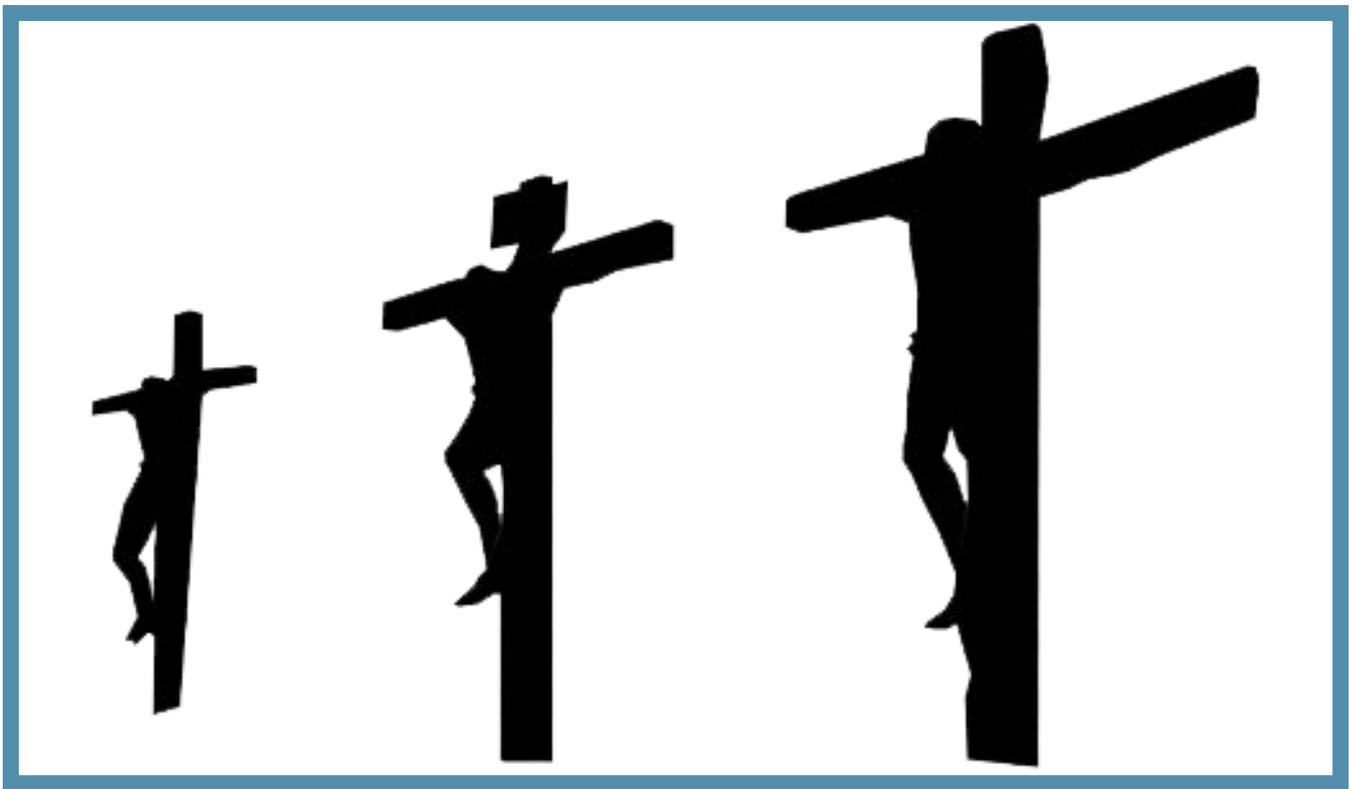




WINDOW ON WESLEY'S



APRIL 2022

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 Brian Goss MA (Supernumerary)
The Revd Paul Hulme BA (Supernumerary)
The Revd Dr John Lampard BA M.Th
(Supernumerary)
The Revd Stephen Penrose (Supernumerary)
The Revd Ian Yates (Supernumerary)

Lay workers: Mr Thomas Smith (Leysian Missioner)
Mr Erick Hunter (Global Mission Fellow)

Museum: Mr Christian Dettlaff MA (Curator)
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Community Engagement Officer)
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Dear Friends,

As we draw near to Easter we remember the 33rd anniversary of the union of Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission. I remember the joyous celebration of 30 years of unity we had on Palm Sunday 2019: the large street procession, the donkey, the food, and the songs of praise. It was a true celebration and thanksgiving to God for the shared history, and the particular strengths of the two traditions.

We could not have imagined the three years that would follow, but we have been well served by the complementary patterns of strength we carry in our institutional memory. The Leysian Mission was unparalleled for its service and attention to the changing local community, nevertheless with an eye to the global character of Methodism as it welcomed migrants from all over. Wesley's Chapel held the memory of Mr. Wesley's zeal for Word, sacrament, and song as activities that equipped the Methodist people for a global mission, nevertheless with two centuries of commitment to the people here on City Road.

