

Some thoughts from St Mary's Manse for the month of July

As I sit in my fine study to write this monthly letter it is the middle of June. Over the past few weeks it has been a great joy to welcome so many visitors to our chapels, both on St Martin's and here on St Mary's. The other Sunday on St Mary's seemed like a bumper week as there were so many Christian friends from the churches on the mainland. There were friends from all denominations both at our morning services and again at our 8 pm act of worship with so many showing delight to end the day in chapel singing some proper hymns and hearing the promises of our Sovereign God... Yes our faith is indeed a very precious thing.

On a Sunday evening after the service we love to invite these folk back to the manse for refreshments. It is very good to hear what is going on in other places, what other churches are doing, and how they see the mission of their local church. The other week there were an interesting couple from North Devon, the husband was a worker for the Faith Mission, and his wife had worked for many years for Tear Fund. It was so good to speak with this chap from the Faith Mission; I was able to catch up with news of others whom I have known over the years involved with this work and I was delighted when he said that it may be the case that next year the Faith Mission will visit Scilly..... watch this space

As I sat thinking about all of this, and what a joy it is to greet these fellow Christians as friends, my mind was taken to those words in St John's Gospel where Jesus is with His Disciples in the upper room. He says to them

"I no longer call you servants. Instead I call you friends".

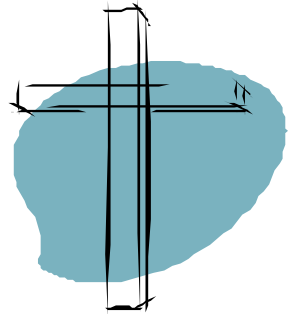
How do we decide who are our friends and who are not? Are they those who share the same interests as us , those who think like us, and what drives us to make friends with some but avoid closeness with others? Is friendship something we earn or is it something that happens? What is friendship and why is it so important to us all? What is the opposite to friendship? Who are the people whom we do not consider as friends? How do we react to those who are not in our chosen circle? What judgements do we make about others and why is it there are those who we just cannot see as being friends? Is it that they are quite simply not like us, or is it that somehow we feel that they don't deserve our friendship?

John is the only New Testament writer who gives us such detail about what Jesus said to His Disciples on the night he was betrayed by a friend and was arrested. It is John who tells us how Jesus takes upon Himself the role of a servant and washes the feet of His disciples. It is John who tells us of how He sees their despair and offers them hope, and it is John who records for us how Jesus calls them His friends, despite their shortcomings. Such is God's grace to those who do not deserve to become the friends of God!

John of course, reveals to us the truth about God. He tells us that God is not just the Lord of creation and the Lord of forgiveness – but that He is supremely a God of grace! We may not deserve to be counted as His friends, but we are. For in Jesus He gives to each of us a promise that is there for all to receive by faith. Yes, as Jesus reminded His disciples on their last evening together, His Cross has the power to make all things new, and now we His church are today called to give testimony to the Amazing Grace of God.

The great Apostle Paul speaks of God's grace on almost one hundred occasions in his letters to the early church; to Paul, grace is the very bedrock of our precious Christian faith. He speaks of how God's grace brings freedom to our lives. He speaks of a life that is freed from legalism and ritual, and he speaks of a different way of living, which enables us to take the risk of Holy living that is in keeping with the generosity and character of a loving and forgiving God. According to Paul, this is the very proof of God's grace in the world today and so it is that God shows His grace to us and calls us friends. Grace is at the very heart of God's almighty plan. It is displayed for all to see on the Cross of Jesus, and the blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven become a reality when we, like Paul, seek to live a life of grace.

But how graceful are we, especially in the face of adversity? How do we react when we are let down by others? Is our way the way of Jesus, and are our lives built on the firm foundation of God's grace, and the solid rock of Jesus? Whenever we seek the easy way, and fail to take up our cross and follow, we are denying the grace of God. Whenever we look the other way in the face of suffering, or lack the courage to befriend the friendless, we are denying the grace of God. Whenever we evade our responsibilities and deny the Lord's provision, we are denying the grace of God. Whenever we are quick to condemn and slow to forgive, we are denying the power of the Cross, and we are living lives that are empty of God's grace to us in Jesus! Maybe the only hope for this world, and for the future of our church, is to be found in us rediscovering the grace of God.



