

Acorns

GOFFS OAK METHODIST CHURCH, NEWGATE STREET ROAD, GOFFS OAK, HERTS, EN7 5SS
AUTUMN 2018 - SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY EDITION

Happy 150th Anniversary!



2018

Goffs Oak Methodist Church
Celebrating 150 years

It all comes to a head on 19th October - the 150th Anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of Goffs Oak Methodist Church. In this special Anniversary Edition of *Acorns* you can read about how we have celebrated our Anniversary Year so far and what is still to come, as well as your favourite regular *Acorns* features.



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

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In the beginning.....

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***Acorns* from the depths of time**

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Fourteen of the best....jobs done!

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

Well here it is at last! After planning which began more than two years ago, we are about to celebrate our 150th birthday.

Unlike with most birthdays, though, we began a year-long celebration last October when the Potters Bar Town Band kicked off the proceedings with a roistering concert of sublime brass band music.

During this Anniversary year we have invited guest preachers to the second Sunday morning service of each month, including many former GOMC ministers and others who have had a link with our church. These services have been immensely successful and have led to the renewal of many links and friendships.

In the build-up to Anniversary weekend (20th and 21st October) we have had a performances from the Barney Ceilidh Band (including much dancing) and, by the time you read this, an appearance by celebrated singers/songwriters Noel and Tricia Richards, whose worship songs have resounded through concert halls, theatres, churches and even Wembley Stadium during recent decades. It has certainly been a long musical prelude to our official birthday of 19th October.

Through it all we have been aware of God's presence in all the planning and preparation. We trust also that He will be with us as we take a fresh guard and bat on towards our double century in 2068!

I offer my grateful thanks to the many who have helped make this bumper 24 page edition of Acorns possible in a variety of ways, including suggestions and articles. Particularly, I must thank Maureen for her proof-reading and editorial opinions and Alan for his role in liaising with members of the circuit office who have supported our use of their printing equipment.

Finally, if you have any ideas, articles, photographs, etc which might be suitable for the next edition of *Acorns*, please send them to me at eyetiss@aol.com.

Bryan King - Editor

Message from the Minister

Letter to Goffs Oak Methodist Church Celebrating 150 Years – October 2018



Dear Sisters and Brothers,

What a privilege it is to be present with you and to be the Minister of Goffs Oak for this 150th year.

In 1159 John of Salisbury, Bishop of Chartres wrote: "*Bernard of Chartres used to compare us to dwarfs perched on the shoulders of giants.*" We are here not because we have keener vision or greater insight than our predecessors, but rather because we are lifted up and borne aloft on their shoulders.

As you will see throughout this issue of Acorns and with the wonderful support of the Enfield Circuit, we have enjoyed a celebration year encompassing brass band concerts, ceilidh dancing, fellowship, Mission through invitation, the welcoming back of old friends to lead worship every month, refurbishment and prayerful exploration of a future vision... to name but a few things!

Through all of this what has become clear to me is that we are only here because of the faithful life and witness of those who have gone before - those who have sought to be salt and light to us and the local community. We are here because somebody was bold enough to say I love and follow Jesus Christ in my life and he has changed me completely.

There is however a small problem with Bernard Chartres quote because it reinforces that terrible habit we all sometimes have of looking back at the past with rose tinted glasses only to fall into the trap of imagining that those who went before were somehow greater Christians, better missionaries and altogether more faithful than we are!

The truth is that we do not stand on the shoulders of giants but rather on the shoulders of ordinary broken people just like us who were made extraordinary by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ. God offers this transformation to us all and even when we think we may not have the skills or energy to serve the Holy Spirit steps in to equip those God has called.

The wonderful Ignatian writer Margaret Silf reminds us that:

The future is not discovered but created

The paths to it are not found but made,

And the making changes both the maker and the destination. As we gather to celebrate, giving thanks for the past, rejoicing in the present and praying for the future, God calls us as disciples of Christ to the humble disciplines of worship, learning and caring, service and evangelism. As we step forward creating the future as we go may we also be open and prepared to change and adapt, may we humbly seek to maintain this life of fellowship as God's church in the world and may we love one another such that all people may know we are Christ's disciples. Brothers and sisters, visitors and friends... thank you for being with us and for sharing this part of our journey. We pray for you as you pray for us and we rejoice and give thanks for all that God has done and will do here in this place in the next 150 years.

May God bless you and keep you.

Rev Alan Combes

It was a great joy to return to Goffs Oak, and to preach on 16th September as part of the build-up to your celebration of the 150th anniversary of Methodism in Goffs Oak. It brought back many happy memories, and reminded me of the many wonderful people who encouraged me as back in September 1968, I began my circuit ministry. It also gave me the chance to meet the present generation of Methodists who worship and serve in Goffs Oak.

After five years as a Theological student, I was keen to put into practice all that I had learned in my training, to develop my pastoral skills, and to grow as a Christian disciple. To serve in the Enfield Circuit and have pastoral charge of both Goffs Oak and St John Bullsmore was just right for me, and I have always been grateful for those who taught me so much. As I look back, I particularly appreciated the variety of church activities, the lively work with Children and young people, and the desire of the congregation to reach out to the whole village.

It was whilst I was with you that I passed my driving test and therefore could drive to the village rather than cycle up the hill from Enfield. In January 1969 I began my part-time service as Ecumenical Chaplain and a lecturer at Enfield College of Technology. After my ordination in July 1969 I was appointed to the Highgate Circuit so that I could continue this student work. Enfield College soon became part of Middlesex Polytechnic and is now a University. I spent over ten years in chaplaincy, mostly in a full-time capacity. Student work has been an important part of my ministry, and it all began when I was with you.

In this special year of celebration, I send you my warmest congratulations and good wishes. As you face the future, I pray that you will look back in gratitude, forward in faith, and outward in love, and so continue to serve the Living God.

Peter C. Graves



Guest preachers speak....



Beginning my Ministry at Goffs Oak - Nick Young

Having just 'sat down' (to use Methodist terminology), i.e. become supernumerary, this is an apt time for reflection. In some ways the early years of ministry are the most exciting – everything is new, we will never be this young again, with the accompanying energy of youth. Thirty years ago I had just arrived in the London (Enfield) Circuit as a probationary minister. Some months earlier, during my final year at Wesley College, Bristol, I had been told of this stationing and had received some information, with photographs, about the appointment. I remember seeing the photos of the Goffs Oak church and thinking what an attractive, modern building it was – more so than any church of which I had previously been a member. I felt honoured that I would be its minister.

I was privileged to have Ordnance Road and St John in my pastoral charge as well and enjoyed the variety of settings. Everyone was very kind and supportive so I will not compare the churches. Suffice to say I could not have been given a more nurturing church than Goffs Oak. Although the manse is in Enfield (Freezywater) my family chose Goffs Oak as its church. We arrived with one child, Charlotte, and left with three, having Alice and Dominic too, both of whom were baptized at Goffs Oak. We had a good church family and Sunday Club, which gave our children friends in the church. We began holiday clubs and, as a family, switched from attending Spring Harvest to Easter People.

I found the Thursday evening fellowships very special. They were relaxed and intimate, included an informal communion and prayer, with laying on of hands, for anyone who wished. It supported and strengthened me with the demands of a new vocation. My memory credits Carol Flanders as a driving force behind starting healing services on a Sunday evening. I already had an interest in the ministry of healing and with the support of others, including Halls (Barbara and Richard) and Kings (Isabel and Mike), I learnt a lot and we offered a ministry which was appreciated by many.