The creative complement of these patterns of strength is God's gift to this community as we look forward: we will always be a local church for local people, and a community that has something to say into the global context, and learn from it. We can learn from our history as we ask what God intends for us in the future. What do you value most, in our tradition? What has sustained you in our scripture, in what we have sung, and studied together? What can we offer here and now, that no one else can? Friends, do not underestimate your reach as a Body of gathered people, members and friends of this church.

When a group of you gathered after worship on 16 March to work towards supporting Ukrainian refugees, you brought not just warm feelings and a generous spirit, but hard headed questions and the beginnings of answers. We need both the locally minded practicality and the full global awareness to be able to welcome and sustain welcome for refugees of all kinds. This is who we

are, as a united church. The energy of that meeting was a clear demonstration of our heritage, and I look with great hope to see how we will evolve this work.

Easter is coming, friends. Let yourself be fed by the worship this Holy Week, and pray for your church and your world. Wander in the scripture as we share the record of Jesus' passion, death, resurrection, serve one another, and be fed by grace.

With every blessing, Jen

A Guest, Only Two Years Late:

On 27 March we were joined on Mothering Sunday by guest preacher the Revd Professor Edgardo Colon Emeric, Dean of Duke Divinity School in North Carolina in the USA. Edgardo should have been with us 29 March 2020: as we remember, then we were in week 2 of the first lockdown. We had been meant to broadcast live on Radio 4 for the 40th anniversary of the martyrdom of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador. As it was, many of you contributed recordings for that service, and it was broadcast to the nation as a strong witness to Romero's (now Saint Romero) legacy and our shared ecumenical and global commitment to justice as Methodists. It was also a great pastoral comfort to many when broadcast, including Edgardo's sermon recorded then in the USA. We are thrilled to have finally welcomed Edgardo in person, and to host him for his entire 10-day stay, as he toured the United Kingdom. And his sermon (re-printed here, or available on the Chapel YouTube channel - 11 am, 27 March 2022) was equally as challenging and comforting. Thank you Edgardo!

“Mothering is a Lenten school of deep lament, fierce hope, and Marian hospitality. If you have graduated from this school, recruit. If you are enrolled in this school, study. If you have not enrolled, apply. Your church needs your tears. Your nation needs you anger and courage. Our world needs more mothers in Israel.”

*Sermon-Mothering Sunday: Exodus 2.1-10, and John 19.25-27
The Revd Professor Edgardo Colon-Emeric
Dean of Duke Divinity School, North Carolina, USA*

Gracia y paz de Dios nuestro Padre y el Señor Jesu cristo...I came to the United Kingdom at the invitation of the Romero Trust in order to celebrate the witness of Oscar Romero. During the past ten days, I have felt like a little like one of John Wesley's Methodist itinerant preachers. I have been riding trains to preach and teach throughout England and Wales about the significance of the martyred archbishop's teaching for the church universal.

I have to be honest. I had not heard of Mothering Sunday until your superintendent asked me to preach for this occasion. In the United States, Mother's day is observed on the second Sunday of May. That celebration traces its roots to the twentieth century. Mothering Sunday has deeper roots. It is a medieval observance connected with Laetare Sunday. It marks a pause on the Lenten journey to Holy Week, a cancellation of fasts for the sake of feasts, an invitation to return to our mother churches. Today, this Methodist minister feels like he has come home. I have come to the rock from which I have been hewn, to the cradle of my faith, to my mother. I make my own the words of the prophet Isaiah: ¹⁰ Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice with her in joy, all you who mourn over her--¹¹ that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast; that you may drink deeply with delight from her glorious bosom (Isa. 66:10-11). The prophet's language is strong but accurate. Mothering Sunday is a Lenten practice. It is honest about the mixed feelings that many of us might have about today's celebration. It includes mourning and rejoicing, disillusionment and delight. Indeed, the scriptures read this morning invite us to reflect on Mothering as a Lenten school of deep lament, fierce hope, and Marian hospitality.

Mothering is a Lenten school of deep lament. Consider again the story from Exodus. The unnamed mother of Moses, knowing of Pharaoh's decree against the Hebrew children, hid him for the

first three months of his life. No circumcision, no showing off the baby to neighbors, instead a desperate plan to send him down the river alone to face death or deliverance. How many mothers are making similar choices in Central America? How many unaccompanied minors handed over to elder siblings or smugglers to escape the clutches of gangs? In Central America, in countries like El Salvador, mothering and mourning often go together. Oscar Romero was well acquainted with this sad pairing.

