

# WINDOW ON WESLEY'S



NOVEMBER 2020

## **STAFF**

**Ministers:** The Revd Canon Dr Jennifer H Smith BA PhD  
M.Phil (Superintendent)  
The Revd Steven Cooper BTh MA(Cantab)  
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The Revd Dr John Lampard BA M.Th  
(Supernumerary)  
The Revd Stephen Penrose (Supernumerary)  
The Revd Ian Yates (Supernumerary)

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

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

**Community Worker:** Ms Sally Rush BA MA MLitt

**Museum:** Mr Christian Dettlaff MA (Curator)  
Miss Gemma Smith BA (Hons) MA (Learning &  
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Dear Friends,

Welcome to the November edition of Window on Wesley's: as I write leaves in the courtyard are falling and the rain is pouring down, it is properly Autumn. Today London is sitting in 'tier 2' watching as France, Germany, and different regions in the United Kingdom take new steps to stop infection rates rising.

It is hard to predict what this month will hold, so my message for us is an old one, borrowed from the medieval mystic Margaret Kempe: 'Pacyens is more worthy than myraclys werkyng'. Interpreted for modern ears I'd translate this as, 'God is in it for the long haul.' That is to say, God doesn't leave us on our own in the grim and grey bits, and then show up like Father Christmas with light and thunder, only to disappear again. Likewise, this season calls for our faithful, sustainable tenacity in the work of God around us. Not grand gestures, but durable loving-kindness.

'Answering the call' is a work of patient, gentle and tenacious work. We cannot live, and should not, as if in perpetual emergency or crisis. Rather, now is a time to dig in, hang on, and take what deep breaths we can as we support one another. It is this patient tenacity that will change our world, and it is this patient tenacity with which God is present alongside us. And I hope, this reassurance will also allow us to be gentle with one another, and with ourselves. Courage, friends.

Thank you to all who took part in our Church meeting, and in our Anniversary celebration in October: the choir singing 'Church of Christ, Arise' was a statement both of the reality of the challenges we are facing in our lives, and the reality of our companionship in those challenges. And a brilliant song! It has been shared now on many platforms, and continues to buoy us up. And we thank Professor Anthony Reddie for his words of challenge and encouragement to us, as we go forward.

Many of us are facing real challenges in our work, our households: let us not confuse the patience I spoke about above

with passivity, or any lack of attention to the wider world or challenge to it. This winter we will be continuing the slow, durable work of building community, supporting youth and elders, and partnering to work against homelessness, poverty, and deprivation of all kinds. And let us look towards the winter months with confidence that Christmas is coming: God will yet come among us, and we will keep the light burning.

***With every blessing, Jennifer***

**PREPARING FOR ADVENT:** Can you believe it is that time of year again? Advent begins on 29 November, our 'new year' in church terms. This year, with most of us still worshipping on line, we will invite you to make an advent wreath at home: four candles is all it takes, whether they are set in teacups or fancy holders. Each week we will ask a different household to video our candle lighting for worship, and we will all join in it together. And for anyone who needs inspiration or wants to make a wreath together (virtually), watch this space!

**WATCHING AND WAITING:** a reflection course for Advent. Beginning Thursday December 3 at 12.45 (and viewable thereafter), with discussion Sundays at 5.30 on zoom, we will follow a 4 week course of reflection and Bible study to prepare for Christmas. The full course is downloadable here, or contact the office for a printed copy.

<https://www.methodistlondon.org.uk/adventcourse2020>



On Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November from 6-7pm Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission will be partnering with Forum +, (the Camden and Islington LGBT+ charity), City University and others for a Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) event. TDOR was started in 1999 by transgender advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith as a vigil to honour the memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman who was killed in 1998. The vigil commemorated all the transgender people lost to violence since Rita Hester's death, and began an important tradition that has become the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance.

"Transgender Day of Remembrance seeks to highlight the losses we face due to anti-transgender bigotry and violence. I am no stranger to the need to fight for our rights, and the right to simply exist is first and foremost. With so many seeking to erase transgender people -- sometimes in the most brutal ways possible -- it is vitally important that those we lose are remembered, and that we continue to fight for justice."

- Transgender Day of Remembrance founder Gwendolyn Ann Smith

It is not just a day of remembrance though, we seek to make it a time of celebration when people are able to embrace all of who they are, and from a Christian perspective all God has made them to be. That's why Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission are getting involved, for us it is about showing God's grace and love is for all and God's creation often goes beyond our understanding. It is also about social justice and remembering the several hundred people each year, particularly black trans women, who are murdered because they are seeking to be all they truly are.



## ***Our Minister, the Revd Steven Cooper writes...***

As we begin this month with the Feast of All Saints, we enter a season, in the run up to Advent, when we celebrate the reign of Jesus Christ as Lord in the world and in our lives. In the words of St Paul, we are all “called to be saints” (1 Cor 1:2); and by faith we each claim that glorious mantle for ourselves as a gift from God, as we bear witness to God’s transforming love in the midst of so many pains facing our world in these days.