Another highlight for me was the pattern of regular united services which we shared with St James's, St Andrew's (& St Thomas's) and what was then called Cuffley Free Church. I remember that when Revd Nick Champagne (I can't remember whether that is how he spelt

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his name) was vicar of Cuffley & Northaw he took great delight in introducing himself as Old Nick and me as Young Nick. I was greatly amused some time after I had left Goffs Oak to discover that his successor was Revd Mike Beer (lower church?). I remember that our united services sometimes clashed with circuit services, and I felt that my priority was our local ecumenical services. After all, my ministry was spent more in Goffs Oak and Cuffley than Edmonton, Enfield Town and Ponders End. That priority of Christian unity over denominational events has continued with me throughout my ministry and some of my best experiences in ministry have been when the churches have been working together.

I could write much more but must have overrun my brief already! I will end by recalling that my appointment was not intended to be a probationer's appointment. The circuit had failed to attract an ordained minister. I bumped into one who had considered it, who asked me about my stationing and said, "Oh that's the one with the funny little manse. We could never have got our family into it!" But I could not have wished for a better start to my thirty years of active ministry. My final circuit brought me back to within touching distance of Goffs Oak and I have been delighted to have seen many of my old – and made new – friends over the last few years. Now we are settling in Letchworth Garden City, although as I write this our house still has some very behind schedule builders in it and we are living out of suitcases with family and friends!

Thank you for your love and support. Congratulations on your 150th anniversary. Whatever happens to Methodism God's church will continue to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. As we see what is happening in the world at the moment we may despair, except that we who follow Jesus have hope because God has shown us a radical alternative in him. Our task is to witness to this, so keep up the good work, and may God bless you as you give thanks for the past and look to the future.

Nick

To Goffs Oak from Rev'd Donald Sampson

Annette and I are looking forward to returning to the Enfield Circuit in October for your celebratory Weekend.

We were married on 10th August 1968 at Enfield Methodist Church (now known as Trinity) so we have just celebrated our Golden Wedding in the company of our extended family. We have a son and daughter, each with a delightful spouse, and in all we have 7 grandchildren.

Methodism, with 70million members overseas, is much smaller in U.K. than it was when I had the joy of entering upon Circuit ministry 1963 when its membership was approximately 725,000. It is now approximately 185,000. Thus, we seek to dwell on the positives of our situation with realism and a strong sense of Christian Adventure.

We are serving in a much more secular and materialistic age. Life for many is a steady challenge. The injustices in our society lead to vast queues at my local Food-Bank- 35 on Friday last- whilst some in our society are able to rejoice in their second holiday abroad!

As a Probationer I was stationed to serve at St.John's, Enfield and Goffs Oak. This privilege afforded me some time for probationer studies and then, later, as an Ordained minister, to grasp the insights of 'Clinical Theology' which was highly liberating. I shall share some of these insights when I come in October.

Having kept all my diaries since 1959 I can see that my first service with you was on 1st Sept. 1963 with a 'Family Service' following on 8th. These were always well attended with many parents present on a monthly basis. This provided massive outreach and pastoral opportunities. Many would help to staff the Annual Summer Fete which was always a huge community occasion. Personally, I was able to work to enrich these contacts.

The uniformed groups were strong, with excellent leadership by Ken Eddowes (Scouts) and Ros Dix (Cubs). The Guiding leadership was equally good.

The Youth Club was outstandingly well led by Ken Way with several excellent assistant leaders. Such work complimented the strong Junior Church. Our Sunday evening gatherings resulted in a group of us enjoying holidays abroad. I have a list of the sixteen of us who went to Guernsey in 1966 and the same number to Italy the following year. Needless to say, we were not gazing into Smartphones! Friendships were greatly enriched by these holidays and continue to this day. A significant number became 'Church Members'. Such work as I have mentioned was possible because the whole church was supportive in every possible way.

Thanks be to God for our continuing adventure in the strength of God's Spirit.

Every Blessing,

Donald

For the benefit of those readers who did not get a glimpse of the Autumn Acorns edition last year, we have reproduced this very brief history of our church so as to give a context to the church's 150th birthday on 19th October, 2018.....

Way, way back in the rural days of the 1860s, something was stirring in a small, scattered hamlet near Cheshunt. A group of zealous non-conformists were pursuing a dream. On a piece of land in Common Road (now Newgatestreet Road) a pioneering group of what were then known as 'Primitive Methodist' adherents built a church on the site of our current building in Goffs Oak.

The year was 1868 and a foundation stone was laid on the 19th of October, which can be seen in the front interior wall of our church today.

At around the turn of the century the church began a formal link with the then 'Enfield Station of the Primitive Methodist Conference', thus beginning a relationship with Enfield which continues to this day, with Goffs Oak being something of a country outpost to urban Enfield. In the early 1950s Goffs Oak started to expand as a residential area, the consequence of which congregations started to increase and the need for a new church building was felt. In 1956 land adjacent to the primitive church was acquired and, due to the hard work of members of the church and circuit, and aided by a variety of generous grants, a new church was built and dedicated on 28th September, 1957. It comprised a variety of rooms and a dual-purpose hall, serving as a place of worship and a space for other activities. The building remains today as our church hall and adjoining rooms.

The new building enabled the church to develop a Cub and Scout group as well as a Brownie pack and Guide company and a revival of the youth club. These and other groups used the old church building initially, but when the time came for it to be demolished, two temporary prefabs were put in its place.

When the church's centenary came round in 1968, Jim Priest in his history of GOMC 'From Acorn to Sturdy Oak' wrote these words which, with minor changes, could be said today:-
"There is a tremendous sense of thanksgiving for all that is past, but there is tremendous confidence about what needs to be done now and in the future to help in the extension of the Kingdom of God on Earth. In 1868 a small company of faithful people planted an acorn in the form of a modest Methodist Church in Newgatestreet Road; its successor in 1968 can reasonably claim to be a sturdy oak!"

These words certainly proved accurate in the following decade, when Rev'd Donald Sampson persuaded Don Clark to design a new versatile church building to cater for future needs. That vision became reality in 1977 when the current church building was completed and dedicated. Since then many improvements have been made, including roof replacement and many internal decorative improvements. Probably the most dramatic of changes is the glorious stained glass window, which was completed and dedicated in 2014. **Today, our oak is truly looking sturdier than ever.**

List of Ministers and notable events at GOMC 1868 - Church Established and Chapel built on current site in Goffs Oak (although references to a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel on the North side of Goffs Lane in 1833 can be found).

John King - first steward. Responsibility for the 'outpost' at the extreme Northern End of the Enfield circuit was the responsibility of the minister living at Enfield.

Early 1950s - **B. Bernard Beard**

1956 - **G A Lardi**

(1957 - New Dual purpose church hall built)

1961 - **Raymond H Norgate**

1963 - **Donald J Sampson**

1968 - **Dr Peter Graves**

1969 - **Arthur Freeman**

(1972 - current church sanctuary opened)

1974 - **Martin Charles**

1977 - **Robert Foster**

1979 - **Bill Jones**

1983 - **Colin Letchford**

1988 - **Nick Young**

1994 - **Stephanie Hibberd**

2003 - **Marion Cole**

2005 - **George Mawire**

2010 - **Inez Reid**

2013 - **Alan Combes**



Original Foundation Stone

Nigel's Gallery

Next time you're in our church, take time to look at Nigel's Gallery. It is a wonderful collection of photographs and memorabilia about GOMC over many decades. He has painstakingly mounted many pictures and representations of historical value. You may even find a picture of your younger self, or others that you know. Maybe you're on this page too! Top right is at World Village at Windermere (1990); centre is a Leaders' gathering in 1994 and at the bottom a large attendance at a Sunday Service in 1994.

