

Focus on May 2021



*Stained Glass Window in St Oswald's Church. Grasmere
(Photo by Judith)*

WELCOME TO WESLEY CHAPEL

We are planning to open for Sunday morning worship on 23rd May (Whitsuntide). As before, restrictions will apply.

Meanwhile the Nidd Valley Circuit present a weekly service
Please visit <https://www.facebook.com/NiddValley/> for
Circuit Sunday Service at 10.30am every Sunday

Morning prayer at 8am Monday—Saturday led by one of our Nidd Valley Ministry Team.

Telephone Service. Dial a thought. Ring 01423 648644. Changes weekly.

All links (and much more) can be accessed via our website
<https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk>

or if you need more information leave a message:
<https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/contact>

Wesley Chapel Contacts

Ministry Team: Rev. Lesley Taylor, Rev. Trevor Dixon.

Senior Steward: Les Sudron

Church Council Secretary: Jenny Goodwin

Safeguarding Officer: Christine Sudron

Focus Editor: Judith Yeats e-mail judithyeats0@gmail.com

Website: www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk

Wesley Centre Contacts

Wesley Centre Manager: Philippa French (Pippa)
pfrench@wesleycentreharrogate.org.uk

Website: www.wesleycentreharrogate.org.uk

The deadline for 'Wesley Focus on June is 24 May. Please send any notices, news, articles, photographs to Judith Yeats: 01423 506014, judithyeats0@gmail.com. Focus is also on the website. <https://www.wesleychapelharrogate.org.uk/our-focus>

WHAT'S ON

Sunday 23 May 10.30am, Morning Worship at Wesley, led by Rev. Trevor Dixon. Music before and after the service by Barbara.

Sunday 30 May 10.30am. Morning Worship at Wesley, led by Mike Greenberg. Music before and after the service by Philip.

Sunday 06 June 10.30am. Morning Worship at Wesley, led by Rev. Lesley Taylor. Music before and after the service by Graham.

Sunday 13 June 10.30am. Morning Worship at Wesley. Streamed Circuit Service. Music before and after the service by Judith.

Wesley Sunday Share

We are meeting every other Sunday online at 6pm for our new online 'Sunday Share'. We join together for 30 minutes to share something that we hold dear; that is important to us or holds special memories. It may be a favourite hymn or song, a favourite bible reading or poem, a special recollection, someone who was important to you or just something uplifting or challenging about your faith journey.

Our next meetings are 9th and 25th May.

Please join us if you can. Contact Les or Judith for a link.

See also p 24-26

Bible month

June is Bible Month. This year, the focus is on Mark's Gospel. If you'd like to follow the theme in your own devotions, this is the link to resources available from the Methodist Church. <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/the-bible/bible-month/>

MESSAGE FROM REV TREV

I was surprised to hear on the radio today that it was the 400th day since the start of lockdown. On such a day when it seems that a programme has developed for future days it would be good to think we can get back to normal as soon as possible. But then I thought are we nearly at the beginning of the end or the end of the beginning? What is likely to be the new normal? Maybe. Does anyone really know? We get regular reports that the vaccine programme is progressing, and we might assume that many people have had the right number of injections, so that must be good. But we must still stay safe.

However as soon as a new stage is reached the pictures on the television news show that there are many who are seem to be easily distracted from following the rules to stay safe totally. Can we afford to be self centred as individuals, as a county, as a country? It is not only the people of GB who are affected.

In the early stages I had a family member who lives in an MHA home who was admitted into hospital with suspected mild Covid 19. Having recovered from the Covid 19 he was discharged, with a diagnosis of confusion. Before he was discharged it was reported that he had been vaccinated but that turned out to be questionable.

As I write, the news from India is horrendous, and every time I hear it I think about Rev Moses John, Minister in our Circuit. He came from India and his wider family are still there. His plan was to visit them later in the year. Serious questions maybe about the health of his family. However the story we have before us does not indicate the total extent of the out-break and India is a large country. We can only hope and pray that Moses and his family will be safe.

I frequently hear of individuals who comment that they have another Zoom meeting in which they have to share. Sometimes more than one a day, sometimes business, sometimes pleasure, but always a remote picture with remote sound. Although our Tuesday Coffee Mornings have helped us to keep a conversation going.

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Message from Rev. Trev continued.

The shop keepers are suggesting that if at all possible only one person from a family should do the shopping, but how can a family discuss what they really want for the next meal or something else? I realise though, that that's the way it is for some all the time.

