



Newsletter May 2015



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Minister's Letter

Dear Friends,

When you read this you will either be about to cast your vote or will already have done so, and we will either have a new government or be in the throes of trying to form a new one. The beginning of May will be eventful to say the least. Whatever the shape of our new Parliament we all need to remember that this is the beginning of a new phase in the life of our country and not in just the end of a process. Many of us took part in the “Good Society” conversations in preparation for the election – and we say “thank you” to all who were involved in their organisation – but those conversations need to continue. As Christians, we are called to have a prophetic voice, and to challenge those who hold power when their policies work against the values of the Kingdom of God.

At the beginning of May we are still in the Easter Season and we will celebrate Pentecost towards the end of the month – May 24th. In John’s gospel, we read that Jesus spoke of the coming of the Spirit during the last meal that he shared with his disciples. In John 15 we read, “When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf.”

The word “Advocate” is an important one, both as a noun and a verb. As a noun, it means a person who speaks or writes in support or defence of a person or a cause; a person who pleads for or on behalf of another person; an intercessor. As a verb “to advocate” means to speak or write in favour of a person or cause; to support or argue for; to recommend publicly. So this Advocate that Jesus promises us will plead for us and intercede for us. This was picked up by the early church and we read in Paul’s letter to the Romans “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.” (Romans 8:26)

The word “advocate” comes from the Latin *advocare* (to call as witness) which comes from *vocare* (to call): so we can say that the Spirit intercedes for us but also witnesses to us. The author of John’s gospel doesn’t use Latin though, he uses Greek, and specifically for the word translated into English as Advocate he uses *parakletos*, which, of course, also means one who pleads another’s cause: that is why it is translated as Advocate. But it also has a richer meaning as it includes the understanding that the *parakletos* does more than just speak up for another person; the *parakletos* also actively defends and comforts them. The Spirit not only intercedes for us but also defends and comforts us.

The quotation from the gospel ended with the words “he will testify on my behalf”. But John continues, “*You also are to testify*”. The Spirit witnesses to us; intercedes for us and comforts us – but also calls us to go out and do likewise. We are to become advocates; to witness to the living Christ and to be the voice that pleads – that intercedes for – those who have no voice or who find it hard to make their voice heard.

To not only speak up for those who are the victims of injustice, wherever it may be found, but also to defend and comfort those in need.

Our Good Society conversations need to continue – both formally and informally – whatever the outcome of the election, for we still have the same task: to be advocates – it is our calling. So this May we begin the month with an election and end with our yearly celebration of Pentecost. As we prepare to receive the gift of the Spirit, may our hearts and minds be open not only to receive but also to give – to receive and then live as those who are citizens of the Kingdom of God.

Your sister in Christ,

Mandy

Please pray for other nations with May elections:

10 May: Poland (President)

11 May: Guyana (Parliament)

22 May: Ireland (Referenda)

24 May: Ethiopia (Parliament)

25 May: Suriname (Parliament)

26 May: Burundi (Parliament)

Mandy

Mid-week Communion Services

12.30p.m. @ Dialstone Lane Methodist Church

May 6th & 20th

June 3rd & 17th

July 1st, 15th & 29th

August 12th & 26th

All are welcome

In Our Prayers

Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who are unwell at home or in hospital at this time or have been bereaved, also those housebound through age and those awaiting or recovering from operations.

We also pray for anyone experiencing difficult times.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the June Newsletter is **Sunday 31st May 2015**. Please leave items in the letter rack **NO LATER THAN 12noon**.

Thanks

We would just like to thank everyone for the lovely Bibles and yellow roses we received when we transferred our membership on Easter Sunday. We really appreciate being made to feel so welcome and thank you all for your good wishes.

Sophia & Barbara Pape

Church Charities 2015/16

A programme of fundraising events has been decided upon from September 2015 onwards. Details of the first events will be published soon.

Further to this, a meeting will be organised to decide on other events that will be held in aid of Church funds. Please check the next newsletter for details.

Ian Halford

Birth Congratulations

Congratulations to **Jenny Nowell** who has become a Great Grandma to Joseph Stanley who was born on 7th April and to **Paul**, the proud Grandfather.

