

Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre



‘LINK’

January – February
2020

Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre
Buckingham Street
Aylesbury, Bucks. HP20 2NQ

Registered Charity No. 1129749

Church Office: 01296 426526
e-mail: office@aylesburymethodists.org.uk

Aylesbury Methodist Church & Centre Website
www.aylesburymethodists.org.uk

(AMC Weekly Notice Sheet and LINK magazine
can be found on the website)

Minister:

Rev Richard Atkinson
01296 339899
revrja@outlook.com



Auntie Emily and Uncle Harold were an interesting pair. He was my grandfather's elder brother. They were a childless, perfectly pleasant couple, but one thing about them fascinated my childish self. They were creatures of routine: the same hotel in Fleetwood on the Lancashire coast, for the same two weeks each summer, from their honeymoon to Uncle Harold's death. They ate the same menu at home each week, and on the odd occasion they ventured to my grandparents or to our house, and ate beyond their usual diet, they became overcome with wonder at extraordinary things like apple crumble!! I remember the angst once Uncle Harold had died, as Auntie Emily did not drive and the parish church they attended was too far away to walk. Her decision to go Methodist surprised all and sundry, as did the ease with which she settled into her new spiritual home.

Sometimes it is too easy to fall into the comfort of routines, and the impending journey through Lent invites us to benefit from a changing journey. Traditionally, this season of fasting is seen as a time to give things up. I remember one of my contemporaries at university forgoing tea for Lent and becoming tiresome. It felt like every time you saw him he would bemoan the lack of his essential brew; and once Easter came, he returned to epic consumption levels of his favourite brew. I still wonder if he had it right. Now, I am not going to criticise those who opt to give up cake, biscuits, chocolate etc, but when Easter dawns and some seem to feel the need to make up for lost time, have we really benefited from the exercise of fasting? This is not to doubt the wisdom of eating less, but Lent is not really an invitation to diet, in my head.

Lent, a proper fast, I think, is about doing - taking something up to aid the spiritual dimension. This can be a host of things, from the obviously religious like Bible study and prayer through to a decision to do something in the community as a way of expressing your faith. Some take pilgrimages, walking round neighbouring streets and praying as they go, while others seek one of the many Lenten study guides to help add focus. Others simply spend time with the journey Jesus made, from the temptations to the crucifixion. I have been known to take time to really listen to a piece of music each day. This could be your favourite Christian acts or, as I have

been known to do, listen to instrumental pieces and allow your imagination to draw you towards God. I have even known folk who have used Lent as a time to express their love to family and friends as a means of helping them remember the ways we are blessed by God.

So, my question is, what difference is Lent going to make? The hope surely is that something of our fast continues as we journey through Easter into the year beyond. That Lent should make a difference to an ongoing pilgrimage. As our Lord reveals his solidarity with our human condition, here is our opportunity to walk with him in some way in the hope of drawing closer

May our journey through be a blessing to us and to the Church

Richard



CIRCUIT DIARY

In the hope of avoiding too many clashes, we are going to try to establish a **Circuit Diary** to cover one-off events like concerts and mornings, in the hope of not having too many things happening at the same time. Obviously, we cannot be prescriptive, but the system would allow you to see if something else is planned for the same time elsewhere in the Circuit. This does not include the regular things already advertised in the Circuit Magazine

Shirley Francis, the Office Administrator, is going to keep the diary. She can be contacted at office@aylesburymethodists.org.uk or 01296 426526. She will then be able to advise if there are any clashes.





WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2020

I am representing AMC on the World Day of Prayer (WDP) committee. The 2020 service has been prepared by the women of Zimbabwe and will be presented in 170 countries throughout the world on one day – Friday 6th March. There are two services: one in the afternoon at 1.30pm (at the 7th Day Adventist Church on the Stoke Road), and the evening one at 7.30pm (planned to be at the Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church at Bedgrove - to be confirmed).

We in Aylesbury play our part as one of 3000 churches presenting 5000 services in the UK. The power of prayer will be felt all over the world and particularly in Zimbabwe. The committee feel it would be lovely if we could have members of our Zimbabwean community involved in the services so I am appealing for volunteers to join us, although willing participants can be from any ethnic background.

If you have not been to a WDP service before, there are several reading parts (there are no lines to learn, the words are printed in a booklet!) interspersed with prayers, hymns and songs, and it's very interesting to learn about the country that has prepared the service. The committee has regular meetings and there will be rehearsals beforehand. If anyone is interested in playing a part in the services (afternoon or evening or both), please contact me and I can give you more information. **ALL ARE WELCOME.**

There are also a number of Zimbabwean 'props' needed for the service, such as musical instruments (hand rattles, drums, tambourines, etc) and things like clay pots, reed or sisal mats, beads, reed baskets, etc). I have the full list if anyone wishes to have a look to see if they can loan us anything!

Jackie Simpson-Tyda 07834 780543 or Jackiesimpson88@gmail.com



5 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR CHRISTIANS

Most people don't think of things like New Year's Resolutions as being specific to Christians, and not all of them have to be, but what better way to ring in the new year than to work on strengthening your relationship with God and vowing to become stronger in the Lord?!

Here are some New Year's Resolutions you may wish to add to your list of resolutions (that don't have to be started at New Year's - they can be started at any time!)