On Sunday 10th July we celebrate the anniversary of our chapel here on St. Mary's in a special act of worship led by Len Michell and Neil Didlick

On Sunday 17th we welcome the much acclaimed opera singers John and Krenulla Moorman. They will be singing one evening during the week at a special charity event on Bryher. Look out for details of this; it will be a grand event you must not miss. John and Krenulla worship at a Methodist church in Norfolk, where John is a local preacher. Both he and Krenulla will be taking part in the 11am service on St. Mary's, the 6pm service on St. Martin's, and at a very special celebration Songs of Praise at St. Mary's. I am really looking forward to hearing them both on the 17th in these acts of worship

In the evening of Sunday 24th at 8pm we will be holding our annual Lifeboat Service on St. Mary's. led by myself, and includes a message by Canon Peter Walker.

I end by sending our best wishes and prayers to Philip Michell, who is to be ordained as a priest in the Church of England on the mainland. Philip is of course the son of Len and Sylvia, who I know are very proud that their son has followed the call of God, and will be there with him on this very special day.

What a joy it is to have friends, and how precious it is to know that because of God's grace alone we too can become the friends of God.

May the grace of God continue to be seen in the love of one another.

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

Charlie Gibbs

News from St.Martin's.

In addition to our loyal regular leaders of worship, we were pleased to welcome Rev. Andrew Bell back to St.Martin's. He shared the service with Charlie on Aldersgate Sunday, when he spoke about the history of Methodism and significant areas for us. We were reminded of the call to mission, the importance of teaching the scriptures and compassionate and practical care for those in need.

It is good that Uncle Rodney has occasionally been able to leave Auntie Celia to attend a service at Chapel and resume his place at the organ. When he has been unable to do so we have been blessed with multi-tasking preachers and willing holiday makers. Members appreciate the many people who support our witness on St. Martin's in a variety of ways.

Not only have our thoughts and prayers been with Auntie Celia and Uncle Rodney, but Daphne too, as she has recently had a hip replacement. Daph's progress seems to be good and we look forward to seeing her back on St. Martin's when the time is right. For the moment she is staying with her sister in Camborne but keeping "In Touch" with her family on the island.

Folk from St. Martin's, including members of our congregation, were well represented in the events staged to welcome HM The Queen and HRH Prince Philip to Scilly. Some were involved in show casing their products on Holgates Green, some attended the reception and others the lunch. Ella Gillett, a St.Martin's representative on the Five Islands School Student Council, along with Jinny Stevens were presented when the Royal couple visited the New School Build site. Similarly, Jackie through her work with Brownies, was involved with the children on the day. Many Islanders will have memories stored away of a very happy Royal visit

Heather Terry

Grand concert

Saturday 16th July
St Mary's Methodist Chapel
7:30pm

John & Krenula

Moorman

Be sure not to miss this unique event on the Isles of Scilly!

Much acclaimed singers
Music you love to hear

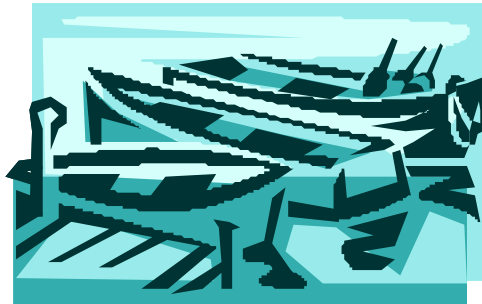
There is no admission charge
but a collection will be taken for
Methodist Church Funds
at the end of the evening

Men of the Sea

Your first disciples, Lord, were men of the sea:
Hardy fishermen from the shores of Galilee.
They knew from experience the perils of the deep...
They also knew your presence with them in their darkest hours.

We pray for those who face like hazards today...
Lord of the sea, be near to guard them in every danger...
And let them hear your voice above the tempest,
'It is I, be not afraid'
So bring them to their haven in peace.

From a prayer by Frank Colquhoun



This prayer was included with the annual lifeboat service in mind. The service is on the last day of July and will be led by Rev Charlie Gibbs, hopefully on Holgates Green - weather permitting. The service is in support of St Mary's RNLI.

The morning service also has a watery theme. At 11 o'clock Rev Gibbs will be preaching about The Water of Life.

Introducing the President of the Methodist Conference, Leo Osborn

The Revd Leo Osborn begins his office as President of the Methodist Conference on Saturday 3 July when the Conference meets in Southport. His answers to these questions give you an impression of the man behind the role.

Why have you chosen your theme – “Caring as Disciples of Jesus”?

It really springs from the words in Colossians 1:17 where Paul tells us that “In Christ all things hold together”. One of the best ways in which we can model that to a fragmented world is through the quality and breadth of our care. But it will only ring true when, within the church, we are holding on to each other and being held together by Christ in our disciples

What are your hopes and dreams for the Methodist Church?