Birthday Wishes

Congratulations and Happy Birthday to **Jane Hollins** who celebrates her 60th birthday on 10th June.

Book Club

The date of the next Book Club is **Thursday 4th June at 11.00am**.

The Stewards' Team

This month we welcome **Carol Pearson** as our new steward. Many of you will know Carol as a faithful worshipper at this church for many years. We are looking forward to her joining the team and we pray that she soon settles in and feels at ease in her new role.

I step down as co-ordinating steward and pass on to **Mike Dascombe**. It doesn't seem five minutes since I was asking for your help and I would like to thank you all for your prayerful support over the last year. I couldn't have coped without you.

Finally we say farewell to **Ted Dawber** as he finishes his term of office. Things will never be quite the same again and I am sure you will agree he has done a great job for us all. Always cheerful and friendly and a very willing worker, I don't know how we are going to manage without him.

A great big thank you Ted for all you have done over the past six years - we will miss you.

Andrew

One more step along the road.....

It has taken almost 70 years for me to reach this point in my journey of faith. During that time I have been supported and encouraged by many different people, none more so than here at Dialstone Lane. Moving here has been a blessing to both of us in so many different ways. We were made welcome from the beginning and soon felt part of the church family. As I became more involved one thing led to another and it was with mixed emotions of humility and pride that I became a worship leader for this church on Easter Sunday morning. It was particularly special to have both my family and friends from Cheadle Hulme joining our own congregation for the commissioning.

I thank all of you for your prayerful support over recent months and your good wishes, cards and gifts were much appreciated, but totally unexpected. I am looking forward to sharing in worship from time to time and count it as a privilege to be able to do so at Dialstone Lane.

With every blessing,

Andrew.

Borrowing Church Property

Will anyone wishing to borrow items of Church property please speak to Margaret Bryant or Sue Judson before removing anything from the premises.

Thank you for your co-operation.

The Property Committee

Easter Offering Service.

The Circuit Service at Poynton on the evening of **Sunday May 24th** will take the form of the annual Easter Offering Service when the money raised by the Easter Offering at each Church will be dedicated and we can learn more of the purposes to which the money is put. All are welcome.

Please note that there will not be an evening service at Dialstone Lane.

Tape Ministry

If you would like to hear the service on tape, please contact Lesley for a copy.

Open Space

- At Dialstone Lane Methodist Church For all ages
- **Sunday afternoons once a month: 4-5pm**
- **Forthcoming dates: 10th May, 21st June, 19th July.**
- Active, interactive and flexible.
- Arts and crafts, Games, Stories, Singing.
- Juice, tea, coffee and biscuits.

- Explore faith in different ways.
- Open Space is everyone's space. Let us know your ideas.
- All are welcome!

For more details:

Like Us on Facebook or visit www.dialstonelanemethodistchurch.co.uk/for-children/openspace/

(Or just turn up on the day!)

The Circuit Choir

The Circuit Choir will be holding their usual informal get together at 8pm on 2nd June at our Poynton Church to discuss our next Choir Services so please come along for a chat and cuppa and any ideas that you may have.

Stella M

Church Charity Coffee Morning

Connie has kindly agreed to hold a coffee morning for "Practical Action" at her home in Lakeside Gardens on **Saturday 30th May** from 11:00am to 14:00pm.

There will be a Bring and buy, raffle and cake stall and we will serve snacks and light lunches.

Any items for the stalls or help on the day would be appreciated but mostly we would like you to come and help to raise more money for this worthwhile charity.

Prayers outside Church

It was a very subdued congregation that gathered on the morning of Palm Sunday after the tragedy that had occurred outside church the previous day where two young lives were lost and another hanging in the balance.

Grateful thanks to the Reverend Payne who had the foresight to take us all outside at the close of the service and lead us in prayer in an act of faith round the tree.

We send our sympathies to the families of those involved.

Action for Children

Results of Collections etc. and announcements of coming events

We are pleased to give results and thank all who have helped in any way.

