



# Methodist Post

Boston Spa • Clifford • Bramham  
April 2020



## Minister's Letter



Dear Friends,

At the beginning of Lent, I did not expect to be living in my own version of a desert place, as I expect so many of you didn't.

The impact of everything that you do and the groups that you belong to being suddenly curtailed is horrendous, and even though I am used to working from home, I usually am in and out like a yoyo, with meetings, visits and church services.

But now life as we knew it doesn't exist, some find the changes exciting and embrace new ways of doing things, whilst others live in fear of becoming ill, losing their jobs, or simply not being able to get out.

Closing our church buildings and cancelling all the normal church activities including services may seem a very insensitive thing to do when people come to church for comfort but let me reassure you, we, the Church, are not closed.

This is the perfect time to remind people that church is not just for Sundays and we will over the weeks ahead seek to maintain contact with you and help in any ways we can.

As we spend time reflecting during this 'wilderness' period, can we think about

what is lost, what do we truly miss, and what is God giving us in the space that this loss has created.

What practical responses do we have to the questions of what we need to do; can we see this time in a transformative and godly way.

Therefore, what if in this time you wonder...

- How do we find time to be attentive to God as the noise of the world settles and the noise of coronavirus increases?
- How will we invest in relationships with others, whether we do it digitally, via the phone, or in good old-fashioned written words?
- How can we show love and care, even if its from our home; because we must be careful about leaving or maybe cannot leave at all?
- If we are required to live a more limited life, what money will we be saving and how might we then be generous to others, the Church included?
- How might we each be a more holy person, and a more faithful church, at the end of all this.

I have been talking with Sue and Donald and, together, we have been looking at ways that we might all continue to be 'Church' during this time. This is a list of some of the ideas we are working on; some of which will no doubt up and running by the time you read this.

- A regular newsletter; delivered through letterboxes and digitally.
- Sunday Worship for use in home – delivered through letterboxes and online.
- Providing every household with a candle which can be lit (if safe) at the same time

each week, as we pray together in our homes.

- A regular, 'Thought for the Week,' online.
- Busy Bees/Tot n Toys 'Story-Time' every Wednesday and Friday morning on FaceBook/YouTube.
- Messy Church/Tea-Time Church Story and Craft on FaceBookYouTube
- 'Stew n Oyster' Coffee Sessions by 'video conference'.
- Setting up a network of Prayer Warriors who will receive items for prayer from others, and pray regularly for them.
- A 'Telephone Tree' to encourage conversation and sharing of news.

Can I encourage you all to keep in touch with each other, by phone or email; it's good to talk, and will help ease the loneliness of isolation.

We love you, and don't want anyone to feel isolated or not knowing where to turn

for pastoral support. Pastoral Visitors will not be making home visits but rather they will keep in regular contact by phone-call. In exceptional circumstances Donald or I will visit at home if necessary.

Live wisely following all the guidelines about hand washing etc, but as well as living wisely, let us choose to be those who also live kindly and unselfishly and without panic or fear, seeking to be good neighbours. Our lives are in the hands of a wonderful God, and we can look to Him every day, and in every way. This is an opportunity to be good Christian neighbours, and to show the difference a living faith in Jesus makes.

Please feel you can contact Sue, Donald or me at any time if you need us or have any questions.

With love and blessings,

Revd Steve

**The severe restrictions imposed on us as a result of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic came just as we were ready to go to print with this issue. The cancellation of all the normal church activities, including worship services, means that many of the regular pages are no longer applicable. However, this remains one of the vital tools to keep us in touch with each other, so please keep sending me articles of interest.**



Ideas and contributions for future editions of the Methodist Post are always welcome. For the May issue, please send copy by 10th April to: [jovernon1@gmail.com](mailto:jovernon1@gmail.com)  
Jo Vernon, Editor (01937 360016)

Don't forget, the magazine is also available to read on our website:  
[www.bostonspamethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.bostonspamethodistchurch.org.uk)

Cover photograph: Jo Vernon – One of the artistic floral decorations at Boston Spa last Easter. Our thanks to such a talented team of flower arrangers for bringing beauty and joy throughout the year.

**Amanda Buch** M.C.S.P., BSc(Hons)

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### From our Lay Pastor...

