



METHODIST CIRCUIT

IN TOUCH

February/March 2023

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From The Manse.....

In the last edition of InTouch, anticipating the change of calendar year, I wrote a paragraph about endings and new beginnings. I had in mind something of the way that a new calendar year can often represent a fresh opportunity to explore or commit to new ways or new things. In our New Year's Day worship on St Mary's we heard a reflection about New Year's resolutions. The author, (Thom M Shuman) notes that many resolutions are often the same year after year. It didn't take us long as a congregation to identify some of the resolutions that appear annually: to lose weight, to get fitter, to eat or drink more healthily... The reflection invited us to symbolise our openness to the new things offered God by resolving in 2023 to take up something completely new. I wonder if anyone has risen to that challenge?

The period covered by this edition of InTouch includes much of the Christian season of Lent - a time that's become associated with commitments not to take on but rather to let go, lay aside and give things up. The practice relates to the example of Jesus, with the Gospel passage on the first Sunday of Lent traditionally being the account of Jesus in the wilderness, fasting for 40 days and resisting temptation.

Leading up to Holy Week, Lent has become a time to reflect especially on the humility and selflessness of Jesus. In the Church, the season is one of penitence and self-denial, a time to remind ourselves of our need and dependency on God's mercy. In some traditions of the Church, Lent continues to have a focus on reconciliation, a time particularly to devote to mending broken friendships and building bridges of justice, unity and peace.

In contemporary practice it often seems that the things chosen to be given up in Lent are things we most enjoy. Chocolate is often a favourite. We might give chocolate up for the 40 days, knowing we fully intend to indulge again on and beyond Easter Day! The same principle applies with many of the things we might choose to give up as a Lenten discipline.

A perhaps more challenging alternative might be to choose something to give up that makes a difference to our lives and the lives of others into the days beyond Lent. Researching possibilities for our local Lent studies I've come across a book with the title, "Give up something bad for Lent". A similar theme is taken up in one of Nick Fawcett's Lent courses, "The Bad and the Ugly of the Church". Regardless of the subject agreed ecumenically for our local group Lent course, perhaps the ideas in these books might offer a focus for us individually.

Both these books give a biblical basis for eliminating negative and destructive attitudes or habits from our lives. The invitation is that we ask God's help to make Lent the start of a commitment to become more Christ-like by giving up something we know to be contrary to the ways of God's kingdom. Examples given include envy, apathy, gossip, negativity, discouragement as well as intolerance, jumping to conclusions and holding on to resentments. No doubt there are plenty more ...

I wonder what you think? What a difference it could make if we pledge to give this alternative challenge a go this year; something perhaps to think about as we approach Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent, which this year is 22nd February.

As always, whether you're reading this on Scilly, online or on the mainland, I extend to you the greetings of the Methodist Circuit and people. Our prayerful best wishes to you and to those you hold dear.

Revd Carole

Book References

Thom M Shuman "Got your list done?"
p263 "Winter" (2016) ed Ruth Burgess Wild Goose Publications

Nick Fawcett (2014) "A Chequered Legacy" (Book 2)

Lent Lunches and Lent Study Group

It's the hope and intention that on St Mary's there will be a simple midday meal of soup, bread and cheese each week during Lent. It is likely, but yet to be confirmed, that this will be on a Wednesday, beginning 1st March, with the first 3 Wednesdays in the Methodist Hall and the following 3 Wednesdays in the Parish Hall (charity shop). Everyone will be made very welcome. There will be no charge but donations will be invited in support of Christian Aid.

The dates, times and theme of a Lent study group are yet to be finalised. This will be jointly led across the churches. It's thought that we might have two options, a daytime and an evening. With a Zoom option, the groups can be extended beyond a St Mary's base. Please keep a check on local notice boards and church announcements for more details.

Prayer for Christian Unity

Each year, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland join with Christians around the world in a week of prayer. Although a particular week in January is identified, the theme continues through the year.

In 2023, the call to prayer explores Be-Longing: Praying for Unity amidst Injustice. The resources for prayer, reflection and action are available online, focusing on the sin of racism and the imbalances of power and privilege that deny human dignity.

<https://ctbi.org.uk/resources-for-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2023/>

The Methodist Church is committed to Justice, Dignity and Solidarity, believing that all people are uniquely made in God's image and are all equally precious to God. As part of our commitment to be a church that witnesses to God's inclusive love, The Methodist Church has a wide range of resources available, including mandatory training in Unconscious Bias and EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion).

