



# Weybridge Methodist Church

## Newsletter August 2021



The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission.

## Worship in August

01 <sup>st</sup> August	to be confirmed
09 <sup>th</sup> August	Graham Pearcey
15 <sup>th</sup> August	Dave Ingoldby
22 <sup>nd</sup> August	Rev Peter Hills
29 <sup>th</sup> August	Graham Warr

Refreshments will be served after the services in line with Government guidelines

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Birthday wishes this month go to Tiffany, Martin & Samuel Ashplant.



As things return to a degree of normality the flower rota is now available for you to mark any Sundays you wish to sponsor in memory of a loved or to mark a birthday or anniversary. Please see Carol.

## So long, Farewell, Auf Wiedersehen, Goodbye

*(no attempt at Spanish – I'll get it wrong)*

On Sunday 18 July we said a sad but joyous farewell to Lili and Jose as they leave to start a new life in Egypt. We were delighted that James & Hazel Bell could join us for this occasion and Rev David Faulkner, who had pastoral charge of Weybridge for two years, was able to join us and say farewell on behalf of both church and circuit.

Despite the heat we enjoyed a buffet lunch in the church hall – which was blissfully cool



Jose explained how he and Lili came to our church. Having moved to Weybridge they continued to worship at Cheam. One Sunday they overslept so googled the local churches and found that they had time to get to our church – after all they only lived 500 meters away, only Steve & Teresa lived closer! The first people they met at Weybridge Methodist church were James & Hazel (which is why it was so particularly great to have them with us) closely followed by Stan. They felt so at home in our church family that they stayed with us.

We wish them all God's blessings as they commence their new life together in Egypt.

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Friends in Christ,

As I approach my “sitting down” (retiring) time and becoming a supernumerary, I want to thank all of you for the many ways you allowed me to serve as presbyter (minister) in this Circuit. As the years go by I will look back fondly on our time together; I trust the same

will be true for you. In the last nine years I have watched children grow up. I have baptized and performed funerals. I have visited the church family members in hospitals and in residential and nursing homes. Together, we realized a few dreams, lived through a few trials, and persevered. While we presbyters come, serve and leave, there is one who never leaves us - Jesus Christ. Jesus has been here from the beginning and will be with us for the rest of time. If through the power of the Holy Spirit, we allow Jesus to guide us individually and collectively then the congregations and the circuit will always have a relevant and fruitful mission. It may not look like the church we have today. The pandemic has changed many things in life and there may be difficult decisions which need to be made. But a passion for our Lord and Saviour will see us through all our future trials. This passion guided the earlier congregations in this circuit, a passion which allowed them to navigate their own trials. They managed and flourished; so can we. The Bible is full of stories about people who faced harder trials than we. A few times the people of Israel were exiled from their land; every time they returned. When Elijah was on the run from King Ahab and Queen Jezebel he prayed, “I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life” (1 Kings 19:10 NKJV). The LORD heard Elijah’s prayer and encouraged him with these words: “I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him” (1Kings 19:18 NKJV). When Elijah had done the math it looked to him like it was all over. God’s math was different from Elijah’s. God made a way where there was no way, and God will do it again for people who trust and obey him. Covid might have shaken us and made us to think that things can change in an instant and so much is out of our control. But it has also strengthened our faith in that God is the God of yesterday, today and tomorrow. He is the one constant we can rely on, no matter what season or stage of life, the

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goodness and grace of God is always there to give us hope and stability. I hope you have a wonderful future. I know there are wonderful leadership teams in all churches and at the circuit level too and they have worked tirelessly over the years. I hope and pray that your dreams and visions are fulfilled and that you find new ways of being church, serving our God, each other and the neighbourhoods we live in and invite more people to join us on Sunday mornings. Finally, I share with you the biblical blessing, "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26 NKJV). Amen

Rev Asif Das

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At the recent Circuit Meeting, Rev Keith Beckingham reported that he has sought, and been granted, permission to 'sit down (retire)' a year early. This means that the forthcoming connexional year, 2021/22, will be Keith's last year with the circuit. The circuit is therefore once again in Stationing, after it was thought that we had a year off! Please pray for the circuit team as they once again commence the Stationing process.

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Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,  
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,  
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:  
Lord for the years, we bring our thanks today.

Lord for ourselves; in living power remake us-  
self on the cross, and Christ upon the throne,  
past put behind us, for the future take us:  
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.



