

NEWSLETTER

FROM THE MINISTER



It's been a busy few months as we have traveled through Lent and Easter together. Thank you so much if you joined a church event or indeed if you took part in leading one. One of the things we have to be careful of as a church is being so busy that we do not notice what God is up to all around us. In the village, which is Notting Hill and Ladbroke Grove, God is at work. Nature is bursting into life all around us. The trees are in glorious blossom, gardens, and flower boxes are bursting with life. I wonder how it is with us? Are you feeling the joys of spring? Or is life just feeling difficult? Some people will argue that as a Christian, we should always be full of joy – but we know in truth this can never be the case. Life is full of ups and downs. Where the joy and indeed the hope comes from is knowing that God walks alongside us however we are feeling. Whether we have a spring in our step or indeed if we feel we might need dragging along!

As a church, we are always called to mirror the ways of God. To join in the celebrations of people's lives and likewise to empathize with those who are struggling, not telling them to buck up but literally walking alongside them and sharing the love and kindness of God with them and letting God do the work.

Thank you to those of you who have shared with me the joys and struggles you are going through – I consider it a huge privilege. Know that I am here for you if you need to talk, and be assured that in the joys and sorrows, you are always in my prayers. **Paul**

FROM THE OTHER ONE - INTRODUCING THE REVD IAN WORSFOLD

Who am I? I'm definitely not Jean ValJean!

We've been around now for 6 months, but Paul has asked me to share a bit more about myself, my background and something of my work as a university chaplain.

The first confession, (if you didn't already know) is that I'm an Essex boy! I grew up in Basildon with mum, step-dad and older sister, Michelle. My parents divorced when I was about 4 years old. My dad, step-mum and younger half-sister Hollie, (25 years younger!) live in Stowmarket in Suffolk.

I was quite a sensitive kid and would often clash with my step-dad who was very sporty. His answer to any bullying I experienced at school was **'thump 'em'**! As he had grown up in the Boys' Brigade (BB), my step-dad decided to send me there too, in the hope that it might toughen me up! I'll leave you to judge whether that actually worked!



The local BB company was at the Methodist Church at the top of the road, interestingly, beyond the local scout hut, just next to our house, where a lot of my school friends went. Trinity Methodist Church in Basildon became and remains a special spiritual home for me. I still enjoy going back there when I can. Clearly, God was already at work in my life.



The BB played a significant part in my life for the next 11 years. I achieved all the badges, gained all the promotions, and eventually become an officer (accredited leader). Some of my proudest moments are associated with my time in the BB. Being selected to parade in front of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle with other Queen's Badge holders (the highest award in the Brigade); travelling to meet the BB in Hong Kong and hosting them in return. Leading the Brigade's national worship band which included performing at the Royal Albert Hall and leading the main-stage worship in the Big Top at the Brigade's worship festival, Firm Foundations, packed with 1000 people.

It was while on a BB camp in 1992 that I made my Christian commitment, realising that Jesus' love wasn't just a story, but it was real and was for me. My call to ministry also came while on a BB camp a few years later. That was nearly 30 years ago and is another story in itself to reach where I am now.

For the last 10 years I've had the privilege of coordinating a team of 8 chaplains at City, University of London: five are Christian, one Hindu, one Muslim and one Jewish. Together, we fulfil a pastoral role within the university for both staff and students, offering support and conversation of a broadly spiritual nature. In my first few months in the role, I found myself speaking more freely of God in conversations than I had in circuit ministry (other than in the pulpit that is), such are the demands of a circuit minister.



There is another role for chaplains and that's to offer challenge to the institution if we hear about unjust structures or pick up on people being excluded for whatever reason. Whether you call it 'speaking truth to power' or acting as a 'critical friend' there is a prophetic nature to this aspect of chaplaincy. For the last few years, I've been exploring this particular aspect of chaplaincy while researching on a practical theology doctoral programme at Roehampton.