Romero became Archbishop of San Salvador during a turbulent time. Vast income inequality, failed attempts at land reform, and rumors of a Cuban style revolution sowed national unrest. Some expected the Church to serve as a bastion of national stability while others dreamed of a Christian guerilla movement. Many saw Romero as a safe choice for archbishop. Some greeted the news of his selection with dismay, others with relief. All misread the man and the moment. Only days after his installation, on March 12, 1977, his friend, Father Rutilio Grande along with Manuel Solórzano and Nelson Lemus were murdered while driving to El Paisnal. The violent event turned Romero into the pastor and prophet of a persecuted church until he was murdered at the altar on March 24, 1980. During his years of service, he protested the insults, beatings, kidnappings, and deaths perpetrated on his people. On many occasions, Romero's voice was heard preaching suffering love, while wailing and lamentation were heard at the cathedral of San Salvador, as the church wept for her children because they were no more.

Mothering begets lament. Listen to the words of John, "standing near the cross...his mother." Mary was experienced with trauma. She was born to a people under imperial occupation; she knew poverty; she experienced the plight of the refugee; she underwent a parent's worst fear, not just outliving her child, but seeing him killed before her. Mary was a woman of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Of course, all this happened in accordance to the scriptures. Moreover, Mary had a choice. She could have slammed the door on Gabriel. She could have scolded old

Simeon for his hard words “a sword will pierce your own soul too.” She could have but she did not. Instead she said, let be with me in accordance with your word, and pondered all these things in her heart because mothering is a Lenten school of deep lament.

Mothering is a Lenten school of fierce hope. Hope is not optimism. The optimistic viewpoint comes from a calculus about the odds. The odds for Moses floating on the Nile were long. The odds for Jesus hanging from the cross were worse. There is no room for optimism at Calvary, only hope. Hope is hard. It is Abraham “hoping against hope” (Rom 4:18) that God could raise a people from his small, vulnerable family. At the same time, hope is light. It is Sarah’s Easter laughter at the birth of her son against all odds. Writing from a South African context, Alan Boesak speaks of hope as a mothering practice. “Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage. Anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the same.” The daughters of this mothering hope are born not of the flesh, or of the will of men, but of God; they grow in wisdom and stature as they nurtured in desperate situations and social dead ends. A mothering hope recognizes these daughters. Mothering hope is fierce. It burns with anger that, in the words of Ricardo Arjona’s song, in this world there are more churches than happy children. It fights with courage to affirm and defend life beginning with the most vulnerable.

The Old Testament lesson tells a story that seems lifted from news headlines: national greatness built from forced labor; refugees, a threat to national security; government officials carry out inhumane orders; women organize to defy unjust policies. In the first chapter of Exodus, we read of how the Hebrew midwives risked everything to defend the lives of other women’s children. It is interesting that the Bible does not remember pharaoh’s name, but the names of the women who stood up to him are memorialized: Shiphrah and Puah. They disarmed Pharaoh by using the prejudices of the nationalist narrative against him: the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women. The Bible

justifies the midwives' actions with three words: they feared God. Mothering is a Lenten school of fierce hope for life.

Just over a month before his assassination, Óscar Romero gave a lecture titled "The political dimension of the faith from the perspective of the poor." As Romero concluded his reflections, he said: "The early Christians used to say gloria Dei, vivens homo (the glory of God is a human being fully alive). We can make this concrete by saying gloria Dei, vivens pauper (the glory of God is a poor person fully alive)."

"We can make this concrete." As Christians, this is our responsibility. We draw on the ancient and modern wisdom of the church and make it concrete. In El Salvador, where the survival of the landless campesinos was under threat from a right wing oligarchy, the glory of God is a poor person fully alive. In the United States, the glory of God is a black person fully alive. In Guatemala, an indigenous person fully alive. You are called to make this concrete in your community. Whose fullness of life is being compromised that needs to be defended? In the United Kingdom, you will have to tell me. The point is that mothering is a Lenten school of deep lament and fierce hope, and that hope comes with beautiful daughters: anger and courage for the sake of fullness of life.

Mothering is a Lenten school of Marian hospitality. In the gospel lesson, we hear that John took Jesus's mother into his own home. Things may well be different in England, but there is little room for Mary in Methodist homes in Latin America. In Cuba, Methodist evangelists visit homes of new converts with trash bags in hand to clear out all shrines to Mary and the saints. In fact, I remember one dear sister (Leisy) telling me that when she sees a statue of Mary, she feels an urge to behead it. Most of us might not be quite so extreme but may still find it hard to take Jesus' mother into our homes. Mary looks, sounds, and smells just a little too Catholic for Methodist sensibilities.

On this Mothering Sunday, Romero would encourage Methodists to reconsider our hospitality and to make room for Mary in our lives. He is clear. "Mary has not saved us. Christ has." But Romero believes that "God wanted there to be next to Christ, the precious pearl, a gold frame." Mary is the gold frame which God uses to adorn and present Christ. We do not need to set up shrines with statues or carry rosaries in our pockets to take Mary into our homes. We do not need to observe multiple Marian feasts or May crownings. These may help but they are not necessary.