Perhaps when we are released from our Covid19 lockdown locations, or are even now in preparation, we will have to continue to seriously consider what we have lost and/or what we have gained and make sure we go forward in a manner which affirms us as individuals, with a significant part to play in those communities and groups which continue to be significant.

One of my favourite Bible readings gives an assurance that even in these circumstances we have support and encouragement. The inescapable God is an encouragement and not a threat.

The Inescapable God

To the leader. Of David. A Psalm 139

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.

You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.

Where can I go from your spirit?

Or where can I flee from your presence?

If I ascend to heaven, you are there;

if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.

If I say, 'Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night',

even the darkness is not dark to you;

the night is as bright as the day,

for darkness is as light to you.

How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!

How vast is the sum of them!

I try to count them—they are more than the sand;

I come to the end—I am still with you.

Make God's peace be ours even at this stage in our journeys. Every
Blessing. **Trevor**

Remembering Roz

We were very sad to learn of the death of our dear friend Roz McKenzie and our thoughts and prayers are with Andrew and all the family. Her Wesley family and friends remember her here.

'I shall always have the happiest memories of Roz. She was always willing to help in every way possible at Wesley, being part of the rotas for Forward Together, concert refreshments, coffee mornings, porch duty (together with Andrew) and was invariably cheerful and positive. Nowhere was this more evident than in the way she faced illness in recent years. Philip and I were privileged to attend her funeral service at Trinity this week. It contained music chosen by Roz and included three hymns: The Lord's my Shepherd, How Great Thou Art, and O Love That Will Not Let Me Go, which we were able to listen/watch on screen. We reflected on our memories of her while we listened to Make Me A Channel Of Your Peace. In spite of the sadness it was a very uplifting service and a real tribute to a lovely lady whom we shall remember with great affection.'

Jenny Goodwin

'I have happy memories of sharing porch duty on Sunday mornings for several years with Roz and also of making sandwiches for the monthly lunch time concerts. She was always a willing helper in the kitchen on Thursdays and at coffee mornings.

Roz had a lovely sunny disposition and will be greatly missed by her family and friends at Wesley.'

Margaret Stangroom

'Roz and Andrew would always ask me where I had been with my walking group and tell me of the lovely walks they had been on. They clearly loved walking in the countryside! I also used to admire them walking to Wesley from their home in Oakdale Glen!

More recently Roz sat behind me in Church and we usually had a chat after the service (those were the days!). She always struck me as a very pleasant and amiable person.'

Janet Allen

Remembering Roz continued.

'Put me in front of the organ or the piano and I can accompany the congregation hymns, no panic. Give me some minutes to write, no problem. Put me in the kitchen and I freak out. So it was that I was helping out in the kitchen before a lunchtime concert and without knowing of my phobia, (but perhaps guessing), Roz totally and utterly took me under her wing, virtually held my hand and guided me through the next couple of hours. She was so kind and helpful and I was so grateful for her thoughtfulness. I didn't really know Roz very well at that point, but I soon realised what a lovely lady she was, and I know she will be sorely missed by many of our church family.'

Judith Yeats

'My earliest memories of Roz at Wesley were of seeing her from my seat in the choir, sitting with her husband Andrew in the gallery. She once told me that their first visit to Wesley had been to attend a funeral and they liked what they found so decided to stay. She became a very faithful member of the congregation and the worship at Wesley was obviously very important to her. She was a quiet but thoughtful person who was always very willing to serve in different capacities when asked.

I first worked with Roz when we were preparing sandwiches for the Wesley lunchtime concerts. She was already very well established when I joined as a new girl and was impressed by her hard work and efficiency, especially when it came to slicing and buttering the bread buns! She was such pleasant company and part of a very happy team. I got to know about her family and how important they all were to her. I shared in her excitement as she talked about her latest grandchild in Australia and the plans she and Andrew were making to go and visit. She talked about her older grandchildren too and made regular visits to see the families. She was very good at serving the customers their tea or coffee and knew many of them by name and chatted easily to them. I also learned about her love of walking, an interest which she and Andrew had in common with Graham and I. We shared a love of the Lake District and talked about our favourite walks and places. She and Andrew often went to stay in Grasmere which is just a few miles down the road from Ambleside where our daughter Rachel lives. We also both had a special love of Borrowdale.

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Remembering Roz continued.

