

Some Thoughts from the Manse

I start this letter by thanking all those who helped to make our circuit service on St Martin's such a wonderful event. This act of worship was led by our St Martin's preacher, Mr Chris Savill and many of the folk from St Mary's said to me afterwards that they would love him to come over to St Mary's one Sunday and lead our worship there. So, if you read this Chris, give me a date!



At this service Beryl Read gave us a wonderful account of a recent Songs of Praise evening on St Mary's and led us in the singing of the hymn 'Sweet is the work, My God, My King', a hymn that is much loved by many. This was followed by Mary Ratcliffe speaking about the grace of God which led into a challenging meditation. All of this and much more was made possible by the members and stewards on St Martin's who, as always, gave us a warm welcome and, on this occasion, hot and cold drinks for the picnic which was held outside the chapel in 'classic' St Martin's weather.

Often in those moments just before an act of worship starts I like to sit, to feel the atmosphere, and to look around me at the people sitting and waiting. To me there is something very special about this - people have come, people have gathered.

All congregations are different, people come with different needs and with different expectations. Some bring with them worries and burdens from the week before, others come with a sense of celebration and joy, and each act of worship is as it is, not just because of the preacher, but because of God's people who have 'gathered together'.

Over the years I must have led thousands of acts of worship. Much of my ministry was with tiny congregations in rural Norfolk but I have also led worship in city churches and now in the chapels here that are sometimes full of holiday makers, and I can tell you I have never lost that sense of excitement, and that sense of 'expectancy' at the start of worship. It is wonderful, it is precious, because it is, I believe, a foretaste of heaven!

Looking back, I remember in particular those moments before a service of thanksgiving at the loss of a loved one. People gather, often you can feel the atmosphere of hope and

expectancy, and you can sense the longing to hear that Christian message of our hope of a new and a better life beyond the things of this world.

Whenever we meet in church it is special, each act of worship is different. For that hour people have come for a purpose, and each and everyone who has gathered is special to God!

I expect you may have heard about the recent survey which said that Methodists live on average seven years longer than others (see page 12)!! Well I for one am not surprised to hear this. Regular worship has certainly served me well, it warms my heart, it fills me with hope, and having sung some good solid hymns I always feel better. Now the secret is out, I expect our chapels will be full to overflowing!

May we always be open to the voice of our loving God, who in His grace calls us to worship at every season of our lives. May we never miss the opportunity to 'gather together' in the mighty name of Jesus, and may His promise of blessing continue to be seen in our love of one another.

Whatever you may be doing in the month of August, have a great time! Continue to pray for one another, be sure to be in chapel every Sunday – and who knows, you may live seven years longer than your neighbour.

I remain, by the grace of God, the Methodist minister of these fine islands for a while.

Charlie Gibbs

Gift Day

Dear Friends

What a joy it was to have so many of you visit the Manse on our Church Gift Day on the 1st of July. Mrs Williams, our Church Treasurer has told me that the total amount given that day was £1702!!!!

This is most encouraging – thank you so much. This I believe is yet another sign of how richly blessed we are as members of this church and as devoted followers of Jesus.

May we continue to show our trust in God through our sacrificial giving, and especially in our love of one another.

We thank God for all that is past, and trust God for all that is to come. All will be well. All will be well indeed!

Charles R. Gibbs

News from St. Martin's

Our news this month is solely about the Circuit Service which was held on June 27th. at St. Martin's Chapel. It was good to welcome several visitors along with members from the congregation on St. Mary's. We were especially pleased that Mary and Joe felt able to make the trip after their recent bereavements. On the trip over, we witnessed to fellow passengers on the Guiding Star with a few songs from Mission Praise, but as we were scattered around the boat, how well we kept together was debatable!! Most people were able to enjoy a walk from Lower Town quay to Chapel, but lifts had been arranged for the less mobile.