1. **Read your Bible daily.** Don't get overwhelmed. You don't have to read the entire Bible at once (because then you would never comprehend all that you have read), but take it one verse at a time.
2. **Go to church more often.** It is so important to go to church regularly so you can be spiritually fed through the word of the Lord. It doesn't matter if you have read the Bible several times and heard a lot of different takes on the same verse. The word of the Lord is a living, breathing thing, and changes as different people read it and new context is brought to it. It is also important to surround yourself with other believers to help uplift and support you and encourage you along the correct path.
3. **Pray for wisdom.** Wisdom is something most people do not think to ask for in today's society, but it is so important. If we have the wisdom of God within us, we will make the right choices and follow God whole-heartedly.
4. **Find an accountability partner/friend who will help you grow in Christ and motivate and encourage you in the Lord.** Having a peer who is strong in the Lord, has the same beliefs as you, and can encourage you along the right path is such a strong asset to your life.
5. **Commit yourself fully to the Lord to do His will and live for Him.** When you live for the Lord and do His will in your life, God will bless you and will allow His light to shine through you to help others come to see him through your words and actions.

(AND 10 BONUS RESOLUTIONS FROM CHRISTIANPOST.COM)

- **Resolve to stay faithful to Jesus Christ.** He is the one Truth, Way and Life. There's no reason to look elsewhere.
- **Resolve to not let anything** – a career, a significant other, social media, a house – **become an object of worship.**
- **Resolve to watch your language** and not speak any destructive talk, especially involving the name of God.
- **Resolve to prevent burnout** by putting aside work one day a week. Trust God to provide for your needs that day and just enjoy the time He's given you.
- **Resolve to talk to your parents** on a regular basis, and show them love and respect.
- **Resolve to be angry less.** Channel any feelings of rage, which Jesus said are as severe as murder, into worshipping God and serving others.
- **Resolve to honour your commitment to your spouse.** Whether in thought or in deed, stay pure and loyal in the union God made.
- **Resolve to not take anything that's not yours,** including stuff you can hold and put in your pocket, and plenty that you can't, like music downloads, streaming movies and hours on your timecard.
- **Resolve to speak about others only with truth and love,** not gossip.
- **Resolve to be content with what you have,** and not worry about all that others are amassing.



A report from the Treasurer

I reported the accounts for the year ended 31st August 2019 to the Church Council in October.

For the general account they showed a small surplus of £7584 which has increased our balances to nearly £37,000, about £20,000 short of our target balance of £56,000. To put that in perspective our annual income was £177,100, so our present balance is less than 3 months of annual turnover.

Looking at the detail of the accounts, we substantially overspent our budget for building and equipment maintenance but this was compensated for by increased income on collections, donations and lettings.

You may be interested to see the different ways people contributed towards the Church in 2018/19 and I show below the amounts and numbers of people.

	£	Numbers
Annual contribution	6,710	8
Monthly standing orders	32,201	73
Weekly envelope system	25,085	77
Loose cash	9,025	unknown
Total collections	<u>73,021</u>	<u>158</u>

The advantage of the first three ways of giving is that they are recorded, so enabling Gift Aid to be reclaimed and in 2018/19 this amounted to £16,428. As a fairly new concession, HMRC allow us to reclaim income tax on the loose cash but only up to a total of £8,000 a year. It is important then that anyone putting in loose cash who pays income tax should switch to one of the recorded methods (which incidentally preserve confidentiality). I can arrange that for you.

We are very grateful to the band of stewards and volunteer counters, two of whom spend over an hour after each Sunday service to count, record and bank the loose cash and envelope money. The cashless society hasn't quite reached AMC yet and we recently had to switch bank to the only one open on a Sunday.

The Welcome Area account is almost complete, we are just waiting to see how much the final payment to the contractor is. The final cost is likely to be about £118,000 and our income is almost up to that total so the end of fund raising for the project is in sight.

The Church annual report will be freely available by the time you read this and you can see more detail of the accounts and illustrated reports of all the other aspects of Church life. It's a good read.

Roger Kirk
Treasurer

Dear, God I am
sorry for the bad
things I did when I
was little.

Peter F



Hmmmmmm!

And what, exactly,
DID you do, Peter F!!

WELL WHOSE CHURCH IS IT THEN?!



A COPY OF THE EMAIL SENT TO US BY JUDITH PURLING ON 5th JANUARY 2020.

Dear Friends,

Thank you for all your emails and enquiries about our safety. We are not in danger.

Where to start? Locally, here in South Australia there have been fires in the hills in the fruit orchards and vineyards.

It is prime agricultural land and now it is blackened with skeletal remains of trees and vines (well the posts). Several small towns were evacuated and many homes lost. It is quite eerie to see all the hills just black.

Some of you have been with us to Kangaroo Island and will remember that we went to the Flinders Chase National Park; well, that half of the island has burnt. Homes and farms have been destroyed and all the tourism infrastructure has gone. Because it is the summer vacation KI is always busy with visitors. They have been asked to leave the island and the ferry has been bringing people with boats and caravans, etc back to the mainland.

All unnecessary travel to the island has been forbidden. A cruise ship, the Vasco da Gama, was scheduled to visit the island but was asked instead to help with the evacuation. Our air quality has been poor with the smoke blowing across the water.

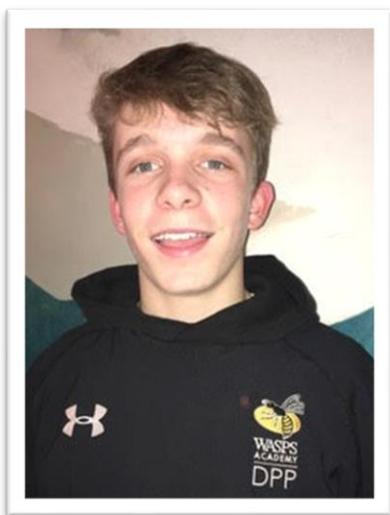
In New South Wales the fires have been burning for 51 days and no end is in sight. Along the coast the fires are raging through small towns towards the sea, and people had to get to the sea and were evacuated by the navy by helicopter, and ships. In some places people were advised to leave but many have no fuel for their vehicles as the fuel tankers haven't been able to refill the tanks because the highways have been closed. Mobile phone towers have been destroyed, so there is no coverage; power lines have burnt and the pipes which take water from the reservoirs have been damaged so the water supply is low. The local dams are empty because the fire planes have scooped up all the water. The situation is dire everywhere. There are still fires in Victoria.

