

**WINDOW  
ON WESLEY'S**



**AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2016**



## **STAFF**

**Ministers:** The Revd the Lord Leslie Griffiths MA  
(Superintendent)  
Rev Jennifer Potter BTh MA MSc

**Associate Ministers:** Rev Pauline Barnett MA (Supernumerary)  
Rev John Beebe (Supernumerary)  
Rev John Cooke MA (Supernumerary)  
Rev Brian Goss MA (Supernumerary)  
Rev Jon Lampard (Supernumerary from September)  
Rev Robert Maginley (until September)  
Rev Stephen Penrose (Supernumerary)  
Rev Ian Yates (Supernumerary)

**Student Presbyter:** Mr Kido Baek BTh MA

**Leysian Missioner:** Mrs Judith Bell BA

**Lay Members:** Dr Peter Briggs OBE  
Dr Joy Leitch BSc DipEd MA

**Museum:** Mr Christian Dettlaff MA (Curator)  
Miss Aisha Al-Sadie BA (Hons)(Learning Support  
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**Administration:** Mrs Tracey Smith

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## ***Dear Friend***

And so another (Methodist) year comes to an end. The long, languorous days of summer are now getting shorter and bearing evidence of the imminent arrival of autumn. Where does all the time go? Why does it slip away so readily and quickly?

There seems to be more in my diary this August than I've ever known before. I thought that getting older meant doing less! Not, it seems, for me. I have to say, however, that so much of the programme awaiting my attention this month will confer nothing but pleasure on my part.

Visits to Scotland and Wales will form part of my travelling. In both journeys there will be a pastoral element - the visit of an old friend going through tough times. But there'll also be a chance to visit an event or two at the Edinburgh Festival. And to pay literary homage to the great writers of Wales. Can't be all that bad can it?

I've also put together a series of visits (to Edinburgh, Hemel Hempstead and Belfast) in my work as President of the Boys' Brigade. I've been working with dozens of young men and women in their late teens or early twenties who are being prepared as future leaders for the Brigade. It is truly heart-warming to sense their optimism and to recognise their talents and commitment. The Brigade is a wonderful institution that prevails against the ethos of a time that leads people to lazy and self-indulgent lifestyles. I'm proud to be at the head of such an organisation.

This is a double edition of our magazine and that allows me to look forward to September. As usual, on the first Sunday in the Connexional New Year we will receive the President and Vice-President of Conference as well as our District Chair. I hope we'll have a good crowd in Church on that occasion. It will be followed by an international lunch when, once again, we can

remind ourselves of God's goodness in binding us into this extraordinarily diverse fellowship of ours. It's a great way too of showing the nature of our fellowship to the senior officers of our Church.

And we'll also have an opportunity to make another trip to The Leys School in Cambridge. My sons were pupils there once and it has been one of the great pleasures of my time at Wesley's Chapel to enter into a formal and honoured relationship between Wesley's Chapel, in its Leysian Mission form, and the splendid school just 50 miles to the north of us. We've sent 20 of our children there on full scholarships over the years and they too are an adornment to our society. I hope many of you will want to join us on that day out. Full details can be found elsewhere in these pages. I'll leave matters there for now. This comes with my usual good warm greeting to you and your loved ones.

The Lord bless you and bless you kindly

***Leslie Griffiths – July 2016***

**Chapel Trip to The Leys School, Cambridge**  
**10<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

All members of the Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission community are invited to join The Leys School in Cambridge (with whom we have a covenant relationship) for their Family Day. This promises to be an afternoon of activities, fun, and fellowship.

The Chapel is subsidising a coach up to the event, but is asking for a donation of £5 per adult and £3 per child to secure your place. Please contact Judith Bell to book your tickets.

## Church News

### ***Revd Ken Start 2.8.1936 - 5.7.2016***



*Rev Ken Start* has been a supernumerary minister, stationed at Wesley's Chapel since 2002. During that time he has been one of the ministers taking the 9.45am Communion Service on a Sunday morning. Together with *Lynn* he has also been a regular attender at the 11.00am worship.

He trained for the ministry at Richmond College in the late 1960s and was stationed as a minister first in Oldham and then in Ilford. The bulk of his ministry was in a very specialist and unusual area – namely the provision of housing for low income and vulnerable people. He became the Chief Executive of Springboard, a Housing Association which took on challenging work that other housing associations would not touch. Up to his retirement in 1998 he had worked for the building of over 5000 housing units.

His funeral was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> July and a Memorial Service at the Chapel was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> August. May his soul rest in peace. Since the July edition of *Window on Wesley's* we have welcomed four children into the fellowship of the Church here.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> July we welcomed *Thea Seren Animwa Williams*, daughter to *Adwoa* and *Owen* who were married here at the Chapel. May *Thea* be a blessing to her family.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> July we baptised three grand-children of the late *Elizabeth Tachie-Menson*. They are *Jasmine and Alana*, daughters of *Lilly and Micah Joseph*, son to *Magdalene and Frederick*. We wish every blessing on these two families.

