stop and listen. It warms my heart and I thank God for the simple things in life.

We have quite a number of articles in this edition so lots of reading for you. My thanks to all those who contribute – please keep them coming. They don't have to be theology based – maybe you've enjoyed a holiday or an experience that you would like to share with us? Or some events in your past which we'd enjoy reading about? Or a hobby? Family news is always appreciated – we love to hear about new great-grandchildren and family achievements!

Our opening reflection this time is from Jan Hoskins. Jan is our new layworker, working with us all at Tewkesbury. Her role will be partly pastoral and partly outreach work connected with our Welcome Space project. Jan has already attended Saturday coffee mornings and is assisting with the Wild Green Breakfast Club so has met many of you already. Jan can talk for England (she won't mind my saying that!) so is always up for a chat! We have no doubt she will be a great asset to the work of our church at Tewkesbury. (There's a little bit more information from Jan about herself further in the magazine).

On Saturday 9th August, we hope our section churches will be able to join us at Tewkesbury for afternoon tea and fellowship. This has become an annual event, which we thoroughly enjoy hosting, so I do hope many of you will be able to come along. More details will be emailed to you.

In the meantime may you have rest and enjoyment during the summer months as we thank God, our Creator, for longer, warmer days and the opportunity to be outside and enjoy His creation.

All blessings –
Jean (Davies)
Editor

Church Family News from Tewkesbury

We remember and send our love to all the members of our church families and particularly those who live in Residential Homes.

We continue to remember all those who suffer with ill health and mobility issues and hold them in our prayers. And we also remember those who

struggle silently with their own personal problems. Many of us have been there, and hope that it is some comfort and support to know you are cared for and held in our prayers.



It is with great sadness that we relay the news of the recent death of Pat Manning. Pat and Frank, who were incredible stalwarts of our church for many years, relocated to the Isle of Man a few years ago to be near their family – Frank dying 2 years ago. Pat has stoically battled cancer for several years always remaining positive and upbeat. We remember her with affection and hold her and her family in our hearts and our prayers.

We also are saddened by the death of Pat Moss – for many years a member of our choir. Pat never recovered from the death of her husband Dave, another choir member, last year – we thank God she is now at peace and reunited with her beloved Dave.



From the Methodist Church website

By David Hardman Methodist Liaison Officer, Jerusalem

Jerusalem June 13 2025

In October 2023, the sirens were a surprise. I barely had time to react before hearing missiles intercepted overhead, shrapnel raining down nearby. Now, in June 2025, it's different. My phone woke me with alerts—Israel had launched 'preemptive strikes' against Iran.

Warnings to stay close to a shelter and to move the moment a siren sounded. This morning news apps reported Iran's retaliation, drones already in the air. I brace for the sirens, for the inevitable rush to shelter.

How do I feel? Angry. Angry at world leaders who still believe peace can be forged through war. Governments that pour endless resources into military buildup while refusing to invest in the very things that sustain peace—education, dialogue, cooperation.

I am angry at the church, too, for legitimizing war through 'Just War' theory instead of offering a real vision for peace—one rooted in justice, reconciliation, and nonviolence.

For nearly two years, I have served as the Methodist Liaison Officer. I have walked where Jesus walked, lived under occupation as He did, and seen firsthand how oppression crushes lives.

And I am more certain than ever—peace will never come through force. It must be built through justice and a relentless, nonviolent struggle.

A Prayer - Gracious God, - we lift before you all those directly impacted by this escalation. We ask your blessing on the peacebuilders. Strengthen; we pray our resolve to be people of Your peace. Lord in your mercy - hear our prayer. Amen.

Hello Everyone 😊

I'm Jan Hoskins and the most recent addition to the Lay Outreach Workers Team, based in the Tewksbury Methodist Church. I'm originally from Liverpool (yep, another Scouser!), married to Rob who was born and bred in Bishops Cleeve, and am a registered nurse for people with learning disabilities.

I've been a volunteer Street Pastor in Cheltenham for the last 2 years and feel blessed to be able to contribute to the community support of people using the night-time economy. I trust that the Lord will lead us to where we need to be that night. The Prayer Pastors who support us are a comfort and a blessing. Sadly, some people are homeless, and others find themselves in emotionally charged or vulnerable situations. The support offered by the team can be of great benefit to those we meet; however, we also experience occasions when we're told to 'clear off' (or words to that effect!).