The service itself really was representative of all aspects of the Circuit. Chris Savill from St. Martin's guided the worship along and led us in prayer, whilst Beryl Read, Mary Ratcliffe and Rev. Charles Gibbs represented the contemporary and traditional ways of celebration on St. Mary's. We were uplifted and blessed by our time together, worshipping as the family of Methodists on Scilly.

Picnic lunches were eaten in the sun between Signal Rock and the Chapel, with hot drinks served by St. Martin's members. After this shared time most people headed for home (England's World Cup football match being an interest for some!) but a few St. Mary's folk stayed longer on St. Martin's to enjoy its scenery and appeal.

Heather

Bill Miller: Some will remember the annual visits of Linda Miller and her parents when they attended worship and the Friday Fellowship meetings. Linda's mother died many years ago, and we have just heard that her father, Bill, died in March at the age of 97. Linda and Bill last visited in 2002 when he was 90, but his growing frailty prevented them from coming again. Linda hopes to come with some friends at the end of September, and I am sure that those who remember her will be pleased to see her again.

Len and Sylvia Michell

District Synod at Mevagissey, Saturday 24th April

Charlie and I attended on behalf of the Isles of Scilly Circuit, getting a lift through the kindness of Rev. Bob Senior of Penzance. Fog delayed leaving Scilly so we arrived after proceedings had started. To catch the plane back we had to leave before Synod ended, fog prevented us getting back on that evening, so we had a weekend in Penzance only to have to come back on the boat on Monday morning – because of fog.

I sat next to Ian Haile in the meeting, a former Chairman of Cornwall District who sends greetings to you all. Three Circuits gave notice of concerns they were bringing to the notice of the Methodist Conference which meets at the end of June: Launceston Circuit anticipated having to make a choice between paying the increased Connexional assessment or reduce resources for work with youth, children and families; Falmouth and Gwennap Circuit want clarification on the use of Methodist premises by other faiths; St Austell Circuit want Conference to back a motion expressing grave concern about Israeli treatment of Palestinian settlements, especially where international law has been broken. [One of the sessions after lunch heard a speaker from the circuit speak quite strongly on this matter, but there were other speakers (including Rev. Prof. Peter Stephens) who put the Israeli side.]

Synod voted on two nominations to go to this year's Conference, one being Beryl from St Mary's who lost out to Biddie Bishop of Liskeard and Looe. John Winton gave a paper on 'Our Ministry to Visitors'. We are doing it right – he advocated keeping doors unlocked as much as possible, and also suggested that local people pop in occasionally and speak to anyone visiting.

One agenda item was 'The Place of Lay People and Appreciation of Ministers' which brought quite strong comments from both lay and presbyters. Some felt they were regarded as second class by ministers, which some ministers refuted. The debate reflected the growing reliance on worship leaders and preachers in the District. (In the Connexion only 38 successfully candidated last year for the ministry, much less than the number of retirements.) It was an interesting day – I was pleased to be able to go.

Len Michell

Worship leaders' and Preachers' Away-day

At the last meeting of worship leaders and preachers (19th Jan) in connection with 'Local Preacher Development' which Circuits are encouraged to promote, it was agreed to have a fellowship day on St. Martin's in May. This took place on Sat. 15th when 7 of us from St. Mary's (including Rev. Andrew Bell, a friend of Charlie's, on holiday) joined Christopher Savill in the island hall. Unfortunately, Barbara and Mervyn were unable to come with us.

Before lunch we shared in a short service, at the end of which Charlie and Andrew sat at another table to which, in our own time, we could go and receive the bread and wine individually, and be prayed over should we have any personal concerns.

After a picnic lunch, taken in the bracken-spattered field outside, with the sun shining on the righteous (!), we reluctantly retreated inside to have a time of discussion led by Charlie. His theme was 'Sacrifice'. The lessons we read in the morning were Romans 12:1-18 and St. Mark 8:31-38 and these were referred to at times in the afternoon. (Have a look at them if you have time, and see if you are challenged by them.) Although we are not called to undergo the sacrifice of suffering as so many of Jesus family are where persecution takes place, perhaps we have to sacrifice something in our natural selves which becomes a stumbling block in our relationships with others both inside and outside the church fellowship. We were able to share with one another our personal concerns, those things which we find difficult to change because it would be a sort of sacrifice to do so.