There is so much that excites me about being a Methodist Christian. Sometimes I think we tend to be envious of other Churches who we think excel in worship, preaching, evangelism, concern for the poor and marginalised and so on. But often a Church may be strong in one of these areas and weak or unconcerned in another. Yet we want to say that all these things and more besides are important, and although we don't always get it right I value so much a Church that has helped to shape me as I hope a 'rounded' Christian. I wish we could celebrate this 'roundedness' a bit more!

What do you think are the greatest challenges facing the Methodist Church today?

We are still sometimes afraid to take risks lest we get things wrong and are not always ready to trust those whom God through the Church has called to lead us to do so! But perhaps the greatest challenge is how to proclaim the gospel we sing that 'we have ... to proclaim' in a world that is changing more rapidly than many of us care to admit. Because I still believe this gospel is worth proclaiming, I hope this year to learn from those who are doing so in new and creative ways.

Representative to Synod

Twice a year, in May & September, our Church sends representatives to Truro to attend Synod on behalf of our Circuit. A vacancy has arisen for one of our members to attend, and this is an opportunity for someone to experience the wider Church. Synod is more than a business meeting, and would be a great source of encouragement to anyone wishing to meet and worship with other Christians from around the county.

All expenses will be paid. For further details please contact our Minister, Rev Charlie Gibbs.

Rose Didlick
Circuit Secretary

Cost of preaching

One beautiful Sunday morning, a priest announced to his congregation: "My good people, I have here in my hands three sermons...a £100 sermon that lasts five minutes, a £50 sermon that lasts fifteen minutes, and a £10 sermon that lasts a full hour. Now, we'll take the collection and see which one I'll deliver."

Introducing the Vice President of the Methodist Conference, Ruth Pickles

Ruth Pickles begins her office as Vice-President of the Methodist Conference on Saturday 3 July when the Conference meets in Southport. Her answers to these questions give you an impression of the woman behind the role.

Why have you chosen your theme – 'Learning as disciples of Jesus'?

Well, you have to take into account the incoming president's theme alongside it – together we have chosen 'Learning and Caring as disciples of Jesus'. Those who are familiar with *Our Calling*, which has been encouraging congregations to examine their faithfulness to the work of God, will recognise it as one of the four themes. Learning has always been a passion for me. I trained as a teacher of science, and taught for some years. At the same time my church involvement was with young people on a Sunday morning and evening, and I loved the journeys of faith exploration we made together. Then for eight years I worked as a training and development officer in my own Methodist district – I love to see people gaining new understanding and skills, and growing in their faith. I am still involved in this kind of work, and hope to be able to continue it as part of my vice-presidential role.

What are your hopes and dreams for the Methodist Church?

That we can be a 'learning Church', reflecting on our situation and experience, so that we nurture that which is of the kingdom and embrace change where we need to be different and do things differently. I believe we still have much to offer to people if we are faithful to our Methodist

ethos (or 'charisms' as our general secretary puts it) in a way that is culturally relevant.

What do you think are the greatest challenges facing the Methodist Church today?

I suppose that the challenge is to do just that – to be a 'learning Church' in all that entails

St Mary's News

Over the last month some of the congregation have spent time in hospital and we wish them all a speedy recovery. We will continue to pray for all those concerned.

Do you have an old or interesting Bible in your home that could be included in the display of Old and New Bibles? Let us know. The display is to be held in the Wesley Room at the Manse from 1st to the 3rd August. Please contact Rev Charlie Gibbs on 422406 or Mary Ratcliffe on 423030 if you can help.

Looking ahead to August, the weekend of the 6th and 7th brings a visit from Rev Steve Wild. On Saturday he will be giving a special presentation taking a fresh look at the Bible. This will be at 7:30pm with refreshments served in the Manse at 8:45pm. On Sunday he will be preaching at 11o'clock (St Mary's), 6pm on St Martin's and 8pm back on St Mary's. Do come along to all or any of these events.

Sum problem

"Now, James," said the teacher, "If your father gave you £1, your uncle 75p, and your brother a 50p, what would you have?" Jimmy was deep in thought for some time.

"Come, James, that's not a difficult problem," said the teacher.

"It is for me," said James. "I can't make up my mind whether I'd have a large ice-cream or small hamburger."

What happens in heaven when you pray?

I dreamt that I went to Heaven and an angel was deputised to show me around.

Our first stop was at a large room filled with angels. They were unfolding, reading and stacking thousands of bits of paper, of all sizes. My angel guide explained, "This is the Receiving Section. Here, all petitions to God said in prayer are received.' I looked around the area, and it was terribly busy. Angels were sorting out petitions from all over the world. Some were long and involved and weighty, others merely a sigh on a scrap of paper.

