

**CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH  
CAVERSHAM METHODIST CHURCH  
NEWSLETTER  
DECEMBER 2017 AND JANUARY 2018  
Volume 44 No 1**



**MINISTERIAL TEAM**  
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### **Our Minister's Letter**

Dear Friends

Another year, another Christmas, and the world often seems to be oblivious to the good news we're celebrating at this season. Looking around, we might notice only immense human need, uncertainty, stress and fear – in our nation and across the world. Nothing changes, except some things seem to get worse. Where is God? Where is Isaiah's promise of peace, justice and fair, godly government?

In the town of Bethlehem two millennia ago, it was an ordinary night in an ordinary place. An ordinary couple struggled to find overnight accommodation because of government bureaucrats conducting a census in order to increase tax revenues. A baby was born, and to most eyes, it was just another day. The world was no different than it had been the day before. Only a few scruffy shepherds, alerted by an incredible display of angelic messengers, glimpsed what was *really* happening. Christians celebrate that ordinary night as the most extraordinary event in human history, for on that night "God was in Christ, reconciling the cosmos to Himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19).

The poet U.A Fanthorpe, in her poem "BC:AD" describes the moment when history changed forever. Here are some extracts from the poem:

*This was the moment when Before  
Turned into After, and the future's  
uninvented timekeepers presented arms.*

*This was the moment when nothing  
happened.*

*And this was the moment  
when a few farm workers and three  
members of an obscure Persian sect  
walked haphazard by starlight straight  
Into the kingdom of heaven.*

We live in the world, but as citizens of heaven who know that, what we see as ordinary and every day, can be the place of God's amazing activity. We hold to the conviction that there is more than meets the eye in the world around us, that what is real may not be as visible as that which is fleeting and temporary. The coming of God's Son as a baby in an inconspicuous corner of the world gives us hope. The theologian Ken Leech said: "hope isn't a state of mind; it's a piece of work". During the last couple of years, the PMC journey has been teaching us to look beneath the surface to see what God is doing, and to join in.

In 'The Last Battle' the final story in the Chronicles of Narnia by C S Lewis, there is a Tardis-like shack which is bigger inside than out. "Yes", said Queen Lucy: "in our world, too, a stable once had something inside it that was bigger than our whole world."

**May the hope, peace, joy and love of Jesus be yours this Christmas,**

**Shalom.  
Jenny**

### **Rainbow Harvest at Gosbrook Road**

On Oct 5<sup>th</sup> both churches celebrated their Harvest Festivals. The chosen joint theme was 'Rainbow Harvest'. Considerable effort was put in to making our church look special. The Art group had all provided paintings on the rainbow theme and they were very varied in their interpretation. Rainbows over pastoral scenes, rainbow colours jumping out of top hats, galaxy style rainbows in the sky, and a rainbow full of butterflies, to name but a few.

The Pre-School had made a large rainbow poster of painted hands all cut out and joined together on a blue sky, most impressive. Obviously there were plenty of flowers. Seven tables had been set up at the front of the church, each with a coloured cloth representing the rainbow spectrum. The gifts were brought for Readifood and were all packets and tins. It was surprising how the colours all gained their places on the tables. **Red** was easy, lots of tomato soup and tinned tomatoes, **Orange** had tinned oranges, packets of biscuits some peaches. **Yellow** had pineapple, macaroni cheese, and again some tinned fruit. **Green** well, what do you think? peas of course. Now, **Blue** you would have thought was difficult, but most fish tins has blue labels, and then **Indigo** came from coloured wrappings on tins of meat and some chocolate packets. Finally – **Violet** - have you ever heard of Cadburys! - plenty of purple there, and other brands trying to copy the original chocolate biscuits etc.

Everything looked 'bright and beautiful' if not in the hymn writer's original sense.

After the morning service - led by Revd. David Jenkins - we were joined by friends from Caversham Heights when we shared in a very pleasant Harvest lunch.

Many thanks to all those who came, provided the food and helped clear up afterwards. A special time of fellowship for the two churches together.