Our city/suburban fire brigades are paid but the Country Fire Service is all voluntary. They are exhausted because this has been going on for weeks. They are very brave people putting their lives at risk to help others. Many have lost income and many have lost their own homes and some have lost their lives. As you can imagine, the loss of wildlife is terrible: koalas, kangaroos and wombats, to name a few, have been burnt by the hundreds. Farmers and vets are euthanising injured animals, sheep and cattle, as well as alpacas and goats and so on.

I'm sorry it isn't more cheery news but that is how it is.

Love to you all,
Judith



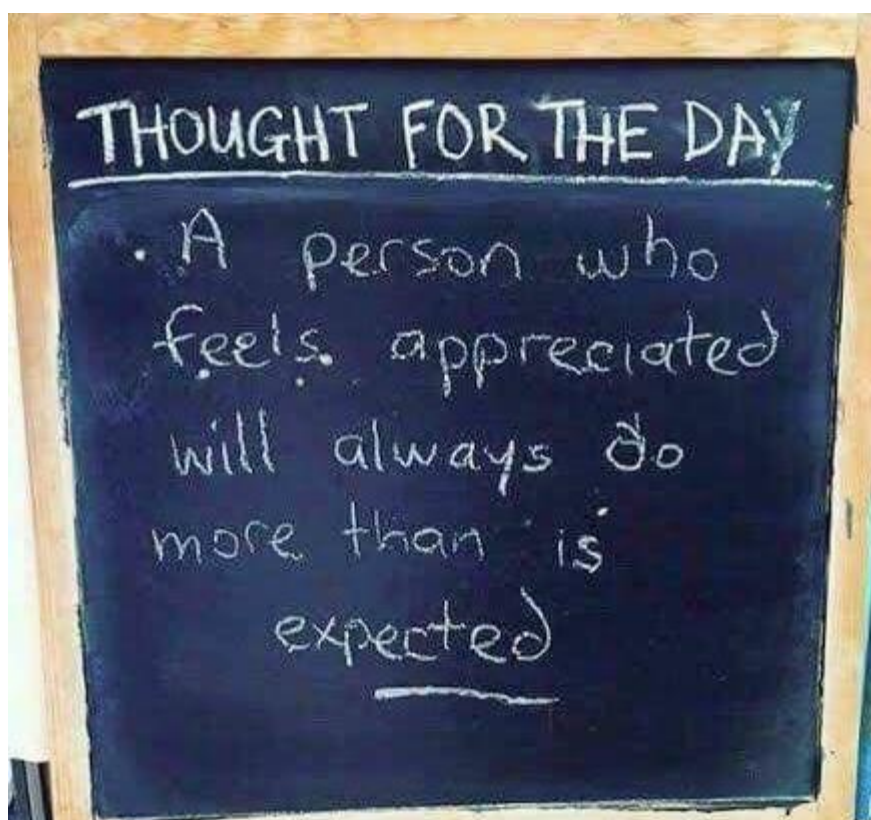
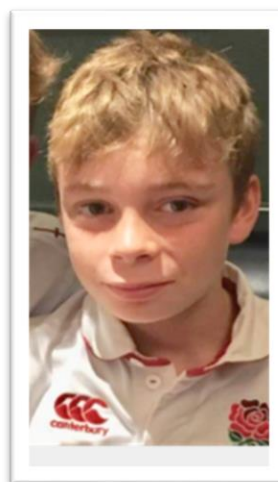


Wasps Rugby Football Club, one of the UK's premiership clubs, has invited Boys' Brigade member, Jake Hydon, to join their **Academy**. The **Academy** aims to develop, with the help of professional and expert coaches, young, elite-level rugby union players with the potential to play Premiership rugby and beyond! Jake, an active member of Aylesbury Rugby Club, has also been invited to take part in the Buckinghamshire Schools under-15 trials. To add to his extra-curricular activities, he also takes part in the Duke

of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the German Exchange.

Not to be outdone by his elder brother, Lewis Hydon is also a member of the Boys' Brigade and the German Exchange. Lewis is a keen and ambitious cricketer, who is a playing member of the North Marston and Granborough cricket club and a member of the school under-13 team.

Peter Farmer.



J TEAM



Welcome to the J Team pages



Finding your way through life can be a lot like finding your way through a maze. Each day we have to make decisions and it is sometimes difficult to know which way to go. We may choose the wrong path and end up at a dead end. When that happens, we have to back up and start over again. Life isn't easy and it can sometimes be very frustrating when we don't know which way turn.

Jesus knew that life in this world is difficult. That is why he prayed for his disciples when he knew that the time had come for him to leave this world. "I will remain in the world no longer," he prayed, "but they are still in the world. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe. No one was lost, but now I am coming to you and I ask you to protect them and keep them safe."



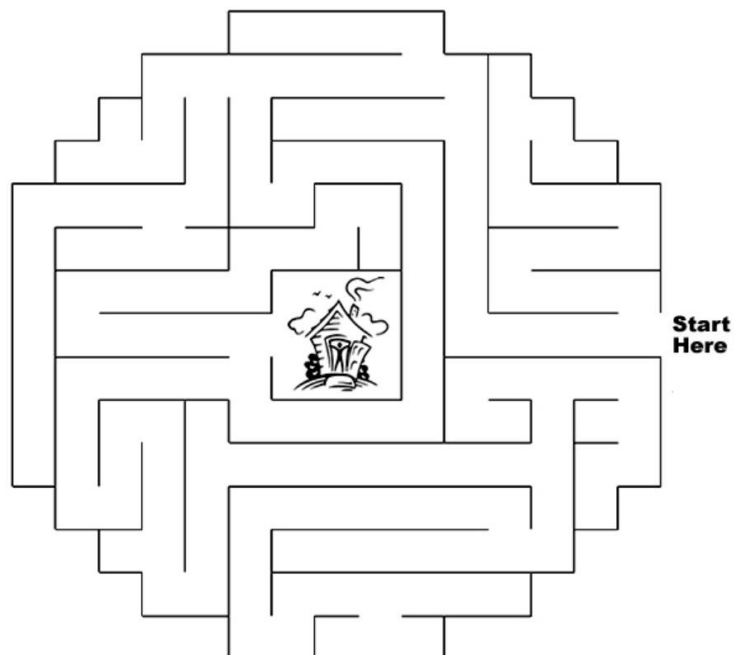
How do we find our way in this world? We put our trust in God, our Heavenly Father, to show us the way. We have his Word, the Bible, to help us. Any time we don't know which way to

