

September/October 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters

If there is one thing I am forever grateful for in the Christian life that is rooted in the very nature of God – it is that by God's grace we are constantly given the opportunity of a fresh start.

So I find myself after six years of candidating, training and probation making another fresh start post ordination! In the past two years I have often found myself feeling guilty about things I have not done (monthly church letters being a good example! ☺) and I guess there will always be an element of that in the juggling act of multiple churches that is Methodist Ministry. BUT this week feels like a true fresh start. I have completed my studies, gained a degree, been ordained and now ministry begins in earnest. I'd love to say the 'L' plates are off but as we all know the process of becoming Christ-like is a life-long journey rooted in this promise from God:

Philippians 1:6 *I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.*

Now over this last weekend I was delighted to be invited to assist at the wedding of my cousin's daughter. On Sunday by chance I met Rob, the pastor of a local Pentecostal church. We shared a joyful conversation about the work of God and how through prayer the Holy Spirit goes before us in all that we do. We prayed for each other and as he laid hands upon me he said; *'Lord, in your love and grace, your might and power, through the presence of the Holy Spirit, protect Alan and his churches and go before them in all that they do.'*

I was deeply moved by this because the very reason any of us can make a fresh start. The very reason any of us can have a living relationship with almighty God – is because God's love has gone before us in the life, death and resurrection of Christ. God loves us and this world so much that he sent Jesus whose sacrifice conquers our selfishness and sin making us at-one with God again.

All God asks of us is a step of faith, and even in this he sends the Holy Spirit to help us.

So as I write my first ministers letter in a long time I am drawn to 2 Corinthians 5:17; *So if anyone is in*

Christ, they are a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

And my prayer echoes that of Pastor Rob; ***Lord, God, in the love of Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit, go before us, heal us, protect us, encourage and inspire us and our churches as we make our daily fresh start with you. Amen.***



Looking ahead – by the time you read this - we will have welcomed Revd Julia Wiktorska to the circuit.

At Goffs we pray for those attending the evangelism course – Blowing your Cover – and the blessings this will bring. We also hope to share this with the other churches.

At Ponders End another step forward in church development has seen beautiful carpet laid in the coffee area. We also look forward to the 'International Evening' on Nov 28th.

At Ordance we give thanks that the roof leak has been found and fixed and pray for ongoing repairs. We welcome Augustine Yeboah as a new steward and we pray for our Junior Church team.

I pray for you – please prayer for our superintendent Louise, our surrounding communities and all those who minister to us. May God bless us all richly.

Alan Combes

*Minister - Ordance Road & Goffs Oak Churches
Assistant Minister at Ponders End*

A word from our president: Rev Gareth Powell

'At the heart of our faith touched by your hand our world is holy.' Elements of the world and aspects of human behaviour can so often seem rather void of holiness but this is not a reason to give up or become despondent. The same prayer petitions God, *'Help us to cherish the gifts that surround us and to share your blessings with our brothers and sisters.'* **Amen**