For several years Roz and I were on the coffee rota for Forward Together. Again she was very good at talking to the varied people who came in and was always quick to assist when they needed help. If trade was slow, Roz and I would look at each other and decide what jobs needed to be done in the kitchen. We were often to be found sorting out the cutlery or the crockery into their rightful places as with so many users of the kitchen things would often be jumbled up or put in the wrong cupboard. We worked very happily together and Roz was always a cheerful companion.

Roz was always very willing to help with the Christmas Coffee Mornings. She was hidden away from public view, but played a key role preparing the food to a very high standard, arriving early and staying on into the afternoon in case more sandwiches were needed. I always knew that with Roz and a small team in the kitchen the catering was in safe hands. I was impressed by the wonderful atmosphere to be found in there. Roz was always very calm and her quiet influence could be felt.

It came as a blow to learn of Roz's diagnosis of bone marrow cancer three and a half years ago. Who could have thought that a simple backache could lead to such devastating consequences? She bore her diagnosis calmly and as ever made no fuss, but quietly went about undertaking her treatment to try and slow down the cancer. She was very brave, even when the gruelling treatment made her very sick and unable to get out of bed on some days. She bravely fought back and after a year of treatment her cancer was in remission and she was able to come back to Wesley which brought her great joy. Worship and Christian Fellowship were an important part of her life, Communion was very meaningful to her and spoke of her deep faith.

During her time spent at home I was privileged to see her as her Pastoral visitor. She was always very welcoming even when she was obviously in some discomfort. Even then I found visits to Roz uplifting. It came as something of a blow just before Christmas 2020 to learn that her pain had returned after a year in remission. It was so sad that she had to go into hospital just after Christmas and was only able to leave for such a short while to return home to be with her much loved husband and family.

Remembering Roz continued.

I shall miss Roz's friendly smile and the chats we had about our families and our favourite walks. Her companionship was special to me and I am grateful for having known her and having experienced her friendship. I shall miss her.

Rest in Peace Roz.'

Christine Bunting

Roz was a very friendly and warm-hearted person who will be greatly missed at Wesley. It was always a great pleasure to be greeted by her and her husband Andrew when they were on porch duty on a Sunday morning. She also was a much valued volunteer helping with the refreshments at the lunchtime concerts.

Ulrike and Andrew Hitchen

*O Joy, that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to Thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.
George Matheson. Singing the Faith 636 v 3.*



Ullswater in the Lake District (Photo by Judith)

Wesley Week Pieces

Lots of visits to places of outstanding beauty like Harlow Carr Gardens, Fountains Abbey, Studley Royal, Ripley Castle have resulted in some lovely photographs. We also have a detailed picture of the ceiling in St. Mark's Basilica, Venice from Ian, taken before the pandemic restricted our travel plans. (See pages 16 & 17).

Some of the old and young Sudrons visited Fountains Abbey. Margaret enjoyed racing the children and with scooter at top speed was nearly a match for them! (Below)



The older Sudrons visited Mount Grace Priory (above). A lot smaller than Fountains Abbey but a most lovely place to stop and stare. Daniel really enjoys this place...

Easter

We're still in Easter, and here are some events that happened during Easter week.



Maureen and Mike did the Holy Week trail around Knaresborough and sent us these photographs. Above: Easter garden outside the United Reform Church on Gracious Street. Right: Poster outside St. John's church.

Penny sent information about a charity advertisement in aid of Westminster Abbey that appeared a number of times over Easter on her Facebook page. It is of St John's Gospel being beautifully read by actor, Sir David Suchet. It is an amazing reading of the whole of this incredible Gospel, give yourselves a couple of hours to settle down and listen. You can do so by visiting <https://bit.ly/2PN75Y8>

New look Upper Hall

Pippa, Les and Lesley, and others, are working very hard to get our Upper Hall ready for our Whitsuntide service on 23 May, our first live service since Christmas Day. The new toilets and kitchen are looking good, the gallery is being cleared and a deep clean will take place shortly. Wow, can't wait to be back. **Judith**

.A Fishy Tale/Tail from Ian

Every time I go to Studley Royal, I am reminded of the day when a young David found a twig with some line and a hook attached. So he rushed off, dipped the line in the water and immediately a small fish latched onto it. Unfortunately, the twig snapped and the line, with the fish still attached, got stuck around some rocks in the stream.

I made my way down the bank and caught hold of the line. I freed the fish and eased it back into the stream. What I hadn't thought of was that I was laying headfirst down the steep bank and it was only my belt buckle that was anchoring me. As I moved, the buckle moved and I started my slide towards the water. I was about to get a soaking! Looking around there was a small bush which I could have grabbed, but three year old Catherine was between me and the bush and it wouldn't have gone down well with her or Eileen if I had pulled her in. I accepted the inevitable and slid elegantly into the stream!