On July 18<sup>th</sup> we commissioned *Michael Larbi*, a member at Westminster Central Hall as an intern for Kwanglim Methodist Church as part of our relationship with that Church. We have heard that he has arrived safely and is settling in very well.

We are sad to report the death of *Arthur Downes* at the age of 95 years. He used to attend our services on Thursdays and was a regular at our Christmas Lunch. He was Mayor of Tower Hamlets 1995-96 and had a distinguished career as a Local Councillor. May his soul rest in peace.

We congratulate *Sarah and Nana Osei* on the birth of their daughter, *Alexandra*, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Congratulations are also in order for *Edwina*, Sarah's sister, and *Ernest* on their traditional betrothal on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July. It was great to have Edwina and Ernest in the service on the 30<sup>th</sup> for a blessing of their relationship and to celebrate Edwina's birthday.

We also congratulate *Kadija*, daughter to *Dorothea Salim*, and her husband, *Augustine* on the birth of their second daughter on 25<sup>th</sup> July.

The Welcome Service for *Revd Robert Maginley* to his new Circuit, the New River Circuit will be on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September at 4.00pm at Finsbury Park Methodist Church.

Finally we welcome our new caretaker, *Dino Constantinou*, to our staff team. Please make him feel welcome by going and introducing yourself to him should you happen upon him in and around the campus.

## An Insight into the role of Christine Elliott- one of our members



We have quite a few members of our Church who we do not see very often because the nature of their work means that they travel a lot. This applies to the husband and wife team *Chris Elliott* and *Steve Pearce*. Steve's job is to relate to our partner churches in



Asia and the Pacific, so we receive reports from him about Methodism and the Christian Church in Fiji and Tonga, China and Korea. When he is around he sometimes plays the organ for us – both on Thursdays and on Sundays.

Chris Elliott also used to work in the Methodist Headquarters team but now works as the Director of World Church Programmes for Churches

Together in Britain and Ireland. Her work takes her around the world and she has a very important role in relating to Israel/Palestine and how British Churches link with and support Christians in the region.

In May this year she was part of a twelve women group that travelled to Greece for a five day visit and to meet with women involved in the refugee crisis.

The group saw official refugee camps with organised buildings and maintained by the police and the military. They also saw unofficial camps made up of tents. In the official camps the sight of razor wire and high fences was chilling. Here people are

detained, in limbo, desperately clinging to the hope that they would manage to get to Germany and soon.

The group was very aware that the majority of refugees in the world are women and they often bear the responsibility for children, the elderly and the sick in addition to their own needs. There are also particular



vulnerabilities for women and children who are displaced and uprooted in relation to sexual harassment, abuse and trafficking, forced or early marriage and the huge challenges of providing for their children.

So the visit of Chris and her colleagues was a sisterly visit in which they were eager to hear the voices of and stories of women, who are often silenced in the dominant narratives in the press or on the television.

The group became aware of the extreme vulnerability of women and unaccompanied minors to people smugglers and traffickers. As there is an enormous lack of safe passage possibilities, almost everyone they spoke to had needed to resort to people smugglers, at great cost and high risk as they felt they had no alternative for reaching safety.

In 2015 a staggering one million migrants and refugees crossed into Europe, most of them making the perilous journey from Turkey to Greece. This has continued into 2016 with 135,000 people arriving in January and February alone. Greek citizens and the Orthodox Church in Greece have responded with compassion and generosity especially given their own financial plight. Other Church initiatives from Germany have provided food and the Salvation Army runs a day centre.

The report from the visit states “among the most important values that people of faith can offer in the context of war and displacement is the belief that care, justice and compassion are

not confined by the boundaries of our own states. From a faith perspective, our country is the whole world. If it is not, then we are not true to our faith.”

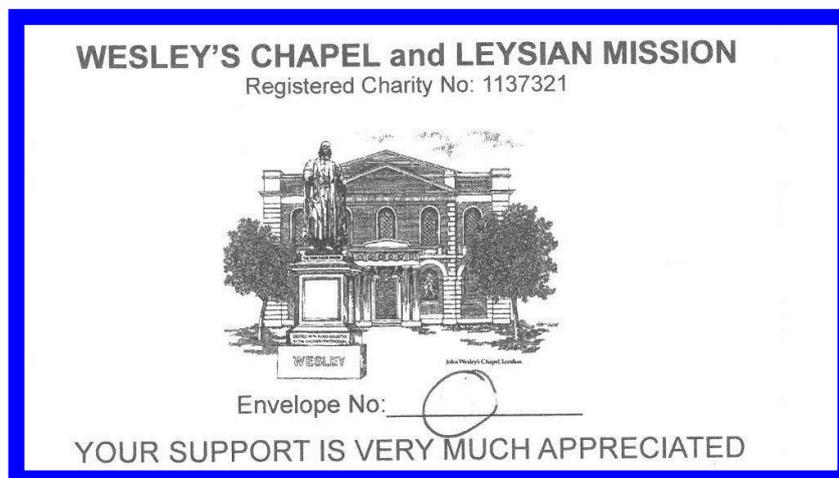
As people are still drowning in the Mediterranean as they desperately seek safety may we continue to see the whole world as our country and all people, especially the most needy as our sisters and brothers.

