

# **WINDOW ON WESLEY'S**



**OCTOBER 2017**

## **STAFF**

**Ministers:** The Revd Dr Jennifer Smith BA PhD M.Phil  
(Superintendent)  
The Revd Jennifer Potter BTh MA MSc

**Associate Ministers:** The Revd Pauline Barnett MA  
(Supernumerary)

The Revd John Cooke MA (Supernumerary)

The Revd Brian Goss MA (Supernumerary)

The Revd Dr John Lampard BA M.Th  
(Supernumerary)

The Revd Stephen Penrose (Supernumerary)

The Revd Ian Yates (Supernumerary)

**Authorised Presbyter:** The Revd Dr Keith Riglin MA MTh ThD

**Leysian Missioner:** Mrs Judith Bell MA (Cantab)

**Community Worker:** Ms Sally Rush

**Museum:** Mr Christian Dettlaff MA (Curator)  
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*‘Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, that he may come and rain righteousness upon you.’ Hosea 10.12*

Every church has seasons in its life, and every minister in her ministry. What an adventure to begin this next season together with you at Wesley’s Chapel, and in the City Road circuit. And this community has welcomed me with open arms: thank you so much for your care and growing fellowship, it has been second to none.

I have had a sense of holding back in these last months leading up to September, as if accompanied in my weekly round by a gentle companion whispering, ‘not yet -’ In our Methodist system of stationing, I continued in my past station for a further eight months after ‘matching,’ so my sense of professional anticipation has been high. I know there are things in the life of this church where there has been an equal sense of holding back, of preparation. And not just among those faithful people getting the manse in such a welcoming state, thank you specially for all your care and work!

At Wesley’s Chapel you have been saying goodbye to Leslie and Margaret, along with Kido Baek and his family and the others who are changing roles, and you have done this with great care and skill. It is hard, changing ministers, and we must make room for healthy grief and leave-taking. You do not just turn off your affection for a minister with whom you have had a fruitful relationship like you turn off a tap, that would be unnatural and it is not expected. I know the churches who have just said goodbye to me would agree about this too. Because we were late in the Methodist process last year, I was not replaced in Ealing and they have had a years’ gap. This means they well understand the anxiety of the ‘stationing’ process by which we get new ministers in Methodism, and in which we at City road are already seeking a replacement for Jennifer Potter to start in September 2018. Watch this space: the trustees hope to have good news soon.

Finally, it is time to begin: 'Now is the time to break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord,' says the prophet Hosea. The context of Hosea's call is the festival of Sukkoth, a celebration of Harvest and of the memory of Israel's time in the wilderness. For me, arriving here and beginning work does feel like a time of harvest, having waited and planned for so long to come. But even with the focus on the good things at hand, the prophet reminds us to look to the future. Now is the time for looking at ourselves, our surrounding community, and our church - every life to see where God is calling us forward.

Where is our fallow, that is, undeveloped ground? What patches of unused, unseen resource have we among us, what talents and ideas, what hopes for the future? What tiredness or anxiety have we that needs soothing? This process is not about the scrutiny of inspection, but more like a child shaking wrapped gifts under a tree on Christmas morning – and we should approach it with equal joy, and gentleness.

Make no mistake, breaking up 'fallow' ground is hard work, as anyone who has cleared a disused allotment will know. It is especially hard as there are not immediate outcomes, but only the promise of coming years' harvest. It requires we hold our nerve when backs begin to ache and hands blister. But God's promise is sure: the rain of steadfast love and righteousness will come.

I look forward to this first season with you immensely, thank you again for the welcome you have given me and my whole household.

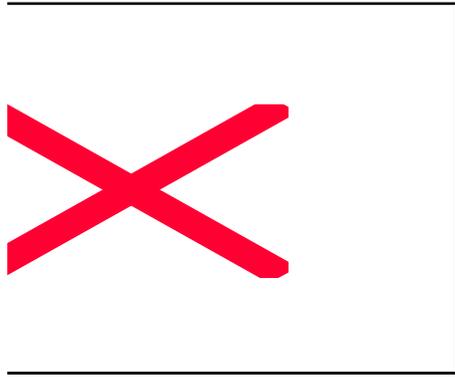
With every blessing, *Jen*

### **A few more facts about me:**

I was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1971, and my parents still live outside Boston in the United States. I have a younger brother Andrew who lives in California, and my parents are active members in the United Church of Christ; I became a member of

the Episcopal Church during University in Charlottesville, Virginia, and came to the UK for a teaching job in 1993.

In the small world department, while I was working at Uppingham School, I was a junior colleague to Martin Priestley, who is now



Head of The Leys School with whom the Chapel has an historic Covenant. During the time of my first marriage I finished doctoral studies in politics, for which I studied the development of religious liberty in the ideas of Roger Williams, a mad but loveable sometime-Baptist who founded the colony that would become Rhode

Island. I also joined the Methodist Church in Leicester, where I was lecturing at the university. I still keep a hobby in 17<sup>th</sup> century ideas, but only a hobby. Many will find this a relief!

I trained for the ministry at the Queens Foundation at the University of Birmingham, and was put to work in a wonderful church in Handsworth for 18 months: I put on a stone in weight which says good things about the fellowship, and the resulting study was published in part as *'Vex the devil': Scripture, God-talk and holiness at Villa Road,* in the journal *Holiness* a while ago.

I was stationed in the Kettering and Corby Circuit (Northamptonshire) in September 2005, and ordained in 2007. The Cliff College International Learning Centre has taken me to Nigeria eight times and Sierra Leone once to teach alongside local staff on courses for ministers, Bishops, and lay women leaders. Aside from that, I have been a trustee with the Nigeria Health Care Project, a Methodist charity that supports rural health care missions of the Methodist Church Nigeria, since spending six weeks on pastoral placement at the leprosy colony of the Uzuakoli Diocese back in 2001. I support the Nigerian Chaplaincy here in the UK, and look forward to learning more about Ghana and the many other nations from which we hail.