Eileen was in the car reading the Sunday paper and, with two ecstatic children as my escorts, I squelched my way back to her. The children were saying 'mummy, mummy, guess what daddy's done?'. Her response was exactly what you would expect of her, 'you're not getting in the car like that'. So, I travelled back to Harrogate stripped to my underpants, holding the Sunday Times across me to hide my state of undress! Eileen drove and I am certain that she managed to stop at every red light between Ripon and Harrogate. When we got home, Eileen parked outside the garage before taking pity on me and moving the car into the garage. Perhaps unsurprisingly, I have never been allowed to forget it. **lan**

It was Daniel's birthday earlier in April and the family met at the Staveley Sudrons to celebrate in the garden...it got a bit chilly. Daniel's birthday cake was baked by Christine and decorated with little eggs by Elsa and Rowan.



Janet is the Hon. Secretary for the Happy Wanderers and in her role maintains relationships with some of the supermarkets in Harrogate and gently asks for their support occasionally. The photo below shows Janet receiving a cheque for £333 from Dannielle O'Brien at Waitrose. Janet commented – 'Spot the clue we're in a pandemic!'.



How not to take a selfie

Ian sent this picture on *how not to take a selfie*. 'The Alternate Tuesdays Coffee Team (less Wendy) on our walk from Ripley to Clint. (L-R Ian, Jean and Eileen.'



Münster, Osnabrück, Wesel – a tale of three German towns

Andrew shares a lovely insight into his travels within Germany alongside Ulrike.

One of my favourite haunts when I visit Ulrike's home town of Wesel is the antique shop run by Herr Schwarz and his wife on the Blankenburgstraße. The street is named after Hermann Ludwig Blankenburg, who was a composer of German marches and lived on the street. The antique shop is a stone's throw away from the house in which Ulrike grew up. On a visit a couple of years ago my eye was taken by a copy of a print of Münster, Osnabrück and Wesel as they would have been in medieval times and I decided to buy it. What is striking about the print is the huge number of churches.



Münster The original name of the town was Monasterium, which in itself indicates how important a role religion played in the life of the town. Münster is 'Catholic'. *Continued p15*

A tale of three German towns continued

This may seem a strange concept to us in Britain. After all, it is unlikely we would say that York is 'Protestant'. (York is twinned with Münster). The reason that Münster is Catholic has historical roots. The German speaking states and principalities (as opposed to Germany which has existed only since 1871) were run by the local count, duke or prince and it was his religion which decided the religion of the towns over which he had control – *Cuius regio, eius religio*.

The Anabaptist rebellion took place in Münster during the Protestant Reformation and the Treaty of Westphalia was signed in the Münster Rathaus which ended the Thirty Years War in 1648. Münster was heavily bombed during WW2 and almost all of the Altstadt (old town) was destroyed. After the war a decision was made to rebuild the town in the medieval style. It is now a most attractive and elegant town, with some splendid shops.

Münster is a university town, with 45,000 students. It is the fifth largest university in Germany. For about 15 years I taught English as a Foreign Language to students from Münster University. Both Ashville and Harrogate Ladies' College have an arrangement with the Department of English at the university whereby students in the department spend their year abroad at the schools. Ulrike and I have visited Münster on many occasions, often to meet up with former students. In 2018 I gave a talk at the Department of English at Münster University on the causes of Brexit and the impact it has had on us a family.

Finally, Münster is situated in North Rhine-Westphalia. This state was created by the British military in 1946, thereby joining the former Prussian province of North Rhine with the former Prussian province of Westphalia. (See photo of Münster on p18).

We look forward to Andrew continuing his story about the three German towns in the next issue of Focus.

(Ulrike and Andrew, when I lived in Kitwe in Zambia we had a visit from the Münster Madrigal Choir, and two of the choristers (two young men as I recall), stayed at our home. They were a superb choir. This was about 50 years ago, hopefully they are still going strong. Judith).



Left. Ian came across this picture with incredible detail, taken from St. Mark's Basilica in Venice taken in April 2015,

Below photos from Ian and Eileen's visit to Harlow Carr on a sunny afternoon.



