

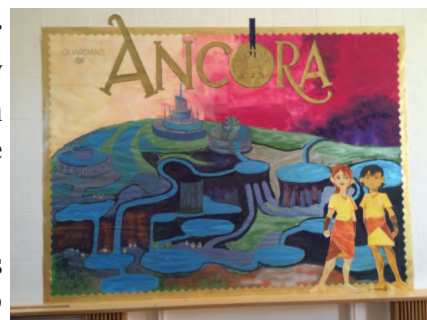
Acorns

GOFFS OAK METHODIST CHURCH, NEWGATE STREET ROAD, GOFFS OAK, HERTS, EN7 5SS
LATE AUTUMN 2016

Forty four children become Guardians of Ancora for a week

Holiday Club flourishes as stories of Jesus are discovered

A late rush of interest in this year's Holiday Club swelled our numbers considerably during the run-up to our legendary long-running activity. Altogether, 44 children benefitted from a week of fun, joy and discovery when they enlisted to become Guardians of Ancora for the week.



Their role was to find the whereabouts of five New Testament stories lost from the Hall of Memories in the mythical city of Ancora. To do so, they had to undertake treasure hunts, discussions, art and craft activities, prayers and games. Of course, they discovered the five stories and restored them to the Hall of Memories and had a wonderful time doing so.

The week was organised by the usual team who were working on their 24th Holiday Club. They were helped by several older youngsters, who in recent years had been Holiday Club participants themselves and were more than happy to put something back into Holiday Club to enhance the children's experience.



The whole week was enhanced by technological magic from our IT maestro and if you are in the church hall at any time during the following year you will see the wonderful mural (top right of page) created on the back wall by our resident artists.



LOOK WHAT AWAITS YOU IN THIS AUTUMN EDITION OF Acorns.....!

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What's happening in our Church?

Sunday Services are held at 10.15am every Sunday and at 6.30pm on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.

Sunday Club - All youngsters are welcome to come to Sunday Club at 10.15 am, where there is a variety of activities. Sunday morning worship at 10.15 am is a mix of traditional and contemporary styles.

Holy Communion is held on the 1st Sunday morning and 3rd Sunday evening. Members of the Methodist Church, any other Church, and those earnestly seeking faith, are all welcome to take and share bread and wine with us.

United Services are held on the 1st Sunday evening of each month with St James' Parish Church, Goffs Oak. Check the News Sheet for which location.

Prayer meetings are held from 11.45am on the first Sunday of the month - please ask when you come to Church if you wish to support this important part of Church life. Check the News Sheet for which location.

Tuesday Coffee Morning - Every Tuesday there is a Coffee Morning in the church lounge from 10.00 - 12.00 to which everyone is invited.

Introduction to Christianity, Baptism, Confirmation (membership), Weddings and Funerals These are a part of the life of the Church, the community and its people. Those interested in discussing any of these should contact the Minister.

Uniformed Organisations The Scout and Guide communities are very active in Goffs Oak. Please see the Hall for Hire page on the website for details of when and where.

Weddings and Funerals at our Church - For information regarding costs, please contact Alan Combes, Minister, on 01992 762317. For information regarding booking a hall please contact David Batts on 01707 874092.

**DON'T FORGET
OUR WEBSITE!**
If you can access the internet, log on to

www.goffsoakmethodistchurch.org.uk

David Batts is supervising our website, so please log on regularly and keep up to date with what is going on at Goffs Oak Methodist Church.

Current and past Acorns also on website!

EDITORIAL

LAA stands for a few things. Legal Aid Services, Light Aircraft Association and Left Atrial Appendage come to mind. I'm sure you can think of lots more. But now there's a new one. Welcome to Late Autumn Acorns!

Due to a variety of technical and admin issues we are unable to get our editions out quite as early and as regularly as in the past. This one should have been on the news stands during, firstly, Spring and then *early* Autumn. Better late than never though and please accept my apologies and those of the staff here at Acorns Towers for making you wait so long for your favourite church magazine. I trust you will find it hits the right spots.



"At last!"

We are looking to get another Acorns out early in the new year (Mid-Winter Acorns, perhaps?), so if you can offer anything which you feel might interest our readers at home and abroad, please send it to me at eyetiss@aol.com.

I again thank everyone who has contributed to or read the pages of our magazine, and especially to Call Print of Hertford, who always make a great job of producing the publication. Thanks as always to Maureen for her observant proof-reading, which has helped me on countless occasions.