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-church/the-inclusive-methodist-church/>

News from St Martin's

We held our traditional Carol Service, led by Carole, when the children read the lessons so well that there was clapping after each one! The Chapel looked lovely with its seasonal decorations. The singing was magnificent as the Chapel was full and we all enjoyed tea and mince pies after. Thanks to Julia for organising the service.

The Christmas Tree party was held in the reading room, and all the Island children were gathered together for games and a sumptuous tea. The new tradition is for them to move on to Middletown where they meet Father Christmas in amongst the growing field of Christmas trees (ready for next year!)

At the tea £70 was donated to Action for Children and £211 was collected at the service for UNICEF's appeal for children in Ukraine.

Chris Savill took our service between Christmas and New Year and we went to join The Church folk for the first service after.

On December 2nd the community of St Martin's along with many friends and family from across the islands and the mainland came together to remember Edna Goddard, to celebrate her life, and say farewell at St Martin's Church.

Edna Oyler was born on Tresco and lived there until 1957, when she and John Goddard married and she then moved to St Martin's. Edna was always busy and immersed herself in Island life in so many ways.

Her faith was very important to her and she liked to worship in Church on a Sunday or in Chapel on Fridays in the winter. Edna lived out her faith in her kindness, friendliness, patience and non judgemental attitudes. She was loved and respected, and will be missed by so many.

We continue to remember Andrew, Mandy and Tony and their families as they come to terms with their loss.

Perhaps we can take one of Edna's many attributes, and one as set by example by our Lord - that of KINDNESS

Be kind to yourselves - and then you can be kind to others.

Val Thomas

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Dear Lord, I turned the calendar -
Another month gone by!
It looked so fresh and clean and new
It made me pause and sigh

What would the week ahead all hold
And would I treat them right?
I hoped the days would be all good
And filled with love and light

Please help me, Lord, to do my best
Whatever lies in store,
Reminding me you're always near
To turn the page once more

Iris Hesselden

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Giving up for Lent

At the end of the pre-Lent sermon, the vicar suggested, as an example to the rest of the community, that the congregation should worship in an unheated church for the whole of Lent. As they made their way into the chill Sunday air the vicar addressed one member of the congregation, asking what she had decided to give up for Lent. "Church," she replied firmly.

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Jesus Christ is the key which unlocks the door of the prison cell of our own making and sets us free to live in the wide world of God's love and purpose.
Kenneth Pillar

John Cennick

Born 12th December 1718

Died 4th July 1755

John Cennick was born at Reading Berkshire in 1718. Born of staunch quaker stock he nevertheless had an Anglican upbringing.

He was an early Methodist and Moravian evangelist and hymn writer.

After reading George Whitefield's journal and hearing locally of Charles Kinchin (a member of Wesley's Holy Club) he travelled to Oxford in 1739 and through him made contact with John Wesley and George Whitefield.

His decisive conversion soon followed and John Wesley made him the first of his official lay preachers, and he was a significant contributor to the success of Methodism in the Bristol area especially Kingswood.

In 1740 he parted from the Wesleys on doctrinal grounds.

He assisted Whitefield until 1745 but as he was displeased with the Calvinist strand within Whitefield's Methodist movement he joined the Moravian Church and was ordained deacon in London in 1749.

His duties led him to Germany and Dublin in Ireland.

He then made Northern Ireland his main focus where he established fifteen chapels, over forty religious societies and over two hundred preaching places.

He died in London on 4th July 1755 aged 36 and was buried in the Moravian Cemetery Chelsea

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His evening hymn "Ere I Sleep" can be found in Hymns and Psalms

John Cennick's Evening Hymn
"Ere I Sleep"
Hymns and Psalms
Hymn No 638

ERE I sleep, for every favour
This day showed
By my God,
I will bless my Saviour.

O my Lord, what shall I render
To thy name,
Still the same,
Gracious, good, and tender?

Thou hast ordered all my goings
In the way,
Heard me pray,
Sanctified my doings.

Visit me with thy salvation;
Let thy care
Now be near
Round my habitation.

Leave me not, but ever love me;
Let any peace
Be my bliss,
Till thou hence remove me

Thou my rock, my guard, my tower,
Safely keep,
While I sleep,
Me, with all they power.