Street art in Knaresborough, taken by Maureen and Mike

Christine and Les did a trail around Knaresborough on Easter Sunday and this was the beautiful display of hyacinths that greeted them near the castle. The fragrance of the flowers was lovely...you can almost smell it from the picture!

Jigsaws



Jigsaws have made a comeback during the last year and this one was completed by Christine and Daniel over the Easter weekend. Why not send us your latest!

Christine was given this jigsaw (below) by a special friend from Wesley Chapel and very quickly noticed that there were

no straight edge pieces. Undaunted, Christine carried on making very slow progress and she realised that there were also many more missing pieces. So, this picture shows her last effort and with it a cry for help! Do you have the missing pieces?



And a second mystery from Eileen and Ian. 'Where do you think Ian was? And who painted the picture? (the picture was taken well before lockdown)?



(For answers to these puzzles see pages 22 & 30)

Continued from p15



*‘Ulrike and I have visited
Münster on many occasions’*

News from ‘old’ friends

Lynne has been in touch with an ‘old’ friend and writes:

I was delighted to hear from Sarah Burton (nee Roberts) this week and was even more pleased to hear some happy news from her regarding Charlie. A lot of Wesley folk will remember him from his visits to Harrogate as a little boy/young man.

Charlie is a volunteer for Childline and this week Dame Esther Rantzen, its founder, announced that he had won this year’s Childline Volunteer Award. Unfortunately, because of Covid restrictions this could not be presented to him at the usual black tie dinner but nevertheless he was delighted to receive the award virtually (see over).

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This year the award was called the 2021 Lockdown Hero Childline Award. As a volunteer Charlie has to travel to a Centre in London and he has apparently done a lot of extra volunteering, over and above!!! Many congratulations Charlie on being the recipient of this award which is very well deserved.

Further happy news is that Charlie has decided on a career change. He has decided to leave teaching and take up medicine following in Martin's footsteps (his dad) and is to begin this in September in Swansea. Peggy and Geoff would have been so proud of him and Geoff would, no doubt, have been encouraging Charlie to play Rugby and join a Welsh choir!!!

In these difficult Covid times it was so nice to receive some happy news – it made my day when I heard it! I am sure a lot of Wesley folk will be pleased to also share this news.

Sarah, Martin and Charlie send their love to everyone at Wesley Chapel.

Lynne Harvey

A Bunting family update

We were really pleased to see David, Lottie and Jemma in our garden on Easter Day. This was the first time they had been to our garden since Christmas Day and fortunately it was rather warmer than it was then. Graham and Christine ate their Easter dinner inside with the patio door open while David, Jemma and Lottie moved our patio table to a nice sunny spot in the middle of the lawn. They brought a restaurant vegan ready meal with them which Christine cooked in our oven and then took out to them. Meanwhile she roasted a chicken in



the oven for us which was a nice treat. Afterwards we enjoyed a coffee together on the patio, properly socially distanced, of course! It was lovely to be able to spend quality time together and we hope it won't be too long before we can spend time with the rest of the family.

On the following Friday we went on our first trip into Nidderdale since restrictions eased. We parked in Pateley Bridge and walked along the river upstream for a little way. Christine's foot did quite well, though she needs to wear hiking boots to give it sufficient support. We were surprised to see people camping at the showground as we thought shared facilities blocks were not allowed to open yet. We thought the sun must have tempted a lot of people to have a weekend away. Once past the caravan site, however, it was so peaceful and we were able to enjoy the tranquillity and abundant birdsong. Christine observed a curlew circling overhead with its distinctive call which brought back lots of happy memories of time spent on the moors.

Christine Bunting

(see also photograph p21).



‘It was rather warmer than on Christmas Day’

Football

Sometimes at Tuesday coffee the conversations gets round to football (and a groan goes up by those not-interested-in-football fans). The latest in depth conversation was Les and Ian discussing Tottenham Hotspurs new and amazing football stadium, and they thought (well Ian did) that we would all like to see some pictures.



and on page 22.....



Tottenham Hotspurs splendid new state of the art stadium

Les watched a documentary about this stadium and said it was amazing to learn amount the science and technology that make it unique in the world. However Les was keen to point out that Harrogate Railway's football ground still holds a special magic even if the crowd is 70 rather than 70,000.

Missing pieces of jigsaw

On page 16 we showed a picture of a jigsaw that Christine had begun only to find no edge pieces and lots more pieces missing. Following an appeal to anyone who might have information about these missing pieces and we received this note!