It was good to share fellowship with each other, to have time to talk instead of having a 'business' agenda to work through. Our thanks to Charlie for his leadership that day, and to Christopher for organising the room and refreshments.

Len Michell (Local Preachers' Meeting Secretary)

We apologise to Len for the late inclusion of his articles.

Methodists celebrate 150 years of chaplaincy to the armed forces

150 years ago, the Methodist Church purchased land in the garrison town of Aldershot to provide a place of worship for the Methodist men stationed in the camp. Despite some initial hostility from other Christians, resolute Methodists began the legacy of Methodist chaplains serving those in the Army, Navy and RAF.

150 years on, Methodist chaplains have provided support to military personnel and their families throughout more than 15 conflicts, from British colonial rule in South Asia to the ongoing war in Afghanistan.

For decades, Methodist chaplains initially had no official status in the army or admiralty, but the Methodist Conference sent ministers around the world to comfort injured soldiers, accompany troops who were stationed as far away as India and South Africa, and offer their services to prisoners of war.

Revd Stephen Hancock, an army chaplain from Abingdon, said; "From the centurion at the Cross to chaplains serving today in the UK or overseas – Navy, Army and Air Force – little seems to have changed. People still need to experience the love of God in places where war is the norm. It is not always pleasant, not always fun, not always rewarding, but it is part of the great commission to 'go' and, as with the Methodist chaplains who have gone before us, we few who serve today press on in the hope that we can direct people to the Son of God."

Faith brings a man empty to God, that he may be filled with the blessings of God. - John Calvin

Faith, to put it simply, is the conviction that God does not tell lies. - Frank Retief

Which are you?

There are two kinds of people on earth today;
Just two kinds of people, no more, I say.
Not the sinner and saint, for it's well understood,
The good are half bad, and the bad are half good.
Not the rich and the poor, for to rate a man's wealth,
You must first know the state of his conscience and health.
Not the humble and proud, for in life's little span,
Who puts on vain airs, is not counted a man.
Not the happy and sad, for the swift flying years
Bring each man his laughter and each man his tears.
No, the two kinds of people on earth I mean,
Are the people who lift, and the people who lean.
Wherever you go, you will find the earth's masses,
Are always divided in just these two classes.
And oddly enough, you will find too, I ween,
There's only one lifter to twenty who lean.
In which class are you? Are you easing the load,
Of overtaxed lifters, who toil down the road?
Or are you a leaner, who lets others share
Your portion of labour, and worry and care?

Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850-1919)

With thanks to Pamela Thomas for passing this on to us.

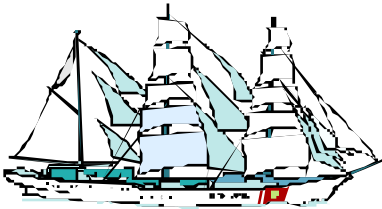
Birthday Greetings

This month we send our love and prayers to Jenny Burrows, Neil Didlick, Sybil Gandy, Rev. Charlie Gibbs, Anne Gurr, Peter Laverock, Daphne Perkins, Jeremiah Roberts, Paula Rose, Katie Smith, Rebecca Smith, Alan Terry and Julia Walder. We hope they all have a very happy time on their birthday.



A Jubilee Sailing Trust Adventure

Having undergone a protracted and extensive period of scrutiny in my professional career, I was looking for something which would be an adventure and take me away from the consulting room. I have often thought about a Tall Ships experience, having seen the parade of sail at the Tall Ships' Race in Falmouth on two occasions.