What is necessary for making room for Mary is to learn her song, the Magnificat, and make it concrete. It means taking into our lips her "cry of holy rebelliousness," as Romero called it, and offering this cry as a protest and plea to the God who has the power to pull the mighty down from their thrones. Were Mary to sing her song in El Salvador or Russia, she would be labeled subversive and silenced. Mary should come with a warning label. Take her into your home at your own risk. Mary's words to the angel at the annunciation were not a passive act of surrender. Her "yes" to God spoke for the longings of an entire people. "Come! El Salvador needs you. History needs you." Ukraine needs you. The UK needs you. Wesley Memorial needs you. Mary, we need you to teach us to sing your Magnificat. Teach us to be Mothers in Israel.

Marian hospitality allows us to welcome our mothers in new ways. The early Methodists recognized the women whose creative and courageous ministry supported the movement as "mothers in Israel." Deborah the Judge whom God raised to rule Israel during a time of chaos and confusion was the first one called a mother in Israel; she has had many daughters among the Methodists. You know their names. They are written on gravestones across the road; they are engraved in our hearts. I want to introduce you to a Guatemalan mother in Israel, hermana Mercedes. I first met Mercedes when she registered for the Methodist pastoral formation program that I have been supporting in Central America for about a dozen years. Mercedes arrived to El Salvador with

two things, a Bible with pictures of her children taped inside the cover and a dream of theological education. She knew her church would never ordain her. In the eyes of the church referees, she had accumulated multiple yellow and red cards against her. She was a woman; she divorced her abusive husband; she welcomed her pregnant unwed daughter back home. Mercedes knew grief, but she also had fierce hope for herself and for her Guatemalan Methodist family.

As Mercedes studied, her theological voice became stronger. When the clarity of her preaching intimidated her pastor who was not theologically trained, she convinced him to go to school with her in El Salvador. When national leaders worried that Mercedes was introducing too many young women to theological education and that older pastors who could not easily travel to El Salvador were falling behind, she persuaded me to start a branch of our program in the highlands of Guatemala. Three years later, when the Guatemalan program graduated its entering class, Mercedes personally sowed the caps and gowns for the entire class of fifty students which included the leadership of the Methodist Church of Guatemala. Mercedes is a mother in Israel, a Magnificat singer, a graduate of the Lenten School of Marian hospitality. Mothering is a Lenten school of deep lament, fierce hope, and Marian hospitality. If you have graduated from this school, recruit. If you are enrolled in this school, study. If you have not enrolled, apply. Your church needs your tears. Your nation needs you anger and courage. Our world needs more mothers in Israel.



Pastor William Seay a minister of Genito Presbyterian Church near Richmond, Virginia & professor of international relations at Virginia Commonwealth University has very kindly sent us a copy of the weekly devotional article that he writes for his parish.

Pastor Seay has visited the Chapel before whilst studying at LSE and Cambridge and hopes to visit us again this summer. He is also a subscriber to WoW.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. was a famous physician and poet in Boston Massachusetts. He advocated the use of the stethoscope whilst examining patients as well as coined the word, "Anesthesia," for patient sedation with ether. He was also the father of a famous U.S. Supreme Court Justice of the same name prefixed "Jr."

The son of a Congregational minister, Dr. Holmes once wrote that many people regard the Sermon on the Mount as "a flag under which to sail rather than a rudder with which to navigate." How sadly true. We often ask to receive for ourselves yet do not ask God to bless and heal others especially our enemies as Jesus commanded. Also, we desire life question answers to find us. Yet we are unwilling to seek as Christ preached we must do in order to achieve Holy Wisdom -a part of God's plan for us. And oh how we judge others yet forget our own sins and weaknesses- even with little attempt to improve after repentance. We often take more than we give even from God. Yet both God and Saviour still show us love and mercy. How Great They Are!

To walk with God is nevertheless to become selfless. This means caring for ourselves yet for God and others, firstly. God and Christ love us selflessly and require us to do the same. It is the only way to build the Kingdom of Heaven through love on earth. It is the only path to Eternal Life with the Father. Let us strive to better live these truths this Lenten season and beyond.

"Be doers of the Word and not listeners only, deceiving yourselves." (James 1: 22)

Passiontide, Eastertide, Ukraine, and Worship

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

This is a month of two halves, in more ways than one. In a symbolic sense, in the way that the Church marks time, it is a month of two halves, with the Cross—Good Friday on the 15th of the month—at its centre: two weeks of Passiontide, followed by two weeks of Eastertide. Death giving way to Life. We remember the forces of sin and violence that were laid heavy upon Jesus Christ to the point of his death on the cross; and we remember the force of life that comes from God, by whose power death has been defeated, and by which God makes all things new.

This motif reflected symbolically in the calendar and worship of the Church—these two halves: Life winning out over powers of Sin and Death—is equally present, in much more concrete ways, in our world this month; most particularly in Ukraine. Just as we have seen sin and death wrought upon the land of Ukraine in the most horrific of ways over these past five weeks (as I write, it is exactly five weeks since the war began), so too we have seen—and continue to see increasingly plainly—that these powers are being vanquished: that for all its military might, the evil force of Putin's efforts to bring death and destruction to Ukraine simply will not win the day against a spirit of Life that, by God's almighty power, cannot die.