Today I just want to offer a reminder of some of the current opportunities, mentioned here last month, available to you to share in the worship and fellowship of the community of saints that, together, we are as Wesley’s Chapel & Leysian Mission. These are our Choir; our new Music Group; and, beginning in January, our “Disciple” Bible Study course. Read on for details. As we navigate this strange time, when we are prohibited from singing as a whole congregation, and when we cannot all be present at the Chapel physically, we nonetheless would love to enable more of you participate in our music by all the means we can. And as we prepare to start our “Disciple” course in the new year, please, please do let me know if you would be interested in this—this is hugely helpful as we make our plans and schedule.

### **Choir and new Music Group**

As it continues to be difficult for many to gather physically, our choir has adapted to the new circumstances—as we experienced to magnificent effect most recently at our Church Anniversary service last month—by recording its anthems for our worship ‘virtually’, with each member of the choir recording their part at home. This is all coordinated by our choir director Mikyung, who then wonderfully combines the many recording together to create the choir’s performance that we hear in worship—about once per month. **The choir is always on the look-out for new members, and is for anyone who loves to sing:** if you’d be interested in giving it a try, please don’t hesitate. Contact Mikyung at [mikyung.kim.9@gmail.com](mailto:mikyung.kim.9@gmail.com)

Alongside this, we are now expanding our musical offering with the formation of the Music Group: comprising both singers and instrumentalists. This Music Group will play in person, in our Sunday morning worship—typically once a month, starting this All Saints Day—and is **for those who can read music or pick up music confidently, and who are confident in performing with a relatively small amount of rehearsal.** It will sing and play a broad choral and instrumental repertoire, according to the gifts of those who come. If this sounds of interest to you, please again don't hesitate to contact Mikyung, who coordinates this group.

**'Disciple' Bible Study course starting in January**

As an aid to our growth in our knowledge and understanding of the Bible, and of Christian discipleship, we shall be launching in January the year-long **Disciple** Bible Study course. This is a high-commitment course, entailing daily individual Bible reading (amounting to about 30mins a day, six days a week) together with 34 weekly meetings of participants together for prayer, reflection and worship, spread out with holidays over the course of the year. Over the course, we will read around 70% of the whole Bible, and develop deep resources in ourselves for how we apply our faith to our life. It is a tried and tested course using excellent resources, and all who have participated in Disciple in the past (myself included) attest to its transformative quality.

The course, we plan, will be led by me and by our Community Worker Sally Rush—and is open to everyone. If you would be interested, or would like to know more, please contact me at [minister@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:minister@wesleyschapel.org.uk) or via our office. We shall confirm the exact schedule for the course in due course, in consultation with those who would like to take it up.

This high-commitment course will run alongside our various less-intensive ways of engaging with Scripture and in reflecting upon our Christian discipleship week by week.

### **Young people's pilgrimage to Taizé in summer 2021**

Lastly, I mentioned last month that details would be forthcoming about arrangements for our visit to the Taizé Community (for

those aged 15 to 30) in the summer. I apologise that, due to uncertainties related to the current coronavirus situation, we haven't been able to confirm the details quite as soon as we had hoped—but please watch this space!

As the nights begin to draw in, yet as we continue to bear witness to the light of Christ that always shines through the darkness, I wish you all every blessing this month, as always.

**Steven**

### **Rooms to let**



The Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Community currently have rooms available to let, and is looking for new people to join the community.

The cost of the rooms available vary and as part of the community we will also require people to volunteer time and commit to coming to our monthly gathering.

To find out more details and request an application form please contact the office at Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission (tel: 020 7253 2262) or email Sally Rush our community worker ([cw@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:cw@wesleyschapel.org.uk))

### **November Lunchtime Recitals (Tuesdays @ 1.05pm) Entry Free of Charge**

03.11.20	Victor Braojos	Piano
10.11.20	Phoebe Tak Man Chow	Organ
17.11.20	River City Saxes	Saxophone
24.11.20	Jonathan Melling	Organ



## Reliving Happy Holiday Memories in This Time of Covid

This year is turning out to be very different from anything anybody had planned. I was looking forward to three mini holidays but that has not been possible.

In April my sister and I were to travel to Lake Garda and visit Venice, Verona and Milan with the local U3A group. We were very disappointed when it was cancelled in early March as that trip is on our 'bucket list' and we really wanted to go. We are hoping we can all rebook next year! For our Autumn trip we booked to visit the Lake District with a coach firm. In May we were told the firm had ceased trading and our booking fee was returned. In January I decided to book a 5-day Rail Discoveries break to see the steam trains of Yorkshire. An area Ron and I had visited several times when visiting friends who had moved to that area.

The itinerary and tickets arrived two weeks before the start date, and Mandy, the Tour Manager, telephoned for a chat, a couple of days before I started the journey. We looked forward to meeting in the hotel at Harrogate, between 4 and 6 o'clock on Sunday. At last, a holiday that was not going to be cancelled!!

When I visited my son the day before I left, he mentioned that I needed to book a seat on the LNER train from Kings Cross to York. At the ticket office I was told there were no seats on my chosen train, I had to wait 35 mins for the next train. I found my seat, G54, easily and counted just 8 of us in the whole carriage all



properly wearing masks! No refreshments were available on the 2-hour trip so a hot cup of tea when I arrived at York was really welcome. (Better than the sips of water I'd had on the train.) The station is famous for the beautiful Victorian iron arches that span the very spacious, airy platforms. Social distancing in the

local train to Harrogate was impossible as every seat was taken

in the its 2 carriages. The guard checked our tickets and made sure masks were being worn. While driving to the hotel, the taxi driver was very informative and said that the Conference Centre is now being turned into a Nightingale Hospital. It shared the same approach to the 13 storey Crown Plaza Hotel, the chosen centre for our stay. My room was on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor with great views overlooking of the area and lovely sunsets in the evenings.

