

EDGE LANE AND CLAYTON METHODIST CHURCH

February Magazine 2025

Minister: Rev. Paul Welch



Preachers/Lectionary Readings

2nd Feb	11:00am	Rev. Paul Welch (HC)	Jeremiah Ch 11 v 4-10 Psalm 71 v 1-6 1 Corinthians Ch 13 v 1-13 Luke Ch 4 v 21 - 30
9th Feb Racial Justice Day	11:00am	Mrs Chris Davis	Isaiah Ch 6 v 1-8 Psalm 138 1 Corinthians Ch 15 v 1-11 Luke Ch 5 v 1 -11
16th Feb Student Sunday	11:00am	Mr Keith Paver	Jeremiah Ch 17 v 5-10 Psalm 1 1 Corinthians Ch 15 v 12-20 Luke Ch 6 v 17 -26
23rd Feb	11:00am	Mr Stan Royle	Genesis Ch 45 v 3-11, 15 Psalm 37 v 1-11, 39-40 1 Corinthians Ch 15 v 35-38, 42-50 Luke Ch 6 v 27 -38

Dear Friends,

As I write this, I'm looking out of my study window and despite the cold, wet weather, I am always uplifted by the scene I have. I know I am blessed to be able to look out over my garden, see the changing colours throughout the year and the variety of different birds that come into the garden. If we don't have such views then we have another view we can have on our TV's and watch programmes that enable us to see nature, landscapes, seascapes and many aspects of the world. Seeing such views either physically or on TV can help with our wellbeing. Seeing or being in green spaces has a positive impact upon us and perhaps helps us to appreciate life. It also helps us to see the vulnerability of life too and that it can be precarious and not to take it for granted. When we have an appreciation of nature, we need to realise it is very complex and yet simple at the same time.

Some things we can understand easily like how the rain falls, goes into the ground, makes its way into streams and then rivers and then out into the sea where it evaporates, forms clouds, and falls as rain again. Then there are more complex things like how the trees take in carbon dioxide and breathe out oxygen, the opposite of what we do. We can't physically see it happening, we just have to accept that it does and that it benefits our life. For me that sums up faith, some things we can't explain, but it doesn't mean we have to discount it. Having faith, a trust or belief in something we cannot physically see is exactly that. Faith!

This month you will be asked to join a small group within the life of the church. Like in nature we may not always be sure how things happen or what it will look like but we can know that it will benefit us spiritually.

God is able to do more than we can think or imagine or even see. So, I hope that as we travel through this year, that you are blessed, that you are appreciated and loved. For with faith in God anything is possible.

Every Blessing,

Rev Paul

SMALL GROUPS

At the Church council meeting, we agreed to set up small groups within the life of the church. The idea of the small groups is to meet together to discuss life and faith and to have fellowship more regularly. I have found that small groups are a great way that we can all continue to grow together, as well as support and encourage each other as Christians.

In February, at the back of church each Sunday, there will be a sign-up sheet. There will be a sheet for each day of the week split into 3 time zones, morning, afternoon and evening. Please put your name in any of those slots that are most convenient for you. If you can do many of the times then please put your name in those so that we can then bring small groups together. It may be that you wish to be in a group with a friend or member of your family please put your names in the same group for the allotted time. It is anticipated that the groups will meet 2 times a month with a minimum of once a month.

Within these groups we will be looking for people who are willing to Host a group either at your home, church or somewhere else. If you are willing to Host then please put an H next to your name. We will be looking for people to be Pastoral support within the small groups, if you would like to do this then please put a P next to your name and if you feel you would like to lead a small group then please put an L next to your name.

Initially we will all be doing the same thing in terms of using the same kind of material within the groups. We are aiming to start these groups after Easter and so perhaps May will be the first month.

Can I encourage you to prayerfully consider which groups to join, plus also in what way you can serve within the groups.

Thank you for your support and co-operation in this.

God Bless,

Rev Paul

CHURCH NOTICES

As we move into February and the slightly lighter nights, we optimistically think of the spring that is to come in a few weeks' time. At present most of nature is still dormant, but soon signs of growth and life will appear – firstly the snow drops and then early spring bulbs and shoots. May we continue to thank our Lord for all that is good around us, as we seek to do His will in our own lives.

News Of Friends

It is with sadness that one of our members, Jean Warner passed away in January. She has been unable to attend church for some time, but we continued to pray for her in church each week and in our magazine. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all her family and friends and we give thanks for her life lived in Christ.

In addition, a friend, Claire who attended Befrienders at Methodist Central Hall also passed away at too early an age. She occasionally provided us with humorous sayings for this magazine, and she will be missed by her friends for her cheerfulness and wit.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all who are not well in body, mind, or spirit, and for those awaiting appointments, treatments, and operations. We particularly name Harry & Joan B., Linda, Joan P., Peter, David, Jean H., Ann H, Jean W., and we add other names that we are worried about to these.