Just as I wrote last month, so we are seeing today: God is at work in the hearts and in the choices of the whole human family, in its solidarity with, its support for, the people of Ukraine; and in its extraordinarily united resolve that, come what may, the evil being wrought upon Ukraine cannot and will not be allowed to win. This is what it looks like for God, whose ultimate defeat of sin and death we celebrate at Easter, to be alive and at work in our world today.

And this, ultimately, is what the witness of the Church is about. Human beings do not acquire by accident, as a human family, this capacity to allow God to work through them for God's glorious

purposes of peace, justice and abundance of life. They acquire it because, generation after generation, people have gone on making the effort to bear witness—not least through the worship and ministry of the Church—to these things; and that helps to shape and sustain what we are as a human family and what we stand for.

So, notwithstanding that much of what we do in our calendar and in our worship as the Church might be regarded as ‘symbolic’: it matters. It really matters. (And of course, in the Church itself, we always work to marry up that which we mark symbolically with direct action to make a concrete difference: for example, the work we are doing right now at Wesley’s Chapel & Leysian Mission to support Ukrainian and other refugees.) The bottom line is that our worship, when we take it seriously, is a work of mission. It shapes who we are as a human family. It helps to further God’s purposes of peace and transformation in the world. This is why, personally—as those who know me well will testify—I love it so much.

Come then, and join in our worship at the Chapel this month. We have a rich liturgical array on offer. For me, the greatest highlight of this is the night of Holy Saturday—the eve of Easter Day—and the Easter Vigil (8.30pm on Saturday 16th April, at the Chapel). This is a celebration that has often been overlooked in Methodism, but one at which we rather excel here at Wesley’s: it is often described as the most solemn and splendid of all the moments of the Church’s worship, with really powerful symbolism involving darkness, fire and light, Scripture and music, baptismal water and rejoicing. It can be a profoundly moving experience: come and see!

Likewise, do have a look elsewhere in this issue of *Window on Wesley’s* for details of the whole range of worship that is taking place here during Holy Week and the rest of the month—and do join us, as far as you’re able to. Our worship as a church is at its greatest only when you’re here to actually do it—so please come!

Just a few other announcements regarding our activities this month:

- On **Palm Sunday** (10th April) we gather for worship at **10.50am** outside at the back of the Chapel (near John Wesley's grave), as our worship will begin there, with a procession—those who are able—around the neighbouring streets (out of the back gate and round to the right, up Epworth Street, then round the corner on to City Road) and back in to the Chapel through the main gate.
- We hold the funeral of our dear departed sister **Patience Lusengo** on Thursday 14th April (Maundy Thursday) at 11am – to which all are welcome.
- If you would like to come on the young adults' pilgrimage to **Taizé** in the last week of July (full details in last month's *Window on Wesley's*) please be in touch with me as soon as possible.

I pray every blessing be upon you this month, this month of two halves, and continue of course to pray for Ukraine. Remember that I am here for you, together with Jen and our colleagues here at the Chapel. If there's anything at all that you'd like to discuss, don't hesitate to be in touch.

Wishing you a holy Passiontide and a very happy Eastertide,

Steven

After Easter

Until the Sunday after Easter Sunday there will be no "Sunday School". From the 24th of April we hope to have running a Crèche Session for up to 7, then a Sunday School Class for 7-14 and then Youth Group for 14+. These will run as part of the 11am service.

Given that we need 2 people per session that means we need at least 6 people a week to help (and while Erick and I are finding our feet we can only be 2 people and sometimes we're needed

with other duties to enable everything that is the 11am Sunday service to happen).

So. If you're wanting to give it a go, now is the time to sort that DBS out (we can't let people come help us without it!) and sign up for as many or as few sessions as you want. We know that some helpers prefer certain ages and some like to help with all ages, so feel free to mix and match. The rotas are on Churchsuite to sign up to, if you really can't be doing with "that technology" but want to help you can email me at missioner@wesleyschapel.org.uk or telephone on either 073 8973 7114 or ring the chapel office 020 7253 2262. I'm in the office Sunday-Thursday 9-5ish (Wednesday and Thursdays I am quite often here much later, if you need an evening time to call).

In terms of what you're agreeing to:

Crèche – Going out to help the children play. The room will be set up for you.

Sunday School – A lesson will be prepared each week, sent to you by Thursday so you've seen it beforehand. All materials for the lesson will be "To Hand" for you.

Youth Group – These sessions will be a lot more "Free Form" to start with, there will be provided some discussion points to help kick things off.