Dr Sherwood Elcock, our erstwhile locum from Salisbury told me of his involvement with the Jubilee Sailing Trust, an organisation which takes people of all physical abilities, so that people with a disability and the able-bodied can sail together.

The Jubilee Sailing Trust runs two ships – the *Lord Nelson*, launched in 1986, and the *Tenacious*, launched 2000. I decided to sail with the *Lord Nelson* on a four day trip from Weymouth to Cherbourg and back.

Facilities on board included flat, wide decks for ease of movement around the ship, wheelchair lifts between deck levels, a hearing loop, a speaking compass, and hydraulic power-assisted steering to enable people with limited strength or mobility to helm the ship with ease.

Eight permanent crew are on board at any one time - Captain, Mate, four Bosun's Mates, Cook and Cook's Assistant. The crew also included two engineers, and a medical purser (nicknamed Nursey-Purse) who organizes First Aid and such comforts as your bedding and sea sick tablets!

There are eight cabins on board for wheelchairs, where the physically challenged and their buddies reside. This buddy system gives each crew member someone with whom to share their experiences, someone with whom to learn the ropes (literally!) and someone to help them if the going gets tough, whether sail handling, on galley duty or during 'happy hour' (cleaning the ship!). The safety of everyone is the top priority and so every activity is conducted at a pace comfortable for all. Going aloft (climbing the rigging) is optional – but has to be experienced for all thrill seekers. There is opportunity for all wheelchair users to go aloft, under the strict supervision of the Mate.

We had four wheelchair crew who were keen to pull on the ropes so were placed at the front of each chain gang. Three of these youngsters were sponsored by Activate – a charity sponsoring adventures for the physically challenged. Four experienced voyage crew are appointed as watch leaders, and all aboard stand standard naval watches.

It is difficult to capture in this short article, what fun we had working in a close harmonious team and sharing in each other's strengths and weaknesses. The details of our particular voyage are not the main thrust of this article but the enjoyment of a structured activity holiday, where all worked as a team; the heave of the deck as the wind caught the sails; the responsibility of helming such a large ship at sea; and the camaraderie of the crew are some of the most enduring memories.

Toby

Dr Toby Dalton sailed with JST LN742 Weymouth to Cherbourg to Southampton, May 10 – 14 2010. You could contribute to this enterprise or indeed join a voyage by visiting website www.jst.org.uk or by phoning 023 8044 9108.

Rev. Philip Michell - on Sunday, 4th July in Derby Cathedral, Len & Sylvia's son Philip was ordained as a deacon in the Anglican Church by the Bishop of Repton. Len & Sylvia, together with one of Philip's sisters, Esther and her husband Ian, were present. The occasion was very moving and they were thrilled that in the presence of a full cathedral someone very dear to them, and from Scilly, was embarking on full-time ministry in the church. Philip's early days were closely involved with our chapel, attending Sunday School, being a member of the 'Inters' youth group, and starting his local preaching in Scilly before going to Cliff College, and later joining the support team at Wesley's Chapel in City Road, London as a lay assistant. He and his wife Rachel, with their two little girls, Rosie and Ellie, will be living at Brailsford, a village about 8 miles from Derby, where he will assist the vicar in ministering to a group of 5 parishes. There is a Methodist Church in the village and once a month a united service is held, alternating between the Church of England and Methodist churches, so Philip will be an ideal bridge between the two denominations.

A Prayer for the work of Action for Children

Gwen read this prayer on 11th July, the day when we particularly remember the work of Action for Children

We join in a prayer of thanksgiving for the Christian commitment, past and present of the children's charity started by Methodists over 140 years ago.

Father God, we remember that our Lord Jesus Christ put the highest value on the children around Him. May we too, cherish the lovely, protect the fragile, delight in the laughter and hold the light of the Christ-child deep in our hearts.