Methodism stationed me to Ealing Trinity circuit in 2009, and I became Superintendent in 2010/11 while serving two churches in Acton and Ealing, so I have been minister in a wide variety of contexts and churches. While there I oversaw a large building project for the complete refurbishment of a church, and was also appointed to the Methodist Faith and Order committee; I also serve on the connexional complaints panels and do a few other things to help keep our national church going with more joy and less worry.

In 2010 I married the Revd Dr Keith Riglin, who works at King's College London as Assistant Dean and Chaplain, and also joins our ministerial team as an Authorised Presbyter here at City Road. I have two grown up step daughters, Lucy (married to Liam) in Cardiff and Anna in Cambridge.



## Church News

Since the last edition of Window on Wesley's in August we have had four baptisms – we welcomed *Janelle Lily*, daughter of *Patience Domete* and *Frank Agyekum* on the 13<sup>th</sup> August, *Jayson Christopher* and *Reginald Franklyn* sons of *Christiana Denby* and *Sylvester Davies* on the 10<sup>th</sup> September and *River Leslie*, son to *Danielle* and *Ashley Walters* on the 17<sup>th</sup> September. It is always a joy to welcome children into the family of the Church and we wish God's blessing on all these children and their families.

We mentioned in the last edition of Window on Wesley's that *Norman Beasley*, a former Heritage Steward, choir member and Tuesday Recital organiser had died. The Chapel was well-represented at his funeral in the Forest Circuit and Norman's exploits at the Chapel were suitably recognised.

A small private funeral was held for *Ivy Green* on the 30<sup>th</sup> August at Islington Crematorium at which Jennifer Potter officiated. On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September there was a Thanksgiving Service for her in the Chapel, attended by family members, residents of the block in which she used to live and members of Sisterhood. It was good to be able to pay fitting tribute to someone who had been such a long-standing member of the Chapel and of the Leysian Mission before 1989. May her soul rest in peace.

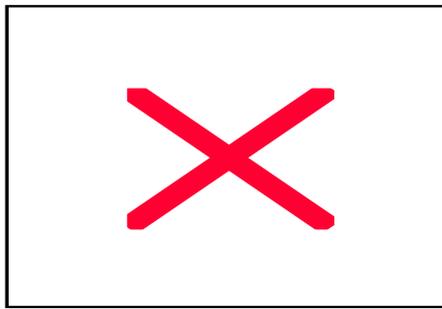
On the 9<sup>th</sup> September we had a joyful occasion here at the Chapel when *Gideon and Dorothy Adjei* had their wedding blessing. They have long been married – 40 years in fact – since their civil ceremony! However they had long wished for the opportunity to have their union blessed in church and this year was the time when that was possible. We congratulate them and wish them well into the future. It was amazing to them at Church the next morning even though they had had a very long day before.

*Abigail Adjin-Tettey* has had an operation and we are happy to report that she is progressing on the road to recovery. We hope that she is soon fully restored to health.

*Margaret Hazard* has also had part one of a two-part operation and, in October will have part two. We pray that she will feel re-energised by these interventions.

*Jean David Eynard* who has lived on and off with us in the bedsits for some years has now gone off to Oxford University to pursue a Masters/PhD having gained a First Class degree in English Literature from Queen Mary. We wish him well as he embarks on this latest stage in his academic life.

A friend of Jean David's, *Phoebe Liu*, who is just in the process of completing her Masters Course at the Warburg Institute will be moving in to our bedsits and we welcome her. Also moving in for just a short time is *Satomi Noda Baek, wife of Chin*. Chin has a secondment from his company to go and work in South Korea for a while. He has already left and Satomi will join him soon.



All we Can' is the Methodist Church's Relief and Development Agency. They are looking for a person to join their team whose role will be to inspire churches across London and the South East.

If you or someone you know is:

- **Passionate about ending poverty?**
- **Highly driven and self-motivated?**
- **Good at fostering relationships and raising support?**

From speaking to a church congregation to conversing with an individual, as an inspirational speaker this person will be adept at communicating All We Can's work and able to apply Biblical concepts to issues of justice.

This job plays a valuable part in All We Can, helping us to grow our income and offer close contact to our supporters. In this role, you will foster relationships and support our volunteers and contacts with existing and new church supporters, to help grow the engagement with our appeals, fundraising and other initiatives through church networks in London and the South East.

**For more information and to apply visit:**

[www.allwecan.org.uk/London](http://www.allwecan.org.uk/London)

Thank you for your support for All We Can, please pass this information on to those you know who are suited for this role.

If you would like to know more about 'All We Can' please speak to Jennifer Potter.

## Before and After

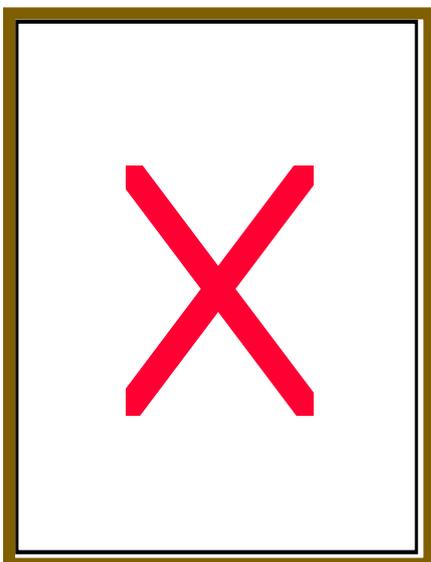
We are often used to seeing advertisements, which show before/after-sometimes to do with dieting, sometimes to do with the attributes of various cleaning materials. Well here is one of the latter but with low-tech cleaning materials having done the job. Aisha Al-Sadie, our Learning and Development Officer, spent six hours transforming this old tea urn using ketchup, salt and lemon juice.

