

# Weybridge Methodist Church

Newsletter February 2020





Rev Dr Barbara Glasson – President of the Methodist Conference

## Portrait Stories

With a couple of hours free on one of my increasingly frequent trips to London, I resolved to visit the National Portrait Gallery. I had forgotten just how engaging the place is and was drawn to a portrait of the physician of immunology Edward Jenner painted in 1803 by the artist James Northcote. The picture shows Jenner in a ponderous pose seated at his desk on which are placed his papers, a book on the origin of vaccines and, if you look very carefully, a cow's hoof. As in many portraits, the fall of the light onto face and hands, the detail of the background and the expression in the eyes indicate not only the story of a life but the significance of the subject in the course of a wider history; a significance I called to mind again when accompanying my youngest grandson Oliver for his three month 'jabs'. Thanks to Jenner and his work Oliver and his contemporaries in the U.K. have little fear of contracting the smallpox that killed nearly 20% of their forbears.

Unlike a CV or a passport photo, the art of painting a portrait is not simply a documentation of facts but an engagement in an empathetic relationship. Portraiture seeks to express the essential nature of the subject, not simply through the pose but also in the demeanour and surroundings in which the subject is described. In the case of the Jenner portrait we see a man who has apparently turned aside from his work for a moment with the artefacts of his research around him. We are given an insight into a particular moment in history, an ink pot standing to hand for the real work to resume at any moment.

During the first six months of our Presidential theme 'So What's the Story ...?', the Vice President, Professor Clive Marsh and I have heard a lot of stories! We have also begun to ask some follow-on questions, 'Is God in every story?', 'Are all stories of equal value?', 'Do we need keepers of stories and story-tellers?' and, crucially for me, 'What do we do with the stories we hear?' Being entrusted with a story is a precious thing, is it sufficient to simply receive a story or are there further responsibilities in the light of what we are hearing?

In an academic context, 'Portraiture' describes an ethnographic research method that enhances the analysis of narrative. Portraiture seeks to

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offer an in depth understanding of the subject in relation to all other aspects of their lives, history, environment, faith or other influences. It also takes into account the 'painters' or 'hearers of the story'. In our context, we might say that the story teller is the subject, the Methodist church, faith perspectives, political environment, historical insights provide the 'background', Clive and I and any other 'hearers' are the portraitists.

Pioneer in the research method of portraiture, Lawrence-Lightfoot says: "In the process of creating portraits, we enter people's lives, build relationships, engage in discourse, make an imprint and leave. We engage in acts (implicit and explicit) of social transformation, we create opportunities for dialogue, we pursue silences, and in the process, we face ethical dilemmas and a great moral responsibility. This is provocative work that can disturb the natural rhythms of social reality and encounter; this is exciting work that can instigate positive and productive change. We need to appreciate the benign, generous impact of portraiture, even as we recognize the huge ethical responsibilities weighing on the portraitist."[

This insight from the academic study of portraiture is helpful in our understanding of the further responsibilities that come from hearing stories. Portraiture offers a method for ethnographic research which not only enables us to listen to a story but for a story. In the case of the Jenner portrait the artist has only one story in mind, the invention of the vaccine for cowpox, and yet in the depiction of the scientist himself we see a depth of interaction between the man and the work. We see historical content, in costume and artefacts, we see his hands and eyes intent on the task. In listening 'for' the story of the invention of vaccine the portrait painter has produced a rich, deep and strong 'story line'. This reflects back to another of the questions we are asking about God's presence within the story – are we listening to somebody talking about God or are we listening for God's presence? Is the God story in the lips of the teller or the ears of the hearer?

Portraiture is a way of capturing a deep and rich narrative and helps us to interpret what we hear with greater insight. Portraiture offers the possibility of nuance and complexity, we literally see the subject differently. And portraiture not only tells us about a person but helps us to question other things too.

So, half way through this Presidential year I see that we have only just begun to scratch the surface of our story-telling theme! I wonder how we are to listen to and for stories, how we are to capture the richest depth of all that we are hearing and what this means for us in relation to the transformation of us as the Methodist Church.

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## Thank you

- To all those who continue to help out at services by providing music, undertaking readings and providing refreshments. Your help is always appreciated.
- To those who covered our time slots in the 24 Hour prayer vigil, especially those who got up very early!
- To all those who gave up their time to contribute to the discussions for 'God in Love Unites Us'.



### Prayer Time:

The 'mobile' prayer group is open to all. Please add prayer needs as they occur to you. If you wish to be added to this group, contact one of the stewards.

