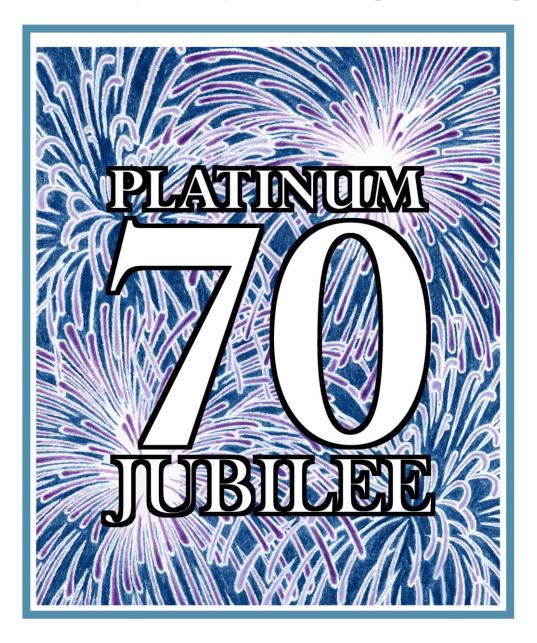
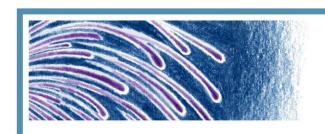


### WINDOW ON WESLEY'S





June 2022

#### STAFF

Ministers: The Revd Canon Dr Jennifer H Smith BA PhD

M.Phil (Superintendent)

The Revd Steven Cooper BTh MA(Cantab)

MA(Winton)

Associate Ministers: The Revd John Cooke 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)

Miss Gemma Smith BA (Hons) MA (Learning &

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#### Dear Friends.

Welcome to the June edition of Window on Wesley's: there is much inside about the events on Wesley Day, 24 May, and also news from different parts of our work and community. And a happy Jubilee weekend to all of you!

For some of us, the work will continue unabated and the extra bank holidays will just mean more pressure on work schedules and rotas, for others of us it will be extra holiday or time with family, and for some it may be days when we are one our own more than we would like. However, these days are for you, know that you are not alone.

At church, we will have a tea party after the service, and share fellowship and memories together. The Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association has gotten in first however, with its own tea party for the Jubilee on 24 May, Wesley Day: 19 children who are there every week aged 5-18 came and took part, with bunting, cake, and games. Hats off to the Officers and Leaders!

We are coming, as we know, into a time of rising prices and pressure on all of us in our budgets and savings. Please let us know if the church can help in a crisis, or if there is a gap in your finances. We cannot meet every need, but we can use our benevolent fund to stand with one another while we wait for a payment to come through, deal with an unexpected hospital stay, or help in other small but important ways.

Special congratulations to Matthew Smith, Captain of our Brigade (the Fifth London): Matthew was, on Monday 23 May, elected to serve as President of the London Battalion. Alongside him, the Revd Ian Worsfold, Chaplain at City University and one of our Wednesday Communion presiders, was elected Battalion Chaplain. There has never been a more important time for youth organisations, and ours here at Wesley's is thriving because of the commitment of the leaders. If you feel like you could be a part of

what they do, or you would like to be a part of Sunday School leading one or two Sundays a month, please be in touch.

Friends, go well and safely: it will be a busy summer, and we pray for Sabbath rest for all of you, and for our time together in church.

Courage, friends.

Jen

#### **Methodists in the Public Square**

#### Wesley Day in the City of London, 24 May 2022

Over 75 Methodists were led by President and Vice President of Conference in a street procession through the City of London during the working day on Tuesday 24 May. The procession commemorated John Wesley's 'conversion' on 24 May 1738, while making public prayer for justice, welcome for all, and new

life in our local communities.

The day began with worship at Wesley's Chapel before moving for prayer and song at John Wesley's

tomb. Barbara Easton preached,

linking present mission to the stories of Francis Asbury and Mary Bousanquet. Accompanied by the Susanna Wesley Mission Auxiliary Choir, the street demonstration paused to pray at the grave of Susanna Wesley, before walking with



song and drums through the City and along London Wall to Aldersgate.