This Tea Urn probably dates from the years around 1840 but it looks very similar to those used in Wesley's time during the Georgian period. It has been in our collection since 1995.

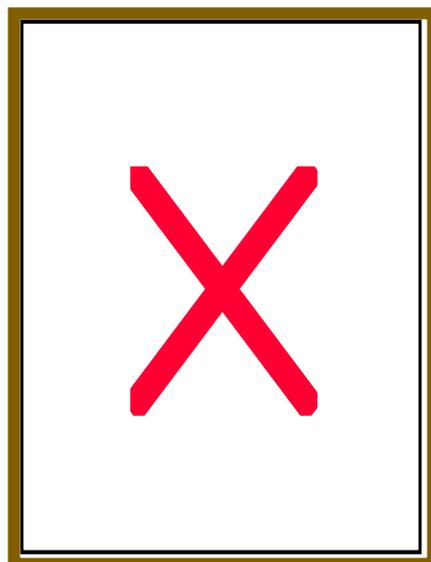
Although John Wesley did not drink regular tea (it was very expensive in his time) he did drink Sage tea which would have been grown in his garden. Wesley and his successors in the house may also have provided regular tea for visitors or have drunk it from this urn themselves. Our urn is made from copper and brass rather than the more expensive silver.

This urn is now on display – why not take a look in John Wesley's House?

**Before**

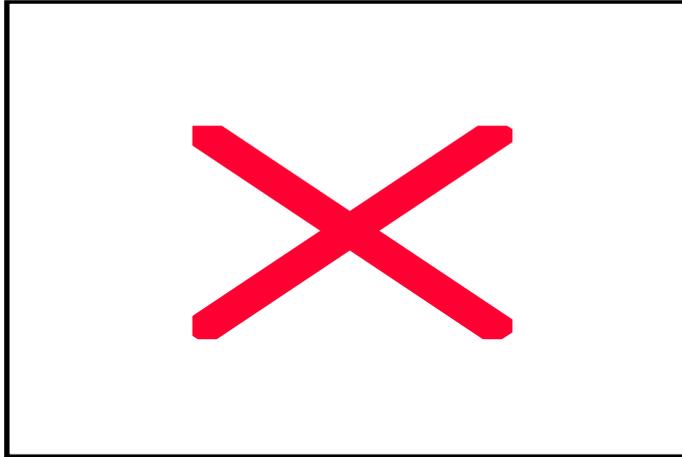


**After**



## Saying Farewell, Thank You and Welcome

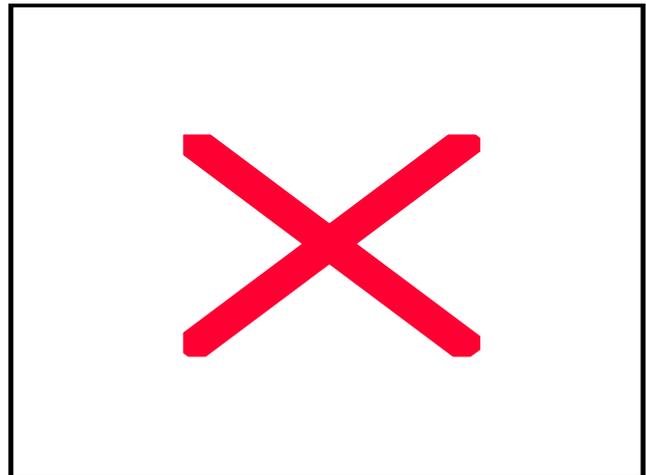
Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> August was a time to say goodbye to two members of our pastoral staff as they left for pastures new – Leslie to



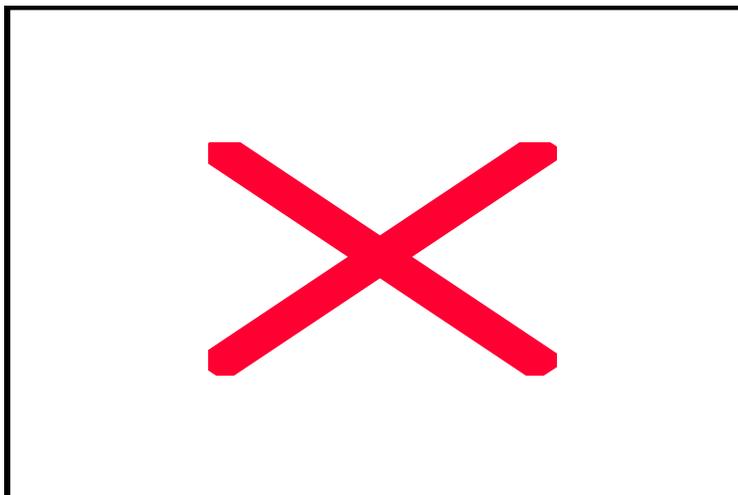
retirement in Croydon and Kido to take up his first appointment as a minister in our neighbouring Circuit of Barking, Dagenham and Ilford.

On that day we also said a big 'thank you' to Brian Goss, Joy Leitch and Peter

Briggs. None of these three are going away – they are just laying down some of their responsibilities. Rest assured you will still see them around. Many people came for the service and there were numerous reunions especially among our young people.



Our intrepid caretaker and photographer, Adrian Beviss managed to capture some photos of the event from some unusual angles.



## **A thank you letter from Brian Goss**

A few weeks ago I was very moved to receive – through the post a gigantic greetings card with the words on the front cover, “THANK YOU SO MUCH!”, and inside 63 kind and gracious messages from members of our Wesley’s Chapel community. Breath-taking! It must be sixteen years ago since I received a letter from Leslie Griffiths saying that he was in some difficulty with the pastoral work, and could I give him a hand?

It was five years since I had retired from the active work of the Methodist ministry, and we were worshipping at Clapton Park (in the Hackney Circuit), where we were, Zena had become the Treasurer, and organised the cleaning of the premises to which we contributed!). However, others agreed to fill those roles, and so began an epilogue to my ministry for which I shall ever be grateful.