***Jennifer Potter***

### **Giving by envelope at Wesley’s Chapel**

Many of you, members of the Wesley’s Chapel congregation, already make your offering by using the envelope scheme. As people are joining us all the time we feel it may be helpful to explain clearly how you can give your offering in different ways.

We encourage people to join the envelope scheme. If you do this you receive numbered envelopes, white in colour, as shown in the image below. We have about 300 members of the congregation making their offering in this way. If you have envelopes it reminds you that week by week the work of the church goes on even when you are not here and having envelopes helps you to give regularly.



**If you are a UK tax-payer** we also encourage you to fill in a Gift Aid Declaration. By doing this Wesley’s Chapel is able to claim an

extra 25p on every £1 you give from the Government without your having to do anything. This is a very important boost to our income.

If you wish to Gift Aid your donations and have not already done so, please come to the office after Church and fill in a form.

Some members of the congregation make their offering by direct debit to the Bank and this is also a good way to give. If you do this and would like to Gift Aid your donations you also need to fill in a form.

Some people use the Yellow Envelopes, which are on the table in the foyer, to give their offerings.

WESLEY'S CHAPEL and LEYSIAN MISSION

Full Name .....

Address .....

Postcode ..... Date .....

*giftaid it*  I am a UK taxpayer intending tax to be reclaimed on the enclosed donation made under the Gift Aid scheme

These envelopes are intended primarily for visitors who give us a once-off donation. Quite often members of the congregation who forget their white, numbered envelopes use the yellow ones instead. This is fine although it does mean that you need to write your name and address on the envelope and your number if you can remember it. Again you need to be a UK Taxpayer for us to be able to claim the Gift Aid and we can only claim the Gift Aid if you write your name and address on the yellow envelopes.

## The Tolpuddle Celebrations: Early Trade Unionists remembered

This picture, taken at this year's celebrations in the Dorset village of Tolpuddle, remind us, on the one hand, of the strong links between the Labour Party and Trade Unions and, on the other hand of the significant Methodist influence on the early Trade Union movement, especially among agricultural workers.



Our photo shows Jeremy Corbyn on the left and Rachel Lampard, the Vice President of the Methodist Church on the right.

Rachel writes in her blog on the Methodist Website ([www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk)) "I was at the annual Tolpuddle Festival, organised by the union movement in memory of the Tolpuddle Martyrs, six men who were transported to Australia for starting a union in 19th century Dorset. Five of the six men were members and preachers at the local Methodist church. As a result, the Methodist Church is accorded an extraordinary place within the celebrations. Wreaths were laid at the grave of James Hammett, the sole martyr who is buried in Tolpuddle (the others returned to England after they were reprieved but eventually emigrated to Canada)."

Rachel continued her report," in amongst the parade, I'm pleased to say, was a banner for the Methodist Church, with the motto "God is our guide", part of a hymn quoted by one of the martyrs after their sentencing. Walking through the streets, it was encouraging to see the number of people who greeted us warmly as we passed."



At a time when Trade Unions are being constrained by falling membership on one side and restrictive legislation on the other, it is good for us to remember the honourable role of Methodism in the early Trade Union movement.

## **St Paul's Cathedral and the Great Fire of London.**

The Year 1666 – 350 years ago – was catastrophic for St. Paul's Cathedral.

On Tuesday 4 September, a combination of factors caused the building to burn with great ferocity. The catastrophic blaze consumed the cathedral which had stood at the heart of London life for over five hundred years. Tens of thousands around the city were made homeless.



When the Great Fire of London began in the summer of 1666, the Stationers Company stored their books and paper in the crypt of the Cathedral for safe-keeping and residents piled their precious furniture in the churchyard – one of the few open spaces in the City – so that it might be safe even if they lost their homes in the conflagration. These prudent measures only exacerbated the catastrophe when a spark set fire to the wooden roof of the Cathedral which collapsed into the crypt, sending a river of molten lead running down Ludgate Hill, igniting a violent inferno of paper that brought down the entire building and consumed all the furniture in the churchyard as well.

Some of the fragments of the old St Paul's can be found in the current Cathedral.

However, Christopher Wren, the architect who was the custodian of the Old Cathedral and designer of the new one had much of the stone from the old Cathedral broken up to be used as infill for the foundations of the new building.