We learn with sorrow that problems of neglect are increasing throughout the world. O God of trust, we pray your presence may be known in the lives of those whose innocence has been betrayed, whose trust has been abused and whose childhood has been taken away from them by hunger, fear, cruelty, shame or lack of loving care. Be there for them in your renewing power, in your strengthening grace and in your sustaining love, so all your wounded, fragile souls may know the upholding of your creative peace. These things we ask in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

Amen

Some children write to their minister

Dear Mr Minister

I know God loves everybody but then he never met my sister. Yours sincerely, Arnold. Age 8.

Please say in your sermon that Peter Peterson has been a good boy all week. I am Peter Peterson. Sincerely, Pete. Age 9.

My father should be a minister too. Every day he gives me a sermon about something. Robert Anderson, age 11.

Oberammergau Passion Play 2010



As predicted, my friend Maureen Burrow and nearly fifty of us were able to visit the Passion Play in the middle of June. The members of our company were culled from different denominations and from many places in Southern England. Thanks to my

brother John, who organized it all with Saga travel, we were enabled to see this extraordinary and profoundly moving production, staged only every ten years. So, it was literally my last chance to witness it, along with several other 'Oldies' in our party.

The Play has been staged regularly for more than three hundred and fifty years and was performed originally in fulfillment of a promise to God, should the village be delivered from the ravages of the plague, and they were! This year there were 2400 in the cast, with 640 children among them. The orchestra has 55 players and 48 sing in the choir, while a great many more people are involved behind the scenes. Anyone who has lived in the village for less than twenty years is not eligible to participate. No microphones or loudspeakers are used and the auditorium now seats over 4500. Virtually all the tickets are sold in advance and only a handful are available at the last minute, mostly for the benefit of the locals. Oberammergau is in a predominantly Catholic area of Germany and the churches are very ornate in that tradition. However, Jesus was a Jew, as were his friends and His chief enemies, so the beautiful costumes have been made in styles true to that era.

The action is concentrated on the last week of Christ's life. The story is interlaced with superb tableaux depicting scenes from Old Testament narratives. It is a marathon performance, starting at 2.30 pm, for the first time this year, rather than in the morning. The arrest of Jesus in the Mount of Olives ends the first part at 5 pm. After a three hour break the second part deals extensively with Christ's interrogation before the various authorities. In Act X we arrive at the Crucifixion – a truly horrific scene with three human beings, not dummies, hanging there.

The final act, XI, is short, with the confirmation to Mary Magdalene that Christ Has Risen! And for me, it barely erased the horror just witnessed before. Still, the performance ends with a great hymn of praise and jubilation sung by the choir.

Hallelujah! He is Risen!

Gwen Clarkson

If you have never seen this inspirational play, do book it in your diary for 2020!

Methodists live longer than the average Brit

Earlier this summer Stanley Lucas of Cornwall died, aged 110 (born on 15 January, 1900). Stanley was thought to be not only the oldest male member of the British Methodist Church, but one of the oldest men in the world.

Is this sort of longevity characteristic of Methodists? Seemingly, yes. An analysis of family announcements printed in the Methodist Recorder shows that in 1973 the mean age of death for Methodist laity was 77.9 years for men and 83 for women. By 2008 these figures had risen to 83.9 and 91.1 respectively – well above the life expectancy for the UK population as a whole (77 for men and 82 for women).

Dr Richard Vautrey, GP and Vice President of the Methodist Conference, said 'I'm sure there are many different factors at work....but I would guess that our emphasis on caring for our spiritual as well as physical health, avoiding excess, engaging with people in our communities and being good neighbours all help'.

Methodist commentators, both in the Victorian era and since, believed that the longevity of Methodists was not accidental. They posited a clear link between a religious, 'clean' and virtuous life on the one hand and a long one on the other. The avoidance of physical and moral excess was especially advocated.

The Church's annual governing body, the Methodist Conference, begins every year with singing 'And are we yet alive?', a hymn by Charles Wesley.

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The more you have to live FOR, the less you need to live ON. Those who make acquisitions their goal never have enough. - Sydney Harris

'The beauty of it all is,' said the mayor, 'it won't cost us anything; we'll get it all out of a government grant.'