Life with God is never dull, always changing and quite often challenging. Life with God is also immensely rewarding and affirming as the One who created everything, is also willing to engage with me and use who I am in sharing God's love with those I'm privileged to serve. That's not something that's just reserved for me, that's just reserved for those who are ordained. That's available to us all. Thanks for reading and thanks be to God. **Ian**

Hosting of Chair's Interviews

Recently, Notting Hill MC was honored to host the interviews for the new London District Chair. The Staff team did a great job meeting the needs of the panel (who came from all over the country) and the interviewees. We had a special message of thanks from the Secretary of Conference for our efficient hospitality.



The Revd Dr. Jonathan Dean was nominated as the chair designate. Jonathan and Paul used to work together in the Connexional Team. Jonathan will be our preacher on Sunday 2nd June. We wish him every blessing.

LES MISERABLE BIBLE STUDY AND OUTING!



Fifteen members of the church traveled through Lent together, looking at the scriptures through the lens of the musical Les Miserables.



Having watched the movie, we spent time looking at the various characters, including Fontaine, Jean Valjean, and the Bishop, to name only three. Most of the group took up the offer to travel into the West End to see the show live.



YOUNG PEOPLE'S WEST END PILGRIMAGE

In May, as part of Paul's work of outreach into the world of theatre, our young people will go on their first West End Pilgrimage. Each person under 18 from the church is invited to bring a friend with them to travel into London, watch a show (the first one will be Matilda), have something to eat and then walk back to Notting Hill. We are looking forward to this fellowship time. Watch this space for news of our next pilgrimage.

MEMBERSHIP CLASSES AND WELCOME SERVICE!

After an intensive 5 weeks of Membership Classes, it was a joy to welcome Delores, Robert, Ajishafe, and Bright as full members of the Methodist Church here in Notting Hill. Their welcome took place on Easter Sunday.



Merger Vote From September, Notting Hill and Harlesden Methodist Church will be working more closely together as we form the Notting Hill and Harlesden Methodist Circuit.



Both Churches will continue to operate locally but will also be there to support one another in admin, mission, and governance.

CAFÉ STYLE WORSHIP

Did you manage to join us for our Café Style worship? The next one will be on the 28th April at 11am – who might you invite to join us?



ECO BARBECUE



The Church is privileged to be the steward of a piece of land near Kelfield Mews which we are developing to help the environment. Why not come and join us (and bring a friend) at our Eco Barbecue on Sunday 26th May 2024.

More details to follow or speak to Portia.

BRING AND SHARE

Sharing food and fellowship has long been part of the church's life and reminds us of Jesus' commandment to remember him. Our next Bring and Share meal will be after Sunday service on 28th July – please do join us.

YETUNDE MOVES “ON TRIAL”

Congratulations to Yetunde as she moves onto being a Local Preacher on Trial. We wish her well with her studies.

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

The following officers are required to undertake Safeguarding Training every 4 years: Pastoral visitors, anyone working with children in the name of the church, Circuit stewards, Church stewards, Local preachers and Worship leaders, those attending 3 Gen. Please check your training is up to date.



If you are not sure speak to Sharon or Anabela.

FUNERALS

We remember the families of Audrey Brown (member of this church) and Flo Stephenson whose funerals have been conducted in our church in the past months.



Preparing the Easter Cross

UNLOCK LONDON 27TH APRIL

Our Church will be open all day on Saturday 27th April for the Unlock London walk. This is an opportunity for us to offer hospitality and our faith with walkers from all over the country.

TABLE TOP SALE

The 27th April is a busy day for NHMC as we will also be hosting a table-top sale in the Lower Hall. Browsers are very welcome. Why not pop by and say Hello.

CHURCH WEEKEND AWAY 17TH MAY

The Church weekend will soon be upon us – we look forward to reporting back what we got up to!

GENERAL CHURCH MEETING

Our annual meeting will take place on the 9th June after worship – please do join us. At this meeting, we appoint members to the Church Council. If you think you might be interested in serving the church in this way please do speak to Paul.

A FORM OF PRAYER FROM THE INTERNET - WOULD YOU AGREE WITH IT?

Always pray to have eyes that see the best in people, a heart that forgives the worst, a mind that forgets the bad, and a soul that never loses faith in God.



Transformation

All our events are listed on the website

www.nottinghillmethodistchurch.org.uk