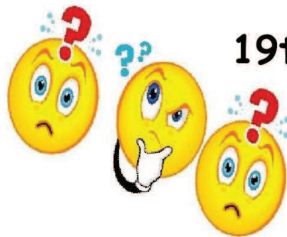
Bryan King - Editor

Goffs Oak Methodist Church

*Come and join us
at our family
quizz*



**... at 7pm on
Saturday
19th November**



**Tickets £6 adults, £4 children,
including ploughmans and drinks,
available from Jacqui Seaman
(philjacqui24@hotmail.com)**

Note: No alcohol is allowed on the premises

Message from the Minister

Autumn 2016



Dear Brothers and Sisters

As I enter year 4 I find myself deeply grateful for the love and support shown to us by so many of you. Living in an extended family called the church can be challenging as some of us have been considering in a Bible study of Acts. The early church sought out some of their best people and so appointed those who were *'full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom'* to administer community life (Acts 6). We are all grateful to those amongst us who take on the various roles within church and community without which our worship, fellowship and mission would struggle. So next time you see a steward, a treasurer, a junior church leader, a Uniformed leader, a property steward or any other role – I encourage you take a moment to say thank you.

On this theme I would like to share two goals for this year - first that of encouraging more (and new) people to become involved in church and service. Second in support of this to start a journey focussed on discipleship in our preaching and Bible study groups across all three churches.

These themes form a virtuous circle. As we grow in discipleship we give more of ourselves and as we serve the church and world we grow as disciples. 1 Peter 4:10 says: *'As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.'* I am amazed at how God equips those who take on something new and how wonderfully people are changed.

I sat with a man a week ago who is struggling with his future. He has qualifications and a world of opportunities open to him and yet he was stuck, worried about which path to take. In the end I said – have you thought about taking time out to serve others? In my experience one of the best ways of learning and growing ourselves is when we engage in washing the feet of someone else.

These twin goals mean that I will be calling upon some folk who have done the same role for many years to be gracious in welcoming others alongside you, or even in taking a refreshing break. Indeed Methodist policy says that ideally no person should hold office for more than six successive years. Although they recognise that this rotation cannot always be achieved.

Now whilst change can itself be daunting I find myself returning to the wonderful Philip – who was one of those appointed as a deacon to the early church in Acts 6. What is special about Philip's story is that God did not type-cast him into one role and keep him there. In fact, by Acts 8 he is transformed into an evangelist who bravely proclaims the Gospel in Samaria and then witnesses to the Ethiopian official. Philip's preparedness to trust in God and to go into new contexts with boldness is a lesson for us all.

So I wonder... what could you do to serve the church or the world in the coming year? Where is your passion? Is it for justice, hospitality, the old, the lonely or the young? Is it for the Bible, worship or prayer? Is it for our buildings, communications, the web and the world? If you make space to listen to God, what direction are you prompted towards? Across our churches themed preaching on Discipleship will start in the new year as we seek people fired up for God who are prepared to take a step of faith.

Why not say that prayer, be that person, give more of yourself and God promises purpose and fulfilment, inspiration and fellowship that go far beyond what the world can offer.

God bless you all as we journey together.

Alan Combes

Minister - Ordnance Road, Goffs Oak and Ponders End

News from our Churches

At Ordnance Road – church improvements from floors to lights to security are planned and we will need help fund raising! We will also launch a new ecumenical group of 5 churches with Community Carols on Dec 11 at 4.30pm at St Georges.

At Ponders End – we are seeking spiritual growth through a series of quiet days and soon hope to make start on refurbishing our back hall. Please come to our international evening 26th Nov, 6pm.

At Goffs Oak – we have introduced data projection to our church whilst making connections to over 500 people who use our premises every week.

So we pray – dear God help me to know in my heart that *'I can do all things through him who strengthens me'* Amen. **Philippians 4:13**

Big steps to help young people into employment

Action for Children have had great success so far for their new 'Best Foot Forward' programme. It's funded by Barclaycard, and it aims to help remove barriers to education, training and employment for over 1,600 young people.



The programme offers two levels of grants. There's the 'Interview Essentials Fund' which consists of grants up to £100 to help young people look and feel their best for interviews. This might be used for clothing, bus fares, stationery, childcare costs or other interview essentials.

Then there's the 'On the Road to Success Fund', including grants of up to £350 to help young people secure, or continue effectively, employment, training or further education. This might also be used for clothing, equipment, stationery, bus fares, essential childcare or contribution towards further education costs such as course fees.

Luke from Scotland (left) was helped by the programme. He was charged with over 30 offences before he even turned 16. Luke was eventually given a curfew which he broke several times, so he was placed on remand for 5 days at the Polmont, a Young Offenders Institution. He has since managed to turn his life around and has now secured an apprenticeship with the company he's been working for the past 10 months. Luke's personal and family finances are tight and although he was able to use the tools provided at work, his employer generally expects young people to get their own set of tools required for the job. Thanks to the grant, Luke was able to purchase the necessary equipment. On top of that, the support he received has given him a real confidence boost and he now feels more included at work.



