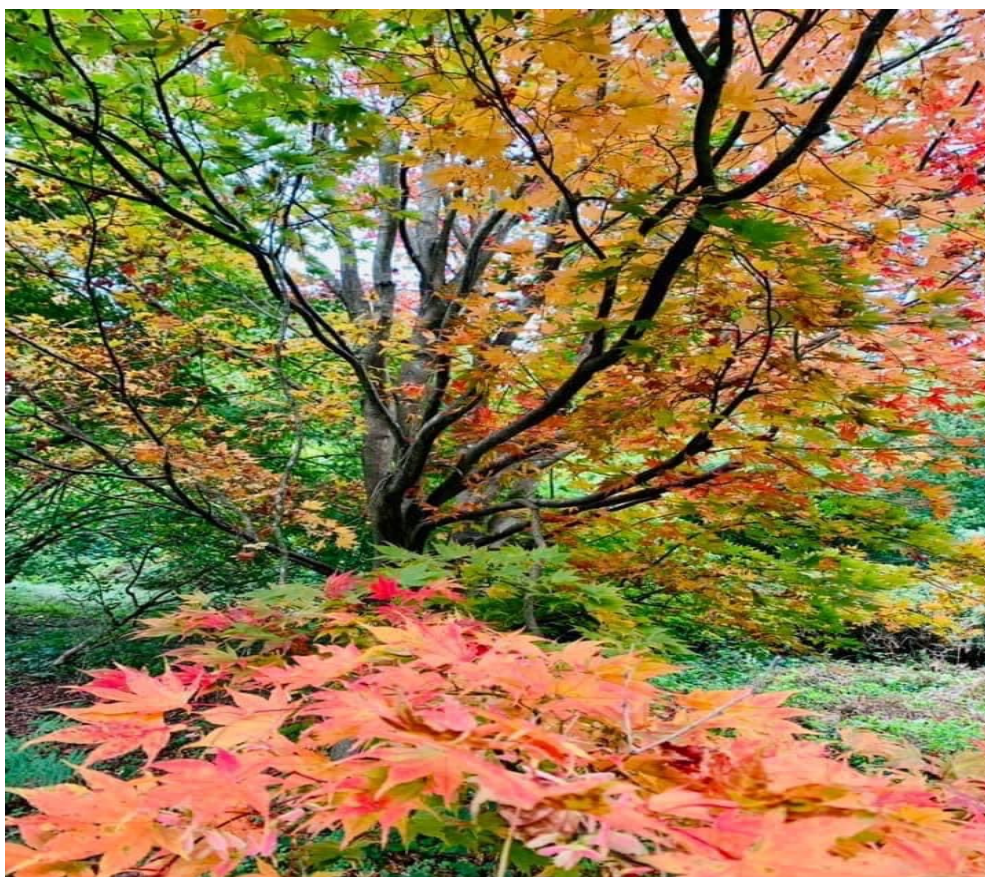




Weybridge Methodist Church

Newsletter November 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.

Pastoral Message

Dear Friends,

My text comes from the Gospel According to Henry Ford:

Whether you think you can or you think you can't, you're right.

It's a quote I've known for many years, but it returned to my thinking this week when I re-read a blog post from three or four years ago by the Canadian pastor I have enthused over in this column before, Carey Nieuwhof. It was entitled, '5 Small-Thinking Mindsets that Stunt Your Church's Potential.'¹ I share it with some hesitation, because I am only too aware of people in our churches who are putting in crazy hours keeping the show on the road, many of whom are at the frontline of the financial and numerical problems assailing our congregations.

Nevertheless, I think we should ponder the small thinking that Nieuwhof writes about. His five examples are the ones that his church in Ontario had to battle; maybe not all of them apply to all our churches, but equally there are doubtless other examples that do apply to us.

What Works There Won't Work Here We claim that the examples of 'successful' churches elsewhere won't translate to our culture. Well, the odd tweak might be needed but human nature is the same the world over. People scorned the Alpha Course as having been developed for young middle-class professionals and it wouldn't work for other people. But it works in all sorts of places, even if the odd amendment might be needed.

My Context Is Different Maybe, but there is still a lot in common. And in any case, why is this used only by those who are small? You never hear this used in reverse by those whose churches are growing: they never attribute their growth to their context.

If You Build It They Will Come That might have been a great line from the movie Field Of Dreams, but it is bad theology. Put a poor church in a good building and it won't grow. Do the reverse and it probably will, and in any case, the Gospel gives us no freedom to wait for people to come to us: we are to go to people!