League of Light Boxes

For year 2014: £565

(previous year 2013: £571.74)

Other efforts previous year Sept 2013- Aug 2014

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Dec 2013: Charity lunch | £95 |
| Christmas post box | £32 |
| Nativity Service | £82.34 |
| July 2014 A for C Sunday | £201.16 |
| Mrs Clarke informal lunch | £50.50 |
| Other amounts | £3.38 |
| | £464.38 |

Present year so far from Sept 2014

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Dec 2014 Nativity service | £33.53 |
| Christmas post box | £49.40 |
| Other amount | .30 |
| | £83.23 |

New Project to raise money

Partnership with Textile Recycling Co:

Ideas requested as to suitable sites for clothing banks which A for C could approach – near car parks, churches, supermarkets, pubs, or shopping centres with good footfall. Any suggestions gratefully received.

Annual Morecambe Bay Sponsored Walk

Sat 22/8/15 from Arnside to Kents bank/ Abbot Hall for refreshments – led by Queen's Guide across the bay. Details on charity noticeboard.

Other interesting / adventurous sponsorship events listed on noticeboard e.g. Liverpool Rock & Roll Marathon 14/6/15 (all abilities)

Margaret A

Barbara's Thoughts

I have always thought myself incredibly blessed to have been born into a Christian home, brought up by parents who had a deep love for God, for one another and for family: always living by the admonition "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord Colossians 3: 23.

I never expected, or indeed felt the need, for the earth to move to know I was safe with God. No Paul blinding experiences for me to know Jesus.

From time to time, I did yearn to know more of this God and his ways. Over the years, it has led me down many paths and my quest has blessed me with a far deeper knowledge of my Bible, drawing me into a bond with the Father that I would otherwise not have had. Above all it has given me an open mind and a tolerance of all denominations and the way my fellow Christians wish to worship.

Down through the ages, worship styles have changed but, whether we belong to organised traditional or Happy Clappy hallelujahs, we all share a desire to connect with and to be nourished by God. Romans 14: 5-12.

Prayer has always, as with all Christians, been an integral part of my life, but during the last few months as prayer has been highlighted I have experienced a great learning curve.

With this in mind let me relate something I wrote about a few years ago, in the Herald.

I had for 12 months been, rather like a metronome, to and from doctors and specialist for injections (uncomfortable and sadly not working), tests (easy-peasy), X rays (numerous) and scans (absolutely fascinating) and finally been put on a waiting list for surgery – isn't the unknown frightening.

It was not until my hospital date drew nearer and the knowledge grew that my convalescent time would be quite painful and take in excess of nine months, plus the dawning realisation of how that would restrict me, that I realised how apprehensive I felt, and as time became shorter, how, as Henry said, I was becoming uptight.

Then, on the day before I was to go into hospital, I became aware of a quiet settling about me. On the morning of my op., having slept soundly, I awoke completely calm, and this stillness remained with me.

It was as I waited to go into theatre that I knew what this peace was. I was surrounded by prayer – encircled with loving prayers from family and friends, all praying for me and the doctors and nurses. This feeling has also remained with me.

Getting up very early on my first morning home and sitting in my chair, I thanked God for all his love. I thanked Him for all the people who through love of him, are moved to care. I thanked Him for those who nurse the sick, the skills they have acquired from his provisions. As I sat there, the sun suddenly came round to the front of our flat. Slowly, its light travelled down the trunk of the huge beautiful tree that grows outside our window. It lit the room with a soft orange glow, and I knew that my prayers were heard, and I thanked Him once again.

On Palm Sunday 2008 I was able to walk slowly with Henry to the service at D.S.L. As I bent my head to pray – Thank you dear Lord that I am able to be here on this special day – the sun came out again, this time through a window, filling the row where we were sitting with light and caressing us with its warmth.

In this fragmented world, I have always considered my wants insignificant. These last eight weeks taught me so much.

God performs great wonders through His people, moving them by His Spirit to good works. Just as we are fed by good food, so we are nourished by prayer. Prayer encourages our character to be the best we can be.

So many flowers I received, so much love and care, so many cards and phone calls over the eight weeks. But most of all so many prayers.

And for a smile:

A child is accused of something.

He says to his Grandad

'It weren't me Grandad'.