### Please pray for

- Jose as he continues to seek a way forward in his professional life
- Our church and Circuit
- Jennifer Webb (Linda's cousin)
- Baby Isaac who is slowly beginning to thrive
- Carole Steele as she recovers from her recent surgery



To:

Nancy, Lili and Grace Lake. Also Brenda Smith  
(I wonder if they have cake at her new church?)

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WEYBRIDGE METHODIST  
CHURCH

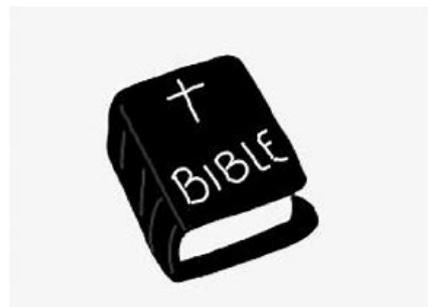
**CAFÉ CHURCH**

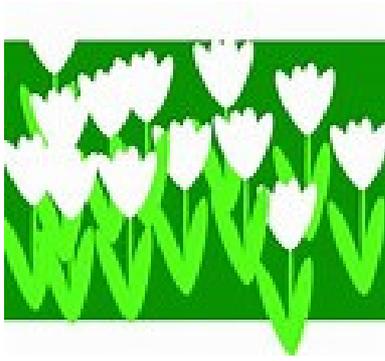
LED BY

REV CLAIRE HARGREAVES

SUNDAY 1 MARCH @ 6.15

FOR 6.30





## Flower Rota

As a church we give thanks to Carol who provides a splendid display of flowers in our church every week whatever the season. There are still some spaces on the rota if you would like to sponsor a specific week to celebrate a birthday or anniversary or to remember a lost loved one. If you would just like to donate to the flower fund, please see Carol.

*Consider the lilies of the field.....Yet I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory was not adorned like one of these....*



## Circuit Mission Supper

A reminder that the Circuit Mission Supper takes place on Saturday 29 February, 6.30 pm at Woking Methodist Church. The speaker is our good friend, Mr Sam Monaghan, who will talk about the work of

Methodist Homes and his work with this organisation. Tickets are £8 and are available from the church stewards.

In an initiative to become 'greener' Woking are asking attendees to bring our own cutlery and plate/pudding bowl. This will reduce the reliance on disposable tableware and reduce the use of the dishwasher. A good idea!

There will be a retiring collection for Methodist Homes

Circuit Mission Supper  
Saturday 29th February 2020

6 for 6.30pm

Trinity Methodist Church,  
Brewery Rd, Woking  
Tickets £8



The circuit will welcome Mr Sam Monaghan, CEO of MHA who will talk about the on-going work of Methodist Homes

## For the New Year

Whilst it won't suit everyone - we do realise that many of the congregation are busy in the workplace during the week - we are going to try a church family event on a weekday morning alternating between Monday and Friday to see which suits the majority.



*through to the vestry.*

### **COFFEE, CONVERSATION & CONTEMPLATION**

Will commence on Monday 10 February between 10 – 12 in the vestry and then have a second event on Friday 21 February between 10 – 12.

*Please enter by the main church doors: they will look closed but will be unlocked. Walk*



### **WALK & TALK**

Saturday 7 March at 2.30pm

In the hope that the weather has become more spring like by then, we will take a walk along the Broad Water and back along the river. Meet at Greside Rd KT13 8PZ. (Plenty of off street parking)

### **Circuit Prayer Diary for February**

- 1 Pray for fun and friendship for children, parents and volunteers at Godalming's Messy Church
- 2 Ask the Holy Spirit to be powerfully present in our church services today
- 3 Light a candle in grateful memory of all those whose lives have been as shining lights to us
- 4 Acknowledge your own need for prayer and offer this up to God
- 5 Give thanks for all organists and musicians whose gifts enhance worship