I'm looking forwards to meeting and working with you during the next 3 years (providing my probation period goes ok!).

If you would like more information on becoming a Street Pastor, please do not hesitate to contact me or email:

cheltenham@streetpastors.org.uk

CHURCH FLOWERS

Wendy Allen continues to do flower arrangements in memory or celebration of loved ones for a small donation (suggested minimum £10). We will provide flowers and endeavour to meet your specific requests if possible. There is a clipboard in the vestibule for you to sign up for dates throughout 2025.

From Dave Amies

Dave has passed on the following, written by his father some years back. This is his introduction –

In 1948, a young army captain left his driver behind and took a motorbike to inspect his transport units spread out across Palestine. They were waiting to evacuate British troops secretly overnight as the country of Israel came into existence. Meanwhile, he could detour via Egypt to see an army teleprint operator stationed in Cairo. They had met on leave at a guest house for Christian service personnel on the coast of Cyprus. Female soldiers were not supposed to cross the desert on motorbikes in those dangerous times, but her hair was hidden in a helmet, and she wore army slacks for the trip over to his base camp.

That evening, the captain's sergeant, who thought he had seen two men arriving for the dance, saw Captain Peter Amies with a beautiful girl! She was in a stunning dress, not her army uniform, as it wouldn't be proper for an officer to be seen fraternising with an 'other rank' in the officers' mess.

Peter and Stella finished their military service and married while he was in training at Spurgeon's College. He was ordained as a Baptist minister and started their joint ministry in Beaconsfield, where I was born in 1955. I remember the exciting five years my father was young people's secretary for the Baptist Missionary Society and the 'summer school' holidays he organised across Europe. I loved the canoe camps of my teenage years when we lived in the Manse at Clevedon; where I was baptised and started my own work with students and young people.



The memorable 'Access, your flexible friend' adverts ran from 1978 while I was at university. They explained how the credit card worked and inspired my father to write the following article to his congregation.

Dave Amies

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## THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Many years ago when I was the minister of the Clevedon Baptist Church a letter popped through my letterbox containing an "Access" card and inviting me to participate in what in those days was a new form of credit. I had but to sign it, fill in some personal details on an application form and access was then guaranteed into a whole new world of available money. Wherever I saw the "Access" symbol I could produce my card, and "bingo" the goods were mine. A dream come true for a hard-up pastor! Of course, the difficult bit came later when after 28 days the demand for payment came!

At the end of May, the Christian Church celebrates the Ascension of Jesus Christ into the heavens - that moment and experience in which the risen Lord gained access into the dimension of eternity. An historical event in time with contemporary significance for us today. Because Jesus is risen and ascended we are guaranteed unlimited access into the presence of God where Christ represents us and our needs.

My Access card had, of course, strings attached. I had to be, in today's jargon, "credit worthy" and a strict ceiling was placed upon my access to credit - which in my case wasn't very much! No such limits exist, however, to my access to God's love and the benefits that flow from it. Being a sinner, I'm certainly not "credit worthy", quite the opposite, in fact. Yet God still loves me and immediately I acknowledge that Christ died on the cross for me to set me free from the consequences of sin I have immediate, limitless access to the presence of God. And so can you!

The Revd Peter Amies, Clevedon

## CROSSPOINT MAGAZINE

I do hope you enjoy receiving your copy of Crosspoint. It is our pleasure to send it out to those friends who have either moved away or are unable to attend church. We do appreciate your continued financial support towards the production of Crosspoint, which costs about 80p a copy to prepare. There is a box in the church porch for donations or you can pop an envelope in with your regular giving. The suggested donation is £1 per copy or £4 for the year.

If you would prefer to receive your copy online if you provide me with an email address I can do this. This will help us with distribution costs but I do appreciate that many prefer to have a paper copy to browse (me included!) Thank you for your support.

The next issue of Crosspoint will be produced early September – please send copy for the next edition to Jean Davies (Tel: 01684 772178) no later than Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> August.

