



The Methodist Church Stamford Circuit

Registered Charity :1160930



June



**“Do not remember the former things, or consider
the things of old. I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers
in the desert.”**

Isaiah 43:18-19

2021

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The Circuit Newsletter exists to build up fellowship across the Stamford Methodist Circuit. Items for inclusion in the Circuit Newsletter should be: *Inspiring, encouraging of faith and discipleship to promote the growth of church relationships within the Circuit.*

Could you please send any articles for the July Circuit Newsletter to the below address/email address at this time:

Email: admin2322@gmail.com

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9 Highfield Close, Empingham, Rutland, LE15 8QB

Articles should be sent no later than Thursday 10th June 2021.

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Friends,

The last time I wrote for the Circuit newsletter it was November, the days were getting shorter and the nights felt darker. But this gave us the wonderful opportunity to look up at the night sky and see the work of God, each star placed in the sky and known by name. This time I am writing to you as the days are growing longer, we have had some sun and been able to get outside of our homes again. On top of this we are having our Covid vaccinations and (dare I say it) it looks as if restrictions are being carefully lifted and there is hope of our returning to be with each other.

But I am going to put it out there that I am somewhat wary of the word 'return'. There is a real temptation to rush back to everything we always did, to return to the routines and rotas and busy-ness of the lives we had before. The time of Covid has been horrific and plunged many of us into isolation and loneliness, but it has also taught us to slow down, to prioritise and value what really matters in our lives and our faith and it has given some of us a time of enforced rest. Do we really want to rush back to everything we had and did before or do we want to take the lessons from the last year and bring with us the things that we have learnt are important? I have heard people talk about the importance of worship, prayer and fellowship which they have either missed or discovered in new ways. Maybe we do not try to get back to the quantity of things we did but we focus on the quality of what we are doing.

I once joined a church close to Christmas. They explained that every year they had a Christmas celebration with good food, good company, games and entertainment and they would invite all of the people who hired the premises as well as all of the church members. This particular year a nursery had set up in the church hall. The owners and staff were Muslim and all lived in the local community. As the invitations for the party went out, I discovered that none had been given to the Nursery. I questioned that and I was told that "we don't want to embarrass them by inviting them because they don't celebrate Christmas and we don't know what food they would eat". Nothing I could do or say would persuade the church to send out that invitation. My thinking was that we had made a lot of assumptions and an invitation which was turned down still held a relationship open, whilst a party which people were excluded from closed down potential relationships.

Here there was an opportunity to take the old and transform it into something new. Not changing it beyond recognition or to the point where it was unrecognisable by the people who valued it and had always attended, but to the point where it could become something bigger than it had been.

There are so many possibilities of what this could mean for each one of us and each of our churches. Inviting people to worship who have shared our written and online services. Using our new found IT technology to enable people who can not yet physically join us to be able to continue to join through their computers. Running groups in a different way, inviting different people to them. Changing how we do meetings. Not filling our own time with busy-ness so we still have time to stop and sit with God. Continuing the prayer life that we have discovered during lockdown.

Take some time to sit with the quote from Isaiah and the image on the front cover. Pray it through what is the new thing that God is springing forth in your life and your church?

Blessings
Rev'd Bekkie Wright

Pray without Ceasing June 2021



Suggestions for each day of the month. A few spaces have been left for your own concerns.

1. For people with Birthdays or Anniversaries this month
2. Andy & Helen, Hannah & Matthew
3. Oakham Church
4. Ryhall Chapel
5. Rev Ruth Charlesworth
6. Thurlby Chapel
7. Uppingham Church
8. Rev William Booker
9. Barn Hill Church
10. Bourne Chapel
11. Rev Bekkie Wright Probationer Minister
12. For those suffering from war and conflict
13. Phil Jones Circuit Mission Enabler
14. Those who would usually use our premises on Mondays
15. Those who would usually use our premises on Tuesdays
16. Those who would usually use our premises on Wednesdays
17. Deepings Church
18. Empingham Chapel
19. Sarah Lamb - Children and Families Worker
20. Ketton Chapel
21. That the restrictions timetable will be completed
22. Luke Denley - Youth Outreach Worker
23. **
24. Those who would usually use our premises on Thursdays
25. Those who would usually use our premises on Fridays
26. Those who would usually use our premises on Saturday
27. Our Supernumerary Ministers & Local Preachers
28. **
29. Circuit Administrator Rowan
30. Circuit Officers

Any suggestions or requests please let Nina Rawlins know on 01780 753649 or email ninarawlins@yahoo.co.uk

Thank you

Thank you to everyone who sent kind wishes and greetings on hearing of my designation as Senior Minister & Deputy Chair of the Nottingham & Derby District. The appointment begins in September 2022.