**Eunice Cooper**



**Photographs – Janet Offord**

### **Annual Finance Report**

*This year for the first time in a long time we have not made a surplus in our annual accounts. There are a number of reasons, all of them quite legitimate but there are a couple of items that seem to be coming more prominent every year.*

*Back in about 2005 before I took over as treasurer there was a campaign to encourage members of our congregation to make their donations by Standing Order. This was a very successful campaign and there are many members still giving in this way. Since that time there has been a small number of new donors but not many. Giving in this way relieves you of the need to remember each week and provides a measure of certainty concerning Church income. If any current members who do not give in this fashion would like to do so then please contact me for the appropriate form.*

*It is also noticeable that of those who started giving in this way back in 2005 only a tiny handful has made any changes to their donations over the intervening 12 years. I know there are many reasons why making changes may be tricky. Inflation affects everyone and those on limited incomes find it particularly hard but may I encourage you to review your giving and if there is room in your finances for a change, however small, to make such a move.*

**Peter Boardley**



### **A TIME TO REMEMBER**

On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November at 3.30 an 'ALL SOULS' service was held at Caversham Heights. A quiet meditative service with an opportunity to think of our loved ones who had died and to light candles in their memory.

A time of fellowship followed with light refreshments.

### **PASTORAL NEW FROM CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS**

Many of our members and friends are unwell. **Simeon Beaumont** unwell at home, **Ted Smith** In Royal Berkshire Hospital, **Tom Chadwick** in John Radcliffe in Oxford. We also pray for **Rosemary Nagle's daughter Jan** facing two operations. **Derek Richings** home after a week's respite care. **Jean Bean**, also home after a spell in hospital. **Congratulations to Joan Bristow on reaching her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday**

**GOSBROOK ROAD CHURCH ANNIVERSARY**  
**Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2017**



Margaret Simpson – Senior Steward, Joy Bosier and Mary Prior  
with Noah and Joanne Daniel.

***Photograph James Rowley***

**CHURCH ANNIVERSARY AT GOSBROOK ROAD**

On Sunday October 22<sup>nd</sup> a service was held to celebrate the 126<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church being built on the corner of Ardler Road. The Church hall - which was then the church - was built in 1891, and the current church building in 1898. There had been an earlier church on the opposite side of Gosbrook Road called 'The Iron Chapel' which was opened in 1881 and cost £360.

2017 saw the return of Revd. Rosemary Fletcher, previous Minister at both Caversham churches. The congregation were delighted to meet with her and her husband James once more. During the service uplifting hymns were chosen and we had the added delight of Peter Bernard playing the organ for us. Rosemary preached on the present and looking forward to the future. She remembered former members who had given so much to the church in the past. Rosemary thought that The Holiday Club and Nativity Live were fine achievements as was the link with other Caversham Churches. She was also pleased to see new faces in the congregation.

The week before the children had made 'Happy Birthday Cards' for the church and these were on display together with coloured cards and pictures from Ben, Mark and Alison our friends from Briants Avenue. During the actual service the children made a large collage of a birthday cake sporting 126 bright shiny candles. There was a real cake too, well three actually. At the end of the service the candles were lit as Peter played 'Happy Birthday'.

Photographs were taken to record the occasion with the two eldest members of the congregation posing alongside the two youngest. After the service coffee was served and cake enjoyed giving everyone a chance to chat and reminisce with Rosemary and James. It was 1.15pm when the doors finally closed.

In the evening at Caversham Heights Rosemary led a very thoughtful communion service that included readings and meditations based on the theme of Autumn.

**It was a special Anniversary Day.**  
***Eunice Cooper***

**IT IS ALL CHANGE – AGAIN !**

What has been previously known as **Network Fellowship** will have a change of name from January 2018. It will thenceforth be known as **The Thursday Fellowship** and will meet once a month instead of fortnightly. Why the change? We have several men who join us and we wish to reflect their presence. Whether we like it or not 'Network' is synonymous with Women's Meetings as it was for many years the umbrella under which women's meetings in the Methodist Church operated. It served us well but has now been replaced. We wish to be an inclusive group giving all people the chance of interesting talks etc. during the daytime so we do not want to limit our name to something that applies, or is perceived to apply, only to women. Our meetings will be held on the **2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday** of each month at 2.30 in the Hall as now. Come and join us – you will be most welcome!

## CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH AUTUMN FAIR

Despite the cold, wet, weather on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November there was a warm welcome in our Church and Halls for all visitors to our Autumn Fair. Hearty Ploughmen's lunches and homemade soups were served in the Hall, and next door there was a myriad of cakes for people to enjoy with cups of tea or coffee. Moving on into the church, tables were laden with cakes, bread, preserves, plants, a miscellany of gifts, and beautiful handmade crafts. People also had a choices of books, Christmas items, toys, games and a Fairtrade stall. Fun was had guessing the number of sweets and buying tickets on the tombola or the raffle for bigger prizes.

With the help of some generous donations £1500 was raised for two local Charities:

The **Ridgeline Trust** which provides horticultural therapy for people experiencing, learning, mental or physical disabilities, temporary or permanent, and for others with particular needs. Through gardening and related social activities they are helped to learn new skills, improve communication and social skills and also build their self-esteem and confidence.

Also the **Alzheimer's Society** who support sufferers of all ages with a range of local services including dementia advisers and support workers. There are 'Singing for the Brain' sessions, activity groups such as light gardening and craft activities. They also run a befriending service and give help and advice to carers. Many thanks to everyone who willingly gave up their time to enable our church to give generous cheques to these charities.

**PADDINGTON**  
*needs YOU!*



He is running short of  
marmalade and Seville  
oranges will be in the shops  
in January  
We need more Marmalade\*\*  
for the Autumn Fair **2018**

**HUNGARIAN SCHOOL IN READING**

For some months now The Hungarian School has been meeting at Gosbrook Road. We are delighted they are using our premises and enjoying the facilities. A few weeks ago we asked if they would write an article for the newsletter, and here it is:

### READING MAGYAR ISKOLA



We attract families from Reading and nearby towns such as Bracknell, Wokingham and Maidenhead.

There are other centres in Berkshire associated to the Balassi Institute, London.

The school was founded to help keep the traditions, lessons, language and culture of Hungary for families living in the UK, many of whom have bi-lingual backgrounds.

Headed up by Adrienn Pim the school meets every other week on Saturday afternoons from 2 to 5pm during the school terms.

The school welcomes 4 different groups of children, separated approximately by age, but also by Hungarian language ability.

Usually 15-20 children come to study and stay for a separate folk dancing lesson with many families joining in.

Along with the school programmes there are special celebrations such as 'St. Nicholas' in the beginning of December, 'Farsang' in February, a Masquerade ball to scare off Winter and welcome Spring. There will also be many picnics and trips around the county.

While the school was started in 2009, we are glad to have found this ideal location with such wonderful facilities.

**Nikolett Bukkosy**



**Hungarian School lesson time**





### **Hungarian School dancing**

#### **A Sailor's prayer [based on Ps 23]**

The Lord is my pilot; I shall not drift.  
He lights me across the dark waters.  
He steers me through the deep channels.  
He keeps my log.

He guides me by the Star of Holiness for His Name's sake.

As I sail through the storms and tempests of life I will dread no danger; for You are near me; Your love and care shelter me.

You prepare a haven before me in the Homeland of Eternity;  
You quieten the waves with oil; my ship rides calmly.

Surely sunlight and starlight shall be with me wherever I sail,  
and at the end of my voyaging I shall rest in the port of my God.

### **ANON**



### **NATIVITY LIVE**

**4 pm on Christmas Eve**

**Starting at the Baptist Church and finishing at Gosbrook Road where light refreshments will follow a short service.**

**Gosbrook Road would welcome some help with refreshments – such as *small cakes, tray bakes, flapjacks,***

***mince pies or biscuits***

**Please contact: Eunice Cooper – 0118 947 8607**

### **PASTORAL NEWS FROM GOSBROOK ROAD**

Please remember in prayer our housebound friends, **Gwen Buckledee, Barbara Tucker** and also **Sue North** who has not been well for some months. **We have learnt recently the sad news that Alma Alexander has died. Alma has been unwell for a very long time and now she is at peace.**