Articles including family news are welcomed. **(Please ensure you have the permission of those you write about before submitting).** It helps if you are able to send via email. Send to Jean Davies: [jed0606@yahoo.com](mailto:jed0606@yahoo.com)

Please note that articles reflect the views of the writer and not necessarily those of Tewkesbury Methodist Church.

A NOTE FROM DAVE AMIES TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY - if you would like to join me for lunch or tea on 16<sup>th</sup> August to celebrate my 70th birthday, please contact me for details.



The following article was submitted by

*Summer 2025*

**Sophie Franklin who will be heading up our church Eco group.**

## Earth Day - April 22nd

The United Nations (UN) website points out that faith-based communities play a crucial role in Earth Day. We are all a part of this planet and we need to protect it, by embodying the principles of educate, advocate, and mobilize in our care for the Earth. Pope Francis rightly called the Earth our common home. Currently our common home faces a multitude of crises: species declining, temperatures rising and wars raging.



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In a recent newsletter from the World Council of Churches connections were made between a plague of locusts devastating food crops (ref Joel 1:4; 2.25) and the capacity of humans at war to destroy ecosystems. The World Council of Churches also made a comparison with the acute environmental challenges facing Indigenous peoples today. They are often the first to suffer the ravages of the exploitation of their “bounties” which they recognize as gifts from the Earth. In much of the world, these “bounties” are seen as resources or as commodities. Indigenous people have an integral connection with nature. They understand the connections between what they call mother earth and human beings caring for each other. This is in sharp contrast to the insatiable desire of many humans to exploit, commodify and consume nature for its resources – to act and make decisions from a transactional world view point.

The World Council of Churches goes on to explain how the wisdom of Indigenous peoples enriches their search for solutions to the climate and nature crisis. Sustainable practices, like crop diversification, strengthen their bond with the Earth and act as shields against extreme weather events. This approach allows communities to be

resilient, preserving biodiversity and honouring the deep connection they have with every corner of their home. The traditions of Indigenous peoples offer an invaluable legacy that we would do well to recognise and value.

International Mother Earth Day is observed every year on April 22nd. This date was chosen to coincide with the UN Earth Day, which has been celebrated each year since 1970. The theme for Earth Day 2025 is "[Our Power, Our Planet](#)" shining a spotlight on renewable energy: for our power, our people, and our planet. We already possess the solutions we need to create clean, inexpensive, and unlimited energy for the entire planet through renewable solar, wind and other technologies. This Earth Day 2025, let us commit to harnessing renewable energy to build a healthy, sustainable, equitable and prosperous future for us all, let us commit to Renewable Energy Now.

*Barbara Echlin is Vice Chair of Green Christian and lives on the South Coast*

**SMILE LINES.....Life choice** - A small boy returned from Sunday School in tears. When questioned by his mother for the reason of his distress, he gulped: "Jesus wants me for a sunbeam, but I want to be an engine driver."

**It's cool** - I was at summer scout camp where the final service was to be taken by a bishop. It was a very hot, humid day and the clergy from local churches were slowly melting in their various heavy robes. Finally, one snapped: "When is that flipping bishop going to turn up?" Whereupon a man close by, dressed in Scouts shirt, tie and short trousers, said mildly: "I'm already here."

**Church notices** - The Low Self Esteem Support Group meets Thursday. Please use the back door.

- There will be a shared supper at church this Sunday – with prayer and medication to follow.

## Don't Step on a Bee Day – 10<sup>th</sup> July

Have you ever wanted to step on a bee? Hopefully most of us haven't – but the eye-catching name of this annual event aims to remind people of how important bees are in our ecosystem, and of the need to promote their protection.

Don't Step on a Bee Day highlights the crucial role bees play in pollination, and also that their populations are declining, because of habitat loss, pesticides, and climate change.

If you want to help the bees, here is what you can do:

*Plant Bee-Friendly Flowers:* Grow a variety of flowers in your garden that attract and support bees, such as lavender, sunflowers, and marigolds.

*Avoid Using Pesticides:* Reduce or eliminate these in your garden, to create a safer environment for bees.

*Support Local Beekeepers:* Purchase honey from local beekeepers, to help support sustainable beekeeping practices.