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- 6 Pray for the well-being of all carers, including devoted relatives and professional carers
- 7 Praise God for his generous love, grace and forgiveness
- 8 Keep praying for those who have no faith to see Jesus in you
- 9 On Racial Justice Sunday, pray that discrimination and racism are defeated
- 10 Are you or someone you know being called to a new vocation within the church? Pray about this.
- 11 Offer prayers of encouragement for tired and busy parents, doing their best for their children
- 12 Pray for a fairer sharing of resources across the world and equal pay for all
- 13 Pray for vision and radical thinking for the Circuit Mission Group meeting tonight
- 14 Pray for comfort, care and the compassion of Jesus for the poor, widows and orphans
- 15 Give thanks for the work of Action for Children
- 16 Prayerfully consider 1 Cor 3.9: “..... you are God’s field, God’s building”
- 17 Hold in your prayers the issues surrounding climate change
- 18 Pray for the Christian witness of prison chaplains, and the hope Jesus brings to prisoners
- 19 Give thanks for the ministry of John Wesley and the hymns of Charles Wesley
- 20 Pray for an end to knife attacks and violence between young people
- 21 Meditate on: “The name of the Lord is a strong tower” Proverbs 18.10
- 22 Pray for world peace and for comfort for victims of war, oppression and violence
- 23 Pray for Breeze and those coming to Pudding and Praise at Walton on Thames tonight
- 24 Pray for release from addiction to drugs, gambling, pornography and alcohol
- 25 On Shrove Tuesday feast on pancakes and pray in preparation for Lent
- 26 Repent of any wrongdoing in your life; ask for and receive forgiveness from Jesus

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## Dates for the diary

Sunday 2 Feb 2020	10.30 am Morning worship	Ms Jean Shepherd <i>Steward – Pru</i> <i>Music – Jose</i> <i>Refreshments - Paula</i>
Friday 7 February 2020	7.30pm, Tickets £10	Music Concert in aid of Clean water
Saturday 08 Feb 2020	10.00 am Coffee Morning	Run by us at Addlestone
Sunday 09 Feb 2019	10.30 Morning Worship	Mrs Rosemary Lee <i>Steward- Linda</i> <i>Music – Adrian</i> <i>Refreshments - Lili</i>
Monday 10 Feb 2020	10 – 12 Vestry	Coffee, Conversation & Contemplation
Saturday 15 Feb 2020	Bedding & Clothes Bank	Church Hall
Sunday 16 Feb 2020	<b>10.30 Morning Worship &amp; Communion</b>	Rev Sydney Samuel Lake <i>Steward – Jose</i> <i>Music – Teresa</i> <i>Communion – Paula</i> <i>Refreshments - Carol</i>
Thursday 20 Feb 2020	1.45 pm Old Folks club	Weybridge Centre
Friday 21 Feb 2020	10 – 12 Vestry	Coffee, Conversation & Contemplation
Sunday 23 Feb 2020	10.30 am Morning worship	Mrs Elizabeth Gurd <i>Steward – Carol</i> <i>Music – Jose</i> <i>Refreshments – Adelaide</i>
Thursday 27 February 2020, 8.00pm	Church Council	Vestry
Saturday 29 Feb 2020 - 6 for 6.30pm	Circuit Mission Supper Speaker Mr Sam Monaghan – Methodist Homes	Trinity Methodist Church

## Advance Dates

Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2020	Café Church	Rev Claire Hargreaves
Saturday 7 March 2020	Church Walk	Meet at Grenside Rd
Sunday 29 March 12.00	Merrow Methodist Church	Meeting for those interested in joining a trip to the Holy Land. <i>See notice board for details</i>

JACOB was a cheater

PETER had a temper

DAVID had an affair

NOAH was a drunk

PAUL was a murderer

JONAH ran from God

GIDEON was insecure

MIRIAM was a gossip

MARTHA was a worrier

THOMAS was a doubter

SARA was impatient

ELIJAH was moody

MOSES stuttered

ZACCHEUS was short

ABRAHAM was old

MARY MAGDALEN was a prostitute and.....

LAZERUS was dead.

God doesn't call the qualified, he qualifies the called and he has a plan for each and everyone of us.

## **Charity Matters**

As result of the lovely, large congregation on Christmas morning which resulted in a generous offertory, our church sent £200 to Action for Children.

Church members Carol, Claire, Paula and Linda continue to assist at the Weybridge Old Folks Club on a weekly basis.

Carol and Claire continue to run the Bedding and Clothes bank on the third Saturday of every month.

Linda assists the Byfleet Foodbank twice monthly and many congregational members donate to the food store.

Carol, Linda & Paula regularly run the coffee morning at Addlestone Methodist on the second Saturday of the month. Along with other help from the Scouts and the WI, this enables our friends at Addlestone to open their church to the public every week.

Steve assists with Kumon learning sessions.

Coming shortly everyone will have the opportunity to contribute to the Easter Offering – envelopes will be available Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday- and also Methodist Homes, both at the circuit mission supper and the envelopes which will be in the pews in June.

Adelaide sent a Christmas card to the whole church. This card contained a donation to Methodist homes in lieu of what she would have spent sending individual cards. We thank her for this thought.