The article below is one I wrote for the Wetherby News. Now, before you think that the only reason for reproducing it here is laziness on my part, not everyone will have seen the original. Plus we have of course been following a Lent Study, based on “Jesus Christ Superstar”, so it is relevant – honest! And, as part of that, we’ve taken the controversy surrounding some of the “Superstar” depiction of the Passion Week story to challenge and build on our own understandings – and of course, you’ll likely be reading this just before Easter. So – is that enough, have I got away with it?

Concorde made the first supersonic flight by a commercial airliner. 600,000 flocked to the Isle of Wight to see Jimi Hendrix, Joan Baez and The Who. Edward Heath replaced Harold Wilson as PM.

For most readers under age 60, this is ancient history – but if you’re over that age, you’ll probably remember it all (though they say that if you remember the Isle of Wight festival you almost certainly weren’t there, as everyone was stoned!). The year was 1970 and it also saw a new rock opera, “Jesus Christ Superstar”, written by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, telling the story of the last week of Jesus’ life – so, this is its 50th anniversary year. It was hugely controversial at the time – questions about who Jesus really was, sympathetic to the conflicts faced by Judas, implying a “relationship” between Jesus and Mary Magdalen, glossing over the resurrection and even, heaven forfend, rock music! Trying to close it down just made it more popular.

Of course, all of those issues also caused controversy nearly 2,000 years earlier when the original events happened (well, maybe not the rock music) and have done ever since. The first followers of Jesus (who came to be known as Christians) suffered the ancient equivalent of a Twitter pile-on. The State, the religious authorities and the mobs all tried to shut them down, to twist and distort what they were saying – in modern parlance, they were de-platformed.

That is why the original gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were written, about 40 to 70 years after the events – to try and explain not just what had happened but also why. 2,000 years later we’re still discussing it, trying to understand for ourselves. There’s maybe a lesson there for us today – whichever side you’re on, closing down debate never works.



“Jesus Christ, Superstar, do you think you’re what they say you are?”

PS When researching the controversies around the original Jesus Christ Superstar, I found an article written by the pastor of a Free Presbyterian Church in North Carolina. They were known as Faith Church, or to give them their full title “Faith Free Presbyterian Church” – shall I tell them, or will you?

Donald

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## Church, but not as you know it

~ Part Two ~

In last month's magazine you were given a flavour of the family's work undertaken across both Clifford and Boston Spa Churches. As a follow up to that it seemed a good idea to tell you about the worship and learning that takes place at both Messy Church and Tea-Time Church.

I'm sure that Messy Church is not a new concept to you, but many people are perhaps unaware of what happens at Messy Church.

In January we celebrated Candlemas, learning about Anna and Simeon and we talked about what a special baby Jesus was and how he was to bring light into the world. One of the crafts was prayer candles, when everyone was encouraged to write people or situations they wanted to pray about on a piece of paper and then wrap them around a nightlight which, when lit, reflected Jesus's light shining into those situations. They were taken into the celebration, at the end of the session, and offered to God; before being taken home, along with all the other crafts that had been made, as a reminder of the story. This was followed by winter hotpot and fruit crumble as we sat and ate together.

In February we learnt about the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist; and followed on from this by experiencing what happens during Baptism today. During craft time we made baptism bracelets with the colours of the beads reminding us that through baptism we are cleansed, given the light of God, and blessed. We also

wrote secret messages with invisible ink, reminding us of the hidden message within the words spoken by God as Jesus was baptised: "This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.", for this is also what God says to each and every one of

us. Shepherds' pie, and jelly and ice cream followed as we enjoyed fellowship together.

Our March Messy Church saw us travelling in Jesus footsteps through Holy Week from Palm Sunday until Easter Day. We enjoyed the

jubilation of Palm Sunday, the anger in the temple, the anointing with heavenly perfume, Passover Supper, arrest and crucifixion, followed by the joy of Easter morning. This was followed by Lasagne and sponge pudding.

Meanwhile Tea-Time Church, which started meeting last September (meeting monthly), has been following a bible-based curriculum which is currently exploring the theme of

'Amazing Me'. This explores the fact that we are all God's children made and loved by our Heavenly Father. The individual themes within the main theme help us to discover not only the amazing people we are meant to be, but also the amazing God who invites us all to be his friend. We always end each meeting with tea, cake and time to chat.

You are very welcome to come to any of these services and join in the learning, fun and fellowship.