*Create a Bee Bath:* Place a shallow dish of water with stones in your garden to provide bees with a safe place to drink.

*Educate Others:* Share information about the importance of bees and how you protect them with friends, family, and on social media.



Summer 2025

## TMC Book Club

## BOOK CLUB

The first meeting of the TMC Bookclub was 20 years ago and was started just as a social gathering on the Church's away weekends to Lindors in the Forest Of Dean.



Over the years at Lindors we read books such as The Kashmir Shawl, Cider With Rosie, H is for Hawk and Finding Faith.

We had a group of around 10 people, men and women, who not only enjoyed reading but very much discussing the books which led us off on many tangents!

It was so popular that I was asked if we could meet regularly and so the TMC Bookclub started meeting in Church once a month. Since then we have read over 100 books ranging from thrillers, historical, crime, autobiographies, modern and classics a real conglomerate.

We take it in turns to choose a book for the following month's read and are free to give our own reviews on the book which leads to some very interesting discussions! We are still a group of around 9 but we always welcome new people who enjoy a good read, a good chat and don't forget the coffee!

We meet once a month on a Saturday morning at 10am so if you feel you would like to join us please come along. You can either find the dates in the notices or contact me.

Jackie Dobbs

"The best moments in reading are when you come across something—a thought, a feeling, a way of looking at things—which you had thought special and particular to you. Now here it is, set down by someone else, a person you have never met, someone even who is long dead. And it is as if a hand has come out and taken yours." — Alan Bennett - The History Boys.

*Summer 2025*

# **The diary of a Geriatric Lay Worker**

## **Chapter 6**

*Andrew is the Lay Community Outreach Worker at Bishops Cleeve and here he continues his diary to share his thoughts, joys and trials and tribulations of his vocation.*

I often say that my role as a Lay Worker is one which just keeps on giving and giving and the fun times I have had with the local Primary school children is evidence of this. I have an assortment of cherished memories of my time both in the school with Jaffa and in the classroom.

But my one outstanding memory is of arriving at the school and signing in for my visit, when I heard a voice of a young lady from within the school office, where she was eating her lunch. "I like coming to your church" she boomed. "And I like you coming to my church" I replied.

She would have been little older than 7, but her words brought an enormous amount of satisfaction and joy. In my efforts to connect with the school and its pupils, I have been desperate to talk to them about God's love, insofar as we are allowed to today. Equally important to me, was the desire to leave our young visitors, in no doubt that church could be viewed by them as a place they could enjoy going to, and somewhere they could have some fun also.

I don't think the original intention, when I started this role, was for me to spend much time with the local schools, and it was certainly not something high on my list of immediate priorities. However, when I heard there was a chance of putting on an Exhibition to do with climate change, connecting with the local school seemed the most exciting and obvious thing to do.

My approach to the local Primary school was met with some encouragement. It was agreed that we would have 6 groups of the younger children, over 3 days with 2 sessions each morning. I was quite apprehensive

as their visits got closer. I was a little more reserved in those early days, but my reservations did not last for long!

I now start with a different set of questions of the teachers or their support team, when the children arrive for an event. Do you have any children with allergies, do any children have problems with loud noises and can I wind them up, are the 3 questions, I like to ask!

I am sure that some children, following a visit to the church, will need to calm down more than normal. Last year I dressed as an Angel, the year before as a shepherd and goodness knows what outfit I will greet them with this year. Whatever outfit it is, I will use it as a way of having fun with the children and communicating some eternal truth with them.

Jesus loved little children, and it is easy to see why. Their energy, enthusiasm and sheer passion for life are so infectious. Engaging with them is always fun and hopefully helpful and informative. We usually show them a short film, gave them a talk, refresh them with a drink and a biscuit and then open up the exhibition for them to see and talk about later.

We have also invited them to contribute towards any exhibition with their own exhibits, usually a painting or some artwork. I always have tried to encourage them, by praising their work.

I have also had the thrill last year, of going into the school and taking lessons on "Creation". I imposed one condition of doing so, and that was I was not to be asked the inevitable question "Where did God come from"? It ended up as the one question I was asked in each of the classrooms I visited. I was amazed by some of the conversations I had.