On the first day we were driven to York in 'our' 53 seater coach, so plenty of space for the 16 of us. Unfortunately, the Train Museum was closed because of Covid! The planned 2-hour walking tour of the city was done in groups of 4 walking with 2 different guides and trying to keep socially distance where we could. I enjoyed the stories we heard and the amazing range of architecture there was to be found from the Roman Forts on the City Walls, the Minster, the quaint old Shambles dating from the Middle Ages, the old Alms Houses etc. In our free time after the walk I tried to see some of the National Trust properties but one had to pre-book on line, several were closed and I was not sure of the timing; so instead I walked round on the City Walls and enjoyed seeing the buildings from a different perspective in the lovely sunshine.



The Worth Valley Railway was having major engineering work done, so instead we went to ride on the Embassy Steam Train to Bolton Abbey. It was a short distance but we



were able to walk around and see the station as it was in the 1940s with trunks and suitcases piled up on the platform, reminding me of the journeys we did going to boarding school many years ago. We then drove to Skipton for some free time. I walked by the canals and while having a sandwich, watched the longboats chugging along slowly. The

coach driver, Mike, knew the area really well and took us up the Worth Valley, pointing out many interesting things, some mentioned in the Bronte books. When we arrived at Haworth we walked through the old town to the Church and Parsonage where the Bronte family lived but, yes, you've guessed it, the museum was closed. That meant I had more time to find the house were 40 years ago we had a holiday in the Ware's stone built, back to back, holiday home.

In 1959, I attended my first service at Wesley's Chapel. Rev. Max Woodward greeted me like an old friend. (When I was eleven, we had stayed a week with Max and Kathleen in Colombo, while we waited for our ship to arrive and take us to the UK for furlough.) I joined the choir and soon became friends with Joyce and Keith Ware. They invited me to their home to share a meal and our friendship was sealed! Joyce had been a Sunday School teacher and Guide leader for many years, involved in amateur productions, performed on stage in the Radnor Room. Keith worked for TFL in the development of rolling stock etc. and had developed driverless trains for the Underground but the Public and Unions were against the idea!!

When Docklands Light Railway was created the trains did not have drivers! My children have fond memories of the Bonfire night parties, open to all, at their home in Digswell. For many years Keith was both Circuit Steward and Treasurer and guided Wesley's Chapel through some tough times. When they bought their 'holiday home' in Haworth they generously let us use it, so we had several holidays walking the bleak moors etc. Keith loved going there and spent hours helping out in the train sheds, doing all manner of things needed to be done in the running of the railway. Several years later, they sold that house and retired to the Station Masters House on Levisham station on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway line. Their son moved to the area soon afterwards and became the Official Artist for the NYMR and had his gallery in the outside buildings of the house.

On the third day the weather changed to wet and windy! We were

taken to Pickering to catch the North Yorkshire Moors train to Whitby. Because of roadworks, we were delayed but fortunately they were able to hold the train for a few minutes and we climbed on board and found our seats quickly. We sat in our 'bubbles' with no social distancing and sadly the views I was hoping for, were few and far between because of the steamed up windows. We were not permitted to get out at the station stops and walk about as I was hoping, so the best I was able to do was to put the carriage door windows down, and take a few photos.

When we arrived at Whitby I decided to climb the 199 steps to the Abbey on top of the hill overlooking the riverside town and harbour. Also on the top is a very old church with grey bleached woodwork boxed pews with shoulder high doors, a three decker pulpit with domed canopy and stoned flagged floors. A lovely old place with lots of history. Fighting the wind and rain I eventually arrived at the Abbey and marvelled at the stonework and enjoyed the sense of peace amongst the high walls before looking round the Museum. Back in town I managed to buy, a few things before getting back in the train for the return journey.

At Levisham Station I took several photos as we past the Ware's home. The last time I was there, Ron and I were invited to stay a few days on our way to Scotland. Keith and Joyce arranged a 'Wesley's Chapel meeting'!! Rev Roy and Joan Kilner were regular worshippers at the Chapel while Roy was Prison Chaplin at Wormwood Scrubs. He had recently retired to their lovely home in York. Also invited for the meal was Alison Taylor who had just taken up the post of looking after 3 small Museums in the Yorkshire Dales. She had been Curator at Wesley's Chapel for several years and just past her driving test. The road to Levisham from Pickering includes a few miles of very narrow roads, over humpback stone bridges, sharp twisty bends as well as three very steep hills. (One in three in places.) This was the first time she



had driven on her own!! She arrived exhausted and shaking, so quickly sat in a chair to recover. She was not looking forward to the return drive back in the dark! We all sat down to a lovely meal when suddenly Keith got up and rushed out to the platform. He had heard the train whistle and had to close the level-crossing gates and change the signals. We all trooped out too to see the train. The passengers were all seated in dining carriages, having a posh meal during their trip to Whitby. We waved to them all as they passed us, then we went back to our food and plenty of chat, catching up on any news of friends and the Chapel.