Office workers, tourists and City residents paused to join in, watch, or listen as the procession sang and prayed at the

Aldersgate Flame by the entrance to the Museum of London,

before moving down Aldersgate to St Paul's Cathedral. There the Dean of St Paul's the Very Reverend David Ison and the Sheriff of London, Methodist Alison Gowman greeted the President and Vice President, laying a wreath of flowers at John Wesley's statue in the north garden of the Cathedral. All joined in Holy Communion at St Paul's, where the Vice President leda congregation of over 200 in prayer under the great dome, and the



President and ministers of Wesley's Chapel assisted.

At Wesley's Chapel, those unable to walk the procession distance joined volunteers in 18<sup>th</sup> Century costume to tour John Wesley's House and the Museum of Methodism, welcoming tourists and groups from over a dozen different nations during the day. Throughout all, the theme was rekindling our sense of confidence in our identity as Christian people in the public square, building relationships in our local communities, and welcoming all



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

This is a festive month: with the Day of Pentecost in the life of the Church, the national celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and the arrival of summer. And a spirit of festivity is very much to be found in our worship at Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission this month, with three wonderful visiting choirs from America and our own magnificent choir contributing to the worship every Sunday in June. Of course that spirit of festivity is offset by the continuing horror in Ukraine, and the many other circumstances in which people continue to suffer in our world—far too often as a result of human sin and the power of evil. But it is by the grace and power of God that these things will be overcome, and this gives us all the more reason to praise God and to make the worship at Wesley's Chapel & Leysian Mission all that it can be. And that's something in which every single one of us plays a part—simply by turning up first of all—but also through the many opportunities to add to our worship through music, reading the Bible, leading prayers, leading the Sunday School for children, welcoming visitors. Thank you, for all that you do to make our worship what it is!

These opportunities to add to our worship are for all—our worship is absolutely a shared enterprise—and I would love for you to consider what special role there might be for you. Please, by all means, have a chat with me about this.

This month, with our wonderful schedule of visiting choirs, I especially want to commend to you our own choir as something you might join. The choir, which boosts the singing of the whole congregation each week, and sings special anthems usually on the first Sunday of each month, is for everyone who loves to sing, with rehearsals each Saturday evening from 5pm to 6.30pm. We are really looking to grow the choir, and I very much encourage you to consider whether you might be a part of it! Do speak to me, or our choir director, Mikyung Kim, who would love to hear from you at <a href="mailto:choir@wesleyschapel.org.uk">choir@wesleyschapel.org.uk</a>

The same goes for our Music Group: this smaller group of singers and other musicians contributes to the Chapel's worship usually on the third Sunday of each month, offering more advanced musical selections than the choir, and usually simply rehearsing the night before. Are you a skilled musician or singer who would like to offer something through our worship in this way? If so, please come forward! Mikyung also coordinates the Music Group, and you can reach her as above.

Whatever you have to offer, thank you! I am always here, and delighted to talk with you about these things, or indeed about anything that is on your mind. You can reach me on 07483 160593.

And one last festive thing—before the next issue of *Window on Wesley's* comes out: On Saturday 2nd July at 2pm, two of our number whom we have come to know well over recent months, Jordan Garratt (29) and Rob Cahill (30), will be getting married here at Wesley's. All are very warmly invited to join them for their marriage service on this joyous occasion. Please join us if you can: you will be extremely welcome!

In whatever way you worship at Wesley's, I really look forward to sharing in it with you this month. My prayers for you, this festive June, whatever it may bring for you. May God bless you.

#### Steven

'While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven...' Luke 24.51

In the 2019 film Captain Marvel, Carol Danvers accidentally acquires extraordinary power and becomes an omnipotent hero: she handily saves the earth, along the way scoring a point for any woman told to 'control her emotions' as she takes out her false mentor and betrayer, played by Jude Law. I saw the film in Brighton before lockdown, and the theatre erupted in spontaneous cheers at that point.

After tearful goodbyes Carol (now 'Captain Marvel') flies away with a bold new hairdo and red suit. She leaves her friends an intergalactic pager they can use to call her in an emergency but goes off to be joyfully omnipotent elsewhere. (No spoilers if you haven't seen the next instalment: the pager works.) It is a good film, with deep friendships and strong messianic overtones. But the point is that Captain Marvel saves the day and then leaves, albeit with a promise to return.