turn, we can talk to him in prayer and ask him to guide and protect us.

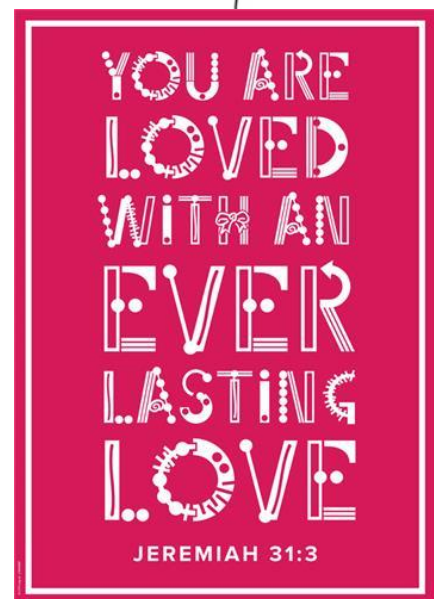
It may not be easy, but with God leading the way, we know that we will never get lost.

Through life's maze

Can you find your way home?



Colouring in



Dear God,
 As we search for the path that will
 lead us safely through this world,
 we place our trust in you and ask
 for your guidance and protection.
 In Jesus' name we pray.
 Amen

New Beginnings

Are your hands cold and empty?
Then put them together in prayer.
Are you lonely and forlorn?
Then have a conversation with God.

Is your life a mess, chaotic?
Ask God to help create order.
If all you can hear is noise,
God, the Great Restorer gives Peace.

When you are hurting and in pain,
Let Our Father lay his hands upon you,
And then submit yourself wholly
To His wonderful Mercy.

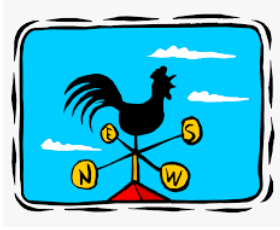
If you cannot see a future,
Just a world full of sadness,
God is waiting for you;
He has been whispering your name.

He has been gently preparing
For you to let Him into your life,
So that He can finally fulfil you,
And then you can be at one with Him.

May this New Beginning, this New Year,
Be yours to seek, find,
And forever know God.
Our Awesome Father. Amen

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The Weather

Sunny spells - Mainly cloudy.

Scattered showers - Continuous rain.

A warm front - Bikini weather.

A cold front - One that is well wrapped up.

An occluded front - One button undone.

Unsettled - Continuous rain.

An anticyclone - Your mother's sister's bike that only comes out in fair weather.

Precipitation - Anything that falls out of the sky, apart from aircraft.

Spits and spots - Just because your Granny's got it, it doesn't mean to say you're going to get it.

Fifty per cent chance of a shower - if it rains, I was right; if it doesn't rain, I was right!

Rain - Falling water.

Snow - Frozen falling water.

Hail - Frozen falling water that hurts.

High pressure - Likely to make you perspire.

Low pressure - Keep your coat on.

Imminent - Already happening.

Soon - Already happening.

Later - Soon and finally

Gale warnings - Excuses for the high price of fish!





VALE OF AYLESBURY CIRCUIT HOLIDAY 2020

Monday 15th to Friday 19th June 2020

You are invited to join Rev Richard Atkinson for our 2020 holiday to East Sussex. We will be staying at the delightful centrally-situated 3-star Cumberland Hotel in Eastbourne.

Set in an enviable position on Grand Parade in Eastbourne, the Cumberland is a traditional seaside hotel with enviable panoramic sea views just across from the beach. Many of you will know the hotel; it is opposite the Bandstand and just a few minutes' easy walk from the pier.

Cost of the holiday is **£365.00 per person, with no single room supplement.** However, there is a limited supply of single rooms available so they will be allocated on a first come, first served basis as we receive your deposit and booking form (attached with this Itinerary).

A deposit of **£50.00** per person will be required to secure your room.

Optional insurance is also available. We are offering insurance on a referral basis this year. Please ring Holiday Extras on 0800 0833551, ask for coach holiday insurance and quote this reference number: **AZ 061**. Alternatively, visit www.insurancereferrals.co.uk Approximate cost should be less than £20.

All cheque payments are to be written out to: **McCallum Holidays.**

Also included in the price is Luxury Coach Travel supplied by Plastows Travel of Wheatley. They will supply a modern coach which will be driven by Gordon McCallum. The coach will be equipped with toilet and coffee machine.

- Four nights in the hotel
- Breakfasts and three-course evening meals
- En-suite rooms with TV and tea and coffee-making facilities
- Bar and Lounge
- Porterage included
- Three included excursions (see Itinerary)
- Evenings of fellowship (including 2 nights' entertainment provided by the hotel)

PROPOSED ITINERARY: (subject to change due to weather and operational circumstances)

Day 1: Monday 15th June. Board our tour coach at your chosen departure point and we will make our way south to Eastbourne. We will make a lunch stop on the way and will arrive at the hotel in plenty of time to freshen-up before dinner.