The display boards are in the central corridor and at the back of the church itself. *Take a trip down memory lane - you won't regret it!*



In the beginning there were workers

Recently unearthed copies of a document dated September 1898 shine a fascinating light on those trustees who formed the cornerstone of our church when it was founded in 1868.

It is a statement - apparently from the Primitive Methodist Connexion - which names the New trustees of the church as appointed in 1898. Only one name survives from the founding till 1898 - John King, whose occupation is recorded as 'labourer'. The others are an assortment including a farmer, herdsman, grocer and two gardeners. Do you see the pattern? Now look at the Trustees in 1868. There are three gardeners, a labourer, a wheelwright, a blacksmith and a miller. Not a banker, lawyer or accountant among them!

Names and descriptions of all the Trustees on the constitution or last appointment of Trustees made the *First* day of *October* 1868

<i>Henry Rose</i>	<i>Gardener</i>	<i>Goff's Oak</i>
<i>John King</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>Goff's Oak</i>
<i>James Wilson</i>	<i>"Gardener"</i>	<i>Appleby Street Chestnut</i>
<i>William Seymour</i>	<i>Wheelwright</i>	<i>Barrow Green Hertingfordbury</i>
<i>Edward Jernam</i>	<i>"Blacksmith"</i>	<i>Noddadon</i>
<i>Richard Cook</i>	<i>"Gardener"</i>	<i>Wise</i>
<i>James John Shingles</i>	<i>"Miller"</i>	<i>Little Bandon</i>

N.B.—This form refers only to the meeting where the appointment (not nomination) of the New Trustees is made.

Clearly, our church's origins are rooted in the working people of Goff's Oak, who appear to have preferred the non-conformist way of life and, to quote Jim Priest (who wrote the centenary booklet 'From Acorn to Sturdy Oak' in 1968), "were determined to do something about it!" One of the early trustees, the aforementioned John King, came to the area from Rede, Suffolk in 1951 to work on the Woodgreen estate. His enthusiasm was such that by the time he died in 1921 aged 98, he had been a Trustee of the church for 53 years.

Names and descriptions of all the Trustees in whose the said Chapel were trustees legally bound

First Old governing Trustees

<i>John King</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>Goff's Oak Chestnut</i>
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Second New Trustees now chosen and appointed

<i>George Duffield</i>	<i>"Gardener"</i>	<i>Goff's Oak Chestnut</i>
<i>Frederick G. Jones</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>Goff's Oak Chestnut</i>
<i>Edward Jernam</i>	<i>Blacksmith</i>	<i>Noddadon</i>
<i>Richard Cook</i>	<i>"Gardener"</i>	<i>Wise</i>
<i>James John Shingles</i>	<i>"Miller"</i>	<i>Little Bandon</i>

Dated: *1st* day of *September* 1898

Signed, Ratified, and Delivered by the said *George Duffield* as Chairman of the said Meeting at and in the presence of the said Meeting on the day and year aforementioned in the presence of

George Heale
3 Rose Terrace, Bromptonham Rd. Edmon.
Bromptonham Rd. Edmon.
Bromptonham Rd. Edmon.
Bromptonham Rd. Edmon.
Bromptonham Rd. Edmon.

Looking back 150 years we can be sure that their labour was far from wasted. Their trust in God to guide them through what for them must have been a very unclear path has paid dividends for the thousands who have worshipped at our church and we owe those pioneers a great debt, which we can repay by continuing their hard work in the years ahead.

Some of the visiting preachers during our 150th year face the probing *Acorns* lens



Rev Nick Young (left), who started his ministry at Goffs Oak in 1988 and visited us on Sunday, 13th May.



Mike King (right) was back among the Goffs Oak fold on Sunday, 8th July



We were pleased to welcome our former minister, Rev Stephanie Hibberd on Sunday, 11th February.



Paul Dakin (right) was with us on Sunday, 8th April



Rev Peter Clarke (left) was our visiting preacher on Sunday, 12th August..



Another former minister, Rev Dr Marion Cole preached to us on Sunday, 11th March.

Figures show budgets for children's early help services suffer £743 million funding drop in five years



Figures recently released on government spending on children's services show:-

- Budgets for 'early intervention' children's services, which can help stop family problems such as abuse and neglect spiralling out of control, have dropped by £743 million in the last five years - a decrease of 26%
- Budgets for children's centres across England have dropped by £450 million in the last five years - a decrease of 42%
- Budgets for safeguarding and children in care across England have increased by £597 million in the last five years - an increase of 10%

Director of policy and campaigns at Action for Children, Imran Hussain, said: "Crippling cuts in government funding are putting councils in an impossible position, leaving them with no option but to cut budgets for vital early help services that protect vulnerable children.

"We know from our own work that without the safety net of well-funded early help services like children's centres, thousands of children at risk of abuse, neglect or domestic violence are being left to fend for themselves until problems spiral out of control. This failure to act with the right help, at the right time, will inevitably have devastating consequences for some children that last a life-time.

"As these figures clearly show, it also makes no financial sense to cut early help as councils are then forced to spend vast amounts on expensive crisis interventions, 'firefighting' problems after they have escalated. The Government needs to allocate additional, dedicated funding for children's services at next year's Spending Review. Without urgent action, we risk failing thousands more children across the country."

Special Events and Services to come during Anniversary year

Saturday 13th October - 7.30pm Noel and Tricia Richards Concert
Saturday 20th October - 7.00pm "An Evening of Memories" with buffet

Anniversary Sunday Events
Sunday, 21st October :-
10.15am: Anniversary Service with
Rev. Donald Sampson,
followed by Anniversary Lunch
3.00pm: Anniversary Tea
4.00pm Anniversary Service with
Rev. Dr Martyn Atkins



Sunday 11th November - 10.00am: Remembrance Service
Sunday, 25th November - 10.15am: Gift Service
Tuesday 18th December - 7.00pm: 'Carols by Torchlight' (at War Memorial)
Sunday 23rd December - 2.00pm: Children's Christmas Party
4.30pm: Nativity Service
Tuesday 25th December - 9.30am: Christmas Day Family Service



A snippety dip into the history of Tuesday Circle and it's predecessor, the Goffs Oak Women's' Fellowship.....

.....Goffs Oak Women's Fellowship started in 1937, celebrating its 21st Anniversary in 1958. Initially it comprised of fortnightly meetings with visiting speakers and an annual 'business' meeting (AGM) with the current Methodist minister presiding

.....The Fellowship's aim was to support the church in a spiritual and practical way - specifically in fund raising for National Children's Homes and the 'WW' department of the Missionary Society - often with the help of 'Bring and Buy' stalls

.....In a prayer for the Fellowship starting another year of service, the secretary quoted King George VI in the minutes of 1958: "I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year - 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' He said unto me, 'Put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.' " The king used these words in his Christmas broadcast of 1939.

