



METHODIST CIRCUIT

IN TOUCH

December 2022/January 2023

From the Manse

I'm writing this in the week leading up to Advent Sunday, aware that this year, I've not yet got an Advent calendar. It's not that I'm without choice. Locally in the shops, let alone online, the selection is vast. It seems there are now Advent calendars to suit all tastes and every theme and hobby. I've noticed too that many Advent calendars nowadays have the added excitement of some kind of treat behind each door..... chocolate, cheese, crisps, healthy nibbles, beauty products, seeds to plant in the garden, tea, coffee and a range of other drinks ... For puzzle lovers, there's a calendar with 24 problems and challenges to work through, and for fitness fanatics, a calendar is available with a daily exercise, presumably to help combat the mince-pie calories. I've even been made aware of an Advent calendar with doggie treats behind each door, though whether I'll be tempted to indulge my pack remains to be seen.

I wonder what you think? Do you have an Advent calendar this year and if so, what kind? Perhaps you continue to use an Advent calendar from previous years. I've smiled as I've reminisced about the Advent calendar I remember from my childhood. I don't recall having a new one each year but instead remember the cardboard doors being so well-worn that many no longer stayed closed. The principle of the day-by-day countdown to Christmas was still there but the sense of surprise was somewhat lost!

Surprise, hope, excitement, anticipation, expectation are among the major themes of the Advent season. Advent calendars (those with previously unopened doors!) can be one way of keeping us mindful of these themes, reminding us to be ever alert to the revelation and presence of God in the world and in our lives.

So much of the Christmas story contains the element of the unexpected. Without warning, Gabriel appears to Mary, completely disrupting her settled life. Little wonder we read of Mary's bewilderment and questioning, "How can this be?" She's able to respond with trust, finding courage in the promise of Gabriel that "The Lord is with you" (Luke 1:28)

The ending of each year has become associated both with review, looking back, and with planning, looking ahead. As we journey through the Advent season, perhaps the daily doors of our Advent calendars might further serve to remind us of some of the opportunities that have opened up for us during 2022; some perhaps we've anticipated, hoped or worked for, while others may

have come upon us with little or no warning. A review of our year could invite us to reflect on the ways in which the promise of Gabriel to Mary has been true for us and we've known ourselves strengthened and sustained by God's presence.

Looking to 2023, perhaps there are opportunities, doorways, we feel called or drawn to explore in more depth. May the promise of God-with-us enable us to journey with courage and hope.

Wherever you're reading this, on Scilly, online or on the mainland, I extend to you the greetings of the Methodist Circuit and people.

Our very best wishes to you and to those you hold dear.

Revd Carole x

News from Connexion, District and Circuit

We've been delighted in recent months to welcome the new Chair of District, Revd Loraine Mellor to visit the Circuit. Loraine visited on a day trip in August to meet with the Circuit stewards. She made a second visit in October, accompanied by the District Property Secretary, Patrick Reynolds. These visits have been incredibly helpful, giving encouragement, vision and direction in our planning for the future.

Revd Loraine has given us some dates for weekend visits in 2023, when there will be opportunity for her to meet a wider group of people, and to lead worship and preach in both chapels. Details of these dates will be confirmed in the next edition of InTouch.

Safeguarding, Data Protection and Privacy

You may remember or be aware that the list of baptisms dating back to about the 1940s was, until recently, on the back wall of the Chapel on St Mary's. In line with data protection and privacy legislation, the four boards have been removed from public display for updating. Please be assured that the record is kept safe and that it is our intention to return the Cradle Roll at the earliest opportunity.

News from St Martin's

As winter sets in we have now moved to Friday services, with some weather disruption. Several of our members are taking their usual annual holidays, so Chapel congregations have been rather thin on the pews...

Our photo exhibition in the Sunday School Room has been open again and so far has raised some £160. It is a work in progress and new additions are always welcome. Some photos have even mysteriously appeared on The Facebook's Very Scilly Memory page! We continue to support young Yusra in Tanzania through Action Aid and it is always encouraging to get her news. She is enjoying school and doing well. Field worker letters also detail the work being done with the local women who are helped to become independent through such initiatives as farming and small business support.