'I wonder if it was me that passed on the jigsaw with so many missing pieces? I have a roll to put away unfinished ones, and this morning opened it up - just to see! Lo and behold there is an unfinished one been left there for some time. Oh dear! I am surprised Christine even made a start on it, well done C. I will let you have the rest of it on your next visit. Love ANON'.

We promised to preserve the identity of the person involved so we have... will include a picture of the finished article in a future 'pieces'.

Grandpa's Onion Gravy

Maureen sent this charming tale and assured us that no one was injured in this incident!

We've just had an exciting 3 days providing child care for our 2 London grandchildren – Becky and Nathan – whilst Joanna has, finally, got some post-lockdown recording work with the CBSO. We haven't seen them for many months so it was very special. At the end of their stay, I asked what their favourite memory was: Fountains Abbey... in the sunshine? Eating ice cream outside Ripon cathedral? Getting a hole in one in the crazy golf in the Valley Gardens? Pizza tea in the garden with cousins Thomas and Harry? No. The unanimous memorable memory was 'Grandpa's onion gravy'.

We were having one of their favourite meals – sausages with Yorkshire pudding. Mike was making an onion gravy to make it a little more sophisticated but ...just as he was dishing up ... the chopping board fell against the frying pan which in turn fell against the onion gravy pan (think dominoes) which leapt off the hob and splattered me from neck to toe (and the walls, the kitchen cupboards and the floor) with onion gravy. This of course they found hilarious. Joanna phoned in the midst of this and I couldn't speak for laughing. I picked the slices of onion off my clothes and went to get completely changed. The children got down to clean the floor (didn't pass the 5 second rule), wall and cupboards. The onion gravy pan had actually landed the right way up on the floor and Mike managed to scrape a teaspoonful of gravy each out of it so we could savour how delicious it would have been.

So, they may forget Fountains Abbey, Ripon Cathedral and the Valley Gardens but Grandpa's onion gravy will be passed down the generations

Maureen

*This reminds Les of an incident in his family. What a brilliant tale; in our family it is a meal on holiday somewhere, where a 9 year old Andrew, tried to pull the top off a tomato sauce small plastic container which he did with such force that the sauce flew three feet across the table and covered Matthew's glasses; needless to say the three boys, when they had all stopped laughing, did not let sauce go to waste! **Les.***

Wesley Sunday Share

Our first Wesley Sunday Share was held on 11 April. Twelve members gathered together, via Zoom, at 6.00pm and we had a lovely thirty minutes in conversation and listening. Judith shared her favourite Bible passage Ecclesiastes Chapter 3, verses 1-8. Janet shared her favourite hymn, *Teach me my God, my King (StF 668 or H&P 803)*. Christine S shared two poems: 'I know' written by Karen T. Brown and 'Footprints in the Sand' authorship disputed by four different people. Each of our contributors shared their own personal stories around their choices and this made our sharing very special indeed.

On 25 April Shelagh shared a story about a friend who had given her a bookmark, a very special keepsake which she still has in her bible. Les play a recording of The Hollies singing *He Ain't Heavy, He's my Brother* on behalf of Keith, who particularly treasures this song, and Jenny shared a favourite hymn and read to us an article she had written for Focus some time ago. Here it is again for those that missed it first time round.

Jenny writes:

A number of years ago, at a choral workshop, we sang Jonathan Willcocks' *Lux Perpetua*. The theme of the work is Peace and Unity and he has chosen words on this subject from many different sources: Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Islamic. I was particularly struck by a poem/hymn by George Matheson (author of *O love that will not let me go*) which I had not come across before. The imagery is wonderful, particularly bearing in mind that by the age of 20 he was completely blind.

1 Gather us in, thou Love that fillest all!
Gather our rival faiths within thy fold!
Rend all our temple veils and bid them fall,
that we may know that thou hast been of old.

2 Gather us in: we worship only thee;
in varied names we stretch a common hand;
in diverse forms a common soul we see;
in many ships we seek one spirit-land.

Continued p25

Wesley Sunday Share continued.

3 Each sees one colour of thy rainbow light;
each looks upon one tint and calls it heaven;
thou art the fullness of our partial sight;
we are not perfect till we find the seven

4 Some seek a Father in the heavens above,
some ask a human image to adore,
some crave a spirit vast as life and love;
within thy mansions we have all and more;
gather us in.

It was written in 1890 as part of a group of Sacred Songs, and appeared in a Scottish hymn book. It was regarded as controversial because of its recognition of the value of other faiths. Today the only hymn book in which I can find it is our school hymn book 'Songs of Praise', which does not have any denominational affiliation so perhaps does not conflict with particular church doctrines.