As well as the local Primary school, I have engaged with the local Senior school. An Ethics group, with some exceptionally talented students, has seen us include some artwork well beyond the maturity of the age group represented. Cleeve school has students who have produced exhibits, which it has been a privilege to include in what we are doing.



It was recently exciting to be involved in an initiative entitled GSUS Live in Cleeve School. With our friends from St. Michael's and Woodmancote Chapel I was delighted to be asked to support Youth for Christ in their project within the school. We looked at themes like fear, forgiveness and rejection through the teachings of Jesus.

In recent times, I have been spending more time with church related activities, which has left me short on time, energy and opportunities of working with young people. I have, however, recently secured "The knitted Bible" Exhibition for the end of next year and hope this will provide the opportunity to work with the local schools and spend time with their wonderful children.

I certainly hope so, as it is so rewarding.

### **Wives and Friends Group**

**On May 6<sup>th</sup> the Wives and Friends Group had their 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.**

**About 25 ladies came - it was nice to see old members. We had a service first. Mrs Eileen Beardsley spoke to us about things that had happened in the last 75 years. Mr Adrian Shelley put the photographs onto slides from over the years which he showed. Miss Patricia Turner played the piano, Dorothy read a lesson and Wendy and Jenny sang 'Wonderful World'.**

**Afterwards we had a cream tea.**

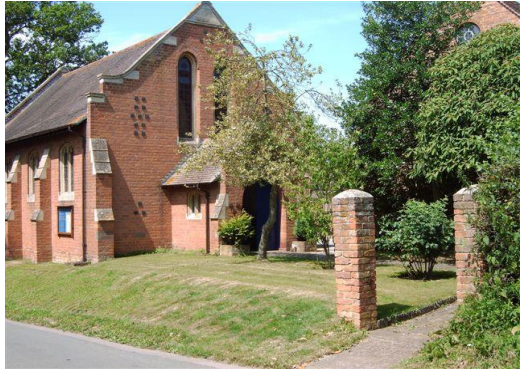
**We had a lovely afternoon, and everyone said how much they enjoyed it.**

**Jenny LeMarechal**

# NEWS FROM APPERLEY

*From Peter Stych*

Since Easter we have all enjoyed a wonderful sunny and very warm spring; alas too little rainfall to promote all the beautiful flowers and crops that should by now be in full bloom.



Now we are told that summer is virtually upon us and yet for those of us with holidays at the end of June it feels as though we had better ask for hot water bottles to be available!

Our services at Apperley have continued to be good and well attended and the half term bank holiday added the special joy of visits from energetic grandchildren. It is always a delight to welcome any of them back.

We were also pleased to welcome Jan Hoskins, our new lay staff worker for Tewkesbury and Apperley. Jan is already finding her way to visit members not able to join in Sunday worship. This is a real blessing and well received by those welcoming her to their homes.

Looking forward to summer events we are planning a Monday morning Away day on July 28<sup>th</sup> when Jayne will give us something to think about and discuss. After that we shall go out for lunch at one of our local eateries.

As the plan for August gives us a Local Arrangement on 24<sup>th</sup> we hope to arrange a summer service out in the garden culminating in a picnic lunch and time of fellowship.

So we wish all of you a happy and enjoyable summer and will be delighted to welcome you to join us for worship 'out in the sticks' at Apperley.

*Summer 2025*

# WINCHCOMBE METHODIST CHURCH REFLECTIONS

Many churches display a large open Bible at the front of their worship areas, symbolising the very important role that the Bible has within the Christian tradition. If we want to please God by trying to be Christ-like in our daily lives, then it is clearly vital that we know how Jesus lived and what He taught His followers.

The four Gospel writers have certainly left their readers with a wealth of material. Nearly all of the other New Testament writings document how the Early Church leaders tried to help Christian converts to become faithful disciples of Christ and encouraged them to share the Good News of Jesus' love with other people.

The vast majority of Christians appreciate the value of reading the New Testament but many find most of the preceding 39 books much harder work! Yet I suggest that it is only when we read these more ancient texts that we can appreciate the full relevance of the message of the Gospel and Epistle writers which together make up the vast majority of the New Testament. Gospel references, for example, to the 'Lamb of God' [eg. John 1: 29] and the significance of Jesus' death being at the time of the Passover Feast [eg. Matt. 26: 2] ... can only be fully understood in the light of the Old Testament's background to and regulations for this particular Jewish Feast.