Our Island has experienced its unfair share of sadness this year. Mary Evans passed away last month at the grand age of 101. She lived for many years opposite Chapel and was a regular member of our congregation. She was the Mum of Peter and Bronwyn, and with husband Glynn became very much part of Island life in their retirement. Mary spent her twilight years in a nursing home in Truro. We have just heard the very sad news that Edna Goddard has passed away, and I will include a tribute in my next contribution. To conclude on a happier note, we have welcomed two new babies on the Island; a son for Geoff and Charlie Payne and a daughter for Jack and Izzy Gillette. May they flourish and enjoy a happy life on St Martin's.

Val Thomas

Welcome of the new Chaplain to the Isles

Many members of the Methodist Circuit were present at the evening service in St Mary's Parish Church on Wednesday 9th November during which Revd Elizabeth Burke was formally installed and licensed as Chaplain to the Isles.

We warmly welcome Revd Elizabeth and husband Mick, pledging ourselves to pray for them in their life and work here. May God's blessing be on them, and on us all through our sharing together in worship and service.

Who is the Baby?

A little girl was examining a Christmas crib with her grandmother and commented, *'Grannie, it's really nice, but there's one thing that bothers me: is the baby Jesus ever going to grow up? He's the same size He was last year!!'* The birth of Jesus must be the most well-known birth in the world, but are we really growing in our understanding of this story?

The angels announced, *'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord.'* (Luke 2: 10,11). The birth of a baby is a time of great joy and excitement and Jesus' birth is good news for *all* people! He is none other than the king of the universe, who has come as our Saviour. To experience this joy, we must let go self-centredness and living as our own saviour. His deliverance and wholeness is a real cause for joy!

'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests.' (Luke 2:14). We may feel anything but peace with God, ourselves, or even with those closest to us at Christmas. How can a Jewish infant born to a peasant family in first century Palestine be the source of peace between God and man in the 21st century? Jesus came to establish such peace through His death on the cross. Trusting the Prince of Peace in our lives brings peace with God. If we ignore this message of Christmas, we won't benefit from it. As the carol says, *'Joy to the world, the Lord has come, let earth receive her King.'*



O my Father, my God, I am in Your hand;
and may I rejoice above all things in being so.
Do with me what seems good in Your sight;
only let me love you with all mind, soul and strength.
By John Wesley

Raphael's Virgin and Child

Raphael (1483-1529) was a talented artist from a very early age, but this drawing belongs to a time when he was in Rome from 1510-12. The finished painting is known as the Mackintosh Madonna, after its last owner.

This drawing, or cartoon, was the first stage in creating that work: it is in black chalk with heightening marks of white. When an artist made an initial drawing like this, he would then prick the cartoon with holes and then sprinkle charcoal powder over the drawing to reproduce the design on the canvas below. The pinholes on this drawing are still clearly visible. Sadly, the



final painting has been damaged through time, but here in the cartoon we see that first stage: a sensitive and balanced picture of mother and child: Mary warm and caring, Jesus laughing and alive.

During Advent we think of the preparations God made for the birth of the Saviour. We celebrate God's work of creation and how He chose a people for His own. Within that people He looked for a holy remnant and then finally a loving heart in the assent of Mary to be the mother of our Lord. These preparatory steps were as vital for our salvation as the artist moving from idea to sketch to the finished work.

Each stage is important; each stage a revelation of life and love. Vasari wrote of Raphael that in his paintings 'the flesh palpitates, the breath comes and goes, every organ lives, and life pulsates everywhere.' Even this preliminary drawing displays that life and vitality. It is a life we celebrate at Christmas in the birth of a child who turns to us, as he does in this work, as a sign of joy and love.

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### **Why care for the poor?**

We should care about people living in poverty around the world because they are people just like us. People who want the same as us: dignity, safety, security, shelter, food, love. – *Chine McDonald*

## **Was Jesus really born on 25<sup>th</sup> December?**

Almost certainly not. But the story of how that date came to be chosen as His 'birthday' is one that stretches back long before His birth.

It seems to have started on the Greek island of Rhodes in 283 BC. That year the solstice fell on 25<sup>th</sup> December, and it was also the year that the Ancient World's largest Sun God statue – the 34 metre, 200 tonne Colossus of Rhodes, was consecrated.

By 46 BC, Julius Caesar had made 25<sup>th</sup> December the official winter solstice.

In AD 274, the Roman Emperor Aureilian chose the winter solstice to be the birthday of the Sun God. He also decreed that *Sol Invictus* (the unconquered sun) was 'Lord of the Roman Empire'.