Lord of life, we come to you,

Lord of all, our Saviour be

Come to bless and to heal

with the light of your love. Amen

Church Council Meeting

We held a meeting in January, when much was discussed with Rev. Paul Welch and we look forward to considering new initiatives and challenges in the year ahead.

A **stewards meeting** will be held on **Wed 5th Feb at 7:30pm**, followed by another Church Council meeting on **Wed 26th March at 7:30pm**. If you wish to raise any matter, please see Rev. Paul or a steward prior to these meetings. Thank you.

Pancake Sunday 2nd March 12noon-1pm

The young people of our church are holding our second Pancake Sunday, just prior to the beginning of lent after the service. They are organising this event so we can all enjoy the food, drinks and fellowship together. All donations will go towards their summer church outing. We look forward to it.

Lent – This year Lent begins on Wed 5th March and ends on 17 April. Easter is late in 2025. More to follow in March's magazine.

January at Church

We began the New Year with our Covenant Service led by Rev. Paul, when we all were asked to renew our covenant relationship with God.

A promise not easy to keep, but we continue to try to live not for ourselves, but for God, as we continue our journey of faith. Our services for the rest of January were led by our local preacher's and we thank them for their commitment and enthusiasm to their calling.

Birthdays

Wishing everyone born in February a Happy Birthday. May this year bring you growth, joy and endless possibilities. Embrace all the wonderful opportunities ahead.

Next Magazine

The March Magazine will be available both on the website and in hardcopy. Everyone is welcome to make contributions by email to marian.claytonmethodist@yahoo.co.uk or to Elva by the 25th of February 2025. Thank you.

Racial Justice Sunday-This is on the second Sunday in February. 9th February. This special day was established by the Methodist church 30years ago in response to the murder of Stephen Lawrence, who had died two years earlier. This year's theme; 'Coat of Many Colours' is designed to help us reflect on the increasing diversity that exists in the Churches of Britain and Ireland. It is an opportunity for all Christians to join together in: -

- Reflecting on the importance of racial justice.
- Thanksgiving for an end to misunderstanding, racism and injustice.
- Action that truly makes a difference.
- Fundraising for national and local racial justice initiatives.

Here are some scripture verses relevant to the theme for us to reflect on.

- Acts Ch 10 v 34-35

Then Peter began to speak, 'I now realise how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accept people from every nation who fear him and do what is right'

- Proverbs Ch 31 v 8-9

'Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

- Isaiah Ch 1 v 17

'Learn to do right! Speak justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the cause of the widow'.

- Hosea Ch 12 v 6

'But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice and wait for your God always'

- Romans Ch 12 v 12

'Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Some thoughts to ponder this February

- Perhaps they are not stars in the sky, but openings where our loved ones shine down to let us know they are happy – An Eskimo proverb
- Let your love be like the misty rains: coming softly but flooding the river – An East African proverb
- A friend may be waiting behind a stranger's face – Maya Angelou
- Friendship isn't a big thing-it's a million little things – Paul Coelho
- The phrase 'They wouldn't hurt a fly' is often used by us. But if a fly landed on us, we might swat it unthinkingly. It's human nature. They say a fly landed on John Wesley's hand as he preached. He gently shook the fly on to the pulpit, saying 'Go sir: there is room enough for both of us.' Let us make kindness our human nature as John Wesley did.

At this time of year, mid-winter, when sometimes life drags us down, and often everything seems miserable, let us brighten our day with this poem by Iris Hesselden

I felt a bit downhearted;
The winter seemed so long.
I longed to see a bright blue sky
Or hear a cheerful song
And then outside the window,
A little flash of red,
A robin perched upon the fence
And all depression fled.
So now I look for him each day,
Though sometimes he's not there,
Yet like a little ray of hope
I like to feel he's near!

Another poem to encourage us and for us to give thanks by Sharon Haston

Angels come in many shapes and forms
Helping us in weathering life's storms
You may be looking for halos or wings

But they're often wearing other things;
Nurses in uniforms, healing the sick,
Those volunteers on a litter pick,
The RNLI crew away out to sea,
The kindness of handing out cups of tea
It's people who help at the local food bank.
Feeding the homeless, not looking for thanks.
Quietly helping in their own special way
Yes, angels exist, they're around us each day.

Timothy Dudley-Smith 1926-2024

The Rev. Timothy was born in Manchester and died last year in Cambridge aged 97. He was Archdeacon of Norwich along with many other positions in the Church of England.

Why are we celebrating his life? Well amongst many things, he wrote over 400 hymns, many of which we sing regularly in our services.

Hymns such as StF 186, 'Tell out my Soul' based on Mary's song – The Magnificat. StF 509 'Safe in the shadow of the Lord' is based on Psalm 91. The first verse says: -

Safe in the shadow of the Lord,
Beneath his hand and power
I trust in him,
I trust in him,
My fortress and my tower

Another beautiful hymn is StF 43, 'Come let us praise the Lord', based on Psalm 95, and the tune is a Chilean Folle melody. The third verse is: -

In worship bow the knee,
Our glorious God confess;
The great Creator, he,
The Lord our righteousness.
He reigns unseen:
his flock he feeds
and gently leads
In pastures green.