From now on (may I say), we shall continue to occupy the same pew and greatly look forward to experiencing the ministry of the Revd Dr Jennifer Smith, her husband the Revd Dr Keith Riglin, and the finale of her colleague and our dear friend, the Revd Jennifer Potter.

Blessings on one and all!

***The Revd Brian Goss***

Hi, I’m Sally Rush, the new Community Worker with Younger Adults (that’s 18-40 year olds). In my first few weeks here I’ve been pleased that 8 of the young people attached to this church have been put in touch with chaplaincies at their universities. In this article I want to say a little about what University chaplaincy is and give a few pointers of how we can support our young people who are at college or university – whether they are studying at home or further afield.

You might wonder why I feel qualified to talk on the subject? Well for the past two years, before starting at Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission in September, I was one of the lay Free Church chaplains at Aston University in Birmingham. Over that time I lived



in a flat at the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological in Birmingham where my husband was training for Methodist presbyteral ministry. Before that I worked for 15 years as an A Level teacher and tutor in Further Education and 6<sup>th</sup> Form colleges. I've also been a student in various universities at both

undergraduate and post-graduate level myself. Finally, I have a daughter, Immy, who's 23 and so I've been a parent going through the journey too.

Anyway, back to the topic in hand.....supporting our students who are going to university.

### **1) Encourage them to make links with churches and chaplaincies whilst they're studying**

Education is great and gives brilliant opportunities but it also presents challenges. These may vary from worries about money or anxiety about getting the right grades for their chosen career to feelings of loneliness or wondering "who am I?" Chaplaincies provide people to support them, or signpost them to other sources of help as well (and more importantly) opportunities to explore with others those big questions of "who am I?" and "where do I fit in?". They also provide great social opportunities to those who might not want the full on party lifestyle 24/7.

### **2) Be interested in what they're doing and commit to pray for them, especially over exam time**

Whilst young adults don't like people being nosy, they do appreciate people taking an interest. Whilst they may or may not want to connect with you on social media, they'll appreciate you

just letting them know you're thinking about them as they study and are willing to pray for them. Ask if they're happy to give you their deadlines and / or exam dates so you can commit to pray for them during those really stressful times. You might also at those times want to send them a luxury gift like a card loaded up for their favourite coffee shop – so they can get good coffee whilst revising.

### **3) Be happy to see them when they come back**

When young people come home for the holidays research (by Guest, M et, al 2013), tells us they are more likely to go to church than when at university. If that's the case be glad to see them.... don't start criticising them. You might encourage them to try the chaplaincy as discussed earlier, but welcome the fact they are here during the vacation and try to keep them up to date with what we have going on.

### **4) Remember they have to make their choices not yours**

When students go to university we can sometimes question the choices they are making: how much to drink, which modules to study, which career path to follow. We can advise people and give them the information to help them make good choices but we can't make their choices for them. Our young people need to know that sometimes it will go well and sometimes it won't but that we are still here for them. If you know a student who is making what you regard as bad choices try to find out how and why they're making those decisions. Signpost them, where possible, to information which can help them (again this is where chaplaincies can be important).

### **5) Share information with them and encourage them to take opportunities**

Finding a job or internship today is hard work. That's one reason why part of my work with students and other young adults is helping them to build their CV's. Volunteering in church and

elsewhere gives our young people all kinds of transferrable skills but it can be hard for them to know how to describe these to an employer. That's part of the work that people like chaplains (alongside careers departments) often do with them. Also young people might be thinking about what kind of career and company matches their value set. They can also be supported in doing this. If you want to know more about anything I've said in this article please don't hesitate to talk to me in church or email [cw@wesleys.org.uk](mailto:cw@wesleys.org.uk) – Thanks **Sally**

### **Message from Pope Francis to the Synod of the Italian Protestant Waldensian Church**

*For many years Protestant Churches in Italy were marginalised and scarcely thought of as Christian Churches at all. The Methodist Church in Italy works closely with the Waldensian Church. The current Pope has adopted a very different attitude to the Waldensians, attended their Synod last year and sent this message to their recent Synod.*

“On the occasion of the opening of your annual Synod, I wish to express the Catholic Church's and my own closeness to you. I greet you fraternally and assure you with much cordiality of my remembrance in prayer.

I keep alive in my memory our recent meetings at Turin and Rome, as well as those in Argentina. I am grateful for the beautiful testimonies I have received and for the many faces I cannot forget. I hope that these days of sharing and reflection, which are taking place on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, are animated by the joy of putting yourselves before the face of Christ; may His gaze, which is turned to us, be the source of our peace, so that we feel ourselves beloved children of the Father and makes us see others, the world and history in new way.

May Jesus' gaze also illumine our relations, so that they are not only formal and correct but fraternal and lively. The Good

Shepherd wills us to be on the way together, and His gaze now embraces all of us, His disciples that He desires to see fully united.

It is so important to walk towards full unity, with a look of hope that acknowledges the presence of God stronger. It is so especially today, in a world marked by violence and fear, of lacerations and indifference, where the egoism of affirming oneself at the expense of others darkens the simple beauty of welcoming, sharing and loving one another. However, our Christian witness cannot yield to the logic of the world: together we must help one another to choose and live the logic of Christ!

I thank you with fraternal affection and ask you, please, not to forget to pray for me and for all of us your brothers and sisters.”

From the Vatican, August 10, 2017

## ***FRANCIS***

### **A Long Pilgrimage to Wesley's Chapel**

On the first Sunday of September, in addition to the President and Vice President of the Conference, we had another visitor who had



travelled much further than they and all on foot! Our visitor was Rev Jorg Niederer, a Methodist minister from Switzerland.