.....At the annual meeting of 1965 the future of the Women's Fellowship was discussed, bearing in mind the recent small attendances. It was decided to hold monthly meetings on Wednesdays during the Autumn and Winter months and then fortnightly ones in Spring and Summer. The last recorded AGM was in July 1971 and the Tuesday Circle sprang up shortly afterwards in January 1972. This organisation was developed from a Mother and Baby Club, started by Irene Shutes. It continued along similar lines to Women's Fellowship, with visiting speakers and annual outings. Interestingly, at the 1985 AGM Doreen Lewis hoped their would be more 'open' meetings to include men-folk!

.....All minutes of the AGMs were handwritten until 2008 and the group eventually disbanded in December 2009....due to low attendances.

Thanks to Doreen Page for lending me the old minute books for both groups.

Ed.

At Your Service



The Acorns camera brings you images of some recent services



Above and above left are two scenes from the wonderfully packed Sunday, when we had our Harvest Festival Parade Service, supported superbly by the Brownies, Rainbows and Guides. Our visiting preacher was Tony Miller, Director of the Whitechapel Mission, who were the recipients of the food gifts and collection.



Sandra Rose peers over a flag as she leads worship on 'Thinking Day', with many Guides, Brownies and Guides helping with the service on Sunday, 25th February.

Lucy Worsley - Queen of TV histories

I recently had the good fortune to meet up with the amazing Lucy Worsley. For those who don't know, Lucy is Chief Curator at Historic Royal Palaces, which is, clearly, a demanding role in itself. But she is also a well known TV presenter of BBC Television series on historical topics, researcher, author and all-round academic.....phew! Lucy is engaging and has a generous nature and made time to talk to me. I was completely captivated by her.

Lucy was born in Reading, Berkshire, the daughter of Peter Worsley, a geology tutor at Reading University. Her mother, Enid, is a consultant in educational policy and practice. Lucy has a younger brother, Tom. Before reading Ancient and Modern History at New College, Oxford, Lucy attended Abbey School in Reading.

Lucy says *"My dad, a geologist, was an expert in glaciers and permafrost, so we moved to a lot of cold places such as Canada, Iceland and Norway. Moving schools was a big deal, though it toughened me up, forcing me to make new friends. My dad wanted me to be a scientist and I was set to study science A-Level. But after the first term I realised it would be much more enjoyable to study English and History, which didn't seem like work, so I switched! Dad was furious and said I'd never earn a living with a History degree, so now I am very pleased to go: Ha ha! I think he has got over it, though!"*

In her teens, Lucy represented Berkshire at cross country running and, as a pastime, is still a keen participant in the sport. "I run up and down the Thames, past the Houses of Parliament and Tower Bridge, for about eight miles most Sunday mornings. It gives me a huge endorphin rush. If I don't feel like running, my purple trainers with yellow flashes inspire me!"

Lucy began her career as an historic house curator at Milton Manor, near Abingdon, in the summer of 1995. From 1996 to 2002, she was an Inspector of Historic Buildings for English Heritage in the East Midlands

region. During 2002-2003, Lucy was Major Projects and Research Manager for Glasgow Museums, before becoming Chief Curator at Historic Royal Palaces, the independent charity responsible for maintaining the Tower of London, Hampton Court Palace, Kensington Palace State Apartments, the Banqueting House in Whitehall and Kew Palace in Kew Gardens. In 2005 she was elected as senior research fellow at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London. She was also appointed visiting professor at Kingston University.



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

Regarding Lucy's television work, between 2011 and 2017 she has presented many television series, beginning with *If Walls Could Talk* exploring the history of British homes, from peasants' cottages to palaces, to

Suffragettes with Lucy Worsley, earlier this year. How does she divide her time between her 'proper job' and her TV commitments? "The BBC pays Historic Royal Palaces for the time I spend out of the office."

Lucy has just returned from the USA where she has been filming a series to be shown here



in the Autumn.

In 2014, BBC Books published her book, *A Very British Murder*, which was based on the TV series. In April 2016, Lucy published her debut children's novel, *Eliza Rose*, about a young noble girl in the Tudor Court. In 2017, she published a biography of Jane Austen titled *Jane Austen at Home: A Biography*.



In February 2015, the Royal Television Society nominated Lucy as Best Presenter in its annual awards, and in July, she was made an honorary Doctor of Letters by the University of Sussex, where she completed her doctorate.

I asked her about her predilection for 'dressing-up' in her programmes. She said, "*You wouldn't believe that I am really quite shy, but it is possible to be shy and a show-off at the same time! I have always been interested in clothes and I'm also curator of a significant dress collection with 12,000 objects in it - the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection at Kensington Palace. But my favourite accessory is a pair of my own long purple gloves. They are about five years old and literally falling apart now. I tend to buy clothes especially for filming. I enjoy putting together the clothes that I'm going to wear for a particular series. I just like to enjoy myself, if I can, at work, and some of the things I do may seem, at first sight, to be trivial or silly! But, I've got a secret plan here, I see myself as the 'thin end of the wedge'. I think if I can get the attention of a twelve year old kid, just for ten minutes, maybe they'll think 'OK, next time I'll watch the whole programme, OK, next time I'll read a book and maybe I'll take History GCSE' and I'll get them hooked that way!*"

Lucy lives by the River Thames in Southwark, with her husband, Architect Mark Hines. She rises at around 6.45 am. "Breakfast is usually a boiled egg with buttered toast. Mark often prepares it! Then it's a dash to catch the train to my main office at Hampton Court Palace here. My office is situated up 51 spiral steps off Chapel Court, an area built for Edward VI. Every day is different!"

Wow! Lucy certainly lives life in the 'fast lane'! How does she switch-off and have fun? "I never 'have fun' in the accepted way because I'm always working, though to me my work is fun!"

Phil Seaman

Ruth's Recipe of the Century and a half!

Mrs Beeton's Baked Bread Pudding



This is an original Mrs Beeton recipe taken from her famous book, 'Beeton's Book of Household Management', published in 1861, and which by 1868 had sold nearly 2 million copies. Both the quantities and text have been reproduced as originally published, with the exception of a little reformatting of the ingredient list to make it easier to follow. Teetotallers will, of course, omit the brandy! I hope you enjoy a recipe which is as old as Methodism in Goffs Oak!

INGREDIENTS

1/2 lb. of grated bread,
1 pint of milk,
4 eggs,
4 oz. of butter,
4 oz. of moist sugar,
2 oz. of candied peel,
6 bitter almonds,
1 tablespoonful of brandy.

Mode.—Put the milk into a stewpan, with the bitter almonds; let it infuse for 1/4 hour; bring it to the boiling point; strain it on to the bread crumbs, and let these remain till cold; then add the eggs, which should be well whisked, the butter, sugar, and brandy, and beat the pudding well until all the ingredients are thoroughly mixed; line the bottom of a pie-dish with the candied peel sliced thin, put in the mixture, and bake for nearly 3/4 hour.

Time.—Nearly 3/4 hour. Average cost, 1s. 4d.

Sufficient for 5 or 6 persons.

Seasonable at any time.

Note.—A few currants may be substituted for the candied peel, and will be found an excellent addition to this pudding: they should be beaten in with the mixture, and not laid at the bottom of the pie-dish.

Ruth Storey (née King)

**From behind the cloak of time *Acorns* articles we have read leap out to remind us
how things used to be....**

Spring 2005

'It may be Church, Jim, but not as we know it'

No, this was not a visit from Captain Kirk and Mr Spock of Startrek, but the spirit of Enterprise was present nonetheless.