Following the Great Fire, Moorfields – the area around our present Chapel became a refugee camp for those made homeless by the fire. The area was marshy and very unhealthy as dung, rotten vegetables and discarded offal from the City were dumped there. Debris from the Great Fire, including debris from the old St. Paul's Cathedral was spread over the open ground around the City and especially over Moorfields so that roads and houses could be developed on firmer foundations. So it came to pass that Wesley's Chapel was built on the rubble of St Paul's and thus Methodism, which did not exist until the 18<sup>th</sup> century has a link to the Great Fire of London of September 1666.



If you are interested to learn more about the Great Fire of London there are a whole range of activities taking place at St. Paul's Cathedral from now until April 2017. More information can be found from the St. Paul's website – [www.stpauls.co.uk/fire](http://www.stpauls.co.uk/fire) or speak to Jennifer.

## September 4<sup>th</sup> First Sunday of the new Church Year

The first Sunday of the Connexional Year is a special day at Wesley's Chapel as this is the day when the President and Vice President of the Conference come to be with us and participate in the worship. This is a tradition, with a very long history – possibly dating back to the time of Mr. Wesley.



This year the President of the Conference is the Reverend Roger Walton, the Chair of the West Yorkshire District of the Church.

The Vice President of the Methodist Church

for this year is Rachel Lampard, who heads up the Public Issues Team at Methodist Church House. Some of you reading this will know her mother – Judith Lampard, who is one of our Heritage Stewards or her father, Revd John Lampard.



### From the Photo Archive

For the past few months we have been looking at old photos of the inside and outside of Wesley's Chapel. Now we are going to have a look at some photos which incorporate people you know – some with us and some who have sadly passed to higher service.

We begin with the day in September 2003 when a Covenant was signed between Wesley's Chapel and our local Anglican Church, St Giles' Cripplegate. Not only are our two churches close neighbours in this area on the edge of the City but we share, as it were, a common ancestor. Susanna, mother of the Wesley's was born Susanna Annesley, the youngest and 25<sup>th</sup> child of her father Revd. Samuel Annesley. Samuel was an Anglican priest. He was of a Puritan tendency and was appointed to St Giles' Cripplegate during the time of Protector Cromwell. In 1662 the Act of Uniformity was passed and all priests of the Anglican Church had to sign to uphold the doctrines of the Anglican Church. Annesley

would not sign and thus was ejected and after that had an Independent Church in Spitalfields. Nevertheless Samuel Annesley's name appears on the list of Rectors of St Giles' Cripplegate.

In the photo we see Rev Ermal Kirby, at that time Chair of the



London North East District in which Wesley's Chapel was located (prior to there being one London District) and the Bishop of London, Richard Chartres. You may wonder what they are doing. Well some of the Bishop's 18<sup>th</sup> century predecessors had written nasty things about

John Wesley. Here we see bits of paper on which those nasty things were written being torn up and burnt by Ermal and Bishop Richard.

To the left of the Bishop you can see Rev Katharine Rumens who is still the Rector of St. Giles' Cripplegate. Bishop Richard has recently announced his retirement.

On the day of the Covenant signing people from both congregations walked from Wesley's Chapel down City Road and Moorgate, singing as we went with banners going ahead of us. You can guess that home-going commuters really turned their heads to see what was going on.

Having arrived at St Giles' the congregation gathered outside while the Chair of District and the Bishop spoke of the new arrangement and the casting away of old animosities.

The congregation then went into St. Giles' for a Communion Service shared by the Bishop and the District Chair. Since that time the ministers from Wesley's Chapel have been taking services at St Giles' and Katharine the Rector has participated in our services.

There will be a special service at St Giles' at 6.00pm on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the coming together of St Luke's, Old Street with St Giles'. The Bishop of London will preach – one of his last engagements as Bishop of London. It would be good if Wesley's Chapel could turn out in force as we did in September 2003.

***Jennifer Potter***

### **Transforming the World from the kitchen- the story of Women Working together in British Methodism**

The story of women working together in British Methodism is one which is under-researched and underestimated. Women have always been active in the Methodist story right from the beginning. It is widely agreed that Susanna Wesley (1669-1742) was a major influence on the faith of her family and especially on young John for whom she had a special concern.



Her kitchen was a teaching and preaching place.

Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB), the current women's movement in British Methodism, have initiated a project entitled, "Transforming the World from the Kitchen?" The thinking behind the project is to create a new archive to be housed at the Epworth Old Rectory and then used to tell the story of women's movements in British Methodism as well as stories of the ordinary women in the pews.

From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century there was a Women's Work movement which sent women missionaries overseas in their own right. Many of the Methodist Girls' Schools around the world were established by these women missionaries and still continue today as centres of excellence in education.

The current women's movement (MwiB) in the British Methodist Church was launched in July 2011 with the press release at that



## Methodist Women in Britain

time stating its purpose as 'a women's movement that combines spirituality and social action in a global context .... Bringing together Women's

Network and the British Unit of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women (WFMUCW).'