An hour or so later we had a repeat performance as the train returned to Pickering. The passengers were being served coffee and chocolates by this time and had enjoyed a good time judging by the smiling faces. Eventually Alison, Joan and Roy had to leave us and we were reassured that Roy would make sure that Alison got home safely. The strangest Wesley's Chapel meeting I've ever attended, but very memorable!

The last day arrived too quickly. As a group we had worked together well and enjoyed each other's company so it was sad when we had to say our socially distanced 'goodbyes' and wish each other a safe journey home. Mine was an easy one on a through train and it was good to be met at the station by my son and catch up on family news.

Hopefully it won't be too long before I can book another holiday.

***Barbara Thompson - Heritage Steward***



## Leysian Missioner Update

Looking back on October, I think the word that sums up a lot of the work I've been doing has been "preparation & reflection":

- Children, young people, and leaders gathered on zoom for a pizza and film night; watching either "Minions" or "Enola Holmes" and sharing together in laughter and discussion. This re-connecting in an informal manner helps us to prepare for sharing in the national 3Generate 365 process – a series of events and resources to help the Methodist Church at a local church and national level to hear the voice of children and young people. Our next event will be on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November, and will include "tuning in" to a national broadcast from Methodist Youth President Phoebe Parkin, plus voting in elections for the 2021/22 Youth President as well as 3Generate Youth Reps for the coming year. **We've just heard the deadline for registering to vote has been extended, so if your child would like to join us please let me know ASAP (no later than 11<sup>th</sup> November).**
- I have been attending a course run by the Methodist Connexional team looking at being church in the digital world – reflecting on our current practices, and how we might create further space for digital fellowship and community (especially whilst physical gatherings are limited). As we begin to enact our current social media strategy, I'm also preparing to revise and expand our vision for going forward. **If you would like to help shape our online presence and digital community, I would like to hear from you.**
- Instead of an All Hallows Eve Party for the community, we



have prepared All Hallows Eve boxes to be used by families in their homes to help them celebrate All Saints Day and All Saints Day Eve. As well as activities which celebrate light, the wonders of the human body, and some of the historical

saints, these boxes include an activity to help children recognise the loss of loved ones; giving thanks for their legacy. **Please pray for the 27 children who will be receiving boxes, that they may enjoy the contents, and hear the message that Jesus offers us hope in times of fear and uncertainty which underpins this festival.**

- We continue to reflect with The Leys School, Cambridge on our covenant together. We welcome the Revd Simon Coleman as Chaplain to the school, and wish the Revd Clifford Meharry a very happy retirement after many years of service. We have also been preparing to work on a new project with The Leys – supporting them in their vision to become an Anti-Racist School. **If you would be interested in being a part of this project please speak to me, or to Sagan Daniels (Trustee of Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission, and former Wesley Scholar).**

Of course in addition to all this, regular pastoral care of adults, young people and children continues; phone call conversations, zoom coffees, letter writing and much more. Thank you again to the Pastoral Leaders who help to care for our congregation – we recognize that many of you have really stepped up since physical gatherings became limited in March. If you are not sure who your Pastoral Leader is, have lost contact, or would like to become a member and receive a Pastoral Leader please do be in touch.

**Prayers and best wishes,**

***Judith***



## JOHN WESLEY'S CUFFS

We have in the Museum a pair of John Wesley's linen cuffs, which were made to be worn over the cuffs of his shirt, possibly as a protective cover from dust and grime.



The hemmed cuffs are about 6 inches (15 cm) long and are embroidered with the monogram J.W in cross-stitch. The material is gathered, ending at the wrist band, which has two button holes for a connected pair of buttons or cufflinks. The

advantage of having separate cuffs was that they would be easier and quicker to wash. They allowed the wearer to prolong the life of the shirt in protecting the sleeves from damage and dirt and could be easily changed. John Wesley had most certainly more than one pair of separate cuffs.

Linen (never silk) was the standard fabric for men's shirts in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as it was hard wearing and easy to launder. The shirts were pulled over the head with an opening slit about mid chest and fastened with two or three buttons. Dorset buttons\* were used, as they were the only kind of button that could withstand the 18<sup>th</sup> century laundry practices. The high collar was soft, without interlining, whose final shape was determined by the neckerchief, cravat or stock tied around it. If wanted, ruffles could be sewn on to the neck slit and cuffs.

Shirts were made up of a series of triangular shapes, so as not to waste any of the length of the fabric. They were full and long, reaching to the middle thighs (an average shirt could be 60 inches (152 cm) in length and 40 inches (102 cm) around the chest. The sleeves were very full (20 inches (51 cm) wide or more, pleated into dropped shoulders and wrist cuffs. Additional gussets were placed under the arms for ease of movement. For most men a shirt was an all-purpose garment, with long tails drawn between the legs to form underwear. They were also worn to sleep in, so were frequently changed.

A man was judged by the cleanliness of his linen. How the shirt was washed and pressed denoted a gentleman's rank. The dozens of tiny vertical pleats required laundresses using special irons and a knowledge of starch for perfect crispness.