So, whene'er in death I slumber,
Let me rise
With the wise,
Counted in their number

John Cennick (1718-1755)

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2023

"I have heard about your faith" is the title of the World Day of Prayer service prepared by the Christian women of Taiwan. This year the act of worship will take place in **St. Marys Methodist Chapel on Friday March 3rd at 2.00pm**. Refreshments will be served in the hall afterwards.

For those in the Anglican and Methodist congregations who would like to have a part in the service or support in any way, there will be a planning meeting in the **Wesley Room on Thursday February 16th at 2-00pm**.

All are most welcome to participate or just share in the act of worship. By joining in this international day of prayer we not only support the people of Taiwan, but also raise funds which are shared between many international charities.

Heather

The Use of Time

A day goes by
And then a week
Of valued time
We cannot repeat

Don't let it fade
Into the past
Without some effort
Or useful task

Time is precious
It was given to use
To fill with talents
Ours, free to choose

Many are the ways
To fill in time, so
Use your God-given talents
Leave something good behind
by Agnes Hill

The Dieter's Prayer

Bless my bathroom scales Lord each week as I step on
Help me lose a stone or two and not put any on
Keep me from temptation from chocolate and from chips
Keep my willpower going just in case it slips
Help me count the calories steer me away from sweets
Keep my sweating palms away from naughty fattening treats
Keep me from the cake shop Lord away from buns and crumpets
And if a cake is in my hand please give me strength to dump it
Help me enjoy my salad and foods to make me slim
Keep me on the "Low Fat" track so one day I'll be thin!!!

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Moses revisited

Nine-year-old Joseph was asked by his mother what he had learned in Sunday school.

"Well, Mum, our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. When he got to the Red Sea, he had his engineers build a pontoon bridge and all the people walked across safely. Then he radioed headquarters for reinforcements. They sent bombers to blow up the bridge and all the Israelites were saved."

"Now, Joseph, is that really what your teacher taught you?" his mother asked, somewhat alarmed.

"Well, no, Mum. But if I told it the way the teacher did, you'd never believe it!"

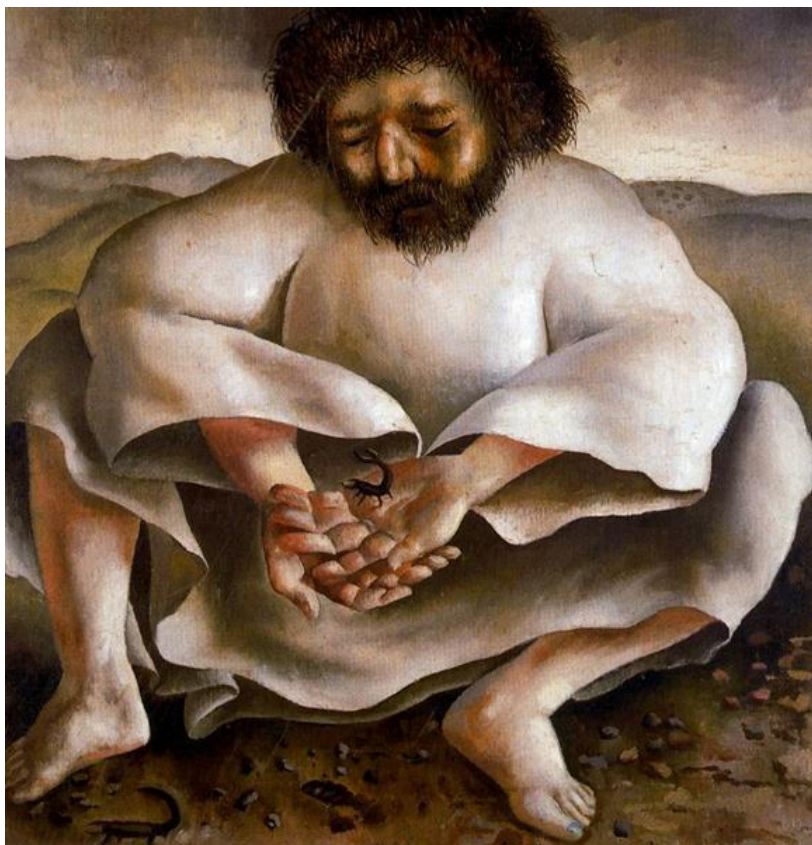
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All the storehouses of God are open to the voice of faith in prayer.