**Morning Prayer by**

**Peter Martin,  
Bolton and Rochdale District Chair**

*As this day begins, we turn to you, our God.  
By your Holy Spirit, be with us in all we have to face.  
In each step we take, walk by our side.  
In every conversation, guide our thoughts.  
In all our actions, show us your way.  
In our challenges, grant us wisdom.  
And at the end of the day, we commend to you our faults,  
failings, and frailty  
Just as we commit to you our devotion, dedication and discipleship.  
In the name of Jesus Christ,  
Our beginning and end. **Amen***

**DIARY DATES – GOSBROOK ROAD**

**December 2017**

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>**

10.30 Rev'd Jenny Dowding – Holy Communion  
6.30 NO SERVICE

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 Rev'd Dr James Mather  
6.30 NO SERVICE

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 All Age Carol Service – Preacher Rev'd David Jenkins  
5 p.m. AT CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS – Carol Service led by  
Rev'd Jenny Dowding

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 Mrs Antonia Allen  
4 p.m. **NATIVITY LIVE commencing at the Baptist Church and finishing at Gosbrook Road for a short service, friendship and tea and cakes.**  
11.15 p.m. Midnight Communion at Caversham Heights with  
Rev'd Jenny Dowding and Rev'd David Jenkins

**CHRISTMAS MORNING – 10.30 Rev'd David Jenkins.**

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>**

10.30 Rev'd David Jenkins  
6.30 NO SERVICE

**January 2018**

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 Rev'd Jenny Dowding – Covenant Service.  
6.30 NO SERVICE

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 Mr Michael Smith  
6.30 AT CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS – Rev'd David Jenkins

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>**

10.30 Rev'd Jenny Dowding  
6.30 NO SERVICE

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 Mr David Munns  
6.30 AT CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS – Rev'd Jenny Dowding  
Holy Communion and Healing Service.

**DIARY DATES – CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS**



**December 2016**

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup>**

9.00 Rev'd Jenny Dowding – Holy Communion

10.30 Rev'd David Jenkins

6.30 NO SERVICE

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 Rev'd Jenny Dowding – HOLY COMMUNION

6.30 NO SERVICE

**Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 Mrs Tessa Bennett

5 p.m. Carol Service – Rev'd Jenny Dowding

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 Rev'd Jenny Dowding

**4 P.M. NATIVITY LIVE commencing at the Baptist Church and finishing at Gosbrook Road for a short service, friendship and tea and cakes.**

11.15 p.m. Midnight Communion at Caversham Heights with  
Rev'd Jenny Dowding and Rev'd David Jenkins.

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas Morning**

10.30 a.m. Worship for all ages led by Revd Jenny Dowding  
bring a favourite present to show

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup>**

10.30 Local Arrangement

6.30 NO SERVICE

**January 2018**

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>**

9.00 Rev'd David Jenkins – Holy Communion

10.30 Rev'd Dr. James Mather

6.30 NO SERVICE

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 Rev'd Jenny Dowding – COVENANT SERVICE -

6.30 Rev'd David Jenkins

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>**

10.30 Rev'd David Jenkins

6.30 NO SERVICE

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>**

10.30 Mr Tony Bell

6.30 Rev'd Jenny Dowding – Holy Communion/Healing service.

**Faithful God,**

**We give thanks for the ways we encounter you in Jesus, the  
Living Word**

**In the faces of those in need**

**In the faces of the 'other' from whom we draw back,**

**In moments of joy and in deep sadness.**

**In all these people and places we find you already there,**

**Kneeling at our feet, ready to serve us.**

**Jesus the first and the last,**

**Help us to be your servant people.**

**Carrying the rich treasures of our faith to friend and stranger.**

**Jesus, born of Mary,**

**May we be ready to see you where we least expect**

**And greet you with hopefulness and joy**

**Amen**

**(Andrew Wood – Southampton District Choir)**

**BEST WISHES FOR A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND A PEACEFUL NEW YEAR  
EDITOR**

***ITEMS FOR THE FEBRUARY/MARCH ISSUE REQUIRED BY 5<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2018***