50 years after that, and Constantine had become the first pro-Christian Roman Emperor. He wanted the Church to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ on 25<sup>th</sup> December. Perhaps it was that to him, Jesus was more or less the same person as the mighty Sun God. Or perhaps he felt that the ancient Sun God's association with goodness, light, warmth and life would help ease the people's transition from paganism to Christianity.

Whatever the reason, the Church went along with it, and chose 25<sup>th</sup> December to be the date of Christmas. And in an ancient mosaic in the crypt of St Peter's Cathedral, Jesus is portrayed as adorned with sun rays and riding in a chariot – just like Sol Invictus.

As for the huge, bronze 200 tonne Sol Invictus? He fell over during an earthquake and was sold off for scrap metal in 654AD by an enterprising Arab scrap merchant. Meanwhile, Jesus lives on...

## **Children's version of the Christmas story**

- When the three wise guys from the east side arrived, they found Jesus in the manger.
- When Mary heard that she was the mother of Jesus, she sang the Magna Carta
- Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.



## 90 years of broadcasting the Royal Christmas Messages

This year we shall have our first Royal Christmas Message from King Charles III. He follows in a tradition that spans three generations. It was 90 years ago, on 25th December 1932, that the first Royal Christmas Message was broadcast on radio. King George V addressed the nation live from Sandringham. A quarter of a century later, on 25th December 1957, the Christmas message by Queen Elizabeth II was televised for the first time.

King George V had been asked to broadcast a Christmas message in 1922, but at the time he felt that radio was for entertainment, and therefore not suitable. Ten years later, after a visit to the BBC, he was persuaded otherwise, and agreed to do it as part of the inauguration of the new Empire Service (now the World Service).

The time chosen was 3pm because it was the best time for reaching most countries in the Empire. In fact the first message started five minutes late and lasted only two and a half minutes, but it made a massive impact and established itself as a regular Christmas Day event.

Edward VIII never delivered a Christmas broadcast, but King George VI continued the tradition, using it to encourage people during the second world war. Queen Elizabeth II broadcast her first Christmas message in 1952, again from a room at Sandringham, and five years later agreed that her Christmas message could be televised – live. She proved to be a natural broadcaster.

But times changed, and in 1960 the message was pre-recorded from Buckingham Palace, which meant that it could be sent to Commonwealth countries for broadcast at a convenient time. However, the 3pm UK broadcast continued every year – except 1969, when the Queen wrote a message instead, believing that the Royal Family had received enough exposure with the TV documentary *Royal Family*, which had aired in the summer.

But the tradition was resumed the following year. The Christmas message is now also available each year as a podcast and can be seen through Facebook and YouTube. King Charles III is expected to give his first Christmas message this year.

## The story behind the carol: Good King Wenceslas

Each year at Christmas we sing about good King Wenceslas looking on the Feast of Stephen... ever wonder who on earth he was? Here are three of the five verses...

*Good King Wenceslas looked out on the Feast of Stephen  
When the snow lay round about, deep and crisp and even.  
Brightly shone the moon that night, tho' the frost was cruel  
When the poor man came in sight, gathering winter fuel...*

*Bring me flesh and bring me wine; bring me pine logs hither;  
Thou and I will see him dine when we bear them thither.  
Page and monarch forth they went, forth they went together,  
Through the rude winds' wild lament, and the bitter weather...*

*In his master's steps he trod where the snow lay dinted;  
Heat was in the very sod which the saint had printed.  
Therefore Christian men, be sure wealth or rank possessing,  
Ye who now will bless the poor, shall yourself find blessing.*

This carol was 900 years in the making... and started with a brutal murder in Bohemia.

For Wenceslas was a real person, the Duke of Bohemia, who lived in the early 10<sup>th</sup> century. He seems to have been a rare ruler, in that he was just and had compassion for the poor. His goodness made him enemies, and when he was only 22, he was assassinated on the steps of a church in Prague in 935.

But that was not the end of Wenceslas. Deeply mourned by the common people, he was soon considered a martyr and a saint. A cult of Wenceslas grew up in Bohemia, influencing the High Middle Ages idea of the *rex Justus* – or 'righteous king' – that is, a monarch whose power stems mainly from his great piety.

The story of Wenceslas came to England sometime before 1853, when Queen Victoria's envoy to Stockholm sent some rare books to a friend, John Mason Neale, Warden of Sackville College, East Grinstead. Here Neale found the story of Wenceslas in an ancient poem by Czech poet Václav Alois Svoboda. Neale published his translation as a carol in 1853. He made the 'Duke' into a 'King', as a later Pope had conferred the regal title on Wenceslas.