Sometimes I have been prone to an implicit theology that behaves as if this is what Jesus is like. By implicit theology, I mean an unconscious gut level script that operates underneath the words I say and what I hope to believe. This particular 'implicit theology' is not just dangerously untrue, it also leads to lonely and fearful faith, unattractive as a way of life compared to the real stuff of the Gospel. If we have had a gut level implicit sense of God as a divine visitor who leaves, then Jesus' Ascension might feel in our guts like an abandonment, whatever formal words and happy songs we have to offer up about it. And yet, clearly the disciples felt no such wistfulness.

At Ascension, we celebrate the moment when Jesus proves he is not just a visiting hero come to earth, happy to be called on for future emergencies but mainly living elsewhere. Jesus' Ascension takes his real, broken, and resurrected humanity into the heart of God. It is the fulfilment of the incarnation, not an end to incarnation. Ascension is the moment when the God receives and owns Jesus' humanity. This is our homecoming, and our full reunion with God. Prayer, praise, and worship are not then intergalactic pagers to call for help in emergencies, but our communion with God's deepest being. And God is still and already at work in the world, so that my faithful tasks are not done in isolation. It is not my work, but God's.

Praise God, the diversity of our tradition offers strong waymarkers as we meditate on what Ascension means, which is the work of a lifetime. We need our full diversity! My warm-hearted, infinitely patient Sunday school teachers loved Jesus. I knew what happened to Jesus was not fair, and it made me feel sad for him, and also a bit angry.

Later I had other teachers who were just as warm hearted and if anything more patient, who played guitars and put their hands in the air. From them I learned of the Spirit's presence and love: the Spirit knew me and pronounced me infinitely loved. Above it all, so good and so important as not to be bothered with small things, I knew about God the Creator – the mover, the source.

Then I went to a different kind of church and encountered the Creed in the liturgy. Creeds are out of fashion in Methodism: they are long to say and stumbling to remember. They trip up our rational minds and force us to confront mystery. But fundamentally when we ask who God is, the Church answers not with dogma, but with narrative: the Creeds tell the story of God's love for the world worked out from Creation to the present and for eternity. They belong in the mouths of ordinary people, tested by real life. In the awkwardness of the Apostle's Creed on my tongue, I stumbled over the Ascension and thus for me began a different kind of joy-filled adventure.

Friends, Ascension is still Good News: Ascension speaks of a truth of God with us, of God not gone away but God in Trinity refusing to be away from humanity. It is an antidote to cold and fearful doing of tasks substituted for faith, and it has been an antidote for me, to being what John Wesley called an 'almost Christian'.

It is the great breaking in and crowding out of fear with joy. It is colour, and warmth and growth, and human frailty taken to the heart of God. In the Ascension, God's commitment and solidarity is not just to humanity in the one person of Jesus, but in every broken person, every unjust situation. And when we say the word Christ, we must hear behind it all that God is: always and ever brooding over creation, closer to us than the breath that eases in us now, than the pulse in our aging bodies.

Today, the world is still a hard place. We need heroes, certainly. But our heroes do not depend on superpowers, bold hair, or red suits. Our heroes use old tools, long proven by many hands: kindness, truth, challenge, humour, friendship, bread and wine, scripture and tradition passed with humble grace. And you are among them, praise God.

A happy Ascension to you all, as we worship with great joy, and bless God.

#### Jen Smith for the Methodist Recorder May 2022

#### A Word in Season 74 – Rest, Relaxation and Spiritual Refreshment by the River Rhein A Reflection on Psalm 23:1-3,6

YHWH, you are my shepherd – I want nothing more. You let me lie down in green meadows;

You lead me beside restful waters, you refresh my soul, You guide me to lush pastures for the sake of your name. Only goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in your house YHWH, for days without end. (The Inclusive Bible, Priests for Equality, Roman & Littlefield, 2007)

In the dark days of November last year, I was flicking through a travel brochure, musing on whether I would book a holiday for this year. I came across an advertisement entitled *Rhein Valley Rail Tour'* for the last week in April this year. My thoughts were that Covid might be less of a restriction to travel by then, and the Tour appealed to me. We had visited Koblenz some years ago and had a thoroughly enjoyable weekend. I also had discovered that there was a German Railway Museum in Koblenz. Could this be an opportunity to visit, I checked it out and it was only open on a Saturday from April – October. I decided that this was a chance too good to miss. Talking it over with the family and sharing it with the Lord I believed it was a good idea – and I booked it.