A hymn asking Christ to be my leader, my teacher, my saviour is StF 492 'Christ be my leader by night as by day; In the second verse it reads:

Christ be my teacher in age as in youth,
drifting or doubting for he is the truth.
Grant me to trust him; though shifting as sand,
doubt cannot daunt me; in Jesus I stand.

One of Timothy Dudley-Smith's most loved hymns is StF 470 'Lord, for the years' where we give thanks for our journey with God. The five verses each start

- Lord for the years your love has kept and guided
- Lord for that word, the word of life which fires us
- Lord for our land, in this our generation
- Lord for our world, when we disown and doubt him
- Lord for ourselves; in living power remake us.

The whole hymn is a prayer of thanksgiving and intercession-just beautiful poetry.

We thank the Lord for hymn-writers both from long ago and in our own generation who contribute so much to our worship and faith.

Particularly today, we give thanks for the life and work of the Rev. Timothy Dudley-Smith and the legacy he has left us.

More about the hymn writer, John Newton, who was born 300years ago this year, in another edition of the magazine.

Here is a prayer from one of the weekly written circuit services

God of all our days

Our beginning and our end,

Help us to walk with you;

To trust you at every turning of the way;

To follow where you lead us;

And to go where you send us.

In all the ups and down of life,

In times when we are uncertain about what we need to do, and in times when we doubt that you are with us.

Open our ears, to hear your voice:

Open our eyes to see you at work

And open our hearts to trust you in every step of our journey. Amen.

February Puzzles

As February 14th is Valentine's Day, how many words of four letters or more can you make from **VALENTINE**

No proper names or foreign words

Answers to Jan 2025 crossword

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1, Sabbatical. 7, Opinion. 8, Laing. 10, Olga. 11, Galilean. 13, Sardis. 15, Severe. 17, Adultery. 18, Flea. 21, Swazi. 22, Acetate. 23, Revelation.

DOWN: 1, Sling. 2, Brim. 3, Annual. 4, Ill-timed. 5, Abilene. 6, Colossians. 9, Gennesaret. 12, Diatribe. 14, Roulade. 16, Errata. 19, Learn. 20, Levi.

Just for laughs

A lost dog strays into a jungle. A lion sees the dog from a distance and cautiously thinks, "Hmm, this guy looks edible. Never seen his kind before."

The lion starts rushing toward the dog menacingly. The dog notices and begins to panic, but just as he's about to run, he spots some bones nearby. Thinking quickly, the dog loudly exclaims, "Mmm... that was some good lion meat!"

Hearing this, the lion abruptly stops in his tracks and thinks, "Whoa! This guy seems tougher than he looks. I better leave while I still can." The lion retreats cautiously.

Up in the treetops, a monkey witnesses the entire scene. Realising he could gain favour with the lion, the monkey decides to spill the truth. He swings down and tells the lion what really happened. Furious, the lion growls, "Get on my back! We'll deal with him together!"

The lion and monkey rush back toward the dog.

Spotting them, the dog panics again but quickly comes up with another idea. He shouts loudly, "Where on earth is that monkey? I told him to bring me another lion an hour ago!"

Wordsearch

Lectionary readings for 9th, 16th and 23rd February include much of 1 Corinthians Ch 15

1 Corinthians

Chapter 15

S E L T S O P A L E A S T M E M O R Y X J N C W
X T O A S Q A B U N D A N T L Y S M X M A V G J
T J Q R C E P H A S Z Q G R E A T E R U T Z X N
P Z M Q H R W K F A I T H J W W H E R E I N X I
E N T N E S E R P W H E T H E R E I L L E Q S I
E E Q P E R S E C U T E D O B D H N E R G C X O
L R L F F R E T F A G E E U E Y P P A V R K C E
S H O P D D P F J Z X T R V X C S L U I A F H N
A T F T I E I N A O H I E O D O C O P M C I U O
U E R W D R L E Y E E I T E G E Y T I N E A R I
D R S R S B N I R D L A R S D F U O P X C L C T
C B E T E Y E E V E K D M N I R A F I C C A H C
A D M K R V F S B E N Z U O E R W L O F H B D E
L U A D O O O B T U R Y I S N F H R L G E O E R
L N J B R T F E H O N E S I R G D C A E L U H R
E L A E F H S C R D W T D J I I S M G A N R C U
D E V A S I D A N O A E Y D N U O F A E V E A S
D S V Y I R C U A N M U D G R E C E I V E D E E
B S J K O D L S D J R E V L E W T X N A Y M R R
P Y F A Z R O E I L Z Q H P M R E M A I N Z P K

ABOVE
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CHRIST
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GREATER
MEMORY
RECEIVED
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GOSPEL
LABOURED
PREACHED
RISEN
THIRD

AGAIN
BELIEVED
CEPHAS
FAITH
GRACE
LEAST
PRESENT
SAVED
TWELVE