Given that Jesus frequently read and quoted from the Old Testament scriptures, we too should surely read and learn from them! We are fortunate these days, to have the availability of many different Bible translations and a multitude of commentaries and on-line resources



that can help us to understand parts of the Bible that 21st Century Christians may find hard to appreciate. If, as 2 Timothy 3:16 asserts, the Bible really is God's Word to humanity, providing guidance on what to believe and how to behave, then Christians should make reading the Bible, a priority! We can study the Bible on our own of course while sermons delivered by preachers can definitely expand our biblical knowledge and understanding.

When I moved to Winchcombe shortly before the Covid lockdowns came into force, I was most pleased to learn that there was already a local Methodist Bible Study group which met every fortnight. Such meetings give Christians the chance to explore Bible passages together and to discuss their relevance for Christian living today.

In a separate article in this magazine, I will share with you some of the many lessons which we as a group recently learned when studying together the life and ministry of the Old Testament prophet Elijah. My prayer is that Christians will increasingly see the value of reading the Bible ... both individually and, if possible, alongside others.

God Bless - Martyn Smith



### **BREAKFAST CLUB - WILD GREEN CHURCH!**

Wild Green Church happens the first Sunday of the month at 9.15am in the hall. Yummy Bacon baps, cereal, toast and juices are available to all. Please join us! All are welcome.

(Please note there won't be a Breakfast Club in August).



## News from St John's, Northgate

Despite the rather cold and wet weather on Good Friday a large crowd gathered at the Cathedral for the 'Way of the Cross', a re-enactment of events by members of the local churches and community (including our own Jackie Pritchard and Deacon Sue Peat). The crowd followed as they proceeded through the streets, telling the story at various points on the way and finishing back at the

Cathedral for a powerful portrayal of the crucifixion just outside the west door, very moving to be part of.

Our Easter morning communion service at St John's was led by Revd Jayne and we saw Jayne again in the afternoon for Together @ 3 at Tibberton. These monthly meetings continue to be well supported, very varied and always challenging. We have friends attending from other Methodist churches, the Anglican church and some who have no interest in traditional Christian services; it's good to share viewpoints.

On the first Sunday in June we used another Local Arrangements to hold our Easter Offering Dedication Service at St John's. It was based on the order of service written by MWiB with this year's theme 'Education for All, Hope for All' but we adapted it for our congregation to include a discussion, sharing personal experiences of education from around the world including Hong Kong, the Philippines, India and South Africa. As we wrote last time, we are blessed to have so many nationalities worshipping with us and we value the contributions that they bring.

Our best wishes from Gloucester to everyone in our section for your summer activities – with our hope for some summer weather!

**Christine and Peter Gardner**

# **BISHOPS CLEEVE METHODIST CHURCH**



Greetings  
from Bishops  
Cleeve –

We are still missing our dear friend Albert Goodman who sadly passed away a few weeks ago. Albert gave so much of himself to the Methodist Church in Bishops Cleeve along with his wife Mildred. He was always nothing but a gentleman. The church was packed for his funeral.

We held a Coffee Morning for Christian Aid on the 10<sup>th</sup> May which raised £485, a result which pleased us very much! St Michaels held a concert and between the two Churches a sum of well over a £1000 was raised for the charity. There will also be that which was given through CA envelopes to be added to the overall total!

We are joining in with the local Anglican Initiative to bathe the whole of Bishops Cleeve and the surrounding villages in prayer between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> June. The hope is that local Christians will sign up to pray for the streets around where they live, either by walking and praying or praying from home, that the Holy Spirit will work in many ways to enrich peoples' lives, even if they do not yet know him.

There is going to be the usual Churches Together presence at the Bishops Cleeve Street Fair on June 8<sup>th</sup> in the form of a stall, with games for children and various pieces of information about all the Churches in the area (see photo below!). It's always a highlight of the local calendar and the weather is usually kind!