It seems that the grant doesn't only remove some of the financial barriers, but often also increases a young person's self-esteem.



The Methodist Church



It is worthwhile reminding ourselves of the seemingly unbreakable links between Action for Children and the Methodist Church, which have lasted for over 145 years.

Together the two organizations work hard to make children's lives better. The Action for Children founder, Thomas Bowman Stephenson, was a Methodist minister from the North East of England with a passionate commitment to social justice. On moving to London in 1868, he challenged the Methodist Church to take action to help homeless children living on the streets. From one family home founded in Waterloo and the addition of further such homes elsewhere, the charity quickly grew to become the National Children's Home (NCH). Its name was changed to "NCH Action for Children" in 1994 and to "Action for Children" in September 2008. The name changes reflected a shift away from providing children's homes (most of which have now closed) to a wider range of services.

Their ethos is deeply rooted in Methodist principles. The famous words of John Wesley to 'go not only to those who need you but to those who need you most' describe their vision and values. Stephenson's commitment to his work 'in the service of the children' continues to inspire the A for C staff. They maintain close links with the Methodist Church in Britain. The Methodist Conference, who they report to annually, appoints their Council of trustees. A number of Methodists are trustees and all of the charity's national committees in England, Scotland and Wales have at least one Methodist representative.

May these links remain unbroken.

Festival encounters!

It's been a great summer for festivals and for catching up with folk performer friends. Once again, Jacqui and I attended 'Folk by the Oak', the one day festival in the parkland at Hatfield House. We have been to every one of these annual festivals since they started in 2008 and we really enjoy the relaxed atmosphere. We just take our fold up chairs and picnic lunches and find a spot on the grass in front of the 'shell' (covered stage). The line up of artists is always impressive and although the event is always well attended, there is never a feeling of overcrowding.

***Son of
'Folk at
the Oak'
by Phil
Seaman***



This year's event was as good as ever with artists such as The Afro Celt Sound System, Lau, Martin Simpson & Dom Flemons and Cara Dillon. One of the musicians playing with Cara Dillon was ace fiddler Sam Sweeney and I managed to catch up with him for a chat before his performance. Sam is an extremely nice guy whom I have met many times, so it was good to see him again.

For me, the highlight of the festival had to be Martin Simpson and Dom Flemons. Martin is considered, by many, to be one of the world's finest acoustic & slide guitarists. Dom Flemons is best known for his work with the Carolina Chocolate Drops, the old time string band based in North Carolina. Again, I have met Martin many times so I took the opportunity to meet up with him, and Dom, for a chat.

At the end of July I spent a day at Cambridge Folk Festival, which is held in the grounds of Cherry Hinton Hall. Artists such as Eliza Carthy & The Wayward Band, Lady Maisery, Blazing Fiddles, Songs of Separation, Varldens Band and Mary Chapin Carpenter were among the artists performing. However, I had gone to the festival primarily to see my favourite band, Solas and to meet up with my friend, New York based fiddler Winifred Horan. Winnie, together with Seamus Egan, founded Solas twenty years ago, having previously played with American/Irish band, Cherish The Ladies. We first met, several years ago, through our mutual friend Sharon Shannon, when Winnie was touring in her band.

After Solas had finished their performance I went to the backstage entrance to Stage 1. The steward on the gate began to explain that he couldn't let me through without a pass, but if I wrote a message to Winnie, he would take it through to her. A few minutes later I received a call on my mobile telling me that Winnie wanted to see me backstage in the artists area. The steward took me through and I joined Winnie and the rest of the band for a drink. We chatted for 40 minutes or so and then Winnie and the band had to leave for Heathrow where they were getting a flight back to America.



Funnily enough, shortly after leaving the backstage area I bumped into Sam Sweeney who was playing in both Eliza Carthy's band and with Songs of Separation! He is certainly in demand these days!

All in all, a great festival season!

In the gallery of the ...



More pictures of our 24th Holiday Club.



Our poster heralds the action to come

Focussed and attentive, the Guardians of Ancora ready for action



A group of Guardians getting crafty

Believe it or not, but there are several Guardians enjoying life under the parachute!



Help is at hand for some of the younger Guardians



As everyone in and around our church will know, **Don Clark** sadly passed away on Sunday 6th March. His role in the creation and care of our church building, as well as his work in the community is legendary. There will be a fuller appreciation of his life and work in the next edition of Acorns, due out early in the new year.