Please be assured that I am fully present and serving in this ministry right up until the time I leave. There is much still to do and exciting opportunities for ministry and mission for us together.

Andy

A reflection: Friends

What is a friend? I will tell you.
It is a person with whom you dare to be yourself.
Your soul can be naked with a friend.
A friend seems to ask of you to put on nothing, only to be what you are.
A friend does not want you to be better or worse.
When you are with a friend, you feel as a prisoner feels
Who has been declared innocent.
You do not have to be on your guard.
You can say what you think, so long as it is genuinely you.
A friend understands those contradictions in your nature
That lead others to misjudge you.
With a friend you can breathe freely.
You can avow your little vanities and envies and hates and vicious sparks,
Your meannesses and absurdities and,
In opening them up to a friend, they are lost,
Dissolved on the white ocean of loyalty.
A friend understands.
You do not have to be careful.
A friend? What is a friend?
Just one, I repeat, with whom you dare to be yourself.

Andy Fyall, May 2021



Sensing God Through The Poets: George Herbert

George Herbert was born in 1593 and was a Welsh poet and priest of the Church of England. He is recognised as one of the foremost British devotional lyricists. Herbert was from a wealthy family and went to Trinity College, Cambridge with the intention of becoming a priest. However he became the University's Public Orator and served in Parliament in 1624 and briefly in 1625. Herbert then renewed his interest in ordination and took holy orders, becoming the rector of a rural parish near Salisbury. He was noted for his unfailing care for his parishioners, providing food and clothing for those in need. Having married shortly before taking the post, he and his wife gave a home to three orphaned nieces. Herbert died of consumption at the age of thirty nine, only three years after taking holy orders.

Love (III)

*Love bade me welcome, yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
If I lack'd anything.*

*'A guest,' I answer'd, 'worthy to be here:'
Love said, 'You shall be he.'
'I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on thee.'
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,
'Who made the eyes but I?'*

*'Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve.'
'And know you not,' says Love, 'Who bore the blame?'
My dear, then I will serve.'
'You must sit down,' says Love, 'and taste my meat.'
So I did sit and eat.*

Beryl Teasdale

Friends,

Although you will be receiving the newsletter in June at this very moment I am preparing a few services for this coming Sunday (23rd May) which is both Pentecost and Aldersgate Sunday. At the same time, I have just seen an advert for a charity requesting money to help starving and injured children in the Yemen. Israel and Gaza are at war and innocent people are dying because of it. India is groaning under the death toll and infection rate of Covid. This year Christian Aid has highlighted the plight of the poorest people around the world who are having to live with the devastating effects of climate change. I cannot help but question what the joy of Pentecost and Aldersgate says to the world situation we are seeing at the moment.

A brief catch-up for those who may want to know more about Pentecost and Aldersgate Sunday: Pentecost is the day when God sent the Holy Spirit to empower the first disciples, just as Jesus had told them God would do (you can read the story in Acts 2). Centuries later on 24th May 1783, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, attended a service of worship at a chapel on Aldersgate Street in London. At around 8:45pm whilst Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans was being read Wesley reported "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 law of sin and death." The truths that Wesley had been preaching for years suddenly turned from academic understanding into a lived experience and he **knew** what it meant to be loved and saved by God. This was the moment that Methodism was born.

For both the disciples at Pentecost and Wesley at Aldersgate, suddenly the feeling of faith which flooded their lives, sent them straight out into the world to speak God's love, to do all they could to change the world from the painful place it is into the Kingdom of God which Jesus has pointed us to.