Launched under the theme, "For such a time as this..." the first President of MwiB, Jill Baker, wrote, "some Methodist women in Britain today want a cause to fight for, others long to read the Bible in new ways; others may need to find a prayer about work-life balance; others to find a group where a lonely enquirer can be embraced. It was 'for such a time as this' that MwiB was set up.

MwiB continues the tradition of the Easter Offering for work overseas begun in 1883 and the magazine 'Magnet' is still produced albeit as an ecumenical resource – see Margaret Hazard if you would like to see or order a copy. If you want to know more about MwiB or about the 'Transforming the World d from the kitchen project' look on the website [www.mwib.org.uk](http://www.mwib.org.uk)

### **The Kingdom of Heaven Belongs to Such as These**

Over the past couple of months, our Sunday School Leaders have been meeting with me in their smaller sections (Crèche, Junior Church, and the Youth Group) to review what we have been doing, see how we could improve, and to plan ahead for the future. These meetings have been really heartening – I can assure you that we have passionate and prayerful leaders!

Throughout all the Sunday School we have a common aim; to walk alongside our children and young people, nurturing them in their journey of faith. We want to give them a sound awareness of the stories within the Bible, and the message of Christ's redeeming love for us all. We hope that this will lead to children having a Christian faith of their own. As they get older, we encourage the children and young people to think about how the Christian faith and the teachings of Jesus should affect our daily living and actions.

Our summer meetings have been a good chance to remind ourselves of what we as leaders are striving for. They have also been a good opportunity to reflect on if perhaps we can improve the way we do things, so that our message is clearer or more engaging for the children. In the light of these conversations there are going to be some changes to the way we deliver our programme, some small and some slightly larger. These will come in gradually over time. I hope you will all give the leaders your support during this time of development.

All our church community can help this work with under 18s:

- You can pray! Please pray continually for our children, young people and their leaders. Please pray also for the families of our children and young people.
- Talk to our children and young people, taking an interest in them as individuals. Why not ask them what they talked about this week in their Sunday School session to start off a conversation?
- Help us get ready for Christmas. I know December is a long way off, but our Nativity costumes are in need of an overhaul and this will take time. If your handy at sewing or crafting and could give us some help please do offer.
- Consider coming on the rota to help us – whether as a leader (resources and support provided), or just as an extra adult for supervision purposes.

Parents, guardians and families, in addition you can also:

- Read the Bible with your children (especially the story we looked at last time you were at church). We may sometimes tell and explore the Bible story using different methods, so having families look at the Bible passage later in the week helps to remind and reinforce the lesson.
- Return your consent forms! These give us vital information to help us keep your children safe. Fresh forms went out in June and July, and all in Sunday school need a new form done, but Judith has had very few back. Spares are available.

Whilst I aim to work collaboratively with my leaders, ultimately the program and resources for all of our under 18s work are produced, procured or finalised by me. If you have any questions or comments about the way we do Sunday School at Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission please come and speak to me directly, drop me and email ([missioner@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:missioner@wesleyschapel.org.uk)) or contact me via the church office. I would love to hear from you.

Prayers and best wishes

***Judith Bell – Leysian Missioner***

### **Lunchtime Recitals in September**

**6<sup>th</sup> Stephen Binnington – Organ**

**13<sup>th</sup> Wind & Words – Valarie Fry**

**20<sup>th</sup> Stylianos Kyriakidis – Classical Guitar**

**27<sup>th</sup> Grzegorz Mania & Piotr Rozanski – piano (four-handed)**

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## INTERNATIONAL LUNCH

Don't forget that **Sunday September 4<sup>th</sup>** marks the beginning of the new Methodist Connexional Year when we welcome the President of Conference and the Vice President and the Chair of the London District (North) to the morning service. In celebration of this we are planning to have an International lunch after the service in the chapel's memorial gardens so pray for good weather.

We would like to invite people to contribute to this occasion with a national dish from their home country (savoury or sweet). Or just one of your favourite dishes, it's entirely up to you. But it would help with the planning of the event if you could let us know which dish you plan to bring. You can do this via the Chapel office or simply speak to a member of staff. If you are not up to cooking perhaps you might like to donate soft drinks. It's always nice have something to wash down all that delicious food.

We will also require help on the day to: set things up, serve food and drinks, wash-up, tidy-up etc. If you are happy to lend a hand please speak to: **Judith Bell** or **Tracey Smith**.

So, don't forget to put the date in your diary – **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September** – and we'll see you there.