Grandad corrects him –

'It wasn't me', he says.

Grandson says 'I know it wasn't you.

It weren't Me, either'.

Barbara Hallworth

News from "All we Can"

"Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can." – John Wesley

You may be aware that the "Methodist Relief and Development Fund" changed its name last year to "All we Can". Their website has demonstrated the need for the work they do in our name – and has some inspiring stories – such as this one about Sierra Leone.

Surviving Ebola in Sierra Leone

In 2013 Sierra Leone was one of the fastest growing economies in the world, enjoying the kind of peace and prosperity that meant the future looked bright for its people. Then on 29th May 2014 the country suffered a serious blow when it was announced that the first cases of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) had been confirmed in the country. To date over 3000 people have died in Sierra Leone as a result of Ebola and the country continues to battle the spread of the disease.

Stories from Kailahun

Kailahun was one of the first regions affected and now hosts over 180 Ebola survivors. Life after Ebola is tough. Survivors often live with not only the loss of loved ones and ongoing health problems, but also the stigma and fear that surrounds the disease. All We Can and the World Church Relationships team of the Methodist Church in Britain have been working with the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone (MCSL) to help support Ebola survivors as they begin to rebuild their lives. MCSL are providing psychosocial care and

resettlement packages, and running activities to sensitise the communities in Kaliahun on the risks of Ebola so that the ongoing threat of the disease is kept at bay.

Road to Recovery

Lahai Kallon, his wife and his young daughter all survived Ebola and feel blessed to have kept their lives, but things are still very difficult for them, as Lahai explains: “When we first came back from the treatment centre things were very hard. Because of the way we looked people were afraid. They drove us from our home. We are living with very little, everything was burnt that we had owned because of the Ebola. We pray that God continues to help us and bless us in our life through what the Methodist Church is doing here for us.”

The Kallon family will be receiving individualised psychosocial support over the coming months to help them address some of the traumatic events of the last year as well as practical items including basic household goods and tools to support them in regaining a livelihood.

Psychosocial counsellor Ahmed Koroma is working with Ebola survivors as part of their recovery process. He believes that with the right approach Sierra Leone can move forward:

“My favourite part of my job is to see transformation from the present situation to something better. If someone is affected I too am affected. Sierra Leone is my country and so I feel its people’s pain also. This work in the fight against Ebola is part of my legacy, by working with thought and care we can see a change here in Kailahun and are already beginning to see a better future come about for survivors.”

Thank you to everyone who supported All We Can’s emergency appeal in response to the Ebola crisis.

The battle against Ebola is far from over in Sierra Leone, but the recovery has begun. The Methodist Church of Sierra Leone has asked that we might continue to hold the country in prayer, to pray for the total eradication of Ebola and to lift up the survivors, their families and those supporting them in coming months.

Supplied by Andy Stoker

Rotas

Cleaning Rota

| | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| May 17 | Stewart |
| 24 | Andrew & Ruth |
| 31 | Andy & Catriona |

Stewards

| | a.m. | p.m. |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| May 17 | Nichola | Andrew |
| 24 | Mike | Nichola |
| 31 | David | Andrew |

Counting Rota

| | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| May 17 | Peter & Pat |
| 24 | Sandra & Debbie |
| 31 | Sue & Jane |

Welcomers

| | a.m. | p.m. |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------|
| May 17 | Lisette & Beryl | Jeremy |
| 24 | Pauline & Roy | |
| 31 | Pauline & Roy | Sandra |

Flower Distribution

If you are unable to deliver on this date, please arrange a replacement.

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| May 17 | Debbie |
| 24 | Margaret A |
| 31 | Lisette |
| Jun 7 | Sue |
| 14 | Debbie |

Musicians

| | a.m. | p.m. |
|---------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| May 17 | Band | tbc |
| 24 | Margaret | Circuit Service at Poynton |
| 31 | John | tbc |

Crèche

| | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| May 17 | Sandra & Debbie |
| 24 | Lisette & Jenny |
| 31 | Sue & Carol |
| June 7 | Stella & Catriona |
| 14 | Sandra & Debbie |
| 21 | Lisette & Jenny |