The carol tells the poignant story of a young king and his page braving harsh winter weather in order to bring food, wine and fuel to a poor peasant on the Feast of St Stephen (26 December). The journey is terrible, and the page only gets through by following in the king's footprints, step by step, through deep snow. There are themes here of following Christ, through suffering, to do good to the poor. If the story is ancient, so is the melody that Neale chose for his carol – it goes back to Finland in 1582.

Good King Wenceslas... today, a millennium after his brutal murder, he is still remembered in Prague, where a statue of him stands tall in the middle of Wenceslas Square. His goodness is not forgotten.



### **God's fragrance – do people catch a whiff of it on you?**

*'...and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.'* John 12:3

A story runs of how a lady was having tea outside a tea shop late one afternoon, when she became aware of a pleasant scent filling the air. She asked the waiter the source of the scent and was told that it came from the people passing by. He explained that they worked in a perfume factory down the street and were on their way home. When they left the factory, they always carried with them the fragrance that had permeated their clothes during their day's work.

As the perfume workers leave the factory full of the fragrance of where they have been, so we, as we leave our churches and chapels and wherever we spend time with God, are meant to carry the perfume of His presence with us. We are called to spread everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Him (2 Corinthians 2:4). If we allow ourselves in worship to be permeated with Christ's love and the sweetness of His presence, then we will be able to take the Jesus in us out into the world.

## Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve! Could it be possible that some of us like it more than the big day itself when all the focus is on the 25<sup>th</sup> and the build up to it.

But once the shops are shut, all the journeys made and everyone is where they are supposed to be and all the furniture has been re-arranged and the last gift placed under the tree, there is a brief time of doing nothing. In the beginning of that 'nothing' time our minds are set free from preparations and we have time to think of others, those no longer with us and those we might still be able to include in the next day's celebrations. Then there is only the waiting left and the trusting.

On a clear night it is nice to step out into the garden, not to pray, or say or think anything, just to be at one with Creation and know that we are part of God's plan, as are each and every one of us. In that time when everything is done or waiting to happen, that is when we find God and faith.

'Silent Night' is more than just a carol, it is a necessary communion, a re-charging of the soul from which we take peace and love into the busyness of the party season and the year ahead. May we all find a little of that precious silent night, that beautiful holy night.

*With thanks to Trinity Methodist Church*

## Christmas Day

**C**arols sound throughout the land  
**H**eralding a special birth  
**R**ejoicing as from Heaven's realm  
**I**mmanuel comes to bless the earth.  
**S**o in the town of Bethlehem  
**T**he Saviour Jesus gently lies,  
**M**ary rocks the tiny child  
**A**s angels serenade the skies.  
**S**hepherds told the awesome story  
**D**ivinity will now reside  
**A**s He who ruled in Heaven above  
**Y**et Lord of all comes as a child.

*By Megan Carter*

## **Action for Children Income 2021/22**

I am happy to report another successful year of fund raising for Action for Children. A total of £665-54 has been banked, in addition to the proceeds from Christmas services and money donated in memory of Gwen. This figure is a little more than last year.

With the summer heatwave and consequent drought, Alan had little excess allotment produce to offer in the roadside box, so it was as well it was a bumper year for book sales.

Whilst we all regret the closure of Lloyds Bank, "it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good", so I was given many lovely children's books by Claire Stone during the preparation for their move.

Once again I would like to thank all who have supported Action for Children in any way – Action for Children holders of home collection boxes, those who have made a donation, providers of books and the many who have purchased books through donation. So many people replace the books they have read, thus keeping the supply chain going.

Please can I continue to ask you to save unwanted paperbacks until next spring, when I will willingly collect and carry on fund raising in this way.

I keep a few home collection boxes, so if you would like one please get in touch. Every bit of loose change helps Action for Children work with vulnerable children and young people. The demands on the charity are increasing with the present cost of living crisis.

I feel I cannot conclude this report without mentioning Gwen. The £377 donated here was a fine tribute, and I understand from her daughter Norma that money given at the mainland memorial service will also be for Action for Children. Gwen would be saying "Bless You."