D M McIntyre

To wish to pray is a prayer itself.

Georges Bernanos



God in the Arts

The Revd Michael Burgess continues his series on God in the Arts with a look at 'Christ in the Wilderness – Scorpions'. It now hangs in a private collection.

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Forty Days and Forty Nights

At the end of this month (Feb) we enter the season of Lent: those 40 days when we follow Jesus into the wilderness and prepare ourselves to celebrate His Easter victory. In the last century an artist called Stanley Spencer planned to create a series of 40 paintings, each depicting a day in the wilderness.

In the end he completed nine, one of which is this month's painting from 1939: 'Christ in the Wilderness – Scorpions.' It is held in a private collection.

Stanley Spencer lived and worked in the village of Cookham in Berkshire. The village and the local countryside were the setting for many of his paintings, and the village's inhabitants his models. Through their everyday life he was trying to glimpse and convey the transcendent. 'Angels and dirt' he called it: the divine seen in the ordinary. So, in a painting of Christ carrying His cross, Jesus has the face of the local grocer.

Another villager modelled for this Jesus in the wilderness: a strong, hefty, broad figure. This is a great contrast to the Christ of stained-glass windows who often seems too good to be part of our world. Here is real life: a large man filling the canvas with His head, His hands and His feet. This figure of Jesus comes as a shock: a very human model, ordinary with nothing handsome or special about Him, apart from His tunic which seems to sprawl and undulate like the hills around. Here is a Jesus born into this world and one with this world.

There are two focal points in the painting – the neat, little scorpion and the massive, unkempt head contemplating each other. One is life in all its hefty reality; the other a tiny creature able to squeeze that life out by one swift flick of its tail.

Jesus is shown in the wilderness pondering the life and ministry called of Him by God – a life and ministry that will take Him from the countryside into the towns and villages and take Him also to the death of Good Friday. Will He find the strength and renewal to embrace that ministry during His time in the desert?

During Lent as we follow Jesus, we seek to live for God. That may mean dying to all that separates us from God. He has a ministry, a calling for each of us. As we contemplate that calling in this season of Lent, we may find it is a calling that leads us through these 40 days to life and Easter life – we may find it a journey that calls us to die to self to find our God.

What NOT to give her for Valentine's Day:

1. A box of chocolates, clumsily rearranged, because you ate all the caramel ones.
2. Any food item with the words: 'diet', 'light', or 'high fibre' on the label.
3. Any household appliance or power tool.
4. A gift certificate.
5. Cash.

Little Teapot

Our new curate had young children and they insisted he choose for his screensaver a picture of a dancing teapot, playing the children's song 'I'm a Little Teapot'. When the earnest young HR officer for the diocese came to call, she sent back a message to the bishop: "The curate may be suffering from an identity disorder."

Answer to prayer

A small boy badly wanted a baby brother, so his dad suggested he pray every night for one. The boy prayed earnestly, night after night, but his prayers seemingly weren't answered. So after a few weeks, he didn't bother to ask anymore.

Some months later, his dad said they were going to see Mum in the hospital and he was going to get a big surprise. When they got to the room, the little boy saw his mother holding two babies. The little boy stood still for a moment, and then cautiously observed: "It's a good thing I stopped praying when I did."

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It is the love of God that makes Him the sworn enemy of sin. -

G Campbell Morgan

Let us prefer your presence, O God, to all other company. Let us praise your name above all other names and let us love your will beyond all other desiring; for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen

Therese of Lisieux (1873-1897)

The Power of God-given Ideas

**'All peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'
Genesis 28v14**

One God-given idea can change so much. Braille sure did!.In 1824 Louis Braille, a Christian, invented a system of raised dots on paper so that blind people could read. He invented 63 symbols representing every language, hence God's Word was placed into the hands of the visually impaired for the first time.

And communications? In part, you owe your mobile phone and your computer to a Christian named Samuel Morse. How different the world was before him! First-class news took two week to reach the USA, and reports of a major victory could take six weeks to reach Britain.

One day a friend said, 'Morse, when you were experimenting did you ever come to an absolute deadlock, not knowing what to do?'. Morse replied, 'More than once.' His friend asked, 'What did you do then?'