And this is why I'm writing about Pentecost for a June newsletter. We cannot just celebrate Pentecost and Aldersgate as events that happen on one day each year. We cannot just read them as historical stories with no firm connection to ourselves. We need to pray and keep praying that we too experience the Spirit of God, we too have the drive to stand up and make a difference in our world. We need to grab hold of our Methodist heritage and know that we have the power to change the world, for as many people as we can reach.

So please, let us take Hymn 383 from Singing the Faith as our prayer and let us keep praying it as we take the flame of Pentecost into the world.

Holy Spirit, gift bestower,
Breathe into our hearts today.
Flowing water, dove that hovers,
Holy Spirit, guide our way.
Love inspirer, joy releaser,
Spirit, take our fears away.
Reconciler, peace restorer,
Move among us while we pray.

Holy Spirit, Christ proclaimer,
Wisdom bringer, light our way.
Fire that dances, wind that whispers,
Holy Spirit, come today.
Ease disturber, comfort bearer
Move among us while we pray.
Truth revealer, faith confirmer
Rest within our hearts today.

Blessings,
Rev'd Bekkie

Reflection on Isaiah 42:9

See, the former things have taken place,
and new things I declare;
before they spring into being
I announce them to you.

We greeted last Spring, 2020, with joy at the unexpected early warmth, revelling in cleaner air and silence in which we heard songs of birds, hum of insects and sounds of life. It was a brief interlude, we thought - a time to enjoy unfamiliar freedom from the rush of days even amidst the constraints of isolation, home schooling and working from home, and the distant threat of an invisible enemy.

Little did we realise in 2020 spring what the unwanted growth would be or the harvest that would be reaped - un-looked for, un-wanted, inescapable.

Now, in Spring 2021, signs of returning life - breaking buds, blossoms, birds singing, buildings opening, business not quite booming - is greeted with relief, caution and wariness born of painful experience. Can we, dare we, learn to live again in response to the life-force that calls, or will we forever pass by on the other side, fearful of contact, of being human? Or - can we, dare we choose to live, choose to risk life, choose to embrace the new thing that is being done with or without our participation?

Audrey Hensman

A day out

Due to the partial lifting of restrictions we made arrangements to meet a poorly and lonely friend suffering from a debilitating illness, in Cambridge.

After successfully negotiating a completely new road system we arrived at Longstanton Park and Ride having driven through "a new town" (Northstowe). What an eye opener! A new experience was the guided busway! We met up at the Round Church in the City Centre. It was overcast but dry so we headed for the river and coffee. It then rained (and rained). John went off separately while my friend and I decided on lunch (outside due to restrictions). It rained! Raindrops in the coffee cup was OK but for John an All Day breakfast elsewhere with plop, plop plop on his bacon and egg was not so good. The day out continued- more rain. There were a few dry intervals but mostly it rained! It was heartening to see so many folk about enjoying a sense of freedom despite the rain. We returned home damp but having had an interesting day out in a beautiful city which was also much appreciated by our friend.

Is this an English summer?

Moyra and John

William's Walk

I am planning to make a pilgrimage, walking from Ryhall to Epworth, where the Wesley brothers grew up. It's partly to connect more deeply with John and Charles and my Methodist roots, to pray as I go, to have an adventure, and to raise money for the Ryhall chapel development fund and Christians Against Poverty (our Circuit charity).

I hope to start from Ryhall on Monday, August 16th and arrive at Epworth the afternoon of Friday 20th. If I can manage it, I will do a "vlog" (a blog on video rather than written) to record some of my experiences and share them. On Saturday 21st, may I invite you to come and join me at Epworth for a picnic, a look round, and a service together (hopefully we will be able to sing together by then, so get practising!)? These arrangements are yet to be firmed up.

William Booker

Open Garden

I will not be having the garden open on one day as in previous years, but if small groups wish to visit by prior arrangement during July and August I would be happy to welcome you. I shall hope to make jam, jelly and marmalade to sell and fruit will be available for sale when it is ready.

Any donations will be for the Zimbabwe charity, Z.V.S.F.

M. Stones (01572 823626)



Prayer Handbooks for the coming year

These are being prepared as usual and will be available from the beginning of September. I am not sure of the price but it will be about the same as this year. Rev J Dowding (01780 481430) will obtain some for Stamford so if you require one will you please confirm this with her a.s.a.p. If you need a large print one you need to let her know this as well.