Mick Arkell 27th April 1939 - 2016

27th April 1939

This was the day that conscription was introduced in Great Britain and the day that Mick was born. It was a very unsettled world with Neville Chamberlain's pact for peace becoming increasingly untenable.



Mick was the second son to be born into the Arkell's household, followed a few years later by twins and later still, baby sister Kath. Although Mick would have been only six years old when the war ended he could remember being an evacuee. He remembered seeing POWs and hunting for shrapnel after air raids. A dangerous and exciting time!

His dad was an accountant and from what Mick recalled seemed quite remote and distant, but his mother was warm and caring, balancing up the couple - although he never quite forgave her for disposing of his toy cars while he was away in the army. Mick's red hair was often blamed for getting him into all sorts of trouble - people saying that it explained his fiery temper. This did not, however, prevent him from enjoying the gentler side of his nature. He loved music and helped his uncle, who was the church organist, by pumping the bellows. He was part of the church choir and enjoyed singing the choral anthems.

As a boy, Mick loved playing in the forest at Epping and recalled with nostalgia the great Hornbeam tree as if it were an old friend. He was quite enterprising, earning money from his various paper rounds - reading many of the comics on his delivery rounds. Schooldays were endured, I think, more than enjoyed. On leaving school he joined a firm that I think sold floor coverings. He was at this time playing in a band, mainly for fun, but also for a small remuneration.

Eventually the conscription kicked in and he was called up and sent to Malaya to do his 'National Savagery' (his words). Although for some chaps this was a trial, for Mick it was one of the greatest experiences of his then young life. On his return and discharge from the army he joined the police force. The job and the camaraderie were much enjoyed, but a more unlikely policeman I have yet to meet.

It was around this time that he married and had his three children - Sharon, Les and Andrew.

So, there he was at 27 years of age with a wife, three children and a demanding job when MS struck. There were some difficult years ahead. Mick remained in the police force for as long as he could, but although he explored every possible road to healing, his condition got worse.

Fast forward 20 years

It was a few months before his 50th birthday that our paths crossed. I had been thinking about working for the Leonard Cheshire Foundation when a mutual acquaintance said that Mick was familiar with the local Cheshire home and could supply me with any information I might require. His help was of great assistance and we soon became firm friends. I invited him along to a Sunday Service at Goffs Oak and he very soon became a part of our church family.

His life was enriched by all that the church had to offer - fellowship, music, love, faith and trust. In return we were mutually blessed by all that Mick had to offer. He was a great inspiration to many as his sense of humour and indomitable spirit were always in evidence. He sang in our choirs and played in the music group, regularly did readings, wrote for Acorns and was a kind friend to all.

He was a loved and valued member of our church family. I know I am not alone in saying that I shall continue to miss him for a long time to come.

Carol Flanders



At Your Service



Getting creative with sheep

Back in April, the Goffs Oak flock were easily led by shepherd of the day, Sandra Rose through a thoroughly enjoyable 'creative church' service based on 'The Good Shepherd'. The congregation, which included Brownies, Guides and Rainbows, were invited to take part in a variety of activities including drama, icing biscuits, sheep craft work, a quiz and a bible study - which were most unsheepishly performed by all.

◀and creative too!

At coffee after service, with
Rev Dr Peter Graves
(see opposite page).



Cuffley becomes Cuba for a day

On Friday 4th March this year an estimated 3 million people, in over 170 countries and islands, gathered to observe the Women's World Day of Prayer, using an order of service written by Christian women in Cuba, and translated into over 60 languages and 1000 dialects. In the British Isles alone, over 6000 services were held. The day began as the sun rose over the island of Samoa, and continued until it set off the coast of American Samoa, some 35 hours later.

Our version of the service was held at St Andrew's, Cuffley and was attended by 74 people from the six local churches, including our own, who take it in turns annually to be host.

The theme - 'Receive children, Receive me' - reflected St Mark's Gospel, chapter 10 verses 13-16, which was the focus of the service, and a reminder that everyone is a child of God and equally worthy of our love and respect.

At Your Service



On Sunday, 26th June, as part of our Sunday Club Anniversary Service (above) we previewed the Holiday Club with a taste of the kind of activities the children could expect during the Guardians of Ancora week in August

After coffee, a 'team photograph' with Peter Graves!



A feature of our Harvest Festival Service on Sunday, 25th September was our own Girl Guide, Emily Marshall, daughter of Guide leader Debbie, giving a fascinating talk and slide show on her journey to Costa Rica as a group leader of senior Girl Guides who were part of a care and conservation development project.