I'm having an out-of-church experience



That memorable phrase was, in fact, the theme of a thought-provoking presentation by Isabel and Mike King, following the Annual Church Meeting on Monday, 15th March. It led to a discussion about what 'Church' really means and where and in what form we could make it happen in the future. Ideas ranged from initiatives within our church premises to the enormous potential for creating Church in the community at large. Acorns to future oaks? Time will tell.

The meeting itself, conducted by Marion Cole, discussed reports from most branches of GOMC and these were superbly reproduced by Hazel Clark, complete with colour photographs. A solid exchange of views on all topics took place and many positive achievements were highlighted, including the burgeoning attendance at Tuesday coffee mornings; successful Grapevines; good attendance at services and an influx of new members. There was much, however, still to be done and Isabel and Mike's discussion helped everyone to focus their minds on some radical possibilities for the future..... *"Beam us up, Isabel and Mike!"*

Editor

Winter 1989

Donation for Overseas Mission

I am delighted to be able to report that the profit from the Harvest Barn Dance amounted to £44, and a profit of £44.50 came from the Church Anniversary Lunch. The sum of £88.50 has now been handed to Paul Bird, the Circuit Treasurer for Overseas Missions. A big thank you to all who helped on both occasions, especially to those of you who donated the food which provided the profit.

Prior to the Harvest Barn Dance, my biggest worry was whether people would actually join in and dance. It was an unfounded fear, for everyone seemed to be quite at home "Dozy Doe-ing" (with Ethel) and "Stripping the Willow." It really was a GREAT SUCCESS, AND A LOVELY EVENING FOR ALL THE FAMILY. The Church Anniversary Lunch went off with a great party atmosphere - very happy and warm, and it was lovely to hear Colin's little anecdotes relating to a Minister's life in Southall.

Again, thank you all so much for helping to make these occasions so happy and enjoyable for everyone who attended,

Barbara Hall

Winter 2011

'A Slice of our Time'

On 2nd June, Gail, Adele, Aretha and I made our way to the Broxbourne Civic Theatre to see Lois taking part in "A Slice of our Time" by the Valle Theatre Company, a production that involved all ages. We had no idea what to expect, but we had a brilliant time wandering down memory lane. There was something in it for everyone, even Aretha who is only 10.

The show covered each decade from the 1920's to the present day showing clips of film on a big screen and having the dance and fashion of the time on the stage. Lois played one of the paper boys and girls that linked each scene by discussing what their ambitions were at that time and giving a brief synopsis of the news of the day as well as taking some part in the playlets such as a street party at the end of the war and reading Harry Potter!

It ended with the paper girls and boys wondering what was going to become of them now that people picked up their news on the internet and 24 hour television news and a Grand Finale including everyone. We thoroughly enjoyed the whole evening with all the music and colour and Lois was excellent. Well done Lois.

Jacqui Seaman



Acorns

Two more blasts from the past - delightful stories by two Doreens from 16 years ago...

Winter 2002

At a Tuesday Circle meeting recently, we had an informal afternoon reminiscing on our war-time experiences and it was surprising what different memories we had.

Joy Jackson and Rose Hopwood were both married in October 1939 (on the same day) when their husbands were called up for military service. Joy and Rose had babies during the war. On the other end of the spectrum, Mary Chadd and Alison Garrett were themselves wartime babies. Joan Castell and Betty White served in the WRNS and ATS respectively. Edna Poole was in a 'reserved occupation', but she, along with several friends frequented the Lyons Corner House (who can forget them) and the Palace de Dance in London – but Edna had to be home by 10pm! Can you imagine today's young people having such a restriction? Goodness, many do not go out until that time!

Dot Fry lived in East Ham and came from a large family who used the underground as a shelter. Her job was to collect two elderly ladies who lived nearby when the air raid warning sounded and take them to the shelter. When the shrapnel was falling, one of them used to say, "Is it safe to go now?" Joan Watkins worked in a munitions factory and she recalled how noisy the machinery was and how dreadful the language was – something she had never come across at home. Jo Stoner also worked in a factory. Jean Weir was a typist in the Telecommunications Research Establishment (Radar) at Malvern and I recounted some of my recollections as an evacuee. Doreen Lewis lived in Cardiff and told how the air raid siren frightened her. We all recalled the Morrison shelters indoors under a large table and the Anderson shelters in the garden – a corrugated structure dug into the ground and covered with earth. Then Rosa Burke, who is Austrian, told us how her father was conscripted into the Austrian army and subsequently became a prisoner of war in Russia. When he came home he was suffering very badly from malnutrition. Her mother had a hard time feeding and clothing the family. We should never forget those on the other side who also suffered.

To young people today, the second world war is history, which they learn at school and from their grandparents. But we all agreed that whatever frightening experiences we had and the hardships suffered, there was a real sense of fellowship and togetherness.

Doreen Page

Time Travel in the USA

History Re-visited

On my recent holiday in Georgia and the Carolinas, I visited Savannah. Whilst on an orientation tour of the city, I saw the church where John Wesley preached in 1736 and also the statue erected in his memory. I took the opportunity to tell all my travel companions that John had been born on the 17th June, 1703 and that in the coming year we would be celebrating the tercentenary of his birth.

We next moved on to Charleston and whilst there took the ferry to Fort Sumpter, at which on the 12th April, 1861 the first shots of the American Civil War were fired.

Nearing the end of our trip we journeyed to the Outer Banks and whilst there drove to Kill Devil Hills, where on the 17th December, 1903 Orville Wright made the first powered flight – all of 120 feet!

During the holiday our courier asked, "What is the difference between an American and a Britisher?" His answer was that an American thinks 200 years is old and a Britisher thinks 200 miles is a long way. On that coach tour of 1621 miles, I experienced both these comments to be true!

Doreen Lewis

News from The Methodist Church

Indonesia emergency appeal launched

The Methodist Church in Britain and All We Can, the Methodist relief and development charity, have launched an urgent appeal for the people of Indonesia.

On Friday 28 September, a 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck just off the central island of Sulawesi in Indonesia, setting off a tsunami that engulfed the city of Palu. Waves more than three metres high swept across the land destroying almost everything in their wake. At least 1,300 are already confirmed dead, though the true impact of this disaster may not be known for weeks with many neighbouring towns and villages cut off by landslides and debris.

At the time of writing, three communities had yet to be reached.

The President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, the Revd Michaela A Youngson and Bala Gnanapragasam, said that they shared in the shock of all who are following the news of the devastating tsunami:

"Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have lost so much; those who have been bereaved, those who have been injured and those searching in fear and dismay for their loved ones."

"We know that our Methodist family will respond generously to appeals for money and will pray for the swift rebuilding of the communities so devastated by this disaster."

All We Can's Humanitarian Aid Coordinator Laura Cook said: "People who have lost everything are in desperate need of water, food, shelter and access to medical care. The final death toll could rise in to the thousands, and thousands more are left in a dire situation. We urge people to give generously so we are able to respond quickly."

Conditions in the devastated area are extremely difficult. The tsunami tore up roads, washed away homes and cut off lines of communication.

At least 42,000 people are displaced and more than 1.5 million have been affected.

All We Can is already working with a trusted partner in Sulawesi to get help to those who need it most while assessing the most crucial needs going forward.

To give to this urgent appeal, to follow the latest news from Indonesia and to download prayer resources, visit www.allwecan.org.uk/indonesia

New Methodist Youth President promises a year of courageousness

Jasmine Yeboah was inducted as the new Youth President of the Methodist Church with a service at St Mark's Methodist Church, Tottenham, London in September.