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April:** I had to be at St Pancras Station for 07.00 to prepare for boarding the train to Brussels departing at 09.01. We needed that two hours to complete all the requirements of Check-In and Passport Control. However, in spite of all the hassle, I was in my window seat, ready to go by 08.45 and gradually began to relax.

We left on time and glided through the Kent countryside seeing all the signs of Spring turning to early Summer. I found myself thinking of a hymn/song I had learned back in the late 1950's at the small Methodist Chapel at Crendell in very rural Dorset.

Yes, God is good - in earth and sky, from ocean depths and spreading wood.

Ten thousand voices seem to cry: God made us all and God is good.

(J H Gurney, 968 MHB, 363 H&P)

For me it was not just a reminder of Gods goodness but how important God's Creation is to us all.

The journey took all day, and three different trains, to reach our destination at Remagen on the banks of the Rhein. I was so glad that our hotel was only fifty metres from the station. After Dinner I took a stroll down through the town to the river. Lovely evening sunshine reflected on the river, it was indeed, restful waters.

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April:** We started with a visit to the 'famous' infamous' bridge at Remagen. The two towers have been converted to a Peace Museum which was very thought provoking. Particularly in the light of what was, and sadly what is, still

happening, in our world from Ukraine to Syria, to the Yemen and beyond.

Then coming out of the Museum, when gathering together I saw another reminder of how much God loves us, it wasn't 'two Sparrows' (Matthew

10:29-31), but a different family, but the message was the same.

It was fascinating to see how the parents looked after their babies - keeping them safe but helping them to learn and grow. As God

does for us.



After lunch we had a free afternoon. I decided to explore the town. It was a



peaceful, interesting and spiritual experience. So many of the buildings were splendid as I walked along narrow lanes with buildings of charm and character.

I discovered the Roman Wall and the small but very interesting Roman Museum, but one gem for me was the Catholic Church of St Peter and St Paul. Its quiet beauty and ethos was calming and uplifting.



Having driven up the Rhein with my family on our way to Switzerland, my wife Christine's homeland, she died six years ago and poignant memories from the past came to mind.

In the quiet I lit a candle and thanked God for fortyone, wonderful years of our marriage and our two

children and two grandchildren.



A short stroll away I found a Pilgrim Way and followed the path up to a glorious chapel.

Again I could feel the presence of God here. I spent some time absorbing the Spirituallity.

Yes, I felt God restoring my

soul, lifting me up to enjoy this week beside the river.



Wednesday 27th April: This turned out to be a long, but



interesting day. We were to cross the river and head for the top of the Drachensfeld Bahn, ('Dragon's Mount Train) Germany's oldest cog railway. First we visited Konigswinter to catch the train. Another lovely town with an enjoyable walk past many old buildings. We then took the train up to the top for a view of the river.

After Coffee and Cake we came down on the train and took a local train to Linz a town with Medieval roots. A beatiful town with three squares and two gatetowers. There was much to see but two items stirred a particular interest

Walking up through the town I passed the Old Lutheran Church which reminded me how the Romans enabled Christianity to reach the area nearly 2000 years ago, and that Martin Luther, and Germany played a significant part in the Reformation and laid the foundations, built upon by John and Charles Wesley and the other founders, of Methodism.



Especially significant as I am writing this article on Aldersgate Day when we remember the 'hearts strangely warmed' experiences of Charles and then John Wesley.

The other interesting item was the fountain outside the Rathaus



(Town Hall) which celebrated the present and future citizens of the town. The children splashing in the fountain, girls and boys playing watched by the adults, men and women. It reminded me that we are all part of God's family whatever our age, sex, gender, staus or religion.

We came back via Erpel where the ancient, 1388, stairway up from the river bank showed the height of floods in the past. We should have been visiting the Ahr valley today but last July it was decemated by a tsunami of water and mud that washed away vineyards, houses, roads and railways.