We were delighted to welcome Rev Dr Peter Graves (below right) as our visiting minister for the Church Anniversary Service on Sunday 16th October. Of course he was most certainly not a visitor in 1968, when he spent a one year tenure as a probationary minister at Goffs Oak. He led a delightful service, before joining us for coffee and a lengthy period of reminiscence, which continued over lunch with some of the congregation at The Plough Inn, Cuffley



During a wonderful Mothering Sunday Service, conducted by Alan, we had the pleasure of witnessing Maureen's daughter Lily being baptised. Here are two lovely moments from that morning in March.



Criminal Finances Bill: a step towards transparency - but much more is needed

The Government's Criminal Finances Bill, revealed earlier in October, will play a useful role in the fight against corruption, but its potential has been overshadowed by the failure to take decisive action on secrecy in UK-owned jurisdictions, says Christian Aid.

Responding to the publication of the bill, Christian Aid's UK Parliamentary and Political Adviser Simon Kirkland (right) said: "This bill represents a real step forward in the fight against corruption around the world, which costs developing countries a massive \$1 trillion each year.



"The Government's proposed Unexplained Wealth Orders and new offence for companies who fail to prevent tax evasion around the world will have real impacts in the fights against corruption and tax evasion, which so blight the global economy.

"While these measures are a good step forward, there is still much more that the UK can do. Together with its Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, it is the most secretive jurisdiction in the world. Territories owned by the UK facilitate huge amounts of tax dodging and corruption every year.

"Without some degree of transparency around company ownership, we don't even know how much harm we're causing. But the fact that the British Virgin Islands was the most popular tax haven in the Panama Papers gives us an idea of the harm that UK-owned jurisdictions are doing. The failure of the Government to insist on transparency of company ownership in our tax havens in this bill is a glaring omission."

Mr Kirkland continued: "The UK led the world in making its company ownership structures transparent. Given that many other countries including Kenya, Nigeria and Afghanistan are following suit, it is time for the Government to make good on a three-year-old promise and ensure that the UK's tax havens are also transparent about their company ownership.

"This would be an excellent first step for the new Prime Minister to turn her warm words on tax avoidance into decisive action. Without this action, the good in this bill is over-shadowed by the lack of action in this crucial area well within our control."

July was an especially sad month for our church when two of our church community died within three days of each other. **Joan Gillian** lost her long battle with cancer on Saturday, 23rd July. Then, on Tuesday 26th July, **John Dorling** passed away following a medical emergency which could not be corrected. It is hoped that a fuller appreciation of the lives of Joan and John will appear in the next edition of Acorns.

Editor's words spoken at Mick Arkell's Funeral

"When we feel sorry for ourselves over something, people often try to comfort us saying, 'Don't worry, there's always somebody worse off than you.' Well, for many people Mick was that person., I've often asked myself, how on earth did he cope with the situation he found himself in at such an early age? As a young man with an active rugby union and cricket career (I believe at one point he played for Essex schoolboys) and a very promising career in the police force ahead of him, he was struck down with an insidious version of MS which soon left him unable to walk - and still, I believe, in his twenties.

When I first met him in the 1980s he lived as he did until the last months of his life - as self-sufficient as it is possible to be living alone and unable to walk. He was able to get about in his electric wheelchair. His range was as far as he could go and get back home before the chair battery ran out (not very far), or as far as a bus could carry him - if he could find a wheelchair friendly bus to take him.

The limitations on his life seemed enormous. He must have thought a thousand times what he could have done with his life if he'd been able-bodied. But he never to me at any rate showed regret or gave even a small suggestion that he felt even a little sorry for himself. And this, I feel, was his enormous contribution to the world around him, which included anyone he met or knew of him. Despite the massive limitations to his life he remained publicly cheerful, happy and more concerned about other people's welfare than his own - he was a magnificent manifestation of basic Christian values - Love thy neighbour, consider others before you consider yourself. He did that cheerfully and in doing so inspired others.

I believe Mick inspired others to think, 'If he can be so positive and cheerful given what he has to tolerate, how can I allow my problems to get me down.'

Even when he entered the last phase of his life, with terminal cancer, he still maintained a cheerful positivity. I had a conversation with him during this period and, prompted by a photograph on his wall of him in the army in Malaysia, I think, he spoke with a razor-sharp memory about the great times he had as a conscripted serviceman in these hot climes. He was smiling and gave off an aura of contentment and joy as he took me through a variety of anecdotes about the wonderful times he had. He was positive and cheerful, despite his by then dreadfully limited situation.

Mick Arkell - a true Christian gentleman and an inspirational human being. I believe that I and countless others are better people for having known him."