When Rev Niederer decided to plan a spiritual pilgrimage, he bypassed the more popular European destinations of Rome and Assisi in favour of Wesley's grave at Wesley's Chapel. He made his journey on foot – 652 miles – as part of a three month sabbatical.

Rev Niederer said, “When I organised my journey to London, I didn't think about sponsorship to begin with. Then I remembered

that millions of people in the world do their journeys not for fun, but because they are forced to flee their homes because of hunger or war so I set out to raise at least \$15,000 in sponsorship for refugees and migrants.

Revd Niederer walked down the aisle with the ministers at the beginning of the service. He had walked from Greenwich that morning and it was wonderful that he could celebrate the first Sunday of the new Church year with us.

***Jennifer Potter***

### **Ecumenical Autumn Course 2017**

In October, as has become our tradition, we will be sharing in the study of a book. 'Being Disciples' with our local churches.

- **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October at St. Giles' Cripplegate**
- **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October at Jewin Welsh Church in Fann Street**
- **Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October at St Joseph's Hall, Lamb's Passage**
- **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October at Wesley's Chapel**

If you would like a copy of the book, please see Jennifer Potter

### **Harvest Festival & the Whitechapel Mission**

This year our Harvest Festival will be on **the second Sunday of October – the 8<sup>th</sup>** and as usual we will bring items for distribution to the Whitechapel Mission for their work with homeless people.

As always there are items that the Mission needs desperately – here is a list; **baked beans, plum tomatoes, sugar, coffee, honey, biscuits and instant chocolate.**

The Mission not only supplies breakfast but gives people the opportunity to have a wash and brush up so the following toiletries are also urgently needed – **toothbrushes and razors.**

Here are a few statistics which give an insight into the work of the Mission. In 2016:

- **113,515 breakfasts were served**
- **6941 different people used the services**
- **10% of people using our services were under 26 years old.**
- **29 people were helped to find employment**
- **311 people received help to claim benefits.**
- **113 people were found permanent accommodation**
- **146 people were found hostel accommodation.**

If you would be interested in knowing more about the Whitechapel Mission or about how to volunteer, please contact Jennifer Potter.

When Sisterhood had a discussion about the Harvest Festivals we remembered from our youth – people spoke of fresh fruit and vegetables and the wonderful smell that pervaded the church. It is not possible for Whitechapel Mission to accept fresh goods and that is why we do not ask for them. However the members of Sisterhood also spoke about bringing flowers to church at Harvest Festival and there is no reason why we cannot do that and then distribute them to those who are ill or too frail to come to church. So, if you would like to bring flowers on the **8<sup>th</sup> October**, please do so.



## Islington in Bloom- Best Community Centre Garden



For a number of years Wesley's Chapel has entered the 'Islington in Bloom' Competition and the best we had achieved in our category up to now was second place. This year we have excelled ourselves and have gained the second place. We also received £100 of vouchers for Camden Garden Centre to purchase more plants. This is a wonderful recognition of the work done by a whole group of people not least our two caretakers – Adrian and Dino.

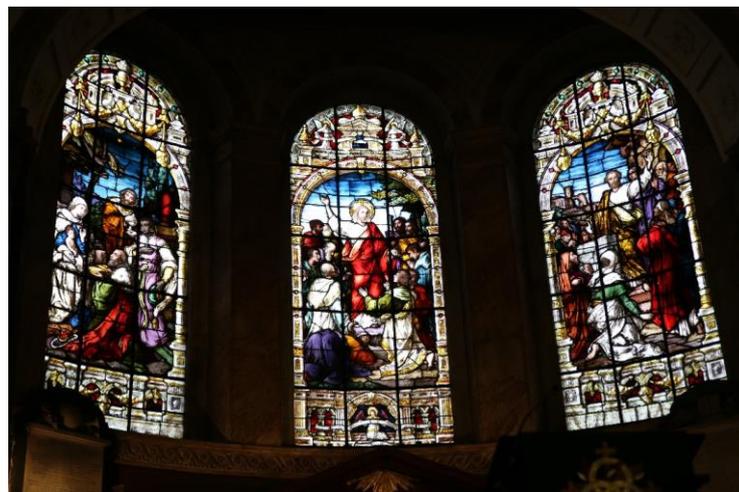
Those of you who come only on Sundays would be surprised to see how many people make use of our gardens at both the back and the front of the Chapel, during the week – as a place to have

their lunch or just a quiet place to sit away from the busy City Road. They really appreciate our gardens.

If you are a resident of Islington think about entering the competition – there are many categories including for those who just have space for a window box. If you are interested, see Jennifer or ‘google’ Islington in Bloom. I am sure other Boroughs have a similar scheme, too.



### A Sermon in Glass



I am sure you recognise the photo of the three stained glass window in the apse of Wesley’s Chapel. Some people are very interested in stained glass and study the windows carefully. Other people probably never give them a second thought. However, on August 20<sup>th</sup> in the context of his sermon, John Lampard used

these windows as a visual aid and based his sermon around them as, in his words, he wanted to share 'the challenging theology that lies behind these windows.'

First of all the background to these windows. All three of them were unveiled on three separate occasions in 1893 by different branches of Methodism. They were intended to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of John Wesley's death but arrived two years late! The window on the left is entitled "Adoration of the Magi" and was presented by the Wesleyan Reform Union. If you look you will see that Mary and the three Wise Men form a circle around the infant Jesus. A rather mature looking Christ child sits on Mary's lap as if ready to receive his gifts. Top left is a rough, realistic stable which shelters Mary and Jesus. A dark sky reveals the guiding star. At the bottom left you can see a crown placed at the feet of Jesus perhaps indicating that Christ is Lord of all. The red column on the right has a crack across it. It is said that this represents the breaking of the Old Covenant with Abraham and the coming of the New Covenant in Christ. This window reminds us that the Good News of Jesus Christ is for all the world.