## **SERENDIPITY TWENTY-THREE**

### **Three Stalwarts of Early Methodism**

#### **Part One: Two and Two Make Five or “Hair” today and?**

The Museum of Methodism, in the former crypt of Wesley’s Chapel, holds many unusual and often amazing exhibits. Some are colourful, like the many paintings, some are large, like, the pulpit from the Foundery, the platform once occupied by Donald Soper, or the section of a tree from Winchelsea, while others are very small, like the contents of many of the show cases. The colourful exhibits are interesting because of the subjects they portray, whilst the larger more showy items are worth seeing because of their origins. Nevertheless, it is often the comparatively small items, the ones most frequently ignored or overlooked, that tend to be the most worthwhile things to be sought out; not least, because of the people and stories with which they are associated.

Heritage Stewards often have the privilege of spending periods of time in the Museum of Methodism with the freedom to peer into each of the display cases so as to be able to carefully peruse each of the items they contain. As suggested earlier, some of the cases hold big showy objects which readily draw the eye, while other cases have contents that appear at first sight to be unattractive, and perhaps liable to be passed over. Experience tends to prove that this could be a mistake, as it often results in missing out on interesting stories. Indeed, recently it was discovered that three items which had been given only a cursory glance in the past actually had significances which greatly belied their appearances.

The items concerned in this instance, are some of those held in the particular show case, that stands close by the large painting depicting the deathbed of John Wesley, and which the Museum “Short Guide” suggests displays objects in connection with John Wesley which convey an element of “hagiography” or “sanctification”.

On display on the top shelf of this particular case, are amongst other things:

A small strand of hair, attached to a piece of paper on which is written:

\*This is a small part of the hair of the late, and dear Man of God, The Rev John Wesley, found in the late Miss Tooth's keeping, in an envelope inscribed: "Dear Mr Wesley's Hair."

A Methodist Society Class Ticket for June 1812, to which is attached, separately, strands of the hair of Mrs Fletcher and Mary Tooth.

A gold mourning ring in which are encased interwoven hairs from the heads of John Wesley and John Fletcher.

After taking a proper look at these objects, for the first time, it was called to mind that three of the people, mentioned on the exhibits, featured, (two by name and one inferred), in an article in an edition of The Times Newspaper published on Saturday April 12<sup>th</sup> 2008. This was a review of the book, "A FAIR GATE TO OBLIVION: A Celebration of the English Epitaph by J.P.G. Taylor".

The reviewer of this collection of epitaphs, explained that he had always been interested in the inscriptions carved on gravestones, and that his favourites were those that told a story, particularly because in most instances the events behind such records could never be fully known, since the few words used left the taste of a part obscured mystery. He instanced, for example, what he considered to be the greatest untold story as being that of an epitaph inscribed on a grave in the churchyard of the parish church at Madeley, Shropshire, which simply reads: "*Mary Tooth, died November 15<sup>th</sup> 1843, aged 65 years, the Beloved companion, Faithful Friend and zealous Successor of the late Mrs Fletcher of blessed memory*".

Drawing his inferences from these few words the reviewer then went on to ask; whether Mary Tooth succeeded her friend in the affections of the latter's husband? Exactly how zealous was she and what unspoken warfare existed between these two bosom friends? Finally he made the suggestion that Mary Tooth's grave might have been silent but her epitaph spoke volumes.

The reviewer was of course quite correct, this particular epitaph does speak volumes but not quite the story he had in mind, since he obviously knew nothing about Mary Tooth, Mrs Fletcher or the latter's husband. Indeed this particular epitaph paints an entirely different picture to that surmised by the reviewer as this latest exercise in Serendipity aims to show. The narrative being particularly interesting since all of the people featured in the epitaph are known to Methodism and all have some connection, one way or another, with Wesley's Chapel, including of course to particular items now held in the Museum of Methodism.

First let us begin with Mrs Fletcher's husband, who while he is not actually mentioned by name in the epitaph, was considered by the author of The Times review, as being the subject of the rivalry between Mary Tooth and Mrs Fletcher. He was the Rev John Fletcher, the Church of England vicar of St Michaels, the parish church of the small town of Madeley, in Coalbrookdale, close to the World Heritage site of Ironbridge, in Shropshire, from 1760 to his untimely death from Typhoid fever in 1785. He was an amazing man with something of an unusual life journey and career path. Originally called Jean Guillaume de la Flèche, he was born in 1729 at Nyon, near Lake Geneva, in Switzerland.

There he studied theology at Geneva University, but did not at that time seek ordination as a Christian minister and instead left to engage upon a military career, but after finding this unfulfilling, he left the army and came to England in 1750 where he took up the role of tutor to the sons of a Shropshire MP, and became involved in Methodism. After experiencing an evangelical conversion, in the winter of 1753-54, he was ordained as a presbyter of the Church of England and in 1760 was inducted as the vicar of St

Michaels. It is assumed that he then anglicised his original name in order to help him to be more acceptable to the parishioners to whom he was called to shepherd and to preach.