## Managing Change A post sabbatical paper by Rev K. Beckingham July 2021

*Hebrew 12:2: "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

The United Methodist church has adopted the slogan: Don't just reopen – relaunch!

### *First, do we want change for the better or change at any cost?*

To ensure that change is for the better, *critical thinking* is required. This involves asking open questions beginning with each of the following 6 words: What, Why, Where, When, Who, How. Each of these should stimulate a series of further questions. Examples may include:

*What* is consistent with the Deed of Union and Our Calling? What is it that our community needs? What appropriate gifts and talents do we have? What project/activities meet the pastoral needs of our members and may attract their friends? What will success look like?

*Why* do we want to attract new people – to fill our pews and appoint church officers or to share the blessings of the Christian faith in a way that meets people's spiritual needs? Why are we doing this rather than letting someone else do it? Why are we not doing this in partnership with others? Why should anyone support us in doing this?

*Where* is the best setting for this project? Is our building suitable, is it in the right place, do we have capacity for this project, is there another church/venue that would be better suited?

*When* would be the best time to launch, when is a good time of the year, when will necessary preparations have been completed, when will safer recruitment and training be completed, when is there a suitable space in the church/national calendar? When will suitable consents be forthcoming?

*Who* will project manage, handle the finances, PR, safer recruitment and training, arrange accountability, benefit from the project, assess the success? *Who* do we report to?

Any church policy requires a Biblical & theological rationale. Without an inspired vision we cannot inspire others, and so time set aside for corporate and individual prayer is vital. The aim is discerning God's will and not to convince others of the wisdom of our own ideas! Reflect on your motives. Are we intent of furthering God's Kingdom or extending our own "empire"? Whose glory are we working towards?

Secondly, have we got clear strategy?

*How* is the process to work? *How* will it be financed? *How* will it benefit the church, the community, and individuals? *How* do we assess the outcome?

John Kotter & Holger Rathgeber offer the following guidelines in "*Our Iceberg is Melting*".

In brief: Set the stage. Decide what to do. Make it happen. Make it stick. Here are the steps:

1. Create a sense of urgency
2. Pull together the Guiding Team
3. Develop the Change Vision and Strategy
4. Communicate for understanding and buy-in
5. Empower others to act
6. Generate short term wins

In a follow up book, "*That's not how we do it here! A story about how organisations can rise and fall and can rise again*", Kotter and Rathgeber write "The rate of change is going up, that fact can be hard to see clearly or to deal with well, and when we cannot find ways to avoid hazards, grasp opportunities and produce results we all truly value ... life can become quite unpleasant". They argue that the two necessary factors for success are leadership and management, which are distinguished from each other. They illustrate their theory in each book with a disarmingly simple yet profound fable. When leadership and management combine a "best-of-both-worlds organization" is created.

When "The Big Opportunity" is identified a cyclical process is required:

1. Create a sense of urgency
2. Build a guiding coalition

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3. Form strategic vision and initiatives
4. Enlist a volunteer army
5. Enable action by removing barriers
6. Generate short term wins
7. Sustain acceleration
8. Institute change

Their second book clearly builds on the work in their first book and represents further mature reflection on their original thinking. To fully understand it I recommend that you read the books and especially look at the helpful diagrams.

Another fable is by Dr Spencer Johnson and entitled “*Who moved my cheese? An amazing way to deal with change in your work and life*”. It is about some mice who live happily in their maze until someone moves their cheese and they must find new ways of coping. In this book cheese represents the thing (whatever it might be) that an individual or group value highly. Again, to properly understand the image it is probably best to read the short book. His main points include:

- a. Change happens – they keep moving the cheese
- b. Anticipate change – Get ready for the cheese to move
- c. Monitor cheese – smell the cheese often so you know when it is getting old
- d. Adapt to change quickly – the quicker you let go of old cheese, the sooner you can enjoy new cheese
- e. Enjoy change – savour the adventure and enjoy the taste of new cheese
- f. Move with the cheese and enjoy it!

*Thirdly, have we got a robust theology & philosophy of life?*

A J Cronin wrote: “Life is no straight and easy corridor along which we travel free and unhampered, but a maze of passages, through which we must seek our way, lost and confused, now and again checked in a blind alley. But always, if we have faith, a door will open for us, not perhaps one that we ourselves would ever have thought of, but one that will ultimately prove good for us”.

Rev Keith Beckingham

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