When our latest hymn-book, *Singing the Faith*, was being planned there was an article in the *Methodist Recorder* asking for suggested hymns for inclusion so I sent this in under one of the proposed headings - our relations with other faiths. However the hymn did not appear and neither, in the end, did that heading. Is it still regarded as controversial? However, I feel that the words are as relevant now as they were then – perhaps even more so because we are all so much more aware of world events and the continuing battles between one ideology and another. Every time I read or hear of another atrocity committed in the name of God (whatever name He is called by) I think of that poem. It is so full of wisdom and perception.

The more I read of other religions, the more I realise that the basic truths of life are common to all of us; they are far greater and more important than our differences. If we are to achieve anything like the kingdom of God on this earth, we all need firstly to get away from the idea that our particular religion is the only true one, and secondly to respect and acknowledge another's path to God, however different from our own.

Jenny Goodwin

Wesley Sunday Share continued.

.....and the words of one of Keith's favourite songs, written by B. Russell/B.Scott, made famous by The Hollies and Neil Diamond.

He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother

The road is long
With a many a winding turn
That leads us to who knows where
Who knows where

But I'm strong
Strong enough to carry him
He ain't heavy, he's my brother
So on we go
His welfare is of my concern
No burden is he to bear
We'll get there

For I know
He would not encumber me
He ain't heavy, he's my brother

If I'm laden at all
I'm laden with sadness
That everyone's heart
Isn't filled with the gladness
Of love for one another

It's a long, long road
From which there is no return
While we're on the way to there
Why not share

And the load
Doesn't weigh me down at all
He ain't heavy, he's my brother

He's my brother

He ain't heavy, he's my brother
He ain't heavy, he's my brother

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George Matheson 1842—1906

George Matheson has been mentioned several times in this Focus, Roz chose his hymn *O love that will not let me go* for her funeral service, and Jenny has written about one of her favourite hymns, by him, on page 24.

Matheson was born in 1842 in Glasgow and was the eldest of 8 children. By the time he was 20 he was totally blind. He had become engaged to be married, but his fiancé broke off the engagement when she decided that she could not go through life with a blind husband.

He graduated with a first in classics, logic and philosophy at the University of Glasgow, and went on to enter the ministry and continued to study theology and history, including the study of German theology and the spiritual development of St. Paul. He had the reputation of being a fine preacher and following an invitation to preach at Balmoral, Queen Victoria requested that his sermon on the patience of Job be published.

O love that wilt not let me go was written in 1881 on the eve of his sister's wedding, and was an expression of his suffering and loneliness. His sister had looked after him after his fiancé left him and now, she was leaving him to get married. The hymn was first published in 1882 in the Church of Scotland's magazine, *Life and Work*. According to the *Handbook to The Church Hymnary* (1927), Matheson explained that when he wrote 'blossoms red' (v4), he was thinking of the blossom that comes out of sacrifice – of the sacrificial life that blossoms by shedding itself. The line 'I trace the rainbow through the rain' (v3) recalls the climax of the Noah story.

Matheson died in 1906 in the coastal town of North Berwick.

Continued p28

George Matheson continued.

The tune, St. Margaret, with which this hymn has been associated ever since it was published, was written by Dr A.L. Peace while on a visit to the Isle of Arran, off the west coast of Scotland. It is named for the 11th century Queen of Scotland who was an influential benefactress of the Church.

Judith Yeats

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Matheson

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/hymns/o-love-that-wilt-not-let-me-go-stf-636/>

Harrogate and District Community Action (HADCA)

Our very own Les Sudron has been volunteering during the vaccination process. This week marked the 100,000th vaccination given across the sites at Harrogate Showground and Ripon Racecourse!. A press release was sent out acknowledging the amazing support local volunteers have provided to make this happen, and a note to say that the organisation has been name checked on the Downing Street press conference. Below is a copy of the press release sent out to various media outlets which will be of interest to all of us who have received our vaccinations.

100,000 vaccine landmark – Harrogate and Rural District Press Release

Wednesday 28 April 2021 marked a major milestone for the primary care teams who have been providing Covid-19 vaccinations to patients in the Harrogate and Rural District.

We are extremely proud to have given 100,000 vaccines to our local community both on site at the Great Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate and Ripon Racecourse, as well as bringing vaccine to those who are housebound or homeless, including every one of our local care homes. This fantastic achievement has been made possible thanks to the extraordinary efforts of the 17 GP practices working together, as well as a myriad of local and community organisations and individuals.