Jasmine, herself from Tottenham and a member of St Mark's, will represent thousands of young people across the UK in this important role in the life of the Church.

She has taken up the position of Youth President following an election at last November's 3Generate - the Methodist Children and Youth Assembly and takes over from Michael Pryke.

In her inaugural address, Jasmine thanked Michael for his work over the past year before moving on to her own priorities and motivations for the year ahead.

Jasmine says: *"My focus for the coming year is courageousness and courageous loving. To be loving of yourself, of others and, most importantly, of God. I want to challenge young people to do things differently, to try new things; from writing to your MP and campaigning for change, through to getting sponsored to do something exciting for a charity."*

Outgoing Youth President Michael Pryke commented: *"My year in office went by in a flash, full of adventures and experiences. My advice to Jasmine, and to all Youth Presidents, is to take time to take it all in and to focus on the goals that will empower young people."*



Poetry Corner

I am sure you will love the imagery in this poem from our regular contributor, the Poet Laureate of Benington, Nicky Phillips. Acorns is privileged to be selected as the first journal to publish this emotive poem, inspired by a religious service near the sea in an area close to the heart of the poet....

Seafarers' Service, Orford Quay

They arrive like a trail of ants on a sugar search,
find the honeypot, settle motionless on the quay,
suck sweetness from the parable of a house on a rock,
sing of straits of fear and reaching the heavenly shore.

A light breeze snatches fragments of the voices.
Behind clergy and band, boats putter forth and back,
gulls screech and chuckle. On each side, a vast
expanse of water shimmies gently in the dipping sun.

In the distance, Orfordness Lighthouse, invaluable
through two world wars but now closed, waits to be
swallowed by the sea. Ahead, the spit of the Ness itself,
created by longshore drift from coastline further north,

shingle and flint moved by storm waves outside man's
control. Members of the congregation disperse until
only a few remain, specks of dust on a miniscule screen,
itself an invisible dot on the edge of the ocean.

Nicky Phillips



Many of you will remember Mike King using this enchanting poem in his sermon on 8th July.....

Whosoever plants a tree

Whosoever plants a tree
Winks at immortality.

Woodland cherries, flowers ablaze,
Hold no hint of human praise;

Hazels in a hidden glade
Give no thought to stake or spade;

London planes in Georgian squares
Count no patrons in their prayers;

Seed and sapling seek no cause,
Bark and beetle shun applause;

Leaf and shoot know nought of debt,
Twig and root are dumb—and yet

Choirs of songbirds greet each day
With eulogies, as if to say:

'Whosoever plants a tree
Winks at immortality.'

Felix Dennis

I came across this delightful poem while 'net-surfing'. The poet is a member of Par St Mary's Methodist Church (below) in South East Cornwall and the poem was written for their own 150th Anniversary celebrations in 2014. I think you will agree that it resonates many of the memories, thoughts and hopes we have for our own church as we arrive at our own special day.



In 1864 when Queen Victoria was on the throne,
The Methodists of Par built a chapel of their own.
They called it Par St Mary's and was needed some would say
Well, it proved the right decision its still standing firm today.

This Church stood like a beacon and its following was strong,
As it guided local people on the path of right from wrong.
Bricks alone don't make a church its true, it comes from the love within
And walls hold the sound of worship, praise prayers and hymns.

Its had to change with modern times, not pleasing some its true
But what it offers is with love and is there for me and you.
Coffee morning every week - a chance to meet and pray
To join with friends and share with friends the problems of the day.

The door is open twice a week for Drop Inn - to chat and care
The foodbank meets the needs of folk and a friendly face is there.
Parents and the little ones are welcome just to play
While fitness is a favoured class to start a busy day.

Bright Hour meets for friendship - that's what its all about
Each Thursday is a special day - of that there is no doubt
Sunday School meets tho' its small, to learn of love and truth.
And young church have their modern band with the energy of youth.

So as we come to celebrate and join in song today
Let's remember all who've gone before and worked along the way.
But most of all let's thank our God for bringing us this far
To have this Church and all it means - St Mary's here at Par!

Freda Burley

Double page Holiday Club 2018 Special

All Aboard for an adventure with Noah

DIY Holiday Club is a big summer hit

It was always going to be a tough 'ask', but Alan felt it could be done.

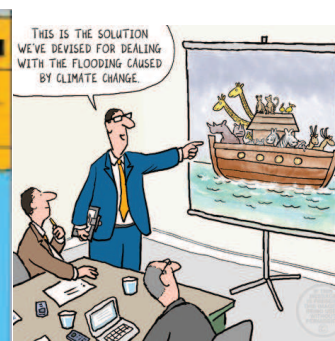
For years we had relied on the admirable work of the Scripture Union who produce a new Holiday Club theme annually. Their very detailed booklets provide ideas for framing the entire week, from suggested names, characters, Bible readings and themes for discussion and ideas for art, craft, songs and a daily drama in episodes. Also, the theme is accompanied by a daily film about the subject - broken down into daily bite-sized episodes. Though acknowledging the quality of the Scripture Union-fuelled Holiday Clubs, Alan felt that he could write one himself, simplified and tailored to our own strengths. How on earth he found the time to create a Holiday Club during his extremely busy working hours is a wonder in itself. But produce it he did!



This year's Holiday Club focussed on the story of Noah, broken into five key bite-sized themes that linked well to our Christian journey and understanding of faith. We examined the story of Noah, his family, animals and the ark, with reference to the appropriate Bible references. The week was rooted in the idea that if we listen to God and follow his call - shown to us first by Noah and then more specifically by Jesus, then even in the face of disbelief from the world around us, we can be saved and can enter a new special relationship with God.

Such was the support we had from our many younger and older helpers that the 26 children who enjoyed part or all of the week had the added benefit of so much attention and assistance that there was almost a 1:1 ratio of helpers to children.

Yet again, the contribution from so many people was immense. From the refreshments staff to the young teenage helpers to the adult helpers, the group leaders, music maker, IT provider, games and challenge organiser, the 'Funbook' designer and producer, and, of course, the children themselves. Like a juggernaut, the Holiday Club has journeyed on over 26 years. It has developed and matured into what some might call a well-oiled machine. Well, some joints might need a bit of lubrication now and then, but the enthusiasm remains. As for next year? *Watch this space.*





ALL ABOARD 'Noah's Great Adventure' Another look through the lens at this year's Holiday Club:-

Top left: The IT Maestro sits in control..

Top right: Our hi-tech Ark, which had powers to illuminate and produce 3d symbols every day to help with our research of Noah.

Left: Four of Noah's adventurers take on one of the daily 'challenges'.

Left below: Ark at Mushy and Marie playing with their own toy version of Noah's floating home.

Below and bottom: Three groups absorbed with craft work.



The Fosters in Chile

The latest prayer update from Luke and Mary Foster (and Barnaby and Martha) who in recent years have been involved in the ministry of the Centre for Pastoral Studies (CEP), an Anglican training college in Chile's capital city Santiago.



CEP seeks to serve the church in Chile and beyond by training Christian leaders so they might love the Lord Jesus more deeply and be equipped to preach the gospel more faithfully. Luke teaches Church History and Doctrine while Mary supports Luke by looking after the family and building relationships with staff and students' families.....

September 2018

I have just come out of a class in which we read Psalm 133 and reflected together on how the blessing and life that are celebrated at the end of the Psalm are enjoyed in the love and fellowship that are described at the start. Our Christian life is a life in relationship. A relationship with God in Christ that is enjoyed in community. Praying for other Christians and being prayed for by other Christians is a precious expression of the unity that this Psalm proclaims. Thank you so much for being to us a reminder of the truths about which the Psalmist sings!