Thank you,  
*Heather*

Book Sales £507-31

Tomatoes and rhubarb £ 13-00

League of Light collection boxes £117-23

Donation £ 28-00

**TOTAL** £665-54

Donations in memory of Gwen £377-00

## **Bible verses of hope as a New Year begins**

*You are a new creation:* Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.' (2 Corinthians 5:17)

*You can have a new heart:* I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. (Ezekiel 36:26)

*Good new things can happen:* Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. (Isaiah 43:19)

*God is looking out for you:* For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11)

*You need not worry:* Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? (Matthew 6:25)

*Do not be afraid:* For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)

*Feel free to always ask for help:* Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. (Philippians 4:6)

*Look forwards:* But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead. (Philippians 3:13)



It's not easy to become an angel! First, you die. Then you go to Heaven, and then there's still the flight training to go through. And then you have to agree to wear those angel clothes. -*Matthew, age*

## Gratitude Month

The weather, although very stormy in recent weeks, has remained fairly mild. This has been a blessing, especially so in relation to events due to be held in the chapel and hall premises on St Mary's. Hopefully the central heating will be restored before Christmas and a warm space can once again be offered for all. In the meantime, we're grateful for so much goodwill, cooperation and understanding.

The situation with the heating has given me cause to reflect on my response to the unexpected. With November designated in some parts of the world as "National Gratitude Month", I've tried to look for opportunities rather than dwell on negatives. In a prevalent culture that often seems to focus firstly and mostly on bad news, it's sometimes a challenge to keep the good front and centre. Whilst the national "Gratitude Month" lasts only four weeks, the call to live intentionally in such a spirit is identified by the New Testament writers as a mark of our discipleship. The words to the Philippians are always worthy of our prayerful reflection. How about this for a New Year's resolution?

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally ... whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things" (Philippians 4:4-8)

*Revd Carole*



A few years ago, a party from a local church went to sing carols at an old people's home. After they had sung several well-known carols, the residents were asked 'Is there anything you would like?' To which one elderly lady replied 'I would like to go to bed!'

## **I heard the Bells on Christmas Day**

I heard the bells on Christmas day  
Their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet the words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

I thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along th'unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head:  
'There is no peace on earth,' I said  
'For hate is strong, and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.'

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
'God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good will to men.'

Till, ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day  
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

*By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*



## **World Day of Prayer**

The World Day of Prayer service is scheduled for Friday March 3rd 2023, so please note the date well in advance! It has been prepared by the women of Taiwan, a country living with the claim of China on its' sovereign territory. More information about planning, time and venue will follow.



## Various reflections on God's grace for the New Year

New Year's Day is a good time to fix one's eyes on the only One who knows what the year is to hold. – *Elisabeth Elliot*

Faith never knows where it is being led, but it loves and knows the One who is leading. – *Oswald Chambers*

This one simple act of beginning each day with God sets each day on the path of wisdom. – *Elizabeth George*

We're most happy when we're enjoying God and fulfilling His purpose for our life. – *Nancy Wolgemuth*

Enter the coming year with renewed hope in the power of God to do through you what you cannot. – *John MacArthur*

Wherever you are, be all there. Live to the hilt every situation you believe to be the will of God. – *Jim Elliot*

Although our New Year's resolutions may quickly crumble, God's plans never fail. – *Charles Stanley*

Let's make one resolution this year: to anchor ourselves to God's grace. – *Chuck Swindoll*



### Spotted on a church notice board:

When you were born, your mother brought you here.

When you were married, your partner brought you here.

When you die, your family will bring you here.

In the meantime, why not try coming on your own sometimes?



"Does anyone have a light, please?"

### **Visiting Father Christmas**

A mother took her young daughter to visit Father Christmas in his grotto at the garden centre. He greeted the youngster merrily and asked: 'And what would you like for Christmas?'

The little girl stared at him, open-mouthed with horror. *'Didn't you get my email?!'*

## Eight Gifts

### **The gift of listening.**

But you must really listen. No interrupting, no daydreaming, no planning your response. Just listening.

### **The gift of affection.**

Be generous with appropriate hugs, kisses, pats on the back and handholds. Let these small actions demonstrate the love you have for family and friends.

### **The gift of laughter.**

Clip cartoons. Share articles and funny stories. Your gift will say 'I love to laugh with you'.

### **The gift of a written note.**

It can be a simple 'Thanks for the help' note or a full sonnet. A brief handwritten note may be remembered for a lifetime, and may even change a life.