*The Families' Worship Crew*



For more information speak to Sue on 01937 842156

## Chris and Hazel



*On Saturday 7th March, the marriage of Barbara Hudson's son, Chris Hudson and Hazel Bray took place at Boston Spa Methodist Church.*

*Rev Steve Jakeman officiated at the wedding, and said it was a privilege to be part of such a wonderful celebration and share in the obvious joy and happiness of Chris, Hazel, their families, and friends who came together to witness their wedding.*

*We give thanks to God for the love that he has planted in their hearts, and pray that he will continue to bless them, and those whom they love, as they travel together, with him, on this new journey.*

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## Love without limit .....

Friday 6 March was the occasion of a World Day of Prayer service at St Edward's, Clifford. The Day is an annual event organised on an international and inter-church basis and is celebrated locally in over 170 countries around the world. It reflects the lives, circumstances and prayers of women from all over the world. This year the service was written by women of Zimbabwe.

Sunday, 8 March, quite separately, was International Women's Day. This day recognises the progress women have made towards equality in what is still a male-dominated society, but also how far there is still to go. It was marked by meetings and in the media. (The Duchess of Sussex spoke on women's rights at a College in Dagenham and you may recall from the television coverage how she was hugged in delighted approval by the Head Boy!)

But there is also a dark opposite side to this. In many areas of life and in many places, women still take second place to

men. We've grown used to it in pay, in business, in management, in government. But it's much worse than that. For example, in war zones there is still today appalling brutality against women, as recent reports by brave journalists like Christina Lamb, Orla Guerin and Lyse Doucet tell us, Kidnap, violence and rape are still widely used as weapons against women and girls.

We think of God as Father and refer to God as "He" and "Him". But the truth is that God's love is complete and comprehensive. There is no gender basis in it, either in God the giver or in we his people who are so blessed to be loved by him. God's love is unconditional, perfect, unending, always there.

This is the good news of the gospel. God loves, and invites, and accepts, and affirms all his children – old or young, female or male, black or white. That is clearly shown in the life and ministry of Jesus. Is it equally clear in our own lives, in our daily witness?

Dennis

Photo: Fr Ken Gabbadon



## WHAT'S MY LINE?

In this series of articles, Arthur chats with members of our church family about their working life.

This month we feature Ian Jones...

### Impossible? – You must be kidding!

Ian was born in 1959, with Cerebral Palsy, to June and Eddie Jones. His early years were spent at home in Worksop and in Africa where his father was working. Due to deterioration in his condition, the family returned to UK. At the age of 12, he boarded at the Thomas Delarue School, run by the Spastics Society in Tonbridge. It was here that Ian made a name for himself in his determination to succeed in life. His interests lay in music and technology and in horse riding. Such was his ability in the latter, that he was chosen to represent the school at an international gymkhana in Holland. Tragically, during rehearsals for the event, he was thrown from his horse, dragged along the ground and finally trodden upon by the horse whose saddle had not been fitted correctly by the stable lad. This severely damaged his leg and knee and consequently confined him to a wheelchair for life!

Undaunted, he turned his attention to music and observed that his fellow students were, like himself, followers of the BBC's "Top of the Pops" programme. As most of his fellow students had cassette recorders, he decided to make recordings from both radio and TV and to rent them out at 2 shillings (10p) per week, the profits to be used to build up the loan system. When the headmaster came to hear of this enterprising venture he suggested that Ian set up an audio library with the proceeds. This proved to be a great success and soon Ian was buying blank cassettes, making



an inventory and even repairing broken cassette players. This latter 'enterprise' rapidly developed his knowledge of electronics; payments for which were made in kind, usually at the local hostelry.

Whilst at school, Ian also took the opportunity to earn 'pocket money' by making wash leathers for car owners at a local company.

Although computers were in their infancy, Ian set about familiarising himself with computer programming which was to stand him in good stead for his increasingly difficult life.

School days came to an end in 1977 and Ian was faced with what for most of us would be a daunting future. Not so, Ian!

Aware that his limited physical ability was likely to deteriorate, and wishing not to be entirely dependent upon the state, Ian decided that he needed to earn enough money to purchase a sports design of electric wheelchair which would travel at least 20 miles at 10mph. He also felt the need to live alone and to be as independent as his deteriorating condition would allow.

Firstly, he completed a higher-level course in Economics and Public Affairs at a technical College in Coventry. Upon qualifying, he joined his parents in Boston

Spa and applied to the British Library in Thorp Arch for a job. In those days, it was unusual for severely disabled people to work, but this did not deter Ian. The library was very cautious at first, but dogged persistence on Ian's part led to his being accepted for training in the various departments before working on the conversion of scientific papers into microfiche form and later in the finance/ payroll department.