Very few shirts original 18<sup>th</sup> century shirts have survived today. Most were worn, mended and refashioned until they were no longer usable, then they were sold for scrap to paper makers or used for bandages.

\*Dorset Buttons were first created in Shaftsbury, in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Using as a base a ring made from Dorset horned sheep, it was covered in a small piece of material and worked with a needle and thread to make a conical shaped button.



***Claudia Webb – Heritage Steward***

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There is an important balance to be struck in my work between looking after “our own” at Wesley’s Chapel and Leysian Mission and building partnerships and developing work with partners outside. When my job is working as it should these feed into each other and are not mutually exclusive. This month I want to shine a light on a two ways this has been happening:

### **1. Through our work with the Islington and Hackney chapter of Citizens UK**

The main current campaign is based around digital inclusion and seeking to get the local tech companies to help more people have the equipment and skills they need to make sure nobody is left behind as more and more essential provision moves online.

Several of our members have been involved with leading on this campaign including Alcinda Lee and onsite community member Bethan Laughlin. **They are starting to put together a set of campaign videos, which will include a family from our own church community who Citizen’s were able to**

**provide with extra technology to ensure that studying for mum and children became easier.**

Previously Jordan Abankwah and Sylvester Mbeah had worked on the policing campaign in Islington, which has fed into wider London wide work, leading to meaningful engagement between Citizens UK and the metropolitan police.

If you would like to know more about this campaign ask Alcinda, Bethan or myself. We'd love to tell you more about it.

## **2. Through our work with Soapbox Islington**

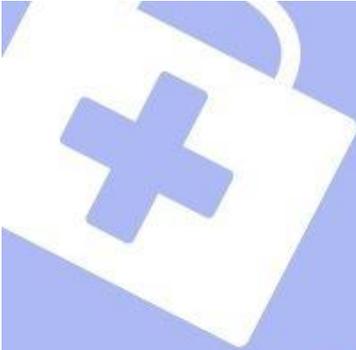
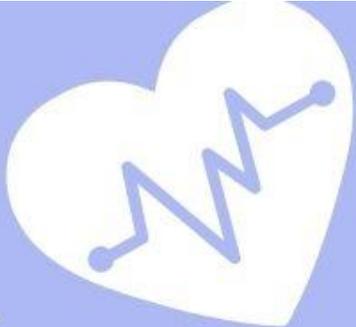
A couple of years ago Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission's work in the community took a turn into employability provision. This has involved supporting people inside and outside the church community through the onsite conferences we have run, together with CV support and signposting to opportunities. The opportunities come through our links with Islington Council and elsewhere.

One of the key supporters of this work has been Henrietta Mbeah-Banks, who has been a key note speaker at a range of events. On Thursday November 12<sup>th</sup> Henrietta will be on a panel for the conference we are running together with Soapbox Islington and London Village Network for those interested in careers in health and social care. **This conference is being something we'd like young people from within the church, as well as beyond to benefit from.** Please do share the details widely, the poster is after this article. Additionally, we'll be offering these online collaborative conferences on a regular basis – if you would like to contribute please do get in touch. In addition, we are continuing our discreet work. primarily for people in Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission on the first and third Saturdays at 4:30pm with our online socials and bible studies for those who are aged 18-30's, to which all in that age group are welcome. If you want to know more please email [cw@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:cw@wesleyschapel.org.uk) or contact me via the office.

**Blessings Sally**



SOAP Box Presents ...

# HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE CONFERENCE

## 12/11/20




**Receive tips from Professionals in Healthcare**  
 Special Guest on the panel- Head of Blended Learning and Digital Literacy Lead at Health Education England.

-  **Tips on how to get a job in Healthcare.**
-  **How to look after your wellbeing during the current pandemic**
-  **Q&A - An opportunity for young people to engage with professionals.**

Must be 13-25 to attend!  
 Conference will take place online via Zoom on  
**THURSDAY 12th NOV**  
 Registration @4:45pm for a 5pm start  
 For more details please email [eugenia@dragonhall.org.uk](mailto:eugenia@dragonhall.org.uk)






## **Serendipity 35 - Wesley London: Part 2 Wesley's Chapel Tour**

The previous part of this article concluded with the reminder that John Wesley is buried in the grave yard garden of his Chapel. But we will not remain with our Mr. Wesley in the garden nor in this article, address the surroundings of the building. Instead, we will begin, where most visitors normally start. That is, we will enter the Chapel by going through the porch, crossing the vestibule and entering the sanctuary, where we will look at the various features.

## **The Chapel Interior**

The changes, that time has wrought to the area in which the Chapel stands, have also been matched by what has happened to the interior of the Chapel. Although several restorations and partial re-buildings have taken place over the years, the sanctuary remains essentially similar to the edifice that Wesley knew. Certainly, he would recognize the Adam style ceiling which was considered to have one of the greatest spans, without intermediate supporting structures, known at the time of its erection. The current ceiling is, nevertheless, a facsimile which replaced the original when the level was raised by four feet in 1864 at a time when other work was being undertaken. Further, the damage caused, as described in Serendipity Twenty-Six, by the fire of 1879, that destroyed the Morning Chapel and the fire, of 1952 which damaged the organ casing has all been made good.