To provide this we do need a team, and the bigger the team the lighter the load for each individual. So if you've never before got involved, now is a great time to "give it a try". You can just agree to do one and "see how it goes". We are here to enable you to share your God-given gifts. If you have those gifts to share we will do all we can to support you.

Every Blessing,

Thomas

HOLY CLUB

YOUNG ADULTS FELLOWSHIP

WHEN

Wednesdays, 7-8:30 PM

WHERE

Philadelphia Room

Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission
47 City Road, EC1Y 1AU

Inspired by John Wesley's original **Holy Club** at Oxford in 1729, gather with fellow young **disciples** exploring the meaning of faith and accountable living.

Contact: Erick Hunter

gmf@wesleyschapel.org.uk

**OPEN TO ALL
AGE 18-35**

DINNERTIME BOOK STUDY

Hot supper, discussion of
"Let Me Go There" by Paula
Gooder,
7-7:45

COVENANT DISCIPLESHIP

Accountable living as dis-
ciples of Christ according
to co-written covenant.
18-25 and 26-35 Age
groups.
7:45-8:30

LOVE FEAST

Gather for a time of wor-
ship, fellowship, and food
as we remember Christ's
last supper and the mean-
ing of Holy Week.

Wednesday 4/13
7:00- 8:30

This hymn was penned by our long-time friend, member and Steward John Showemimo and is sung to the tune of Henieklien

My faith built on nothing less
But His grace and righteousness
Christ The Lord who died for me
Took my sins on Calvary.

I will tell His boundless love
Sent by God who reigns above
Me, a sinner gone astray
Christ redeemed my soul this day.

I am grateful of His grace
He is Lord of time and space
I will cheer with sheer delight
He is God, The God of light.

He is Christ, my precious Lord
Washed me, cleansed me in His blood
Took my sins and turned me round
Lead me where His grace was found.

To my maker, I shall sing
Loud Hosannas to The King
From the sun to blissful shore
I will praise Him ever more.

SERENDIPITY THIRTY-SEVEN

John Wesley's House: Part Eight

We resume our virtual tour of the one-time home of John Wesley at the point at which Part Seven of this article concluded. That is, just as we were about to enter the remaining room, on the second floor, that is open to visitors.

The Nineteenth Century Room

This room has been set up to show that the house remained in use during the 19th Century and is therefore dressed principally with furniture and artefacts of that time.

The Bed

This room contains the bed which is similar in appearance to that depicted in Claxton's painting but it is actually a folding bed of the Regency period. A short video, on the Museum web site is available showing the Museum curator demonstrating how the bed can be made to fold so as to take up less room. As it is it almost fills this little back room lit by a single sash window.

The Rocking Chair

The other major item on show, is of course an anomaly in this room, since it is an 18th Century rocking arm chair, against which John Wesley is said to have "lent" while preaching in someone's house while out on one of his major tours. It is stored here for want of space in the Museum of Methodism.

The Book Store

Like other rooms, in the house, the cupboards each side of the fireplace which were once open shelves, surmount tiers of drawers. These cupboards are now, like most of the others in the house, used to store books, just as the open shelves would have been in Wesley's time although the books held here now, are part of the reference collection.

The Painting of Rev Adam Clarke

Over the fireplace is a painting of Rev. Adam Clarke, the recipient of the ambiguous wedding present from John Wesley.

Adam Clarke, is often described as the cleverest man ever produced by Methodism, he was an autodidact, a self-taught linguist, a theologian who wrote many books. His most important, publication being a concordance to the Bible, which is said to be only book, apart from the Bible, owned by many 19th Century Methodists. He was also a strong advocate of overseas

missionary work which is one of the reasons that this painting, and its subject matter, is in existence.

In the painting Clarke is shown sitting in the study of his house at Millbrook, near Liverpool. In his company are two former Buddhist priests, Munhi Rat'hara Teerunanki, and Dherma Rama. These inhabitants of what was then called Ceylon, but is now Sri Lanka, came to Britain in 1813, to seek Christian education and because Adam Clarke spoke Sanskrit, a language that they understood, stayed with him for nearly two years. In March 1820, they were baptised as Christians and 2 months later returned home to their native country.

We now conclude our visit to the second floor, and while two more flights of stairs ascend to the attic, these are closed to visitors, as the attic rooms are now the Museum Curators office and the Study Centre. Instead, we descend to the ground, where we can exit the house, but this time we are going to visit the basement. This is reached by turning sharp left at the foot of the stairs at the ground floor, then turning left again, to go down a short flight of low-ceilinged steps, then at the foot, enter the door which is immediately in front of us.

The Basement:

The Museum of Wesleyana

This room, at the front of the house, has a very low level of artificial lighting, and blinds limit the natural lighting entering by the two windows at the front. However, the relatively dim illumination that results, is for a purpose, as it serves to protect the fabrics that are on show in the room.