I learned a lot about the area and reflected on the reality of the presence of the Lord. (Isaiah 43:1-3a)

Thursday 28th April: A slow, relaxing, restful day. We took the train to Koblenz and changed to another for the journey up the River Moselle. It was two hours of wonder, as we glided alongside the river passing vinyards and elegant towns and villages and looking up to see castles and watchtowers at the top of the rugged hills. We eventually arrived at the ancient town of Cochem. A real gem with old houses, winding alleyways with a plethora of shops and cafes off all kinds. Including a shop selling metal walking stick badges – they are very difficult to find nowadays. (I have been collecting them since I first went mountain walking in Switzerland fifty years ago)

After a most delicious Apfel Strudel mit rahm (whipped Cream)

und tzwei kugel eis (two scoops of ice cream). Keith, a fellow traveller, and I set out to explore the town. Then I spotted a sign for a Sesselbahn (chairlift) which we soon found, and took a ride to the top of the hill overlooking the river and town. On this glorious, sunny afternoon we travelled



up over the rugged hillside to the top. There the views were spectacular.

I couldn't help but sing in my head, 'When I look down from lofty mount grandure, and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze, then sings my soul my saviour God to thee – How great the art!

The journey back was equally enjoyable. It had been a wonderful day.

Friday 29th April: This was to turn out to be another long day

because of railway problems in Koblenz delaying us on the way home. The journey was up the other side of the Rhein to Rudesheim, I found this less enthralling, except for the incredible Mechanical Instrument Museum full of magical organs of all



varieties. It was a fascinatung experience topped by a real surprise. The museum is based in a late Medieval Knight's house. In keeping with those times it contained a chapel with a frescoed roof.



The river cruise back to St Goar was very calm and restful as we floated past villages and small towns with churches, forts or castles and wharfs, again, surrounded by steep hillsides full of vineyards.

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April:** One of the main reasons for me taking this tour had arrived, a visit to the German railway museum in Koblenz. Keith, a fellow railway entusiast, and I went together, and we were not disappointed.

These photos drew to mind the exciting anticipatory journeys on a TEE (Trans European Express) to Bern in Switzerland to meet Christine and the children, because, as Deputy Head I never got away until at least the second full week of the Summer Holidays. Also some sadness when having to return a week before them in order to get ready for the new school year.



**Sunday 1st May:** When I booked the Tour I was interested to see this was a free day. It would give me the opportunity to go to Church. I looked 'on-line' to see if there was a Mathodist Church in the local area, but there was none. However, Christine and I were married in a Swiss Lutheran Church in the parish where she grew up. Also our two children were both Christened there. A few years later my daughter and I attended a Christmas Service in the church Adelboden. I felt comfortable with the routines of the Lutheran Church, I remember sitting down to sing and standing up to pray.

Consequently I emailed the church in Remagen, as the service that day was at 9.30 not 11.00 as usual. We wanted to clarify the timing and explained I would be on holiday and understood a little German and being an experienced Local Preacher would be able to follow a theme.

We receized a lovely reply in perfect English to explain that the service was at 9.30 because it was being led by the group of young Confirmation Candidates but I would be very welcome to attend.

It was a plain simple church with some interesting stained glass. (Unfortunately, for some reason, my photographs did not save.) The service was very straight forward and the theme was on the Good Samaritan. The first hymn was 'Morning has broken' naturally, sung in German but that was no problem and I sang in German as I could read the word., The next hymn had English words written under the German. The other hymns I also sang in German. I understood much of what was said and found the Communion very special.

I was invited to coffeee and cake after the service and passed on Christian greetings from Trinity, Woking, the Wey Valley Circuit and Wesley's Chapel and they passed on there greetings to you. What a wonderful way to end a holiday, resting beside the waters, my soul was restored and I had been spiritually renewed. I had worshipped my Lord and been satisfied.

By the River Rhein I had sat down and sung the Lord's song in a foreign land. (Psalm 137:4 The Inclusive Bible)

God bless you all.

#### Graham Warr - Heritage Steward

#### Recovery

Anyone who has ever seen someone (or been someone who is) going through rehabilitation therapies knows it is a long process with many frustrations and vexations.

That said, it also has moments of pure, unalloyed Joy at something which would once have seemed quite mundane.