Day 2: Tuesday. We make our way east this morning. **Battle** and **Tenterden** are on the menu today. We will make our first stop in Battle, site of the famous 1066 Battle of Hastings. Free time will be allowed to explore the town or even have a quick visit to Battle Abbey, free to English Heritage members. We travel on through lovely countryside to tree-lined Tenterden.

(You may wish to take a **steam train ride** on the Kent & East Sussex Railway. We will make a return train journey from Tenterden which will take approximately 1-1/2 hours and will cost **£19.**)

Later in the afternoon we will return by coach to Eastbourne.

Day 3: Wednesday. We travel west today to **Worthing** where you will have free time to walk along the sea front or visit the local shops. Early afternoon we head back east to **Brighton** where you will be dropped off beside Palace Pier.

Day 4: Thursday. An easy day today as we set off in the morning to nearby Alfriston, a pretty village tucked into the South Downs. We continue onto Lewes, the County Town of East Sussex where you will have time for lunch and a stroll among the shops and near the River Ouse bridge. On the way back to Eastbourne we will take the coastal route and travel via Beachy Head. We should be back mid-afternoon to allow you time to explore Eastbourne.

Day 5: Friday 19th June. I am afraid we are going home today and we certainly will not be hungry, having enjoyed the sumptuous and plentiful hospitality of the Cumberland Hotel. We will be making a lunch stop on the way home and will arrive in the local area in the late afternoon.

If you prefer to stay around the hotel instead of joining the coach on the outings that is fine. It is a lovely area to explore and relax.

As well as being a relaxing time away, our Circuit Holidays give an opportunity to meet new friends in our extended Circuit. On this holiday we praise God each morning with a short devotional time. For those who choose, we also enjoy fellowship together in the evenings.

There are some booking forms on the display stand in the Welcome Space.

If you would like more details please ring:

PETE & JANE HONEYBALL on 01844 351096 or 07703 174 656 (Jane)

(email: peter.honeyball@btinternet.com)

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU ALL
AND HOPE YOU CAN JOIN US.**



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Tues 21 Jan	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship
Sat 25 Jan	7.00pm	Karibuni Quiz Night at Fairford Leys Community Centre
Sun 26 Jan	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Rev Andrew Shergold
Sat 1 Feb	4.00pm	Messy Church
Sun 2 Feb	10.30am	Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Richard Atkinson
Tues 4 Feb	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship: Fellowship Afternoon
Sun 9 Feb	10.30am	Family & Brigades Service led by Rev Richard Atkinson
Sun 16 Feb	8.45am 10.30am	Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Richard Atkinson Morning Worship led by Rev Richard Atkinson
Tues 18 Feb	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship: Margaret Watson – Basic 1 st Aid
Sun 23 Feb	10.30am	Local Arrangement
Sun 1 March	10.30am	Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Dr Hayford Ofori-Attah
Tues 3 March	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship: Frankie Fisher
Frid 6 March	ARTICLES FOR MARCH-APRIL LINK DUE IN	
Frid 6 March	1.30pm 7.30pm	World Day of Prayer at 7 th Day Adventist Church World Day of Prayer at Our Lady of Lourdes Church (tbc)
Sat 7 March	4.00pm	Messy Church
Sun 8 March	10.30am	Family & Brigades Service led by Rev Richard Atkinson
Sun 15 March	8.45am 10.30am	Service of Holy Communion led by Rev Richard Atkinson Morning Worshil led by Mr John Shaw
Tues 17 March	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship: Fellowship Afternoon
Sun 22 March	10.30am	Morning Worship led by Rev Richard Atkinson
Sat 28 March	6.00pm	Beatie's Charity Bash 2020
Sun 29 March	10.30am 3.00pm	Morning Worship led by Rev Richard Atkinson Circuit Service: Stainer's Crucifixion
Tues 31 March	2.30pm	Tuesday Fellowship: Rev Anthony Howells from Fairford Leys

**O Lord support us all day long
Till the shades lengthen and the evening comes,
And the busy world is hushed,
And the fever of life is over and our work is done.
Then Lord in your Mercy, give us safe lodging
And a holy rest and peace at the last.**

Found on the wall in a church in Dyrham Park, Gloucester

Toys and Gifts



A huge 'thank you' to everyone who brought toys, gifts, knitting or money donations to the Toy & Gift service at the beginning of December. Richard and I filled 2 cars on the Monday and delivered all to the Quarrendon Family Centre on Berryfields. This Family Centre, run by Bucks CC covers all of Aylesbury and has smaller hub centres in some of the

villages around. The Manager and a couple of the Centre's voluntary staff were thrilled with all the toys and knitted items, and together we soon filled the room allocated. Before we were finished, they were eagerly assessing who they thought would benefit from some of the gifts that children under their care would not otherwise be given at Christmas.

A further discussion took place with the Manager regarding the donations collected, and she asked that we turn these into shopping vouchers. She would then be able to keep them to take a parent shopping, when the need arose, for fresh items and food not available at the Food Bank. On returning a couple of days later with the vouchers, a thrilled Manager met me to say that on that afternoon she had a Mother calling who she knew had little food to feed her family. These vouchers meant that she would now be able to use one to take this Mother shopping that afternoon.

Your generosity meant a Happy Christmas for many children and their families.

Pauline Noble.



Aylesbury Methodist Church
Buckingham Street, HP20 2NQ

Youth Group!

From Year 6 upwards!
Every Wednesday. 6.15 – 7.30pm
(except school holidays)

1st Wednesday – SINGING



2nd Wednesday – DRAMA



3rd Wednesday – DISCUSSION



4th Wednesday – SOCIAL



To SIGN UP, please contact Mel
familyworker.amc@mail.com Tel: 07717 121887

There's NO weekly charge.
Just pay £1 on Youth Social nights



ACTS 29

*Radically Changing
The Story*

Our District Youth Event is back!