While we normally shape prayer updates around our life as a family and our life at CEP we wanted this time to focus in on some of the people who are a big part of life and ministry here.

People ...and our life at CEP

Thank you for praying for Cristóbal and his leadership of the CEP over the past few months. We first heard that he might be stepping into the role this time last year and it has been a great blessing to be working with him and learning from him since he took on the role in January. Please pray on that Cristóbal would be able to juggle all the responsibilities that being a pastor and a principal involve. Pray that he would continue to be an example of integrity, humility and love for the Lord Jesus. The family have faced times of illness and loss as a family over the past weeks and months so please pray that Cristóbal, his wife Ale and their three daughters would feel sustained by the Lord Jesus and encouraged by those around them.



Diego and Sabrina

Please also join us in giving thanks for – and praying for – two CEP students who will be involved in our church over the next few years. As we have mentioned in previous prayer updates, our church will be taking responsibility for a church in another part of the city that has recently lost its pastor. The vision is to 're-plant' the church over the course of the next five years and two current CEP students will each work part time with the church as part of this project.

Diego began working with Cristo Redentor part time this year as he finished his third year of the CEP course. He has taken on responsibility for the Sunday School which – given that a third of the church are children – is a very big role! It has been such an encouragement to see how time spent learning from God's word at CEP has equipped him to serve God's people at Cristo Redentor. Diego will continue to work part time with the church so please pray that he and his wife Sabrina to have wisdom about how best to use the other half of his working week. Daniel has been involved with Cristo Redentor since it was first planted 8 years ago when Daniel was still a student at university. He will begin his third year at CEP next year and will be placed at Cristo Redentor where he will work part time alongside his studies.



Daniel and Camila (far right) with some students

Luke and Mary - continued...

The church family have seen Daniel raised up and sent out for gospel ministry – and it is especially encouraging to now receive him back in this new role. It is a reminder of what we would like to see in churches throughout the country – people being raised up, equipped and sent out to share the good news about Jesus in churches and communities. Daniel and his wife Camila were married in February and are currently based in a town two hours away from Santiago. Please pray for them as they prepare for the move to Santiago next year and for all the changes that Daniel's new role will bring.

The role that Daniel and Diego will have at Cristo Redentor is a reminder of why the ministry of CEP is so important. If churches are to be planted – and if churches without pastors are to be revitalised – then we need Christians who are equipped and able to lead those churches. Praise God for the provision of Diego and Daniel, but please pray on that the Lord would be raising up more leaders to launch more churches and care for more Christian communities throughout the country.

People ...and our life as a Family

One of the things that has struck us in the year since we have been back from the UK is how many more opportunities we are having to share with people on a more personal level. Both of us have been able to meet with people both in 'one-to-one' and group settings and are thankful for these opportunities to walk with people in the various struggles and challenges that they face.

Please pray for Luke as he meets with gets together with students from CEP and men from church - that he would listen well and share God's word in a way that is faithful, clear and wise. Please also continue to pray for Mary in the Bible studies and discipleship groups in which she is involved. The women's groups have continued to be an encouragement and it has been wonderful to see how the Lord has used these groups to encourage and build up the women in the church.

Please also continue to pray that the Lord would use our home group to reach more people with the good news about Jesus. One new lady has begun to come along over the last few weeks and we pray that she would understand and be changed by God's grace as we read the bible and pray together.



*'Dieciocho' National Day barbeque with home group....
...and Mike and Isabel!*

Give thanks for the chance we have to spend the month of September with Mary's parents - Mike and Isabel. It has been great to share life here with them. They have arrived in time for the national-day celebrations that are a big focus of the year here in Chile. They have found themselves in the midst of school celebrations, church events and mountains of BBQ meat – and seem to be having a great time. Give thanks for their stay with us and pray that it might be an especially encouraging few weeks for them as they spend time with Barney and Martha.

Thanks once again for your encouragement, prayer and support. What a privilege to experience the blessing that Psalm 133 describes. That in Jesus we can together know the love and fellowship of sharing in his family.



Luke and Mary Foster

Memories of 45 years at Goffs Oak Methodist Church

Richard and I joined the Church in 1973 after our marriage and we had come to live in our first home in The Drive at Goffs Oak.

Worship was held in what is now the large hall. The stewards would erect a dais and lectern each Sunday and a carpet placed down the centre aisle. Hard work being a steward in those days!

I remember the hall being full of people for the morning service with many children. Jim Medhurst was the Sunday School Superintendent and Doreen Page and Pauline Way taught the younger children in, what is now, the new meeting room. Irene Shutes taught the older children.

There was a great emphasis on fund raising to build our Church and this is when we became more involved as Richard took on the responsibility of the annual sponsored walk which was a large event not only for the Church but for the village also.

Everyone in the Church took part – walking if they were able, if they weren't they would man a checkpoint on route, provide refreshments or ferry people home if they had to drop out. Richard walked to check the 20 + mile route the day before and then swept behind on the day with John Flanders, checking that no one had got lost. It was a great day out and raised a lot of money. The new Church was finally completed and opened in 1977 and we must be grateful to all those who fund raised and work so hard to achieve this. We now have a beautiful sanctuary for worship and a multipurpose building.

During our time at Goffs Oak we have had a total of 10 ministers all so different in many ways, but each brought something special.

Another highlight of our life at the Church was our annual Church holiday which was so well organised by Isabel King. For two years we went to Spring Harvest at Minehead, followed by 10 years or more, to Easter People at many different venues – Scarborough, Torquay, Scarborough, Bournemouth and not forgetting Blackpool!!

Looking back these holidays helped me to grow as a Christian and each year was a time of renewal. James and Ruth enjoyed these Easter breaks and it enabled them to experience God's love in their lives. On our first holiday to Spring Harvest at Butlins, Minehead, James at the age of around 7, asked if we could come and live at Butlins as he enjoyed the dodgems and swimming pool so much!

They were very special times because our dear Mick Arkell was able to join us, and he bought a great deal of fun.

Studying the Bible has also been an important and fascinating thing for me and our Class meetings enabled me to do this. We shared wonderful fellowship and from time to time had meals together – often Chinese takeaway. (very topical – “Holy Habits”)

As I look back, Goffs Oak Methodist Church, has been a major part of my life. The worship, the teaching and the fellowship has helped me through life and continues to do so.

My fellow Christians that I have had and are currently journeying with, I will always be grateful. For those who have prayed for us, supported us, laughed and cried with us. Many of whom have already gone to be with the Lord and I look forward to that day when we shall all be reunited praising God together in a time that God has promised there will be no more pain, suffering or sadness!

Barbara Hall



'Secret Agents' get down to some serious spying in the Holiday Club drama of 1995.

More drama (below) from 'Chattabox' - our 1997 Holiday Club.



How many of these Sunday Club members from 1990 can you recognise?

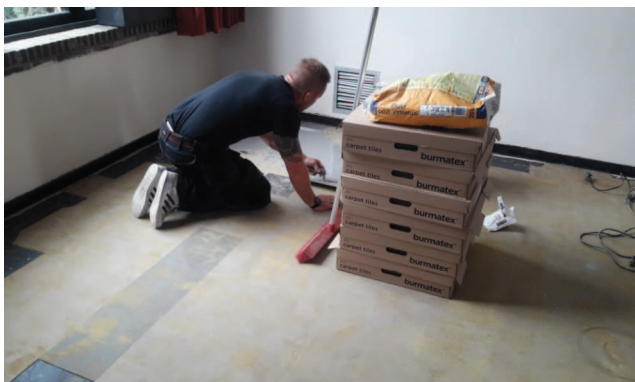
Fourteen of the best!