The middle window was presented by the United Methodist Free Churches (a union of Bible Christians, the Methodist New Connexion and a number of smaller churches) and is entitled "The Apostolic Commission" – "Go ye therefore and teach all nations." Christ dominates the window and he is surrounded by the eleven disciples/apostles. This window is a fine representation of the climax of Jesus' ministry, his sending out of his apostles to make disciples of all nations.

The window on the right was presented to Wesley's Chapel by the Primitive Methodist Church and as a witness to the oneness of the Methodist Family. It is entitled "Solomon's Porch" and Peter dominates the window as he proclaims the Gospel in Solomon's Porch at the Temple immediately after Pentecost.

The proclamation of the Gospel in the Open Air is related to the donor – the Primitive Methodists who recovered the early

Methodist emphasis of preaching outdoors. Behind Peter's hand is a startling detail of Mow Cop Folly in Staffordshire – the location of the first Primitive Methodist Camp Meeting in 1807 set against the Jerusalem skyline!

John Lampard reminded us that the themes of these three windows are unusual and very Methodist – 'hope in the birth of Christ,' the command to 'go into all the world,' and the challenge to continuing to preach the Gospel in word and deed. That is still 'our calling to the present age'!

## The Reformation

On 31 October 1517 Martin Luther pinned 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, protesting against the practice of indulgences and touching on questions of grace, repentance and forgiveness.



The Reformation was a culmination of events and circumstances that led to a seismic shift in the religious framework of Europe and of

Britain.

For Britain it established the image of an island nation, separate and supreme, still resonant today. It triggered a religious and political redistribution of power. It led to renewal and reform but also to deep division, persecution and violence. And out of this turmoil were born concepts of state and church as we know them today.

In this 500th anniversary year of the Reformation, many Christians will want to give thanks for its great blessings, including clear proclamation of the gospel of grace, the availability of the Bible to all in their own language, and the recognition of the calling of lay people to serve God in the world and in the church. Yet many will remember also the lasting damage done to the unity of the church. Those turbulent years saw Christians pitted against

each other, such that many suffered persecution and even death at the hands of others claiming to know the same Lord. As Christianity spread around the world in the centuries that followed, it would carry with it that legacy of mistrust and competition. The 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation provides the opportunity to explore and reflect upon issues of church, state, and religious and cultural diversity that are still at the centre of our national life: the conflicts that divide, and the convictions diverse parts of the Christian church hold sacred – the pillars on which their faith stands or falls. How are we called to be reformed by the Gospel? How do we build the unity Christ called for with those whose convictions are very different from our own? There are many events going on around London to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation – worship services, concerts and lectures. If you are interested to know more just 'google' Reformation 500 or speak to Jennifer Potter.

### **Moving Stories – our District Focus**

At the London Methodist District Synod at the beginning of September a new initiative was launched entitled 'Moving Stories.' It is intended to be a theme which runs for a number of years, allows the whole District to be focused and tells good news stories.

Here are the aims as set out on the District website:

#### **Moving Stories - Aims**

- to recognise and celebrate that migration is very much part of the Methodist story
- to release creative energy by encouraging the District to work together on a common theme
- to enable all Circuits within the District to engage with the theme
- to learn how church communities have been affected by migration and how they have involved themselves in the issues related to migration

- to celebrate, tell and share stories of migration as we celebrate 'Moving Stories'
- to challenge those in power to tell the good news stories of migration and to better support migrants and the communities in which they come to live.

'Migration' has risen up the political agenda recently in response to the growing number of humanitarian crises and disasters but also as a result of growing xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment in many countries.

The whole issue of migration often gets a bad press and is presented in the media in a sensationalist way. It is important that we get beyond these simplistic presentations of migration. Migration has touched every group and every family on earth from the very beginning of human history. Migration is at the heart of the Biblical record especially of the Old Testament.

Migration is a complex phenomenon – it can be within countries and between countries, forced or voluntary and temporary, permanent or cyclical or any combination of these elements.

Over the coming months we shall look more deeply into 'moving stories' both across history and as they have affected us. We shall look at some of the family histories represented in the congregation as an illustration of how we, as individuals and as a congregation have been affected by migration. If you would like to be part of this, please speak to Jennifer Potter.



## **SERENDIPITY 26: A Brand Plucked from the Burning?**

### **Part Two: The 18<sup>th</sup> Century and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Incidents**

The first part of this article described how the six year old John Wesley had a last minute escape from apparently certain death when his family home was destroyed as a result of arson. Although John Wesley often referred to himself as a “brand plucked from the burning”, Wesley’s Chapel might too merit such a description, for several times over the centuries, it has narrowly avoided the fate that John so nearly suffered that night of February 9<sup>th</sup> three hundred and eight years ago.

The first time that John Wesley’s Chapel came very close to being consumed by fire was in December 1780; just two years after the building had been opened for worship. Then, the threat came from a fierce blaze which broke out in a builder’s yard in nearby Worship Street. Here, large amounts of timber were being stored in preparation for the extensive development work being put in hand by the owner. The Mr Tooth who was the builder friend of Mr Wesley, and constructor of both the latter’s Chapel and his house as well as other buildings on the campus.

We know of this incident because of an entry in John Wesley’s Journal, where he recorded:

*Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December 1780 – Waking between one and two in the morning, I observed a bright light shine upon the Chapel. I easily concluded that there was a fire near, probably in the adjoining timber yard. If so it would soon lay us in ashes. I first called all the family to prayer; then going out, we found the fire about a hundred yards off, and had broke out while the wind was south. But a sailor cried out, Avast! Avast! the wind is turned in a moment! So it did to the west, while we were at prayer, and so drove the flames from us. We then thankfully returned, and I rested well the residue of the night.*

The sailor, presumably, an onlooker attracted by the awesome spectacle of the fire, shouted out the nautical term for, “stop, or

hold fast”, because as an experienced seaman he recognised that such gusts of wind were frequently liable to change direction. He thereby restrained Mr Wesley, (who was familiar with nautical terms), and his companions from fleeing what they had feared to be the inevitable destruction of the Chapel and the ancillary buildings in the absence of any means of securing their protection.