Saturday 4th April

8 - 17year olds

Arrivals from 1pm - Event 2 - 8pm

Rugby Methodist Church Centre, CV22 7TB

The **Methodist** Church
Northampton District



HANDS

In 1958, Max Bygraves recorded a song that he had written called 'You need Hands'. He was very popular, and the lyrics stated that:

Hands should be warm, so that you can feel the life blood flowing through the body of the person that you touch.

Whenever I feel cold, the first thing that I notice is my nose goes red and invariably starts to run – but the worse thing is always my hands. They first just start to tingle, gradually turning dark pink and then red.

After this, most of the feeling leaves my fingers. Depending on how cold the weather is, it's not long before I can no longer feel anything at all.

As I go out and about in this wintery weather, I notice people walking hand in hand with either friends or family. Most of them are warmly wrapped up in thick coats, nice woollen hats and scarves - and of course the ubiquitous gloves!



We all pass homeless people, sometimes stopping to speak to them, maybe to give them something. Either food or money. They are almost always sitting on the cold ground, possibly wrapped in a blanket to keep warm. Some have a hot drink in their hands that may have been bought for them.

But who has actually looked at them, or asked them their names? Moreover, even touched them!

How many people, as they dropped a coin or two in an old hat, noticed their hands? Invariably they have no gloves on and their fingers are blue with the cold!

A few years ago, I started talking to Tom, a young homeless man, and when I asked if there was anything that I could do to help, he said that he had been given food and drink, but his hands were freezing (he said that hot drinks helped as you can wrap your hands around them until the drink goes cold).

Whilst he was talking, I thought of my own hands – all snug inside my woolly gloves. So, I took them off and gave them to him. After much protesting from Tom, he gladly put them on.

I saw Tom several times over the following weeks, and gave him another pair after he told me that he had given them to his friend - also living on the street but in a worse position than himself.

The price of the gloves was less than a cup of tea or coffee. But the effect on Tom lasted a lot longer.

When we pass the homeless, please try and see the person beyond the tatty blanket. Stop and ask them their name.

We are **All** God's Children, and just because circumstances have made some of them homeless, it does **Not** make them invisible.

I try to live by Luke 6.31 and have tried to bring up my two children the same way. They give it a different slant, but it more or less means the same: "Do unto others as you would like done unto you". Either way, it seems to work!

So, as we all go out and about, especially with the New Year upon us, be it after Church, going shopping, maybe visiting friends - anything - if we see someone who maybe looks a bit down and out, or lonely, just say 'Hello'.

Touch their hands. Feel the life blood. And see the light shine in their eyes as you do.



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What to Give Up...

Give up complaining ...	focus on Gratitude
Give up pessimism ...	become an Optimist
Give up worry ...	trust Divine Providence
Give up bitterness ...	turn to Forgiveness
Give up hatred ...	return Good for evil
Give up negativism ...	be Positive
Give up anger ...	be More Patient
Give up pettiness ...	become Mature
Give up gloom ...	enjoy the Beauty all around you
Give up jealousy ...	pray for Trust
Give up gossiping ...	control your Tongue
Give up sin ...	turn to Virtue
Give up giving up ...	Hang in there!

A teenage victim of people-smuggling found squashed in a suitcase wrote a thank you letter to English people.

Phong, originally from Vietnam, was in a life-threatening condition when he was found stowed in the back of a car in Dover last year.

The 16-year-old spent six days in hospital. His smuggler Andrei Iancu, from Romania, was jailed for 18 months.

In his thank you letter, Phong said he never believed he would be loved.

He said he woke up in hospital scared and in pain but "kind people" smiled at him and gave him biscuits, oranges and water.

Phong, now 17, has since been fostered by a family in Ashford, Kent, through the county's social services. He is now learning English and Maths.

His letter read: "Dear England, I'm writing a letter to tell you what a difference you have made to my life. You have saved my life. You have given me a family and a home."

Phong was discovered during checks at the Port of Dover.

He wrote: "Now I have a mum, brother, sister, grandad. At first I couldn't speak English very well. We practiced every day.

"Thank you for finding me, making me better in hospital. Thank you for giving me a family.

"I never believed I would be loved. There is now a big rainbow in my life instead of darkness."

Phong's foster carer, Christine Burge, said: "Phong is an incredible young man who has grown so much since he arrived. He makes me very proud every day.

He really is the most caring and determined boy I have ever met."

4th June 2019

Dear England

from Phong

- I'm writing a letter to tell you what a difference you have made to my life. You have saved my life. You have given me a family and a home when I came to the UK. When I woke up in the hospital I was very scared and panic. I don't know where I am, what happen to me, I hurt all over my body and couldn't eat. I could only use my neck and fingers just a little bit. First thing I liked it's the kind of people in hospital. The nurses and doctors smiled at me and gave me biscuits, orange and water. They looked after me very well. After 6 days stayed in the hospital.

Last summer, I went for a day to Clacton-on-Sea and was intrigued to see an axolotl in the aquarium on the pier. I went on a trip to Felixstowe and was thrilled to see a lizard in the rose garden. I went on holiday to Grange-over-Sands and was delighted to see a peacock in the grounds of the hotel.

What do I hope to see in a loch when I next go to Scotland?

One Sunday morning, a man caught up with me as I was walking along Buckingham Street.

“Excuse me,” he said, “Could you tell me where the Stone Circle is?” I must have looked blank.

“You know, the circle of ancient rocks,” he continued.

Then light dawned!

“Oh, you’re talking about Avebury. That’s miles away in Wiltshire,” I said. “This is Aylesbury.”

“Oh,” said the man, “I’ve made a detour on my way to Oxford, to see it. So, what is Aylesbury famous for?”

I said, “Ducks!”