### **The gift of a compliment.**

A simple and sincere 'You look great in red', 'You did a super job', or 'That was a wonderful meal' can make someone's day.

### **The gift of a favour.**

Every day go out of your way to do something kind.

### **The gift of solitude.**

There are times when we want nothing better than to be left alone. Be sensitive to those times and give the gift of solitude to others.

### **The gift of a cheerful disposition.**

The easiest way to feel good is to extend a kind word to someone. Really, it's not that hard to say Hello or Thank You.



Any astronomer can predict with absolute accuracy just where every star in the universe will be when the clocks chime midnight on Christmas Eve. He can make no such prediction about his teenage daughter. – *Anon.*

## **A Recipe for a Happy New Year**

Take twelve whole months.

Clean them thoroughly of all bitterness, hate and jealousy.

Make them just as fresh and clean as possible.

Now cut each month into twenty-eight, thirty or thirty-one different parts, but don't make up the whole batch at once.

Prepare it one day at a time out of these ingredients.

Mix well into each day one part of faith, one part of patience, one part of courage, and one part of work.

Add to each day one part of hope, faithfulness, generosity and kindness.

Blend with one part prayer, one part meditation and one good deed.

Season the whole with a dash of good spirits, a sprinkle of fun, a pinch of play and a cupful of good humour.

Pour all of this into a vessel of love.

Cook thoroughly over radiant joy, garnish with a smile and serve with quietness, unselfishness and cheerfulness.

You're bound to have a happy new year.



### **First sermon in British Sign Language at St Paul's Cathedral**

A Baptist minister, the Revd Sue Whalley, has recently delivered the first ever known sermon in British Sign Language (BSL) at St Paul's Cathedral.

The invitation grew out of a meeting in London between Deaf Church Leaders and Church of England Clergy. Building on the momentum of the BSL Act last April (when British Sign Language was accepted as an official language in England and Wales), it was suggested that a Deaf person preach at St Paul's Cathedral.

A maximum of 30 Deaf people were expected to attend alongside the hearing visitors to the cathedral. But instead, 60-70 Deaf people turned up, 'highlighting the importance and significance of the event'.

## **The New Year**

If we put our hand in God's hand  
As we enter this New Year  
Not knowing what the future holds  
But that our Friend is near

We shall not fear what lies ahead  
If He is by our side,  
Nor wander from the pathway  
If He will be our guide.

The Sinless One from heaven came  
To dwell with us on earth,  
He sought and bought us with His blood  
And offered us new birth.

Now as we travel through this year  
He knows the things He's planned,  
So let us trust and know just this –  
Our times are in His hands.

*By Megan Carter*

## **Excerpt from 'The Glory in the Grey'**

Almighty God, Redeemer...  
Sunshine and storm, mist and greyness  
Eddy round our inner lives.  
But as we trace the pattern, looking back,  
We know that both darkness and light have been of thine ordaining,  
For our own soul's health.  
Thy constant care in all, and everywhere,  
Is manifest.

*By George MacLeod, founder of the Iona Community*

## Editorial Team

Jean Duncan, Anne Gurr and Barbara James are the Editorial Team of In Touch. Articles for inclusion in this circuit magazine can be given or sent to them personally or emailed to [iosmethodist.mag@gmail.com](mailto:iosmethodist.mag@gmail.com)

Please support our Editors by contributing reflections, stories, news etc. (by 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, please). We welcome articles from our mainland readers as well as from Scilly.

'In Touch' can also be read online at [www.scillymethodists.co.uk](http://www.scillymethodists.co.uk)

Thanks to [www.parishpump.co.uk](http://www.parishpump.co.uk) for the use of their material.

*The material in this magazine is from a variety of sources. The opinions and beliefs expressed in individual articles do not necessarily represent or reflect the views of The Methodist Church, the local editorial team or the Minister.*



## Birthdays

We send our love and best wishes to all those who have a birthday in December and January.

*Happy Birthday to you  
To Jesus be true  
God bless you and keep you  
Happy Birthday to you.*



## **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

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The Managing Trustees' Privacy Notice is published on the notice boards in the chapel buildings on St. Mary's and St. Martin's and is available to view online at:-

**<https://www.tmc.org.uk/about/data-protection/managing-trustees-privacy-notice>**

## **Prayer Requests**

As always, please do feel able to ask Revd. Carole if you would appreciate pastoral contact or the prayers of the Church.