Ruth's Recipe of the Season

Stoved Chicken

(serves 4)



Ingredients

1kg potatoes, peeled and sliced thinly
Butter, for greasing
2 large onions, peeled and sliced thinly
1tbsp chopped fresh thyme
25g butter
1tbsp olive oil
2 streaky bacon rashers, chopped
4 chicken portions of your choice
600ml chicken stock
salt and pepper

Method

- 1) Preheat oven to 150C/300F/GM2
- 2) Arrange a thick layer of potato slices in a large greased baking dish and cover with half the onions.
- 3) Sprinkle over half the thyme and season well.
- 4) Heat the butter and oil in a large frying pan and add the chopped bacon and chicken - cook until brown all over.
- 5) Transfer the chicken and bacon to the baking dish and put on top of the potato and onion layer. Reserve the fat in the pan.
- 6) Sprinkle the remaining thyme over the chicken and season again.
- 7) Cover with the remaining onion slices and then a neat overlapping layer of the remaining potato slices.
- 8) Season the top and gently pour the chicken stock into the dish.
- 9) Brush with the reserved fat from the frying pan and cover with foil.
- 10) Bake for about 1.5 hours and then remove foil and cook for a further 30 minutes until chicken is cooked and tender, and potatoes are crispy.

**Ruth Storey
(née King)**

Autumn Poetry Corner

I hope you enjoy these two beautiful poems by the 'Poet Laureate of Benington', Nicky Phillips. They summon autumnal images to the mind, helping to ease us gently from memories of the wonderful late summer weather to the bleaker climes to come.

Sweeping up

Each time I draw the rustling brown-edged leaves
into a tidy pile, one or two stragglers burst back out, break free,
frolic off across the flat patio, chasing into corners,
tucking themselves behind dustbins,
bounding back to the recesses from which I coaxed them,
patting and twisting with the corner of my broom.
Keep sweeping.

Deep in the hush of night, wandering thoughts
stubbornly defy attempts to be collected together
into the television screen of my mind.
Peace presents itself only when scattered loose thought-ends
are herded into the monitor, tied to prevent escape.
Finally the screen goes blank; seconds later, it throbs back into life.
Keep sweeping.

A tug of air rushes through, carrying trespassers into an upward
spiral, like a helicopter rising from firm ground.
Watch them land higgledy-piggledy, spreading, encroaching.
No reason for grumbles, no need to shake the tree, chastise the mind.
See the interest they bring, detail to an empty oblong.
Enjoy their comings and goings.
Stop sweeping.

Nicky Phillips

Bitterly Mild

The old man isn't himself this year,
trolling around too jauntily,
bursting into doorways with a friendly wave,
thumbing his nose to scarves and coats.

Confused by trees' past-their-best covering,
he sidesteps through branches,
splutters and chortles,
enjoying the dance.

Long shadows stretch across gardens
ablaze with colours he rarely sees.
He feels sun on his face,
snaps back, remembers who he is.

He roars, summoning gusts and gales.
We shiver and button up against
the chill, against each other.
He smirks.

A hollow laugh echoes as trees stand stark.
Rain soaks mounds of leaves,
frosts over in the icy nights.
Grey days and freezing fog take hold.

He sniffs the first mulled wine
and knows his job is done.

Nicky Phillips



October's Party

October gave a party;
The leaves by hundreds
came -
The Chestnuts, Oaks, and
Maples,
And leaves of every name.
The Sunshine spread a
carpet,
And everything was grand,
Miss Weather led the
dancing,
Professor Wind the band.

The Chestnuts came in
yellow,
The Oaks in crimson
dressed;
The lovely Misses Maple
In scarlet looked their best;
All balanced to their
partners,
And gaily fluttered by;
The sight was like a rainbow
New fallen from the sky.

Then, in the rustic hollow,
At hide-and-seek they
played,
The party closed at sundown,
And everybody stayed.
Professor Wind played
louder;
They flew along the ground;
And then the party ended
In jolly "hands around."

George Cooper

I love this poem - its imagery, its bounce and its sheer frivolity! I'm sure there should be a cartoon version of it somewhere. If not, perhaps some enterprising film-maker can sort it?

Lights, camera, action!

There cannot be anyone who has regularly attended our church over the last year who hasn't noticed some fundamental changes to the way our services are presented. Rarely do we need to thumb quickly through our hymn books or try hard to remember a prayer response, because it is all in front of us on a screen. Also, any IT orientated churchgoer will have noticed how easy it is to get an internet contact on their phone or laptop. Some may also have noticed an improvement in the quality of our sound system. For all these technological advancements we have David Batts to thank. He has used his knowledge to update us technologically in three main areas - internet, visual aids and sound.



The projector which brings life to our services, with a monitor behind which enables the minister/reader to see what the congregation are seeing.