It is not known what original use this room was put to, although it is possible that in Wesley's time it may have been occupied by the House Keeper. It is now arranged, in its role as the Museum of Wesleyana, as an adjunct to the Museum of Methodism. To this end, it principally, houses items that are believed to have either once been connected in some way to, or actually owned

and used, by John Wesley, or else, are attributed to his use/ownership.

These are displayed in three cabinets; the largest, in the centre of the room, holds some articles of clothing said once to have been worn by John, including, one of the tricorne hats of the type he encouraged his preachers to have on their heads, a pair of his shoes with silver buckles, a set of preaching bands, and the heavy, full length robe, or “night gown”, worn in the house. Other personal items, include, a set of the spurs he wore when riding, a pair of his spectacles, a night cap, and a knife and fork set used on his travels. Less personal items, include a little portable writing desk, a portable communion set and the large umbrella said to have been needed to protect Wesley from the rain when he was travelling in his open carriage.

The Last Time John Wesley Preached in the Open Air

Between the windows, and the door giving access to the coal store, as well as the steps up to the front garden, is a small display case, in which is housed a painting depicting the last occasion on which John Wesley preached in the open air.

This was on 7th October 1790, when Wesley addressed a crowd gathered in the grounds of a ruined church in the small south coast town of Winchelsea. Most unusually, for this late date, in Wesley’s evangelical career, he had been refused permission to preach in the Parish Church, and the Methodist preaching house was too small to accommodate the crowds who wanted hear him.

In the painting he is shown standing under an old Ash tree, and on display with the painting, is a dried leaf from that tree, which someone had picked up and kept as a keepsake, of the occasion. In fact, the tree itself later became a target for souvenir collectors and a Methodist Local Preacher is said to have been prosecuted for stealing a branch.

When the tree fell, or was cut, down some of its wood was turned into collectables and the Museum of Methodism possesses, and displays, just such an artefact in the form of a large section of the

trunk. A cutting taken from the original tree, was planted as a replacement and in its fully grown form, stands to this day, marking the spot where John Wesley preached his last alfresco sermon. This of course was not the last time Wesley preached, but then only indoors as his voice was no longer as powerful as it once was.

The Museum of Wesleyana contains one other case and this, against the north wall of the room, has as its major contents, items said to have been personally associated with John Wesley, or else his family. Amongst the latter, is a babies rattle with a coral teether, while the former includes locks of hair said to have been souvenirs taken from John's head, as was quite usual in those days, as well as a cup and saucer, said to have been used by John, together with a larger and more substantial ceramic item.

John Wesley's Tea Pot

This a large tea pot with a damaged spout and without its lid, has for long been celebrated as having once been a personal possession of John Wesley which was gifted to him by the famous 18th Century potter, Josiah Wedgwood. John is supposed to have used the tea pot during gatherings with his preachers, or so runs the story, long told to generations of visitors to Wesley's Chapel and to John Wesley's House, where it has tended to be regarded as a "Relic" and shown off as such in the past. Indeed, in her book, Helen McKenny often elates how, during the three years she and her family lived in John Wesley's House, the Tea pot was always specially exhibited to visitors along with other "Relics" such as Wesley's Long Case Clock and the Study Chair.

Unfortunately, no real evidence seems to exist that the tea pot was ever actually owned by John Wesley or that it was even made by the Wedgwood pottery. Indeed, it seems to have been manufactured in the early 19th Century, well after John's death. Further John, early in his career, gave up drinking tea, partly to discourage others from wasting their money on a heavily taxed,

luxury commodity, and partly because he regarded the decoction as being pernicious to health. Indeed, he actively discouraged others from drinking the brew and was very far from entertaining his preachers to tea parties.

Although the tea pot did not belong to John, it seems that in the early 19th Century, a tradition grew up of the Ministers and preachers, in the City Road Circuit, gathering regularly for meetings early each Sunday morning and, with Wesley's strictures long since forgotten, refreshing themselves with cups of tea. A large pot would be needed, for such a gathering and perhaps this one was obtained for this end. Probably then it acquired the title of Wesley's Tea pot, partly from the location where it was in use, and also because the grace in the form of the "Blessing" and a "Return- Blessing", printed on its sides, was known to be a favourite of John Wesley. Over time, the pot then seems to have accumulated the legends and the stories that became associated with it and were passed on to interest, and entertain visitors to the Chapel and John Wesley's House, so that eventually they acquired the patina of "truth", and the artefact itself, the mantle of a "Relic".

It perhaps, just goes to prove that something that has been told, and retold over generations, need not necessarily be true. Nevertheless, the Tea pot, even if it never belonged to, or was used by, John Wesley, is still an interesting object and has been responsible for quite a trade, over the years, in reproductions, such as those now on sale in the Museum of Methodism. More information about the Tea pot is available in Serendipity Thirty-Four which can be accessed on line.

With these details concerning one of the display items in the Museum of Wesleyana, we will terminate this part of the article. Our visit to the basement of the house will be resumed in a later edition of "Window on Wesley's" when we will also be bringing this serendipitous virtual tour to its conclusion.