John Wesley does not tell us of what the effect of the change in the wind direction had on the other property in the area, but this was likely to have been of little consequence. This was because the fire would then have been blown towards the still unbuilt areas around or else to the nearby artillery fields and burial grounds.

The Chapel, John Wesley’s House and the other buildings on the campus thus survived undamaged and in gratitude to God, the following day, Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December, the Covenant Service was celebrated despite it not being the first day of the year but the last. Wesley noted that the “company” present was the largest he could remember and at least a hundred more than were there the year before.

After this escape, it was not until nearly a hundred years had passed, and long after John Wesley had been placed in his tomb, before his Chapel was again threatened with destruction. Incidentally, you can tell that the particular event that is now going to be recounted happened many years ago, because an outbreak of fire was discovered by a policeman who was “walking”, on his beat, past the Chapel at the time. Anyway, at around half past five on the very cold, frosty and foggy, winter’s morning of Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December 1879, the eye of this particular guardian of the law was caught by a bright glow illuminating the fog and emanating from the direction of the Morning Chapel. This being the building which then stood immediately adjacent to the north wall of Wesley’s Chapel, on the site now occupied by the Radnor Hall. On getting closer, the officer seeing through the swirls of fog, tongues of flame pouring out from under the Morning Chapel, hurriedly knocked on the front door of 47 City Road, John Wesley’s House,

then the manse, and alerted the Superintendent Minister, the Rev John Baker.

Aid was then summoned from the nearest fire station. Men and machines arrived on the scene very quickly so that they should then have had, it is said, more than sufficient time to bring the fire under control before any serious damage occurred. And so they would have, if it hadn't been for the mischance that their efforts were hampered by a combination of the early morning gloom and the prevailing weather conditions. Firstly, the fire crews had the greatest difficulty in finding the nearest fire hydrant because it was veiled from view by the semi-darkness of the December morning coupled with the thick fog then endemic to London. Even more frustratingly, when the hydrant was at last located its valve was found to be frozen solid, so that it required the application of salt to release the water flow. By then, the time which had elapsed had allowed the unchecked raging fire to spread from the Morning Chapel to the roof of Wesley's Chapel itself.

Hard work by the fire fighters, during the ensuing hours succeeded in both controlling and dowsing the flames. But, only after this had been brought about and in the cold light of day was it realised both just how much damage had been caused, but also how much worse the fires depredations might have been.

Although the Morning Chapel was almost entirely destroyed, the fire crews had been able to save the main structure and most of the contents of Wesley's Chapel itself. Nevertheless, this was only at the loss of part of the Adam style ceiling, while serious harm had been caused to the interior due to a combination of heat, smoke and water.

A contemporary account of the after effects of the fire exists in the form of a letter written by Miss Alice E. Monroe, a member of the Chapel at the time. In it she related what her father and brother had found later in the morning when they went into the building to recover the families hymn and prayer books from their pew. She wrote, *they were upset to find that the consequences were so much worse than they had hoped, with the Chapel floor ankle*

*deep in water and ice, the north side balcony badly damaged and the ceiling on that side so seriously harmed that pieces of plaster were still falling, the lettering on the back panels of the apse were all peeling away, while the pews on the south aisle were badly scorched. The only good news being that the pulpit had “scarcely any harm”.*

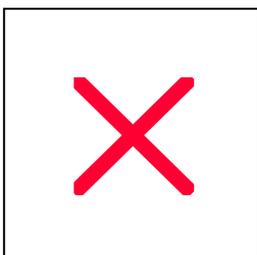
In due course, the restoration of the Chapel took place, in what was described as “a strictly conservative spirit”. This included replacing the part of the ceiling that had been destroyed, using plaster casts taken from the undamaged sections. The work, in as far as it went, was completed in time for the 1880 Wesleyan Conference. Nevertheless, it is likely that it was no more than a “patch-up job”, since it took the major redevelopment funded by the 1891 appeal, as described in Serendipity Twenty-Four, to completely overcome the after effects of the fire and to replace the Morning Chapel.

At this stage in our saga, having described two of the episodes in which Wesley’s Chapel, like the man who had it constructed as his London Head Quarters, escaped from a fiery death, the continuation of the story will be left to a later edition of Window on Wesley’s.

***Keith Dutton - Heritage Steward***

### **Wesley’s Chapel Shop**

There are a number of new items in the Museum shop including differently coloured coasters. Before the Christmas rush why not take time to go down there after the service on a Sunday or during the week if you are able to get here. We also have some Wesley’s Chapel Christmas Cards again this year.



You can also go online – [www.wesleysheritage.org.uk](http://www.wesleysheritage.org.uk) – see what items are stocked in the shop and order online if you wish.

**October Lunchtime Recitals**  
**Tuesdays @ 1.05pm**

- 3rd**            **Maite Aguirre - Piano**
- 10<sup>th</sup>**          **Laura Balboa & Nice Vizoso – Piano & violin**
- 17<sup>th</sup>**          **Aliya Turetayeva - Piano**
- 24<sup>th</sup>**          **Tricolore Trio – Clarinet, Violin, Piano**
- 31<sup>st</sup>**          **Katherine Clarke - Viola**



**CRADLE ROLL BIRTHDAYS - OCTOBER**

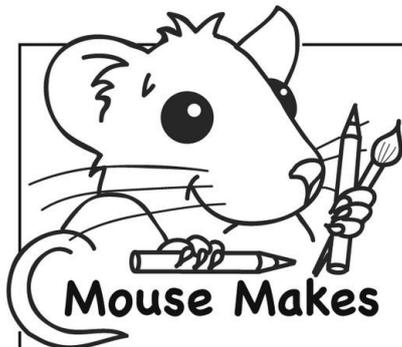
- 12<sup>th</sup> Silua Esdelle 4 years  
24<sup>th</sup> Kirsty Afriyie 5 years