God Bless the Cornish!!!!

A photographer on vacation in America was inside a church taking photographs when he noticed a golden telephone mounted on the wall with a sign that read '\$10,000 per call'. The American, being intrigued, asked a priest who was strolling by what the telephone was used for. The priest replied that it was a direct line to heaven and that for \$10,000 you could talk to God. The American thanked the priest and went along his way.

Next stop was in Atlanta. There, at a very large cathedral, he saw the same golden telephone with the same sign under it. He wondered if this was the same kind of telephone he saw in Orlando and he asked a nearby nun what its purpose was. She told him that it was a direct line to heaven and that for \$10,000 he could talk to God. 'OK, thank you,' said the American.

He then traveled to Indianapolis, Washington, Philadelphia, Boston and New York. In every church he saw the same golden telephone with the same '\$10,000 per call' sign under it.

The American, upon leaving Vermont decided to travel to Cornwall to see if they had the same phone. He arrived in Cornwall, and again, in the first church he entered, there was the same golden telephone, but this time the sign under it read '50 pence per call'.

The American was surprised so he asked the priest about the sign. 'Father, I've travelled all over America and I've seen this same golden telephone in many churches. I'm told that it is a direct line to heaven, but in the US the price was \$10,000 per call. Why is it so cheap here?' The priest smiled and answered, 'You're in Cornwall now, son ... it's a local call'.

Thanks to Stephen Gurr in Brisbane for sending this

A Church notice that came out not as intended!

The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been cancelled due to a conflict.

ST MARY'S METHODIST CHURCH

Do not miss this!!!!

CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY CLUB

Starting

. Monday 16th August

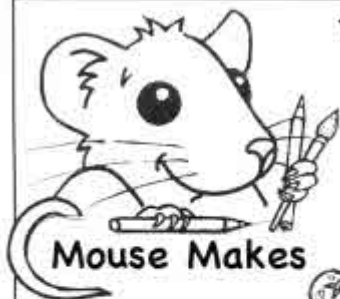
PIRATES LOOKING FOR TREASURE

By the end of the week we will discover that the greatest treasure anyone can find is knowing Jesus as Lord!

Book your place now

. telephone Sonia on 423854

Children will have a great time this summer!



Mouse Makes

The Large Crowd and The Big Picnic

Thousands of people had followed Jesus to the other side of the lake to listen to his teaching.

All that the disciples had to feed them was **five** loaves of barley bread and **two** fish but Jesus took the bread and fish and gave thanks to God. They all had as much as they could eat and there were still **12** baskets of bread left over!



Read the full story of the feeding of the 5000 in John 6:1-15.

Find these words on the picnic rug:

- BARLEY • MIRACLE • CROWD • TEACH •
- GRASS • GATHER • BASKETS • SHARE •
- BREAD • LOAVES • FEAST • SIT • TWO •
- DISCIPLES
- ATE • SAT
- HUNGRY
- BOY • EAT
- FIVE
- FISH
- JESUS
- PIECES
- GOD
- FULL
- FEED
- TWELVE
- THANKED



Aug 10

Editorial Team

Anne Gurr manda.gurr@btinternet.com
MaryRatcliffe maryratcliffe@live.com
Val Parker martinandval.parker@virgin.net

This is the Circuit magazine but it needs your contributions to make sure everyone knows what is happening.

Visit our Circuit website www.scillymethodists.co.uk

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Some material in this magazine was obtained from www.parishpump.co.uk. We thank them for providing material for magazine editors to use.

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We have had some lovely letters from our mainland friends who wish to continue receiving In Touch. A big thank you to you all and a special thank you for the generous contributions you have made to the cost of producing the magazine.

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St Helen's Pilgrimage

This year this will be on August 8th at 3 pm. The boat will leave St Mary's at 2 pm. Do try and attend - it is a lovely occasion and it would be nice to have more local support.