Keith Dutton – Heritage Steward

HOLY WEEK

At Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission



PALM SUNDAY

Morning Service
10.50am - 12.00pm



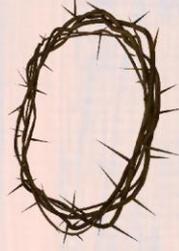
HOLY WEDNESDAY

Lunchtime
Holy Communion
Service
12.45pm - 1.15pm



MAUNDY THURSDAY

Holy Communion
with a Service of
Light & Darkness
7.30pm - 8.30pm



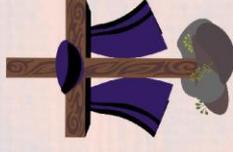
GOOD FRIDAY

Good Friday
Reflective Vigil
10.00am - 12.00pm



HOLY SATURDAY

The Easter Vigil
8.30pm - 10.00pm



EASTER DAY

Morning Service
with
Holy Communion
11.00am - 12.00pm

In-person & livestreamed (<https://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/livestreaming/>)

The Secretary's Prayer

Lord, it is quiet now and I need to tidy the desk of my mind and also my spirit. There are so many things all happening at once and I am surrounded by notes and reminders. You once said that no man can serve two masters and I know what it means to be torn in two by competing claims. Sometimes the answers to questions are easy but often I cannot even understand the question let alone know where to find a solution.

Help me to be patient and thorough and always to remember that the stranger who comes through the door for help might even be yourself. Please let my words and my actions always be as for you.

Even your office, the world, seems a bit untidy sometimes. Amen.

Peter Hemmings - a recent visitor to the Chapel

And finally..... The best position in which to pray

Three theologians at a conference centre sat discussing the best positions for prayer, while a telephone repairman worked nearby.

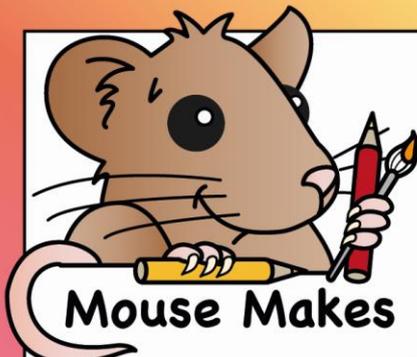
"Kneeling is definitely best," said one, and backed up his claim by quoting a number of New Testament texts on humility in Greek.

"No," another contended. "I get the best results standing with my hands outstretched to Heaven." He quoted a few texts on praise in Latin.

"You're both wrong," the third insisted. "The most effective prayer position is lying prostrate, face down on the floor." He quoted a few texts on penitence in Hebrew.

The repairman could contain himself no longer. "Sorry to interrupt," he said, "but the best praying I ever did was in English, hanging upside down from a telephone pole!"

CHILDREN'S PAGE



Mouse Makes

"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His love endures forever"
Psalm 136:1



I praise you Lord for...

Jesus said,
"This, then, is how you should pray:

Our

_____ in _____ hallowed be your

_____ your

_____ come, your _____ be done, on

_____ as it is in _____.

Give us this day our daily _____.

And

_____ us our _____,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And _____

us not into temptation, but

_____ us from the

_____ one."

Read Matthew 6:9-13 to fill in the words.



I thank you Lord for...



I pray for the Church and world



I pray for my family and friends

"Never stop praying."
1 Thessalonians 5:17



I am sorry for...



I ask for...

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."
Philippians 4:6



Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission

Wesley's Chapel
& Leysian Mission

**FREE
ENTRY**

Lunchtime Music Recitals in April

- 5TH AENEAS ENSEMBLE STRINGS/PIANO
- 12TH YOON SEOK (JOHN) SHIN PIANO
- 19TH MELANIE MEHTA, SOPRANO
RACHAEL CURTIS & MEZZO-SOPRANO
PETER WILSON PIANO
- 26TH JANE FAULKNER & VIOLIN
GARY PEACOCK PIANO

Tuesdays @ 1.05 pm



Worship at Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission

Monday – Saturday

10.00am Morning Prayer from the Methodist Worship Book

Wednesday

12.45pm Service of Holy Communion

7.30pm Lenten Communion Service (during Lent)

Thursday

12.45pm Service of the Word (paused during Lent)

8.00pm Ecumenical Compline (during Lent) – **Zoom only** (see details elsewhere in this issue)

Sunday

9.45am Service of Holy Communion (except first Sunday of the month)

11.00am Morning Worship

7.00pm Service in the style of Taize (first Sunday of the month)

All services except the Wednesday Lunchtime Communion Service are also live streamed

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

We also have a dedicated email address for prayer requests which will be received directly by our ministers Jen and Steven, and will be prayed during the course of the Daily morning prayer service. Please send all prayer requests to:

prayer@wesleyschapel.org.uk

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

manager@wesleyschapel.org.uk