To Methodism, John Fletcher is known as one of John Wesley's most valued clerical supporters, as well as the hoped for successor as the leader of the Methodist Societies, which was dashed by Fletcher's early death. The close affinity of Fletcher with John Wesley is symbolised by the intertwining of each man's hair in the mourning ring exhibited in the Museum of Methodism. John Fletcher is associated with Wesley's Chapel by two memorials within the Chapel itself, and in John Wesley's House by his portrait and his study chair which are exhibited there. The memorials in the Chapel are, firstly his epitaph engraved upon the stone slab placed in the lower half of the North side of the apse at the front of the Chapel, and secondly, the baptismal font which was presented to Wesley's by Fletcher's former church, St Michaels, in 1891. The epitaph is easy to seek out and to read, but not so the details of the origin of the font and its' presentation to Wesley's. True, the information is actually legible on the plinth supporting the font, but it can only be read with difficulty, as experience has shown, by being prepared to lie practically prostrate on the floor, in order to find the details inscribed on the metal plates attached to the very bottom edges of each of the four faces of the plinth base.

In John Wesley's House, John Fletcher's portrait painting is in a prominent position, as it hangs over the fireplace in the first floor back room where John Wesley once slept, while, a similar portrait of John Fletcher can be glimpsed depicted on the wall in the massive painting of John Wesley's death bed scene that is on show in the Museum of Methodism. Also in the house, but this time, in the second floor room once used by the preachers, is where John Fletcher's study chair awaits discovery by anyone prepared to climb the stairs.

Now having introduced John Wesley's great friend and supporter, the Rev John Fletcher, the Vicar of Madeley, we can leave it until

a later edition of Window on Wesley's to provide the information that confirms the mistaken nature of the conclusions drawn by the writer of the Times book review.

***Keith Dutton - Heritage Steward***

**SUNDAY SERVICES IN AUGUST/SEPTEMBER**

**August**

7<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Morning Service & Holy Communion  
Preacher: Leslie Griffiths  
Officiants: Robert Maginley

14<sup>th</sup> 9.45am Holy Communion – Jennifer Potter  
11.00am Morning Service – Leslie Griffiths

21<sup>st</sup> 9.45am Holy Communion – Leslie Griffiths  
11.00am Morning Worship – Leslie Griffiths

28<sup>th</sup> 9.45am Holy Communion – Jennifer Potter  
11.00am Morning Service – Kido Baek  
7.00pm Taizé Prayer Service

**September**

4<sup>th</sup> 11.00am Morning Service & Holy Communion  
Preacher: Revd Roger Walton, President of Conference  
Officiant: Leslie Griffiths

11<sup>th</sup> 9.45am Holy Communion – tbc  
11.00am Morning Service – tbc

18<sup>th</sup> 9.45am Holy Communion – tbc  
11.00am Morning Worship – tbc

24<sup>th</sup> 9.45am Holy Communion – tbc  
11.00am Morning Service – tbc

25<sup>th</sup> 9.45am Holy Communion – tbc  
11.00am Morning Service – tbc  
7.00pm Taizé Prayer Service

**Thursday lunchtimes in August  
at Wesley's Chapel  
(12.45-1.15pm)**

***Places of Pilgrimage***

**August**

<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Iona</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Bardsey Island</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Walsingham</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Canterbury</b>

***ALL ARE WELCOME***

**August/September Cradle Role Birthdays**

**August**

<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Maison Forbes-Grey</b>	<b>4 years</b>
<b>14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Joel Annang-Allotey</b>	<b>3 years</b>

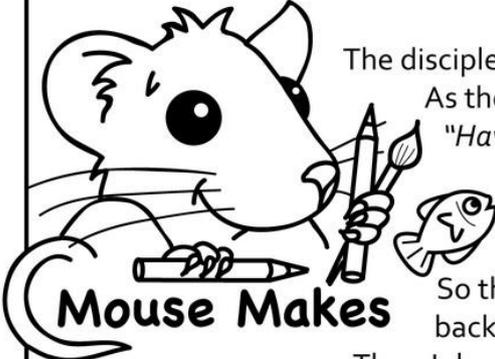
**September**

<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Zachariah Morris</b>	<b>3 years</b>
<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Jackson Coley</b>	<b>3 years</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Simonette Bobie</b>	<b>3 years</b>
<b>14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Arianna Nutor</b>	<b>3 years</b>