Thus, the appearance and the designs of the decoration on the ceiling, while not the originals, would still be familiar to John. As equally would be those on the curve of the arch in front of the apse and elsewhere, as they are said to be of his own choice. That includes the motif repeated all along the lengths of the galleries. Representing, in relief, a dove with an olive leaf in its beak, encircled by a serpent swallowing its own tail. There have been several interpretations of this symbol, but it is possibly an illustration of Jesus's injunction in Chapter 10, verse 16 in the Gospel of Matthew, *"be ye therefore as wise as serpents and harmless as doves"*.

The overall shape and size of the Chapel remains substantially as in Wesley's time although the current level of the ceiling is higher than he knew, while the shape of the west end of the galleries and the height of their balustrades, as well as their entrances have been subject to change over time.

## **The Chapel Windows**

If Mr. Wesley were to return now, then perhaps the first thing he would notice is that how much darker the interior of the building is

compared to in his time, particularly in the winter or on cloudy days. When the Chapel first opened, all the windows were of clear glass and of a design similar to the windows of Wesley's House. Later they remained glazed with clear glass but the shape of the supporting bars was modified to give an appearance rather like the windows still on the west end entrance to the Radnor Hall. In Georgian times it was no longer the fashion to install stained glass in Churches and Chapels but instead to glaze with clear glass only.

In Wesley's Chapel this started to be replaced by the stained glass patterned and picture windows only during Victorian times. The main initiative being the desire to enhance the ambiance of the building at the time when many other alterations were being made to the structure of the building and to its interior furnishing. Although Wesley might now find the interior of the Chapel to be much gloomier than he remembered, due to the changes in the glass of the windows, he might not entirely disapprove. After all, St Andrew's, the parish church of Epworth where he was accustomed to worship as a child has some stain glass windows. Similarly, the chapel of Lincoln college, Oxford, where he was a Fellow, has nothing but stained glass. In Wesley's Chapel, on bright, sunny days when the rays of God's Sun lights up most of the windows, and throws coloured patterns on the pews, then surely Mr. Wesley would approve of the changes which make his Chapel come alive with colour.

Full details concerning all of the picture windows can be found in a leaflet which is available in the Museum of Methodism book shop. But, one window, of particular importance, is about half way along the wall of the north gallery and like most is actually a memorial. It was introduced in 1924 and is dedicated to the memory of the Rev Arthur Wood and his wife Harriett Sidon Wood. Nevertheless, in view of the subject matter of its illustrations, it is more usually known as "The Wesley's Conversion Window". This is because it also commemorates the events which were the impetus which ultimately led to the foundation of the Methodist Church.

On Pentecost Sunday May 21<sup>st</sup> 1738, Charles experienced his evangelical conversion, to be followed a few days later by his brother John, who famously, “*felt his heart strangely warmed*”, on the evening of 24<sup>th</sup> May. The two brothers, separately found their intellectual beliefs to be changed for something better. In their hearts they found they did trust in Christ alone for their salvation and felt assured that Christ had taken away their sins and so saved them from “the law of sin and death”. Their response was to galvanize them into spending the rest of their lives preaching the message, that the assurance of salvation by faith was open to any that would listen; that all men and women, could be saved and saved utterly. And not only to preach this, but to live out the implications of the message in their daily lives. It changed John from an introspective thinker content to spend his life as an Oxford Don and released in Charles the flood of poetry that as hymns helped power the religious revival into which the Brothers plunged.

It is the life changing experiences of John and Charles that the window commemorates, but does not depict. Instead, the top part of the window portrays both Brothers together, as on the evening of 24<sup>th</sup> May, when they met in the house of Mr. Bray, where Charles had been recuperating from an illness. John is shown telling Charles that “*He too believes*”. In the lower part of the window, Charles, is pictured alone, at his desk, as if in the act of writing his conversion hymn, (No 454 in StF), the first line of which, “*Where shall my wondering soul begin?*”, is emblazoned at the top of the window.

Although the Conversion window is undoubtedly, because of its subject matter, the most important, all the other picture windows in the Chapel, including the two modern etched ones, and especially the four designed by Frank O. Salisbury, are interesting and worth taking time over. They are, in the main, memorializing either, specific people associated with the Methodist Connexion, or else particular events which took place in the Chapel. Because, further information can be found in the leaflet available from the desk in the Museum of Methodism, this

article will confine itself to calling attention to the trilogy of windows in the apse. These were originally placed elsewhere in the Chapel and have only been in their current positions since the 1930's. They were so moved because where they are now has a particular symbolic significance. For an understanding of this it is necessary to relate some of the history of the Methodist denomination.

When John Wesley died in 1791, he left behind a nationwide Connexion of Methodist Societies which were, in the main, adhering to John's injunction to remain close to the Church of England, despite very little in the way of encouragement from that body. But, towards the end of his life, even John had been finding it increasingly difficult to maintain this course of action. With his death, and without his firm control, the majority of the Methodist Societies gradually drew away from the Church of England, which did little to prevent this happening and indeed may have actively encouraged it. So it was that the Connexion of Methodist Societies slowly became a separate denomination and assumed the name of the Wesleyan Methodist Church governed by a Conference composed of the 100 of Wesley's preachers he had selected for the purpose. Very soon arguments about how the Connexion should function, and in particular the relative influence that the general membership should have upon the decision-making process, started to cause disruptions. This led to the formation of splinter groups of Methodists. An example being that described in Serendipity Thirty-One wherein it was related the effect that had once been caused by the imposition of the installation of an organ in a particular Chapel. The result was to induce many members of that Chapel to leave to start their own branch of Methodism.