Morse shared a secret, 'I got down on my knees and prayed for light, and light came, and when my inventions were acknowledge by flattering honours from America and Europe, I said, "Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto Thy name give the glory". That's why the first message sent by transatlantic cable read, 'What God has wrought'.

Now add another Christian named Louis Pasteur, the French scientist who showed us that infection is the result of things we cannot see, namely germs and viruses. He introduced sterilisation methods that eventually saved the lives of multitudes. Think God has run out of good ideas? Not a chance! Ask Him for one for your life, your ministry or your business!

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Address: United Christian Broadcasters, Westport Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST65 4JF

Free issues of the daily devotional are available for the UK and Republic of Ireland

10 Things God Won't Ask on That Day

1. God won't ask what kind of car you drove. He'll ask how many people you drove who didn't have transportation.
2. God won't ask the square footage of your house. He'll ask how many people you welcomed in your home.
3. God won't ask about the clothes you had in your wardrobe. He'll ask how many you helped to clothe.
4. God won't ask what your highest salary was. He'll ask if you compromised your character to obtain it.
5. God won't ask what your job title was. He'll ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.
6. God won't ask how many friends you had. He'll ask to how many people to whom you were a friend.
7. God won't ask in what neighbourhood you lived. He'll ask how you treated your neighbours.
8. God won't ask about the colour of your skin. He'll ask about the content of your character.
9. God won't ask why it took so long to seek salvation. He'll lovingly take you to your mansion in heaven.
10. God won't ask to how many people you forwarded this to. He already knows your decision.

Wrong water

A mother was watching her four-year-old son playing in a small plastic pool half-filled with water. He was walking back and forth with an expression of great concentration on his face, while making big splashes. Suddenly, the little boy stopped, stepped out of the pool, and with a look of disgust, began to scoop the water out with a pail.

"What's wrong, dear?" asked the mother. "On Sunday the minister said Jesus walked on water, and this water doesn't work," he replied.

Sick

During a church service my young niece had to go outside, as she did not feel well. She returned a few minutes later and admitted: 'I have been a little sick. But it doesn't matter, there's a box at the door marked 'for the sick'.

Pictures of Love

Today's reading: 2 John 1 1-6

I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another . 2 John 1:5

My children and I have started a new daily practice. Every night at bedtime, we gather coloured pencils and light a candle. Asking God to light our way, we get out our diaries and draw or write answers to two questions: *When did I show love today?* and *When did I withhold love today?*

Loving our neighbours has been an important part of the Christian life "from the beginning" (2 John 1:5). That's what John writes in his second letter to his congregation, asking them to love one another in obedience to God (2 John 1:5-6) Love is one of John's favourite topics throughout his letters. He says that practising real love is one way to know that we "belong to the truth", that we're living in God's presence (1 John 3:18-19).

When my kids and I reflect, we find that in our lives love takes shape in simple actions: sharing an umbrella, encouraging someone who is sad or cooking a favourite meal. The moments when we're withholding love are equally practical: we gossip, refuse to share or satisfy our own desires without thinking of others' needs.

Paying attention each night helps us be more aware each day, more tuned in to what the Spirit might be showing us as we walk through our lives. With the Spirit's help, we're learning to walk in love (2 John 1:6)

Amy Peterson

*Lord, let us not love just in words, but in action and in truth.
Teach us to be obedient to Your call to love*

How can I show love today?

*(Taken from the 2018 June-July-August Our Daily Bread.
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Bible in 50 Words

God *made*
Adam *bit*
Noah *arked*
Abraham *split*
Joseph *ruled*
Jacob *fooled*
Bush *talked*
Moses *balked*
Pharaoh *plagued*
People *walked*
Sea *divided*
Tablets *guided*
Promise *landed*
Saul *freaked*
David *peeked*
Prophets *warned*
Jesus *born*
God *walked*
Love *talked*
Anger *crucified*
Hope *died*
Love *rose*
Spirit *flamed*
Word *spread*
God *remained*

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God's love is not drawn out by our lovableness, but wells up, like an artesian spring, from the depths of His nature. - *Alexander MacLaren*

I am ready to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the ordeal of meeting me is another matter. -

Winston Churchill, on his 75th birthday.

Children's Sunday School Responses

The following were written by children. They have not been retouched nor corrected (ie incorrect spelling has been left in)

In the first book of the bible Guinnessis God got tired of creating the world so he took the sabbath off.

Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree.