*Summer 2025*

Have a good summer – Blessings from all of us at Bishops Cleeve  
Methodist Church



Val, Pam and Andrew managing the Churches Together Stall!

## PASTORAL CARE

I have mentioned before that it can sometimes be difficult to keep regular contact with all our church family. Now that Jan Hoskins has joined us, part of her role will be pastoral support so she will be very happy to meet up with those who are feeling isolated or just need a chat and some company. Jayne or I, hope to introduce Jan to those who are housebound and not able to come to church, over the next few weeks as she settles in. In the meantime please do get in touch with me or contact Revd Jayne if there is anything we can support you with in any way. Please continue to pass on news of anyone who is unwell or struggling. And of course we continue to support all our members and friends through prayer.  
Jean Davies – Pastoral secretary

# WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM ELIJAH?

Today few people would question the idea that we are living in very turbulent times, both in our own country and in the world at large. Public trust in our own nation's leaders seems to be at an all-time low while warfare, oppression, economic turmoil and the scheming of greedy dictators seem to dominate the international scene.

It was very similar for the prophet Elijah who lived in the Northern Kingdom of Israel in the 9th Century BC. So are there potential lessons for us to learn from studying the life and times of this remarkable prophet who features alongside Moses in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' Transfiguration [eg. Mt. 17:1-13] and is commended by James in his Letter [5:17-18]? I believe that there are!

May I share with you a summary of the key points that emerged from our recent Methodist Bible Study series, which featured numerous readings between 1 Kings 16: 29 -> 2 Kings 2:18.

## *1. The benefit of walking in God's ways by faith, rather than by sight alone!*

- \* Elijah trusted for God's provision of daily food at the Kerith brook.
- \* He totally trusted in God during his stay with the widow in Zarephath.
- \* A lone voice, yet Elijah trusted God to answer his prayer on Mt. Carmel.
- ## Faith will look beyond the promise alone ... to the God who promises!  
{2 Cor . 5:7}

## *2. How to stand firm against evil and avoid compromise with wrong-doing!*

- \* Elijah challenged King Ahab's idol-worship & plans to consult idols.
- \* Elijah risked his life in criticising the King's plot to acquire Naboth's land.
- ## Christians are called to be light + salt in a dark and unsavoury world!  
{Matt. 5:13-16}

## *3. The value of avoiding distractions - so quality time with God can be spent!*

- \* Elijah climbed mountains (Horeb; Carmel) to serve/ spend time with God.
- \* Elijah was unafraid of being alone or quiet ... while in God's presence.
- ## Time spent with our Maker is always time very well spent!  
{Isaiah 40: 31}

## *4. The need to be really 'prayer-full' ... in all our words, attitudes and actions!*

- \* In response to Elijah's prayers: a widow's son was restored to life;



\* Fire from Heaven consumed (a) the sacrifice on the Mt. Carmel altar. (b) the King's men who'd shown disdain for Elijah.

\* A terrible drought which had lasted for over 3 years suddenly ends.

## Faithful prayer is like the bird that sings before the light has dawned!

{Matt. 19: 26}

5. *Being able to fully please God may require immense personal courage!*

\* Elijah challenged evil at the highest level eg. King Ahab + King Ahaziah.

\* Alone, Elijah confronted the State-sponsored prophets of Baal on Carmel.

## If we have the courage to trust, wonderful things can be done with God.

{Joshua 1: 9}

6. *God sees our growth potential despite our doubts, weaknesses + failures!*

\* At Jezebel's death threats, Elijah was immediately afraid + ran for his life!

\* Exhausted from running away, a dejected Elijah asks God to let him die.

## God knows our struggles + sins ... offering us His forgiveness + strength.

{Isaiah 41: 10 & Matt. 11: 28-30}

7. *The importance of finishing well in life ... till the day God takes us 'Home'!*

\* Elijah stood up to those who tried to intimidate him eg. the King's soldiers.

\* Elijah recognised the importance of encouraging others to walk with God.

## May Paul's parting words (see below!) to Timothy be true for each of us!

{2 Tim. 4: 7-8}

8. *A belief in a Heavenly life beyond our earth-bound life ... is well-founded!*

\* Elijah's safe River Jordan crossing + travel into God's Presence fits with traditional Christian belief about life with God, following human death.