So it is with the flurry of activity we had around "Wesley Day" – whether you call it that or "Aldersgate Day" seems to be a regionalism – it definitely marked a moment for our present revival.\*

Some idea of quite "where" we are may be gleaned from the fact we had 2 busy Sunday School classes on the Sunday, thanks to visiting children rather than returnees, but it was still the highest we have had for some time. As the old railway company's motto used to say "Forward!"

Then on Wesley Day itself we had quite the crowd. No doubt I will not be the only one to note with joy in this issue that we exceeded expected numbers. To the point of some swift printing of extra orders of service, and greatly surprising St Paul's when we all arrived, and kept coming!

We are, wherever one looks, seeing numbers up. Whether on our social media "followers" or people in the pews, the trend is up even if numbers are still up and down week-to-week. Morning prayer tends typically over 100 souls a day, and the online services, despite them no longer being "the only choice" are pulling in circa 300! Indeed, those figures beat some of the "lockdown" era figures.

Of course, more people coming means more people needed to make everything "go". 5-to-1 is the ratio we need to keep for safeguarding with children's activities. Not to mention the door stewards, communion stewards, collection helpers and so forth. Having come here back in January 2022 (when the tube at rush hour was quieter than it is now at night!) and seen how far we have come, without having been here for "the good old days" perhaps I am inclined to optimism. Yet doesn't Christ want us to be optimistic about the work He sets us to? After all, He is with us as we go about it.

So forward! And please. Do think about lending a hand so we never have to say "sorry we're full" with any of our activities! On Wesley Day we were cutting it finer than a sliced grain of rice...

\* Yes I am using the "R word" – high time it was dusted off and brought into use, we need a lift!

#### Thomas Smith - Leysian Missioner

And finally
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#### **Techie trouble**

The minister had technical problems with the sound system one Sunday. Instead of starting the service as usual with 'The Lord be with you', he said: "There's something wrong with the microphone."

Not hearing this, the congregation responded: "And also with you."



## **Poetry night**

Spoken Word • Poem Recital • Musical Performance FRIDAY 10TH JUNE 2022 • 7-9PM

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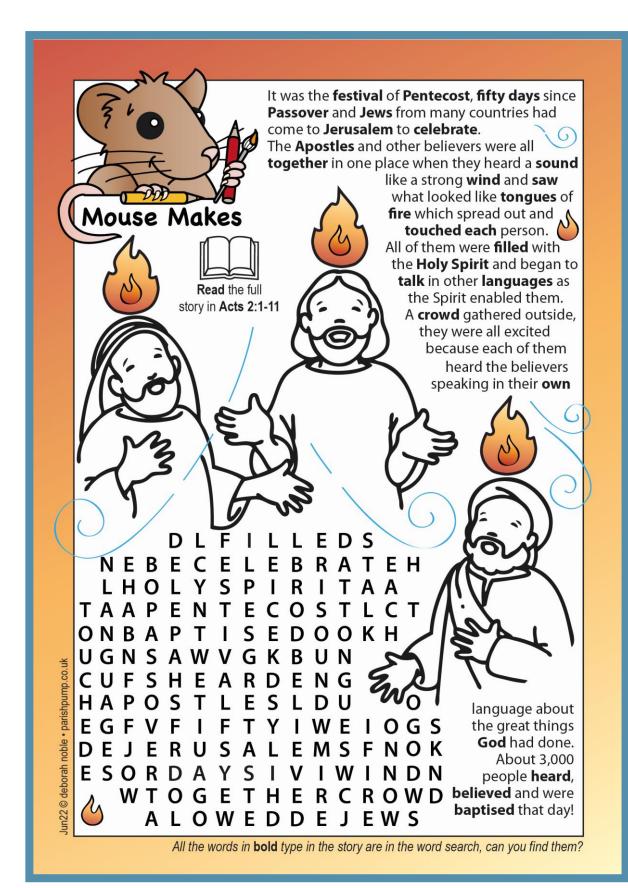
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#### **CHILDRENS PAGE**



WESLEY'S CHAPEL & LEYSIAN MISSION

# **JSIC RECITALS**

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#### 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

#### 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

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

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: <a href="mailto:prayer@wesleyschapel.org.uk">prayer@wesleyschapel.org.uk</a>

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