Unfortunately, Ian's failing health and inability to compete with his colleagues in terms of speed, led to late night working and to great stress and it was decided to retire him on a disability pension.

Retirement gave him the opportunity to turn his attention to living alone, much to his mother's very natural concern. After overcoming the many obstacles presented by the local authority and social services, he eventually succeeded in getting a rented LCC bungalow in Grove Crescent South which took some 16 months to convert to suit his disabilities.

Following this achievement, he now had to decide as to how to occupy his time and his first thought was for his Mother

and to show his deep appreciation for the unstinting devotion which she was showing; but HOW?

Travel! – that was the answer. So Ian organised rail trips all over the country, North, South, East, West; Edinburgh, Bath, Durham and so on. In London, having travelled first class, he arranged for a luxurious meal on the 36th floor of the Gherkin Tower where the express lift entranced him as it took a mere 15seconds to reach the 36th floor – he timed it – and it works out to have averaged a speed of around 14 mph.

Tragically, after returning home, a fall from his wheelchair severely damaged his spine and necessitated a series of complex and extremely painful operations. Another accident when he was being "craned" to his bed detached a retina which has left him partially sighted. June visits him daily and nowadays, carers deal with getting him up in the mornings, bedtime and all of the essential functions.

What's Ian's line? Surely it is his effort, determination in overcoming such daunting odds, and a desire to be as independent as possible.

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## Living Lent – can be difficult and challenging

Last month I wrote about the 'Living Lent' campaign supported by churches, encouraging us to make a commitment to change lifestyle during Lent. Having explored this and how I might live locally during Lent, I quickly came to the realisation that this was not as easy as it first seemed.

I started examining where fruit and vegetables were sourced from and it comes from across the world, blueberries (Chile), raspberries (Morocco), grapes (South Africa), cucumber (Spain), salad onions (Egypt), apples (France) and bananas (Ecuador). This should come as no surprise

as the British market for most of these is quite seasonal, so unless I buy frozen food such as raspberries, I could just do without.

I then visited a local organic food shop a few miles from Boston Spa and found even there that much of their produce was not grown in Yorkshire. I was also taken aback when I saw organic potato crisps, imported from the Netherlands!

So, this Lent has been challenging but also a dilemma, do I just buy locally, or do I also support Fairtrade and buy bananas?

*[Lord, guide us through the difficult days of Lent, encouraging us along the way.]*

Jim Murison



Clifford Birthdays  
David Barrow, Margaret Suggate



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## Boston Spa, Wetherby and Villages Green Group

Faced with the climate emergency, the Methodist Conference last year called on the UK to achieve net zero emissions well before 2050.

Earlier that year the Methodist Church launched 'Eco Circuits' and 'Eco Districts' in partnership with A Rocha, a Christian organisation engaging communities in nature conservation. The first Methodist Church to receive a Gold Eco Church Award was announced in June as Stratford-upon-Avon Methodist Church.

Barbara Glasson, President of the Conference, who walked 133 miles along canal towpaths to the Conference, raising funds for communities across the world affected by climate change, said: "As a Church we believe in the possibility of transformation. Our church has heard the voice of communities around the world that are already suffering severe consequences of climate change. "Our response must be both individual and corporate to do all we can to tread more lightly on the earth."

So, what are we doing to work within this community towards achieving zero emissions? Well quite a lot actually.

Boston Spa, Wetherby, and Villages Green Group meet at BSMC every two months, at

present, with the aim of working together in our community to:

- Reduce Carbon Footprint
- Improve biodiversity
- Reduce waste

To help achieve this we initially created five subgroups looking at; Safer Cycling, Reducing Food Waste, Recycling and Reducing Waste, Trees, and Wildlife Corridors. Now, as numbers have grown, we are looking at creating more subgroups such as Air Pollution, Home Energy, Local Public Transport, Repair Shop, Tools Library, for example.

Last time we met we had a presentation by Mark Barrow about Clean Waterways, which included information about the River Wharfe.

You can catch up with what's going on by going to the website

<https://bostongreengroup.co.uk/>

Here you will find lots of information and a useful A-Z of recycling, a subject which I know can confuse lots of us when we try to work out what can be recycled, and where.

*If you are interested in being involved and would like more information, please contact*

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*Sue Jakeman*



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