Then we moved on down a long corridor until we reached the second section.

The angel said to me, "This is the Packaging and Delivery Section. Here, the graces and blessings that have been asked for are processed and delivered to the people who need them." I noticed again how busy it was there. The angels were working hard to package and send back to earth all the blessings that had been requested.

Finally, at the farthest end of the long corridor, we stopped at the door of a very small station. To my great surprise, only one angel was seated there, doing nothing much. "This is the Acknowledgement Section, my angel friend said quietly. He seemed a bit embarrassed." How is it that there is no work going on here? 'I asked.

The angel sighed. "Well, after people receive the blessings that they ask for, it seems very few think to send back any acknowledgement."

"How does one acknowledge God's blessings? " I asked.

"Simple," the angel answered. "Just say, 'Thank you, Lord.' And mean it."



**Seldom set foot in your neighbor's house -
too much of you and he will hate you.
- Proverbs 25:17**

Friday Fellowship and Friendship Evenings

The Friday Fellowship meetings, held at the Methodist, Manse have been well attended and we now look forward to a new programme led by Rev Charlie Gibbs, other local Church leaders and guest speakers when they visit.

In the Autumn, a new series will begin. This will be most helpful because we will take a chronological look at how the Bible looks at history, and how we can find hope for today, and in the days to come, what is for many 'The Word of God'. As always these meetings begin at 7:30pm and end at 9pm with ham sandwiches and cocoa. All will be made welcome to these friendly meetings, which are always made special as together we exchange views and seek to answer the big and little questions about God, life and how we relate to one another on our journey of faith. Together we will continue to explore our Precious Faith!

Saturday 6th August 7:30pm

The Rev Steve Wild M.A.

What is Bible Fresh?

Friday August 19th 7:30pm

The Rev H Barrie Morris

Member of the Methodist Conference

Evangelist and missionary to Central Africa

Friday 23rd September 7:30pm

The Rev Ruth Goodland

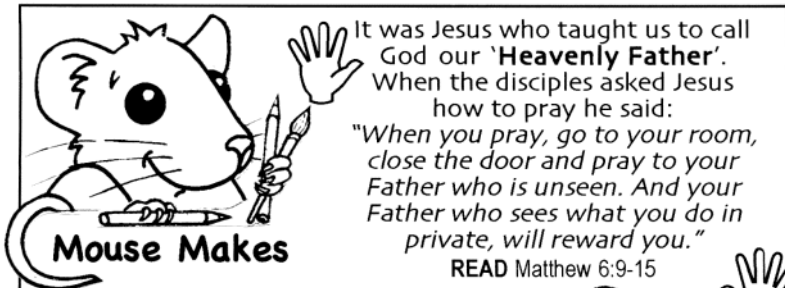
Superintendent of the Liskeard Circuit

Friday 30th September 7:30pm

The start of the new series

Rev Charlie Gibbs

What are the lasting principles of the Bible today? Can we trust it today?



It was Jesus who taught us to call God our **'Heavenly Father'**. When the disciples asked Jesus how to pray he said:
"When you pray, go to your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen. And your Father who sees what you do in private, will reward you."

READ Matthew 6:9-15



LORD JESUS,
 Thank you
 that you love me,
 Thank you
 that you care,
 Thank you
 that you listen,
 Thank you
 that your near.
AMEN

Our Father in heaven:
 may your holy name
 be honoured;
 your Kingdom come;
 your will be done
 on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us today the food we need.
 Forgive us the wrongs we have
 done, as we forgive the wrongs
 that others have done to us.
 Do not bring us to hard testing,
 but keep us safe from
 the evil one.
AMEN

To make a praying hand bookmark, carefully cut out around the hands, fold back along the centre dotted line and glue together. Use the the words on the hands and fingers to help you as you pray.



July 11

Diary Dates

July

**16th Grand Concert by John and Krenula Moorman
7:30pm St Mary's Methodist Chapel**

Happy Birthday to you! Birthday Greetings for July go to

Joe Fairburn, who will be 94, Christine Savill,
Barbara Anderson, Val Thomas, Adele Bird,
Shannon Aston, Denzle Ferguson, Benjamin
Jenkins, Pam Manning, Margaret Snowball,
Pam Thomas, Isobel Trenear
God's blessings to you all.



If we haven't included your name, and you have a birthday this month, please feel included in our best wishes and prayers.

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Keep praying, but be thankful that God's answers are wiser than your prayers! – William Culbertson