Noah's wife was called Joan of Ark.

Noah built an ark and the animals came on in pears.

Lots wife was a pillar of salt during the day, but a ball of fire during the night.

Sampson was a strongman who let himself be led astray by a Jezebel like Delilah.

Samson slayed the Philistines with the axe of the Apostal.

Moses led the Jews to the Red sea where they made unleavened bread which is created without any ingredients.

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You alone do we seek, O God, and you alone do we desire. For you alone do we long and for you alone do we hunger and thirst. And where you are, is heaven.

Sadhu Sundar Singh, Indian mystic and evangelist (written 1922)

Fill our hearts with your grace, O Lord, our souls with your love and our lives with your glory; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dwight L Moody (1837-1899)

SAFEGUARDING

Preliminary Notice

As part of creating a safer place it is necessary to update DBS checks every five years. For those due in 2023, work to renew DBS certificates will be undertaken shortly.

During the coming weeks I shall make contact with those involved to progress this procedure.

Barbara James - Safeguarding Officer

Ash Wednesday: A good time to admit you are sorry

Have you done something which haunts you? Which makes you feel restless and defensive, every time you think of it? Why not deal with it this month, and put it behind you? Whatever your mistake has been, consider what the Bible has to say to you:

'I have not come to call the virtuous but sinners to repentance' (said Jesus). (Luke 5.32)

'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55.7)

'Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing.

Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.' (Joel 2:12-13)

God is inviting you to come to Him this Ash Wednesday. What a wonderful offer! Make the most of it and remember how the prodigal son was welcomed back by his compassionate father.

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St Mary's Offerings

The offerings in November amounted to £810

The offerings in December amounted to £569

The Christmas Day and the Candlelight Carol Services offerings raised £500 and the proceeds went to the charity **Action for Children**

The Year Ahead

*Don't be afraid of the year,
Don't be afraid to begin,
Just open your mind and open your heart,
Let love and hope enter in.*

*Don't be afraid to let go,
Saying goodbye to the past,
Seek for a rainbow
and search for a star
And keep a few dreams,
Hold them fast.*

*Don't be afraid to be glad,
Tears are not only for sorrow,
Welcome the future
and step through the year -
Look for the sunshine tomorrow
Elizabeth Gozney*

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Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both and forever!

2 Peter 3 v 18

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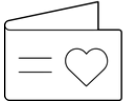
An Irish Blessing

May God grant you always:

*A sunbeam to warm you
A moonbeam to charm you
A sheltering Angel so nothing can harm you
Laughter to cheer you
Faithful friends near you
And whenever you pray
Heaven to hear you*



Birthdays



Happy Birthday and God's blessings
to all who are celebrating their birthday in
February and March



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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**

Please support our Editors by contributing reflections, stories, news etc. (by 15th 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**

Thanks to **www.parishpump.co.uk** for the use of their material.

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

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Prayer Requests

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

Provisional Plan of Services

(please see local notice boards for confirmation of arrangements)

St Mary's Methodist Church Services

Sun 5 Feb	10.30am	Revd Carole Holmes	
Sun 12 Feb	10.30am	Revd Carole Holmes	
Sun 19 Feb	10.30am	Revd Carole Holmes	
Sun 26 Feb	10.30am	Revd Carole Holmes Holy Communion	Lent 1
Sun 5 Mar	10.30am	Revd Carole Holmes	Lent 2
Sun 12 Mar	10.30am	Revd Carole Holmes Holy Communion	Lent 3
Sun 19 Mar	10.30am	Revd Carole Holmes	Lent 4
Sun 26 Mar	10.30am	Revd Loraine Mellor	Lent 5

St Martin's Methodist Church Services

Fri 3 Feb	2.30pm	At the Anglican Church	
Fri 10 Feb	2.30pm	Revd Carole Holmes	
Fri 17 Feb	2.30pm	Revd Carole Holmes	
Fri 24 Feb	2.30pm	Revd Carole Holmes Holy Communion	Lent 1
Fri 3 Mar	2.30pm	At the Anglican Church	Lent 2
Fri 10 Mar	2.30pm	Revd Carole Holmes	Lent 3
Fri 17 Mar	2.30pm	Revd Carole Holmes Holy Communion	Lent 4
Fri 24 <u>or</u> Sun 26 Mar		Date & time to be confirmed Revd Loraine Mellor	