HADCA press release continued.

The vaccination programme has been the biggest ever collective challenge in the history of primary care and, what first seemed an impossible task, was rapidly turned into a hugely successful campaign with all people aged 50 and over offered an appointment for their first vaccine ahead of the nationally set deadline of 15 April. The achievement of 100,000 doses is testament to the hard work and determination of all involved to reach this fantastic figure.

Dr Ian Dilley, member of the Covid-19 vaccination steering group said, 'As we take a moment to celebrate this monumental achievement we would like to thank all those who have been involved, without whom this endeavour would not have been possible; our resilient workforce of practice staff and staff returning from retirement; our tireless volunteer marshals who have made the patient experience so seamless, enduring often grim weather conditions with a smile; the local organisations who have donated goodies to our staff teams; Transdev bus company who have provided a free shuttle service to the Showground, and to our kind hosts at Yorkshire Events Centre and Ripon Racecourse who have worked with us to ensure the best possible environment for our vaccination efforts. A huge thank you to all involved'.

As the local team celebrate the 100,000 landmark at the centres with donations from local companies to the dedicated staff and marshals working at the sites, the programme proceeds to build on existing momentum as the vaccinations continue over the forthcoming months to ensure all adults are offered their first and second doses.

We encourage everyone offered the vaccination to come forward when they are invited. We also urge patients to attend for their second dose when called to ensure that they benefit from the maximum protection that the vaccine has to offer.

*(What an amazing achievement by our local community, something we are all immensely grateful for, and well done Les for volunteering.
Judith)*



Ulrike is our Christian Aid representative and she sends us this message.

Dear all,

Christian Aid Week this year is from 10-16 May and in a normal situation we would have a coffee morning and envelopes at church to support this important work. As this is not possible this year, I would ask you to use the Christian Aid website to make a donation.

Their website states the following:

This climate crisis hurts us all. But people living in poverty fight the worst of it every day. From drought to flooding, climate change robs people of control over their lives. Extreme weather means people like Rose in Kenya are struggling to survive without a reliable source of water:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals-key-appeals/christian-aid-week/christian-aid-week-roses-story>

Your gift could help a community build an earth dam, so when the rains do come, they will have the water they need to live. A reliable source of water will help families withstand long drought or relentless rainstorms. Every envelope. Every gift. Every challenge can change lives. Together we stop this climate crisis.

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week>

Thank you for your support.
Ulrike

Answer to the question on p17.

The picture was 'The wonderful Salt's Mill at Saltaire' - and, of course, the artist is David Hockney.

Prayer Corner

Please remember in your prayers all of our church family members who are not well; those who are grieving the loss of a loved one, and those who are lonely. Also remember our stewards, ministers and other members of our circuit staff who have worked so hard to keep our church and circuit family together through this very difficult year.

Faithful God, when you call, may we respond; when we falter, be our guide.

When you speak, may we hear; when we question, be our wisdom.

When you ask, may we answer; when we hesitate, be our resolve.

When you show, may we see; when we disregard, be our conscience.

When you lead, may we follow; when we stray, be our shepherd.

When you send, may we go; when we fear, be our courage. When you challenge, may we listen; when we fail, be our rock.

When you give, may we receive; and may we love, as you first loved us.

Paul Martin, Methodist Church Prayer Handbook 2019/2020.

Eternal God, your steadfast love is as high as the heavens are above the earth and your everlasting arms are underneath us. In Jesus you made your home among us, and you long for us to find our home in you safe and free from fear.

Alpha and Omega, beginning and end, the one holding all things together, give us liberating confidence to renew our trust in you, seek your will, and choose your paths. Amen.

Leslie Newton, Yorkshire North and East District Chair

‘Help me, Lord, to remember that religion is not to be confined to the church... nor exercised only in prayer and meditation, but that every where I am in Thy Presence.’

Susannah Wesley



Top:: Christine and Les taking a walk at Studley Royal. They did the circular seven bridges and were amazed to see the river had disappeared by the 3rd bridge.

Middle left: Rather peaceful picture by Ian, looking from Clint towards Menwith

Above right:: Easter primroses by Shelagh

Above left: :There were far reaching views across to Ripon Cathedral and beyond. You might just be able to see the white horse on the hill near Kilburn, the village of the "mouseman" Mr Thompson. Best of all the washing was dry when we got home! (Les and Christine)