The church's technology project was split into four phases. Firstly, the internet connection. It seems long ago now, but this was originally done to enable us to join in the Methodist Conference service which included Alan's ordination in June 2015. Since then the facility has been very useful, not only on Sundays, but also during the week for meetings, etc. Now, it is available for use by all who come to the church and halls, but is not 'advertised' as such - parental controls are set very tightly!

Secondly, the projector and screen: For some while before the internet connection was established, we'd started projecting words, images and videos on to a portable screen. This was done via a projector in the front row of the congregation, with cable links to the sound system and power points. This wasn't easy to set up, couldn't be done on a regular basis, and wasn't always reliable. The display wasn't always great either, particularly for videos. But it was a start, and it led, at the beginning of this year, to a decision to look for a more permanent solution. In early April, we approached four local companies with a view to installing a fixed projector, mounted above the congregation, with a fixed screen - both of which could be operated remotely. By the end of that month we had four quotations, and selected Creative Audio-Visual Solutions. Although they didn't put forward the cheapest quote, it was evident that they best understood our requirements (and had lots of relevant church experience). They are based in the old transmitter station at Brookmans Park, so are handy in the event of any support required, which it was later. In early May, we finalised the configuration, completed negotiations, and placed the order. By the end of May, preparatory work had been completed including provision of electrical points, and moving speakers and lights that were in the way of the projector beam. The full installation took place at the beginning of July, and the first use was on 10th July. This followed the purchase of 'Singing the Faith' hymn books and electronic versions of both words and music, which are now used regularly. Overall, the new capability was warmly welcomed, by the congregation and visiting preachers alike, though those who prefer using a hymn book still, of course, have that option.

The third phase was an unplanned one. Shortly after the introduction of the projector/screen, our 16-channel mixing board power unit failed - the preacher had to shout that Sunday! Obviously we needed to replace it as a matter of urgency, and turned to Creative Audio-Visual Solutions for help. They managed to source, deliver and install a replacement 12-channel board within a few days, and all was well for the following Sunday.

Fourthly, Tidying up of the sound system cabinet and original cabling: When we looked at the contents of the cabinet, it was evident that there were devices that were no longer relevant, or weren't even connected. So, we recently asked Creative Audio-Visual Solutions to come back and sort it all out - the cabinet has now been re-configured and has lots of spare space. At the same time, they removed a large amount of redundant cabling, and fixed boxes/cables to walls instead of lying on the floor. They also established permanent connections for the organ and clavichord and supplied new microphones on the two lecterns.

We have certainly come a long way in a very short time and if the new sound and vision in our church enhances our understanding of God's purpose for us, then David's work will not have been in vain.

Coming soon at a venue near you!

Sunday 13th November 10.00am: Remembrance Sunday and Parade Service
11.00am: Parade at the War Memorial with two minutes silence

Saturday 19th November 7.00pm: Family Quiz Night in our church hall in aid of JMA (see advert on P3)

Sunday 27th November 10.15am: Annual charity Gift and Parade Service in aid of Girl Guides' 'Happy Hearts', which supports girls with special needs.
5.30pm. Circuit Service at Trinity Methodist Church

Monday 12th December 7.45pm: Circuit meeting at Ponders End Methodist Church

Sunday 18th December 4.00pm. Children's' Nativity and Carol Service, followed by refreshments

Tuesday 20th December 7.00pm: 'Carols by Torchlight' around the Goffs Oak War Memorial, followed by refreshment and hot mince pies in our church hall

Sunday 25th December 9.30am. Christmas Morning Family Service

Sunday 26th February 10.15am: Thinking Day Parade Service

A plea for respect, tolerance and hospitality to the stranger

In accordance with a request from the Methodist Conference 2016 for the following text to be read out at all churches, it was duly delivered at our morning service on Sunday, 10th July. . . .

"As a result of the referendum on 23 June 2016, the United Kingdom has voted to leave the European Union. In this time of very significant change and uncertainty there is a need for leadership which seeks the common good and encourages people to work together, to respect one another and to uphold the dignity of all.

"The Methodist Conference believes that the British Isles are enriched by diversity and celebrates the contribution made by those who have come from other parts of the world.

"The Christian tradition calls for respect, tolerance, love of neighbour and hospitality to the stranger. All bear the responsibility of speaking and acting for healing, reconciliation, and mutual respect.

"The Methodist Conference abhors and deeply regrets those actions and words which incite hatred and lead to the victimisation of groups within society and notes with concern that such actions and words have been normalised in recent public discourse. Believing that racism is a denial of the gospel and that to stay silent when others are abused is to collude with those who seek to promote hatred and division, the Methodist Conference calls:

- on the Methodist people to challenge racism and discrimination.
- for a political debate which neither demonises any nor leaves the vulnerable (the foreigner, the immigrant and refugee) in danger of victimisation.
- on political leaders to work together for the good of the whole community putting the needs of the nation before party politics.
- on all those in positions of power and authority to hear the voices of those who have been marginalised and alienated and to respond to them in ways which offer real hope for the future."