Angela M Smith

“Remember to look up at the stars
and not down at your feet. Try to
make sense of what you see and
wonder about what makes the
universe exist. Be curious. And
however difficult life may seem,
there is always something you can
do and succeed at. It matters that
you don't just give up.”

~ Stephen Hawking ~
1942-2018





For those who might not already know, the Aylesbury Town Chaplaincy is an initiative by the local Christian community to help serve the needs of the thousands of people who work and visit our town centre every day. It is an independent charitable trust (registered charity: 1147949) and has volunteers serving as trustees, chaplains and street angels, drawn from churches across the town and surrounding area. All are motivated by Christian principles of love and service and fully respectful and committed to serving people of all backgrounds and of all faiths or none.

If you would like to find out more: www.aylesburytownchaplaincy.co.uk/

They are involved in a new prayer guide, and would like to share the details with us so that we can also pray for the work of CNI, both locally and nationally.

An inspirational new Prayer and Action Guide has been produced by CNI (Christian Nightlife Initiatives) Network and several of its local projects and partner organisations. The free 30days Guide can be found at cninetwork.org/30days.

The Guide is based on the work of local Street Angels, Club Angels and Festival Angels who see how prayer and action can and does change communities and people. The 30 day Guide was produced to help people pray for 'God's Kingdom to come, God's will to be done' and provide some tools and ideas to help people become part of making that prayer a reality.

Founder and CEO of CNI Network, Paul Blakey MBE, says, "The 30days Prayer and Action Guide is written with insight from those who are part of amazing volunteer teams and partner organisations, making a difference within communities across the UK and around the world. Those who have contributed have seen first-hand how prayer and action brings about change from reduction in violent crime to offering life-saving help and support.

At CNI Network we believe that our faith needs to be lived out, and the amazing message that God loves people and is for people made known by what we say and what we do. We hope that many will take time over 30 days to reflect and pray on the thoughts and Bible verses and then commit to the suggested action."

'BEATIE'S CHARITY BASH 2020'



Now that we are no longer holding our annual Caribbean Evenings, Beatie is very keen to have a fundraising event each year for charities which are important to her and the Aylesbury community.

A chance, also, to get together for a chat!

So, we intend to have a **FAITH BUFFET TEA**

on **Saturday 28th March 2020, 5.00 – 7.30pm.**

It will be very informal and all are welcome.

NO CHARGE, but we ask everyone to bring **FOOD TO SHARE**

and also to make a **DONATION** on the evening

– we shall have donation buckets available.

We would like the evening to be fuss-free, so all food needs to be brought **ready to serve** on a plate/dish.

You can bring whatever you like! A few ideas:

- Pastry dishes: (quiches/flans/sausage or veg rolls/pizza)
- Different Salads: (leafy/tomato/pasta/rice/couscous/bean/vegetable)
- Cold meats/cheeses, etc
- Filled rolls/sandwiches; sausages, falafels

You might prefer to bring a *Cake* for dessert instead!

(we won't be having other desserts – just different cakes).

Beatie would like to share the proceeds from our first 'Bash' between the Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity and Epilepsy Research.

PLEASE PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARIES!

Further information nearer the time, but do speak to Beatie Francis or Jennie Torpey if you have any queries.





Thank you all for your support during 2019



**The Action for Children Christmas Stall
in Friar's Square on Sat 16th November, 2019
raised £312.65.**

Many thanks to all those who kindly provided gifts for the stall.

Christmas collections 2019

Christingle Service: **£121.35** Christmas Morning: **£319.15**
[of which £200 was Gift Aided]

If any of you who have an **Action for Children Home Collecting Box** which hasn't been emptied during the past 9 months, please will you either bring in the box for us to count the money, or open the box, and count and bring in the money in a sealed envelope, clearly marked with your name.

These boxes are a very valuable source of income for the charity, and every penny counts towards helping the most vulnerable children and families under their care.

Pauline Noble, Dawn or Hannah Wright will be pleased to receive either your box or the counted money. Any queries ring Pauline on 01296 484940



If anyone would like a collecting box, please speak to Pauline.

Coming up:

We have the **Charity Stall in Market Square on Saturday 11 July 2020**, when we hold a Tombola and Children's Lucky Dip

We would be very grateful for items for the Stall - *at any time!!!!*

Please give these to: Jennie Torpey 581414,
Pauline Noble 484940, or Sandie Steeden 331278.



Safe and happy childhood



Action for Children protects and supports children and young people, providing practical and emotional care and support, ensuring their voices are heard, and campaigning to bring lasting improvements to their lives.



Dates for Messy Church

Saturdays, monthly

4.00 – 6.00pm

February 1st: Our Country - 1 Timothy 2:1-2

March 7th: Trusting God - Psalm 23

May 2nd: God answers prayers - Luke 18:1-8

June 6th: Jesus loves little children - Matthew
19:13-14

July 4th: Celebrating Messy Church! - The
Messiest Play Ever!

Any Volunteers? Would anyone like to be a part of the amazing Messy Church team?

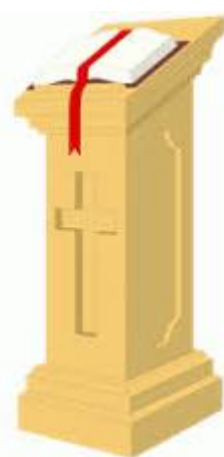
If you would like to get involved and give some time to Messy Church, please contact Mel: 07717 121887
or familyworker.amc@mail.com

Messy Church is **WONDERFUL!**
Please get in touch if you would like to get involved.
Thank you!