May God bless these children and their families

**SUNDAY SERVICES IN OCTOBER**

- |                  |                             |  |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>  | 11.00am                     | Morning Service & Holy Communion<br>Preacher: Jennifer Smith<br>Officiant: Jennifer Potter           |
| 8 <sup>th</sup>  | 9.45am<br>11.00am           | Holy Communion – Jennifer Smith<br>Morning Service – Jennifer Potter                                 |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> | 9.45am<br>11.00am           | Holy Communion – Jennifer Potter<br>Morning Service – Jennifer Smith                                 |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> | 9.45am<br>11.00am           | Holy Communion – John Lampard<br>Morning Service – Jennifer Potter                                   |
| 29 <sup>th</sup> | 9.45am<br>11.00am<br>7.00pm | Holy Communion – Jennifer Potter<br>Morning Service – Jennifer Smith<br>Taizé Evening prayer service |

# CHILDREN'S PAGE



**Ezekiel** the prophet had a special dream from God. In his dream he stood in the middle of a **valley full** of a **great** many **bones**. God made him **walk** around them, then God said;

“**Son** of man, can these bones **live**?” Ezekiel replied; “**Sovereign Lord**, you know.”

God told Ezekiel to **prophesy** over the bones, to tell **them**; “**Dry** bones, **hear** the word of the Lord, I am about to put **breath** into **you** and you will live. I will put **tendons** on you and **muscles** over you and **cover** you with **skin**,

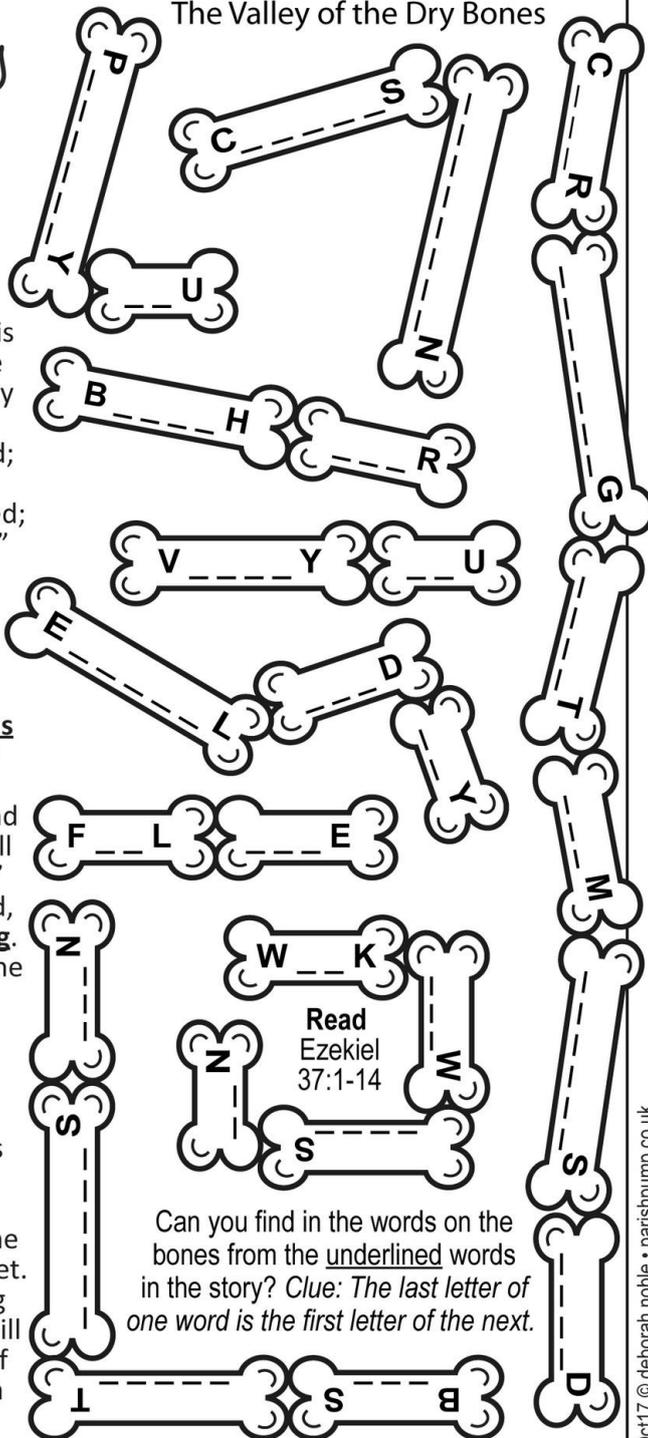
I will put breath in you and you will live. Then **you** will **know** that I am the Lord.”

So Ezekiel did as God had said, he heard the **sound** of **rattling**. The bones came together bone to bone, then tendons and muscles and skin appeared on them. God told Ezekiel to say to the breath; “Come, breath, from the four **winds** and breathe on these corpses so that they may live.”

Ezekiel spoke what God had told him and the **corpses** came alive and stood on their feet.

God explained the meaning of the dream and said; “I will put my **Spirit** in the people of Israel and they will know I am the Lord and they will live.”

## The Valley of the Dry Bones



Read Ezekiel 37:1-14

Can you find in the words on the bones from the underlined words in the story? *Clue: The last letter of one word is the first letter of the next.*

*Evening*

# Taizé

*Wesley's Chapel*



*A Service of prayer, Song and Contemplation*

**Last Sunday of every month  
at 7.00pm**

## 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
	6.30pm	Boys' Brigade & Girls' Association (11 & under)
	7.45pm	Boys' Brigade (over 11's)
Wednesday	10.00am	Stay and Play (pre-school)
	12.45pm	Service of Holy Communion
Thursday	12.45pm	Lunchtime Service

**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**