Margaret Stones will obtain them for the rest of the Circuit. If you had one this year I assume you will want to continue receiving it for the coming year. If you wish to cancel or if you wish to begin getting it please let Margaret know. Again, large print copies must be requested in advance. Tel 01572 823626



GOT PLANS?

Caden, a young man of almost eighteen, was anticipating attending his first-choice university. He was involved in a Christian union in school and looked forward to participating in a similar ministry in the new environment. He'd saved money from his part-time job and also had an excellent lead on a new job. He'd established some great goals, and everything was coming together exactly on schedule.

And then in the spring of 2020 a global health crisis changed everything.

The school let Caden know that his first term would probably be online. The campus ministry was on hiatus. The job prospect dried up when the business closed. As he despaired, his friend glibly quoted words from a well-known professional boxer: "Yeah, everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth."

Proverbs 16 tells us that when we commit all we do to God, He'll establish our plans and work things out according to His will (VV.3-4). True commitment, however can be difficult. It involves an open heart to Gods direction, along with a willingness to resist charting our course independently (V.9; 19:21).

Dreams that don't come to fruition can bring disappointment, but our limited vision for the future can never compete with God's all-knowing ways. As we yield ourselves to Him, we can be certain that He's still lovingly directing our steps even when we don't see the path ahead (16:9).

CINDY HESS KASPER

What disappointment changed your plans for the future?

What can you do to seek God guidance today?

Loving and wise Father, help me to trust you even in my disappointments knowing that you're a good and faithful God and you'll establish my steps.

BIBLE WORD SEARCH!

BASIC WORDS OF THE BIBLE

G E N T I L E B I B L E D
O B A A B R T J E M D I I
D P I I E S I M N I P B N
T E M P T A T I O N J A H
H R P S H L H R P I E P O
E S R A L V E A N S R T L
F E A C E A H C A T U I Y
A C Y R H T O L Z R S Z S
T U E I E I L E A Y A E P
H T I F M O Y J R H L N I
E E S I N N A J E W E H R
R W E C L F A I T H M L I
B S J E S U S C H R I S T

JESUS CHRIST
SALVATION
JEW
GENTILE
HOLY SPIRIT
GOD THE FATHER
PERSECUTE

PRAY
TITHE
MINISTRY
BIBLE
HOLY
SACRIFICE
FAITH

MIRACLE
NAZARETH
BETHLEHEM
JERUSALEM
BAPTIZE
TEMPTATION
SIN

N	A	L	W	O	A	K	Y	U	W	T
S	<p>Here's a super fun Bible word game!</p> <p>We've hidden a verse from Proverbs in this shape.</p> <p>To find it, you'll need to start at the correct letter and then read every second letter, going in a clockwise direction.</p> <p>How long will it take you to uncover the wisdom of this proverb?</p>									R
U										M
N										A
O										I
R										T
B										P
U										H
C										O
T										A
U										F
R										G
Y										O
E										E
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W										N
E										I
S	I	N	D	A	S	E	R	L	E	T

STAMFORD METHODIST CHURCH

Mission Projects Group

Virtual Auction of Promises



We aim to raise money to provide wells for clean water for some of the villages close to the Nixon Memorial Hospital in Sierra Leone. This will improve health and reduce the frequency of water-related illnesses at the hospital.

Our target is £4,000 ... or more



**The closing date to send in your
promise(s) has been
extended to
JUNE 20th**



This can be your way of supporting the hospital and nearby communities.

HOW CAN YOU HELP ?

Can you bake a cake ? Drive someone somewhere ? Mow a lawn ?

Provide train tickets for a special journey ? Do someone's shopping ?

Knit someone a jumper ? Do some gardening ? Something else ???

Please send us your promises by **June 20th**. These will be put in the July newsletter when we will ask you to bid generously for any item.

Winning bids will be published in the August newsletter.

Send your offers to : auctionofpromises.stamford@gmail.com

James 2:17 "faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action is dead"

**Marriage and Relationships Report to Conference
June 2021**

Areas for Concern?