Aylesbury Methodist Church,
Buckingham Street,
Aylesbury, HP20 2NQ

My Mistake

I had been very anxious for the service, to be led by the Good Faith Book Club, to go well, because I value my membership of the Club so much. Peter had asked me to read the first lesson, so I had studied it at home. I had read it aloud to myself several times and tried to put in the correct expression, as my mother had taught me to do, long ago. Knowing that the proceedings were to be streamed on the internet, I was thinking of notifying my cousins in Norfolk and Cornwall about it, so that they could see and hear me on the screen. I applied some hair spray, before setting out, and following Helen's example, sipped some water, before heading for the lectern, as I wanted to look and sound right for them. I told myself that I must speak slowly and distinctly, so that everybody could hear God's message.



Then I made **my mistake**. The moment it left my mouth, **I knew I had gone wrong**. I glanced at the congregation. No one seemed to be intently following the words in the pew Bibles, so perhaps it had not been noticed. There was nothing I could do, except carry on, but I was conscious of the fact that I had said, "Everyone should be slow to listen," while James had written (Chapter 1 verse 19) "Everyone should be quick to listen." Oh dear!

But after I got home, I thought, I don't know, it is undoubtedly right to be quick, to be prepared to listen, but on the other hand, it must be right to listen slowly. In conversation, it is right to pay full attention to the person who is speaking, and slowly take in exactly what they are expressing.

It is so easy for me to make a guess at what I think they are getting at and get it all wrong. If I take the time to let them explain themselves more fully, I sometimes discover that I have inadvertently jumped to the wrong conclusions. I have not grasped what they were really trying to say. Sometimes, I have even found that I have clarified my own thoughts, if I have been given the chance to listen to my own voice more slowly.

My mistake has certainly given me pause for thought.

Angela M. Smith



Karibuni Children: Transforming Young Kenyan Lives

KARIBUNI QUIZ NIGHT 2020

FAIRFORD LEYS COMMUNITY CENTRE
HP19 7HT

7:00PM | 25TH JANUARY 2020
INCLUDES FISH AND CHIP SUPPER

TICKETS £12 | TEAMS OF 6-8
BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS AND NIBBLES

FOR TICKETS:
EMAIL juwat69@gmail.com
01296 641261



Giving is its own reward

'I will gladly spend myself and all I have for you.'

2 Corinthians 12:15 NLT

The apostle Paul wrote, 'I don't want what you have – I want you ... I will gladly spend myself and all I have for you, even though it seems that the more I love you, the less you love me' (vv. 14-15).

Paul found his greatest fulfilment in giving, not receiving. For him, giving was its own reward. For him, being successful meant making others successful. For him, being joyful meant bringing joy to others. That's because he didn't look to people for his reward, but to God: 'Remember that *the Lord* will reward each one of us for the good we do' (Ephesians 6:8 NLT).

The hardest thing for most of us to do is to fight our natural tendency to put ourselves first. That's why it's important to continually examine your motives and make sure you're not sliding backwards into selfishness. If you want to check your motives, follow the example set by Benjamin Franklin. Every day he asked himself two questions. When he got up in the morning he would ask, 'What good am I going to do today?' And before he went to bed he would ask, 'What good have I done today?'

If you can answer those questions with selflessness and integrity, you can keep yourself on track. Seeing those in need, and giving to meet that need, keeps your priorities and your perspective right. It increases the quality of life for both the giver and the receiver.

The truth is, there is no life as empty as the self-centred life, and there is no life as centred as the self-empty life.

Source: The Word for Today, a daily devotional, produced free of charge by United Christian Broadcasters. For your regular quarterly copy write to UCB at **FREEPOST RLTX-ABUL-GRAR, United Christian Broadcasters, Westport Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 4JF**, or telephone **0845 60 40 401**. As a charity, UCB relies on donations, so a gift of at least 50p per copy, which just covers the cost of printing the booklet, would be appreciated from time to time.

The next LINK magazine will be the March - April 2020 issue.

Please send in all contributions by Friday 6th March 2020 to both addresses below:

Jennie Torpey: jennietorpey@gmail.com

AMC Office: office@aylesburymethodists.org.uk

Or I can type them up for you if I have them early enough.



Ideally, please send as an A4 WORD document, with 2cm margins and 14 - 16pt size font



A woman had just returned to her home from an evening of church services, when she was startled by an intruder.

She caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and yelled: 'Stop! Acts 2:38!' (Repent and be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven.)

The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done.

As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar: 'Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture to you.'

'Scripture?' replied the burglar. 'She said she had an Axe and Two 38s!'

Circuit Service

An Invitation to Everyone!

Led by Rev Richard Atkinson, the extended Circuit Choir will present John Stainer's famous cantata 'The Crucifixion', a service of anthems, solos and congregational hymns providing a moving and inspiring act of worship for Passiontide.

'The Crucifixion' recalls the scenes which mark the last few days of our Saviour's life on earth. From the rejoicing as he entered Jerusalem. The Passover where he gives the new commandment of love for one another, the pathos in the Garden of Gethsemane then the hostility and loneliness before Pilate followed by the tragedy and triumph of Calvary.

'The Crucifixion' is on Sunday afternoon 29th March at 3.00 pm, lasting about one hour and followed by refreshments in the Hall.

Everyone is welcome to join with our friends from the circuit as we contemplate Christ's suffering before the joy of resurrection at Eastertide.



*Vale of Aylesbury
Methodist Circuit*

THE CRUCIFIXION

by
JOHN STAINER



**An act of worship for Congregation and Choir
depicting the events leading up to
Christ's death upon the cross.**

**Presented by the Circuit Choir together with
the Choir of St Peter and St Paul, Tring and
friends from other local churches and choirs
under the direction of Cliff Brown**

Led by the Rev Richard Atkinson

Aylesbury Methodist Church

Sunday 29th March 2020 at 3.00 pm

**(Repeated at St Peter and St Paul, Tring on
Sunday 5th April at 3.00 pm)**

EVERYONE WELCOME

Refreshments will be served in the Hall after the service.