Someone once remarked that a characteristic of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Methodism was its fissiparous nature whereby it grew and expanded by forming new groups. These, in the main, being composed of breakaway Wesleyans, although some started up independently. Most of these, in time coalesced at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century under the name of the United Methodist

Church. Nevertheless, the Wesleyans and the Primitive Methodist Church, a body which had formed independently in 1807, remained apart. So it was, that at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Methodism in the United Kingdom was principally contained within three separate organized bodies. These, in the main differed little in their beliefs but primarily, only in their governance. They were, therefore able to come together in 1932 to unite as the British Methodist Church.

The three windows, now in the apse, and which had, hitherto, been located at other places in the Chapel, were placed there in 1932 to symbolize the unification of British Methodism from the disparate bodies.

Wesleyan Methodism being represented by "*The Adoration of the Magi*" on the North side of the apse. This window was presented to Wesley's Chapel by the Wesleyan Reform Union, which actually remains a small independent body to this day.

The United Methodist Church being represented by a window presented by one of its constituents, the United Methodist Free Churches. It is, "*The Apostolic Commission*", in the centre of the apse.

The Primitive Methodist Church is represented on the south side of the apse by "*Solomon's Porch*". Their window, has the startling detail of a depiction, as on the Jerusalem skyline, of the Mow Cop Hill folly in Staffordshire, where the Primitive Methodist Church started at a camp meeting in 1807.

There is stained glass in thirty-six of the windows in the walls of the Chapel including the vestibule. But, that just nineteen of them contain pictures is only because a Victorian scheme to install such windows throughout the Chapel came to naught. Of the picture windows that we have, the Conversion window is perhaps the most significant, nevertheless all are worth studying.

At this point having brought some of the Chapel windows to your attention we will leave till a later edition of Window on Wesley's to describe further features of the interior of the building.

***Keith Dutton - Heritage Steward***

## **Worship at Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission**

Worship services are available and are livestreamed at the following times:

### **Monday – Saturday**

10.00am Morning Prayer from the Methodist Worship Book – live streamed only

### **Wednesday**

12.45pm Service of Holy Communion – this service is open to the public to attend in person and is also livestreamed

### **Thursday**

12.45pm Service of the Word – live streamed only

### **Sunday**

9.45am Service of Holy Communion – live streamed only

11.00am Morning Worship – pre-booking is advised, please contact the Chapel office on 020 72532262 or book via Eventbrite at: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/wesleys-chapel-and-leysian-mission-worship-tickets-117422733557> and select the service you wish to attend.

All services are live streamed

([www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/livestreaming](http://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/livestreaming)) and remain viewable afterwards at: [www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/previous-services](http://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/previous-services)

We also have a dedicated email address for prayer requests which will be received directly by our ministers Jennifer Smith and Steven Cooper, and will be prayed during the course of the Daily morning prayer service. Please send all prayer requests to: [prayer@wesleyschapel.org.uk](mailto:prayer@wesleyschapel.org.uk)