Saturday 5th June 10:00 till 11:30

Venue or zoom – to be confirmed shortly

Are you concerned about the Conference vote in June?
Do you foresee possible outcomes or “fallout” as a result?
How should the church – and you as an individual – respond?
Perhaps you have unanswered questions.
This meeting aims to be a focus for these concerns, feelings and questions,
shared in a spirit of openness.



**GOD IN LOVE
UNITES US**

For more details, contact Ron Curtis (curtisrs145@btinternet.com) or Phil Jones (pdvjones@hotmail.com)

What this meeting is:

- A chance to share openly thoughts and concerns about the Conference vote and its results “on the ground” within church life and Christian experience.

What this meeting is not:

- Further debate on the report itself or seeking to influence Conference outcomes.

Please come and share if this area matters to you.

Please PRAY for:

Bourne

We give thanks for the re-opening of our churches and pray that in a few weeks time we shall be able to enjoy face to face fellowship once more.

We pray for the people of Israel and Gaza that a peaceful solution to the conflict can be found soon and end the killing and injury of so many innocent souls.

We give thanks for all those who work in the NHS particularly those administering the vaccines so successfully thus enabling the deaths and hospital admissions from Covid kept so low.

Deepings

Father God. As we reopen Deepings Methodist Church, and see other churches in the circuit open too, it becomes time for us to reorganise changes, in our environments in our church spaces and in ourselves. Give us the grace to accept the changes from what we knew and loved for years that might now be lost or different in some way. Our services are not going to be what we were used to for the foreseeable future and even the basic social interchanges we are allowed prevent the simple fellowship we look to. However, we are now able to meet for worship the one and only true God. For that we give thanks.

Empingham

Give thanks that we are able to open our church again for Sunday worship. We pray for all who may be anxious or nervous about coming to the services again, we pray for our community as we move back to some kind of normal. Help us dear Lord as a church fellowship to be a blessing and a help to those around us. We pray that our community prayer box will be a help to all who use it.

Ketton

Give thanks that the fellowship is able to meet for worship in person again at St Marys Parish Church.

Pray for those who continue to struggle with isolation and restrictions, and for those who are ill.

Oakham

Oh Lord of all Creation may we start to gather again as family and friends. We thank you Lord for your presence in our lives and the way you keep us under your benevolent care as we take teetering steps towards a more normal lifestyle. We thank you for those experts who have found ways to reduce the pandemic that has blighted the world for the last few years.

We pray for all families that have relatives that have died during this time from such a virulent virus. We still care and pray for each one. Our next step is to relearn how to mix with friends, especially those still suffering from the virus around the world. WE will walk in your footsteps as you guide and support us to find new ways to support each other. Your love and care for all will strengthen our soul to move forward in the light of your Glory.

Amen

Blessings
COUNT THEM ONE BY ONE

Please PRAY for:

Stamford

Please pray for the Government as they discern a way forward leading us out of lockdown. We pray for those who have attended worship in our building and pray that as restrictions ease and confidence rises we will see more people worshipping in our Church weekly.

We pray for the situation in Israel that peace may be restored and people will meet to discuss, and bring an ending to the fighting.

We give thanks for the money raised to build the well in Osupukiai, Kenya that sees George's plan come to fruition. We pray for all those who will receive water from that well and pray that their lives will be blessed.

Uppingham

"Spring into Summer" -we have heard many times .

We thank you Lord for the changing season, for our gardens and the joy we have from the natural world.

We give thanks both for the sun and the showers and we are grateful Lord for your presence at all times in these uncertain days.

Circuit

Give thanks for the re-opening of chapels for "in person" worship.

Give thanks for those who have taken up new office at AGM meetings recently and pray for their ministries among us.

Pray for the Circuit Invitations Committee working to find a Superintendent Minister to serve the Circuit from September 2022.

Pray for all who are still finding life difficult even as restrictions ease.



Submitting articles for the newsletter

We are delighted that some of our readers are inspired to submit book reviews, poems and articles to be included in the newsletter. When doing so, please make sure that you add your name to any item so that folk can follow up if they want to know more.

For published items, please ensure you have the permission of the author and add their name as author of any work.

**Please send all entries for the July newsletter no later than
Thursday 10th June 2021, including Prayers for the Prayer page from
Church Stewards (anything sent after this date will not be included)**

Thank you



“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.”

John Wesley