May God bless these children and their families



# Children's Page

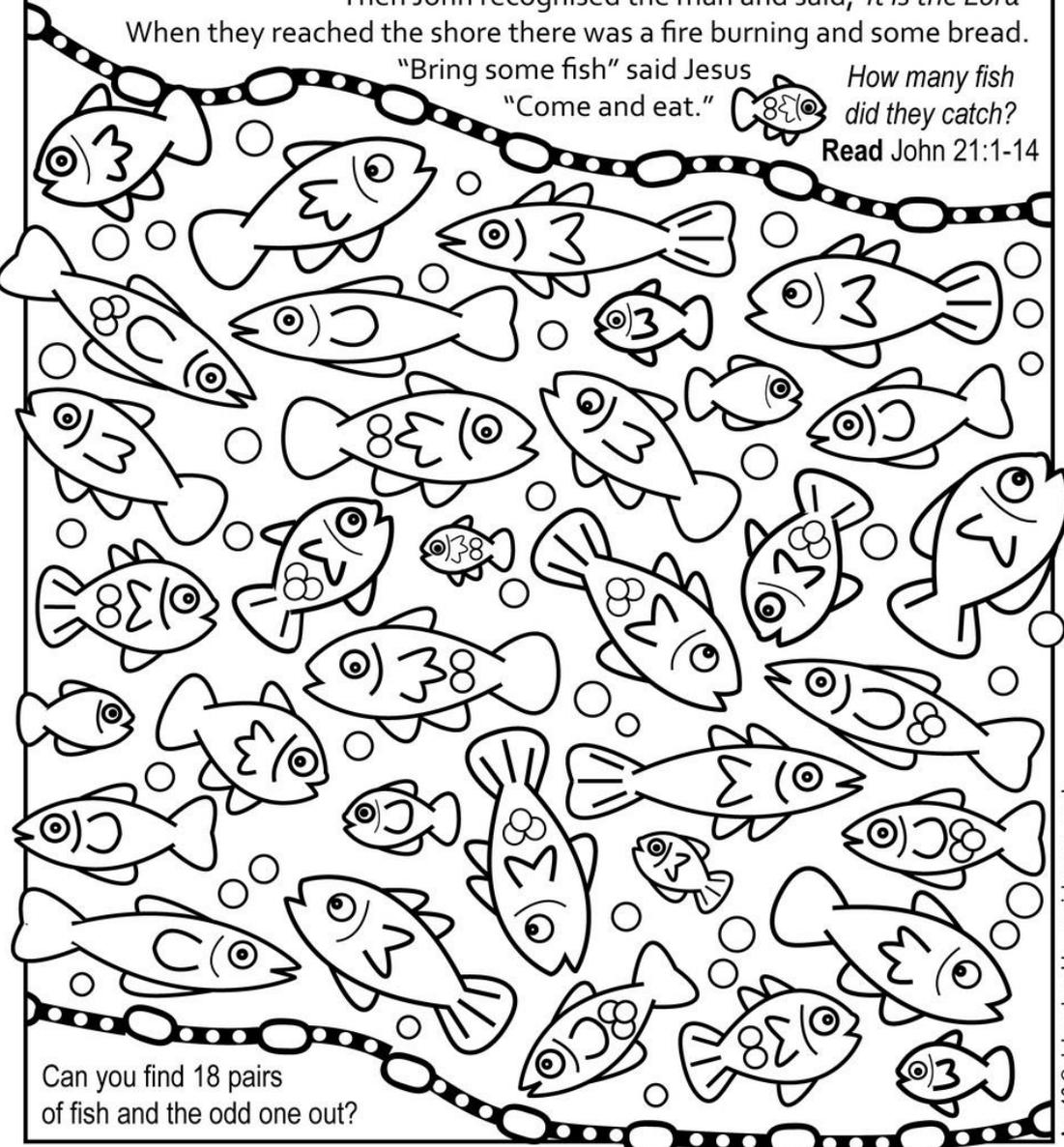


**Mouse Makes**

### THE BIG CATCH OF FISH

The disciples had spent all night out on the lake fishing. As the sun rose a man on the shore asked them, "Have you caught anything?" They answered, "Not a thing". He said to them "Throw your net out on the right side of the boat and you will catch some." So they threw the net out and could not pull it back in because they had caught so many fish. Then John recognised the man and said, "It is the Lord" When they reached the shore there was a fire burning and some bread. "Bring some fish" said Jesus "Come and eat."

How many fish did they catch?  
Read John 21:1-14



Can you find 18 pairs of fish and the odd one out?

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## Weekly programme of events

Sunday	9.45am	Holy Communion (except 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in month)
	11.00am	Morning Service
	12.30pm	Methodist Women in Britain (MWIB) (First Sunday in the month)
	12.30pm	Wesley's Chapel Ghana Fellowship (Last Sunday in the month)
	7.00pm	Taizé Evening Service (Last Sunday in the month)
Monday	7.00am	Prayer Meeting
	2.00pm	Sisterhood Fellowship
Tuesday	1.05 pm	Lunchtime Recital
	7.45pm	Boys' Brigade (Company & Seniors: over 11's)
Wednesday	10.00am	Stay and Play (pre-school)
	12.45pm	Service of Holy Communion
Thursday	12.45 pm	Lunchtime Service
Friday	7.00pm	Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association (Juniors: 8-11 years)

**If you would like to submit an article, poem, prayer or item of interest for this magazine please email it to:**

**[pa@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:pa@wesleyschapel.org.uk)**

**or leave it at the Church Office marked FAO Tracey Smith**