\* The Prophet's departure into God's Presence may hint at Heavenly rewards for those commended for being God's good + faithful servants.

## Heaven awaits those who, despite difficulties in life, have pleased God.

{John 14: 2}

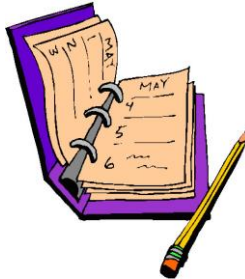
May you know God's guidance and strength as you daily seek to please Him!

God Bless –

Martyn Smith [Winchcombe MC]

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please check the weekly notices or our website for any alterations to dates/times and more detailed information about events



**Coffee mornings every Saturday between 10.30am and 12.30pm**

### JUNE

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> – 10am Book Club

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> – 3pm – Armed Forces/VE Day service

### JULY

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> – 2.30pm Wives and Friends AGM

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> – 10am Summer Fete

***Please note Bible Club cancelled for today due to Fete***

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> – 9.15am Wild Green Breakfast Club

Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> – 10.30am service – Holy Communion

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> – 7.30pm Church Council Meeting

Saturday/Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> – Tewkesbury's Medieval Fair

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> – 10am Book Club

### AUGUST

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> – 10.30am Bible Club

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> – ***Please note NO Wild Green Breakfast Club today***

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> – 3pm Section Churches Tea party

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> – Away Day at Holland House, Cropthorne

### FUTURE DATES

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September – Harvest Festival

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> November – Tewkesbury Methodist Players' Concert

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December – Angel Festival

# CHURCH SERVICES – Tewkesbury

Any alteration to dates and or times will be shown in the weekly notices (also available on our website). The church is generally also open to visitors on Saturday mornings (coffee morning).

*A service is held every Sunday at Tewkesbury at 10.30am service (with occasional changes to times as per the notices).*

*10.30am service **with** Holy Communion is the first Sunday of each month. We also hold a short service of Holy Communion on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 10.30am followed by coffee.*

*Wild Green Church with breakfast takes place on the first Sunday of the month at 9.15am.*

*We do not have a Junior Church as such, but all families and children are welcome to any of our services though there will be particular emphasis on involving children in our 9.15am Wild Green Church Breakfast Club.*

## CHURCH GROUPS AND MEETINGS (TEWKESBURY)

**Please see weekly notices for dates of meetings as they are arranged**

**Church Council**

**Worship Forum**

**Welcome Space and Finance meeting**

**Finance/Property**

**Stewards**

**Tewkesbury Churches Together**

**Pastoral**

**Publicity**

**Green Group**

**Wives and Friends**

**Book Club**

# THE METHODIST CHURCH

## Priorities for the Methodist Church

To proclaim and affirm our conviction of God's love in Christ, for us and for all the world; and renew confidence in God's presence and action in the world and in the church.

### Main contacts for Apperley and Tewkesbury Methodist Churches

Minister: The Revd Jayne Webb

Tel: 01684 298650

*Who also has pastoral responsibility for Winchcombe Methodist Church and Bishop's Cleeve Methodist Church*

Apperley Senior Steward – Peter Stych Tel: 01452 780508

Tewkesbury Senior Steward - Linda Sallis Tel: 01684 294169

Registered Charity No: 1179000

***We are in the Methodist Circuit of Gloucestershire, part of the  
Bristol Methodist District***

***Web site for Apperley and Tewkesbury Methodist Churches with links to our  
sister churches, Winchcombe and Bishop's Cleeve and St John's,  
Northgate***

**[www.tewkesburymethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.tewkesburymethodistchurch.org.uk)**

**Tewkesbury Church phone:** 01684 291101 This is situated in the vestry with an extension to the vestibule kitchen and is intended primarily for use by church officials and for emergency use.



### IMPORTANT Booking rooms and events

If you are arranging any event on the church premises of Tewkesbury Methodist Church, the room and time must be arranged with the bookings secretary, Andrew May at [tmcroombookings@btinternet.com](mailto:tmcroombookings@btinternet.com) (or contact Jean Davies 01684 772178 [jed0606@yahoo.com](mailto:jed0606@yahoo.com))



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*Summer 2025*