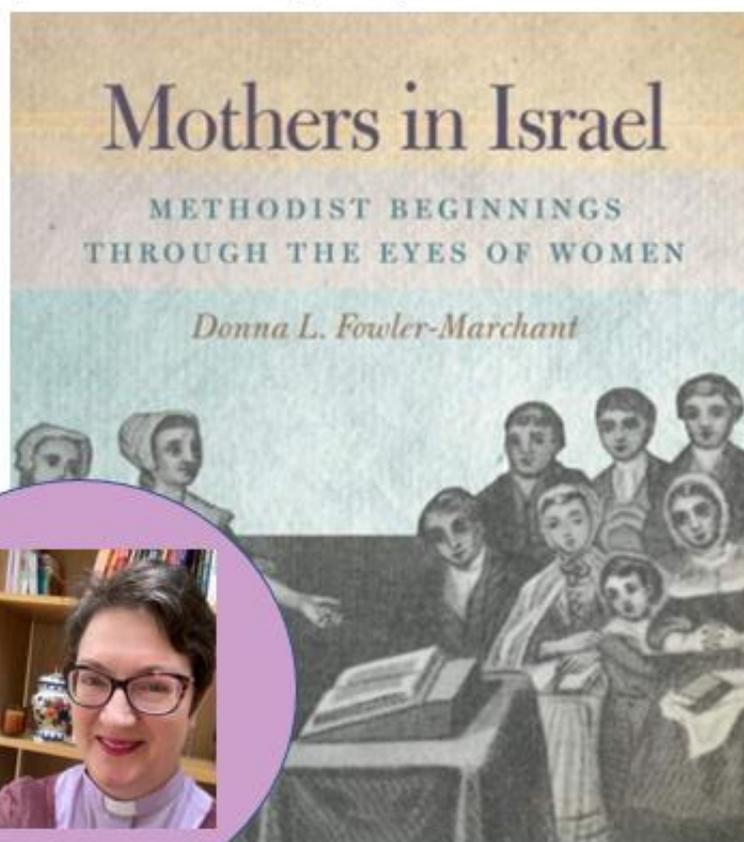


**From Susanna's Kitchen...** On-line discussions about women's lives in the story of Methodism

**Revd Donna Fowler discusses her new book**

**"Mothers in Israel: the Methodist Women in the circle of John Wesley**

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2.00pm

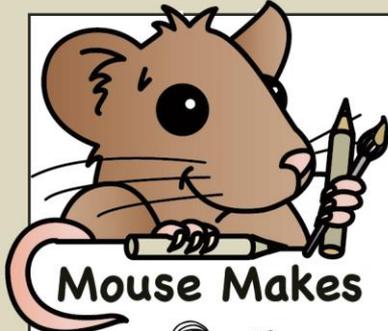


Further information and log-in details from

[talks@epwortholdrectory.org.uk](mailto:talks@epwortholdrectory.org.uk)

or [www.epwortholdrectory.org.uk](http://www.epwortholdrectory.org.uk)

# CHILDREN'S PAGE



## REMEMBERING

*How do you remember things?*

In bible times God's people would remember what God had done for them by building monuments made of stones and by holding festivals and celebrations to give thanks to God.

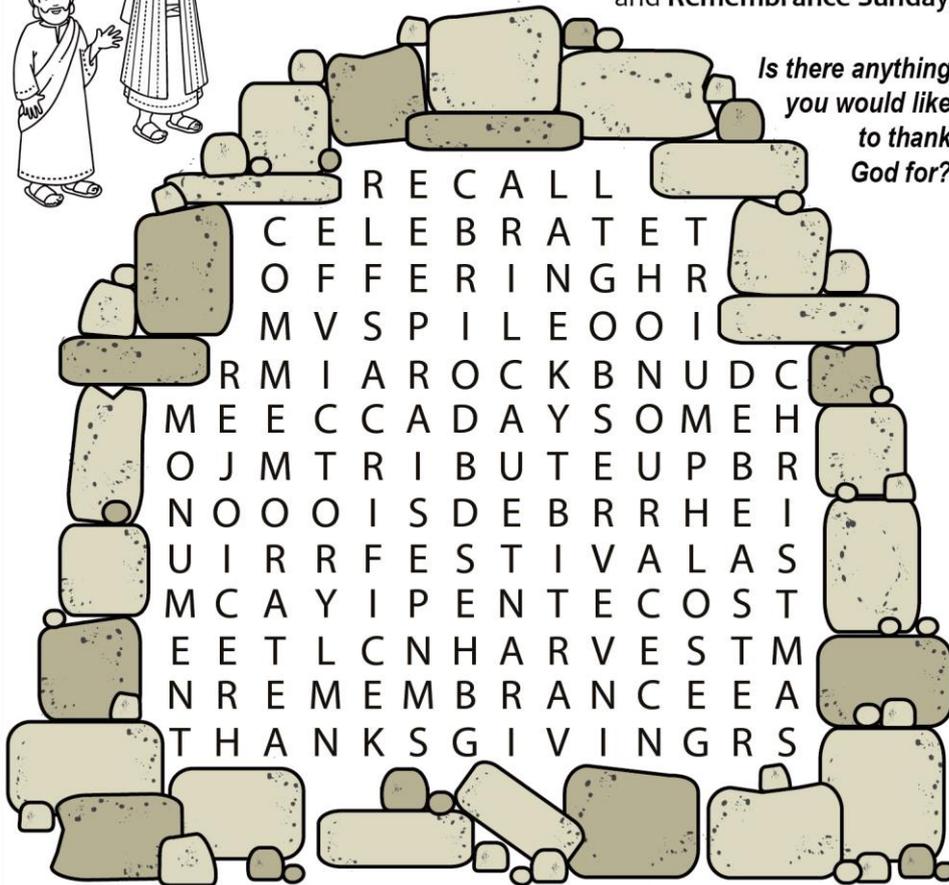


**READ** Joshua 4:1-9 and Exodus 12:1-14

Today we too build monuments to remember and hold services of thanksgiving like **Harvest** and **Remembrance Sunday**.



*Is there anything you would like to thank God for?*



- REMEMBRANCE • SACRIFICE • VICTORY • TRIUMPH • MONUMENT
- ROCK • PILE • OBSERVE • TRIBUTE • COMMEMORATE • RECALL • OFFERING
- HONOUR • CELEBRATE • PRAISE • REJOICE • THANKSGIVING • DAYS
- FESTIVAL • EASTER • PENTECOST • HARVEST • CHRISTMAS

**And finally.....**

**War and Peace**

War is not a new thing  
It's been here from the start,  
When Cain slew brother Abel  
And their lives were torn apart.

Brother still fights brother  
And nations go to war,  
It seems these things will never end  
Perhaps we need to ask 'what for?'

Man has chosen his own path  
Where might and power tell,  
But God desires a better way  
Where harmony and peace can dwell.

And so a time will come at last  
When all man's rule will cease,  
Emmanuel will come to reign,  
Our Lord and Saviour, Prince of Peace.

*By Megan Carter*