The sheer degree of progress made in improving and maintaining our church during recent months is simply astonishing. How about this for a list of achievements:-

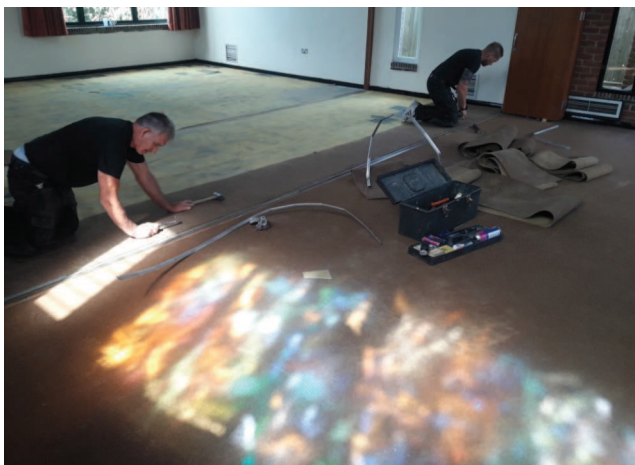
- 1. Small Room - converted in to a meeting room and redecorated**
- 2. Rear Window in Church Hall**
- 3. Flat roof (1/3 of total roof) replaced**
- 4. New Carpet in Church Hall**
- 5. New Curtains in Church Hall**
- 6. New Carpets in all connecting areas**
- 7. New Sound System – in both halls**
- 8. New projection System – in both halls**
- 9. Redecoration of church hall**
- 10. New Lectern**
- 11. New Baptismal Font**
- 12. New room lighting in lounge and connecting areas**
- 13. Landscaping along side of church**
- 14. External window frames to main hall repaired**

All of this has been installed at a cost of around £60,000. Nigel tells me, however, that a further £70,000 is needed to complete the roof.

We are in for another busy year or more!



Replacing the old, original carpet in the church sanctuary was a massive job, but our stained-glass window threw some light on the matter.



Looking to the Future

Our 150th anniversary is here, after many months of anticipation. Anniversaries are a good time to look back, but they are also a great time to look forward. Churches without plans are churches that aren't going anywhere. Part of our commitment to God (and the Circuit) is to maintain a viable community of faith in the village for many years to come and that means having a plan to welcome new faces and grow.

Gone are the days when people came to church because it was the right thing to do. We have to find ways to encourage people to come and one of the things working to our advantage is that in every community, there are people who will come back to church if we invite them. It might not be quite as easy as it sounds, but it works! The very worst thing that can happen is that they will say no on that particular day. It doesn't mean we stop inviting and give up hope!

In June we had our first Invitation Preparation Service, when we committed to inviting people we know to church. Alan followed through with a welcome service a short time later. We are going to do all of that again periodically. We will prayerfully invite people we know and if we keep persisting in that generosity of spirit, we will find that more people will join us.

The reason most of us don't invite people is simple – we're afraid of the negative response. We're afraid of offending people. However, in our new way of thinking, the outcome isn't what is important. Simply being invitational is the goal and the outcome is in God's hands. We're going to just leave that part of the process to God and carry on inviting.

If you are reading this as a member of the church family at Goffs Oak, it's time to start praying about who you are going to invite over the coming months. It is time to start inviting! If you are reading this as someone who used to come, but you're finding it really hard to come back after a period of absence, then consider yourself invited! The welcome at Goffs Oak Methodist Church is second to none and you can expect to be given the very warmest of welcomes. We welcome everyone, not just people like us. Our welcome goes further than a handshake and a hymn book – we welcome you into the very heart of who we are and into the heart of the fellowship. All you have to do is come!

Joanne Mead - Senior Steward

How many of these books of the Bible can you find in our 150th Anniversary Word Search?

LYRMMXNICTXKRSOMAHFKMWYGMICAHTR
 VLRRJRTKAOXIHICALAMTKT1KHEMDTKTS
 LXXRTKDZYGLDMNNJQRQTZRSDTNYKZGE
 LKGM LDWMYMG OJZMGXTDHABLAJOEMGRT
 REVELATIONOASKGPNHTMQNFLMMMSTMS
 SBREVPORPCJWNHSSNHOJ1R1NFTUFIITA
 PHILIPPIANSXOAIZR2RBNTFRHHERTSI
 TYHCTRCTMKLNLRLATTTRTBHWDCFHL L2S
 MPVAHEBREWSSMAKEHNZPKNEBPASTNLRE
 HHRWNNHXVHSSHHE TVSRLJSVNTNK1PRL
 AAKMMORBZ2AANSULUKEEVSH2PAIPKNC
 BIGLLKJRPLIISANMKEDLPAESGIVEKOC
 AMWTDYOEXRHAAYIRCUDMV LXAVTHTLME
 KENNGMTNAA LGJSXHJNBGROOMRACEYOZ
 KHQJAEHHIOALMBITTYVTBNDUJLYRLL1
 UEHNRNCMNGFRNMTVKNTCQIUERAKFZOC
 KNSFNEEI QXJXZPNHBDITLASLJGMTTSH
 MHTLZRAATJBNCENHMWVRCNLGQKTEBFR
 TVFNENXCQFKRBDQALJNLOS RHZSQSOO
 XTYJSLTTSNAIHTN IROC1FCMLENLWLGHN
 ZFZRTFNSHBHDHNM DLZTMNN2LSZSHLNI
 RRBQRUTHWJONNTZAS MVKMMCNJEREDOC
 YBYESTHERLSLKENBUFLTIAKGNIWBSL
 SREBMUNDKPEKPNZOTMHFNINDRKQEKQE
 SGNIK2YMTVAHOJMJINROSXUHEWTHXJS
 KLA KPFTCIDAM1RODTLRENJRZORKTXXR
 GNVVRKTTMNEKKECFRHHKHNEXTJNTPLD
 JRHPBBIRILIGLLTKCPPVOCJHJR2AMFM
 KVSJMCTA INXMM LX2EKMBJLWONONMLVV
 VROYUNHHGVYHTOMIT1BK3TQNB DHRVHL
 MBJSQK PST LAMENTATIONSWBTLLXNZXR

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1 Chronicles	2 Thessalonians	Galatians	Jude	Philippians
1 Corinthians	2 Timothy	Genesis	Judges	Proverbs
1 John	3 John	Habakkuk	Lamentations	Psalms
1 Kings	Acts	Haggai	Leviticus	Revelation
1 Peter	Amos	Hebrews	Luke	Romans
1 Samuel	Colossians	Hosea	Malachi	Ruth
1 Thessalonians	Daniel	Isaiah	Mark	Song of Solomon
1 Timothy	Deuteronomy	James	Matthew	Titus
2 Chronicles	Ecclesiastes	Jeremiah	Micah	Zechariah
2 Corinthians	Ephesians	Job	Nahum	Zephaniah
2 John	Esther	Joel	Nehemiah	
2 Kings	Exodus	John	Numbers	
2 Peter	Ezekiel	Jonah	Obadiah	
2 Samuel	Ezra	Joshua	Philemon	

Church Mice