News from The **Methodist Church** 

President of the Methodist Conference visits Rome



The Revd Dr Roger Walton, President of the Methodist Conference, visited Italy's capital early in October to celebrate 50 years of the Anglican Centre in Rome.

As well as meeting with other Church leaders and celebrating the 50th anniversary, Roger and his wife, Marion, took part in a number of activities including visiting sites of special religious significance.

Speaking about the celebrations, the director of the Anglican Centre, Archbishop David Moxon, said: *"The Anglican Centre has worked for fifty years to help Roman Catholics and Anglicans work together, pray together, study and talk together."*

The Methodist Church, along with the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Church in Wales, the Church of Scotland, Quakers in Britain, and the United Reformed Church have released a statement calling upon the Syrian and Russian Governments and other forces to stop their bombardment of Aleppo.....

The destruction in Aleppo must stop. We are appalled by the attacks on civilians by the Syrian Government, Russian and other forces. Life is a gift of God. The targeting and killing of civilians can never be passed off merely as a consequence of war. Aerial strikes on homes, hospitals and aid convoys are never acceptable, under any circumstances.

The responsibility for such attacks lies first and foremost with those who have carried them out. But the frequency of such attacks in Syria also underlines a failure on the part of the international community to uphold long-established principles concerning the immunity of civilians in conflict. Member states of the United Nations should seek to hold to account the parties responsible for indiscriminate attacks on men, women, children, hospitals, humanitarian and rescue workers, which could be construed as war crimes.

The world cries out for an end to the death and destruction in Syria that daily adds to the largest flight of refugees since the Second World War. We join with our brothers and sisters of other churches and other faiths in praying for the people of Syria. We claim no simple solution to a complex political reality but offer the simple message of our faith: that every life is valued by God and that the slaughter must end now.

"The journey (to Rome) demands the laying-down of old fears and misconceptions of each other, and the building up of a shared story together. These celebrations mark the writing of a new chapter in the history of the Christian Church."

In April of this year, the Methodist Church officially opened its own centre in Rome, the Methodist Ecumenical Office in Rome.

The opening ceremony saw Methodist representatives from across the world, including the Secretary of the Methodist Conference, the Revd Gareth J Powell, meet and address the Pope.

Since 1955, a British Methodist Minister has been stationed at the Ponte Sant'Angelo Methodist, Rome, to act informally as a link with the ecumenical work of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, a body of the Catholic Church. Since 2014, a more formal arrangement has been put in place.

Autumn Fun for the young . . and the not so young!

I'm sure you will forgive your editor this little piece of self-indulgence . . .



Punny you should say that!

I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.

A rubber band was confiscated during an algebra lesson, because it could have been a weapon of maths disruption.

No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.

Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.

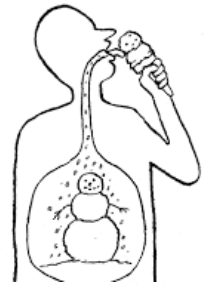
A children's novelist used a rolling pin on some lentils.
The result was rolled dhal.

Atheism is a non-prophet organization.

Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hallway.
One hat said to the other: 'You stay here and I'll go on a head.'

I wondered why the cricket ball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.

ABDOMINAL
SNOWMAN



The soldier who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.

Two fish swim into a concrete wall. One turns to the other and says 'Dam!'

Two people sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft.
Unsurprisingly it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it.

Two hydrogen atoms meet. One says, 'I've lost my electron.'
The other says 'Are you sure?' The first replies, 'Yes, I'm positive.'

I once sent ten puns to friends, with the hope that at least one of the puns would make them laugh. No pun in ten did.

Can you find all these words in the wordsearch below?

Crops bread wheat farmer grain oats barley fields grow combine seed

Tractor harvest winnow chaff miller food weather straw maize plough

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| a | a | t | s | d | f | f | g | h | e | h | j | k | l | z | s |
| f | x | s | c | v | b | a | n | e | d | m | q | w | c | e | t |
| f | r | t | y | t | u | r | i | a | o | p | a | s | o | d | r |
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| v | b | r | e | a | d | e | b | n | m | l | q | w | b | e | w |
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| z | x | c | z | s | d | l | e | i | f | v | b | n | m | q | w |
| e | r | i | t | y | u | i | o | m | p | a | s | d | f | g | h |
| j | a | k | l | x | c | z | v | b | n | m | q | w | e | r | t |
| m | y | u | b | a | r | l | e | y | i | w | o | n | n | i | w |