People Don't Give Nieuwhof's church offered members training in how to budget, and now many have enough to give generously to the church and to save for family needs, both short-term and long-term. It helps to

have a Pastoral Letter of the kingdom of God vision, rather than simply saying, 'Please give in order to keep the boat afloat.'

Some of our folk would rather just retain the small 'club' atmosphere where we know everyone. But if a church grows numerically, there are ways to maintain the close relationships with small groups. Good grief, we're Methodists, and we have the inheritance of John Wesley with his genius for small groups such as classes and bands. We of all people have no excuse!

Behind all this is, I think, one failure to rule them all. It's the error where we evaluate everything on whether we can do it. Yet if God calls us to a venture we won't be able to do it unless we rely on him. The glory must be his alone. And so having opened with a quote, I close with one. This is from James Hudson Taylor, the nineteenth century missionary pioneer to China. In these words he is primarily referring to money, but the application can be taken much wider:

Depend on it. God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply. He is too wise a God to frustrate His purposes for lack of funds, and He can just as easily supply them ahead of time as afterwards, and He much prefers doing so.

May God bless you and stretch you,

Dave Faulkner

¹ <https://careynieuwhof.com/5-small-thinking-mindsets-that-stunt-you>



Housekeeping Items

Attention for those of you who gift regularly via Standing Order

At our recent Church Council meeting it was decided to close our banking facility with HSBC Bank due to charges to be imposed in future.

Accordingly, the account below with CAF Bank should be used for any future donations by bank transfer:

Account name: Weybridge Methodist Church

Sort Code: 40-52-40

Account number: 00031711

If you are currently making donations to the Church by standing order, please arrange to change the account details to the one above.

The weather is changing.....

The weather is becoming cooler and the church heating has been switched on. As a consequence we cannot leave the exterior doors open for added air flow. We must now regretfully request that we all revert to wearing masks in the church itself, especially when singing. They may be removed to enjoy coffee afterwards.

Your co-operation is appreciated.

HELP REQUIRED.....

We are looking for help on Friday 12 November from 10.30am to clean the Church sanctuary. Our cleaning contract doesn't cover the sanctuary and the spiders have been busy – not to mention the dust!!!!!! Please join us armed with dusters, dustpan and brushes, rubber gloves etc. Many hands make light work. If we get through the work quickly we can have coffee and a good chat afterwards.

Thank you



Worship in November

07 th November	Rev Peter Hills
14 th November	Mrs Vivian Gerhold – Remembrance Sunday
21 st November	Rev Claire Hargreaves
28 th November	Rev Sydney Samuel Lake: Communion

Refreshments will be served after the services.



Thank you to all those who help with refreshments.



Dates for your diary

- 12 November – Coffee & Clean 10.30 am
- 13 November - Coffee at Addlestone Methodist church 10 -12
- 14 November – Remembrance Sunday



Birthdays

During November we say Happy Birthday to Claire, Paula & Teresa

And to Zachary who turns 6.

Floral arrangements



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 one or to mark a birthday or anniversary. Please speak to Carol who will be happy to make arrangements. We extend our thanks to Carol for the splendid weekly displays she provides



Welcome!

A very warm welcome to all those who have commenced worshipping with us at Weybridge Methodist church. If you wish to partake in worship by taking a reading or leading prayers of intercession please speak to one of the Stewards (Linda, Carol or Lek). Our thanks to Pat and Andy who have joined the readers' rota; there is still room for more. Email your details to weybridgemethodistoffice@gmail.com



The church runs a WhatsApp prayer group. If you would like to join this informal pastoral and prayer group, just let Linda know your mobile number and she will add you to the group. Speak to her or email weybridgemethodistoffice@gmail.com



Can you help? We have a 'hole' in the coffee rota.. With fewer stewards (and her current incapacity) Carol & Linda cannot commit in quite the same way as previously. All it involves is providing milk & biscuits (tea, coffee & sugar are in the cupboard), setting up, serving and clearing away. If you would care to help, even if only occasionally, please speak to Linda. Thanks to Paula, Caryl, Jean & Linda for holding the fort.

December

Although this is the November newsletter please see below advance notices for December

Every year it is traditional for us to hold a gift service in December. This year it falls on 12 December. We ask all congregational members to bring a financial gift, wrapped in silver and able to be hung on the Christmas tree. This year the proceeds will be going to the Teenage Cancer Trust

Our Christmas Carol service will be held during the morning service of 19th December.

After this service we invite everyone to join us for a Christmas Lunch in the main hall. More details to follow but it would be helpful to know numbers and particularly any dietary requirement.

Just let Carol, Linda or Paula know. - Thanks

POSADA

On Advent Sunday – 28 November- the Holy Family commence their journey towards Christmas day. We will ask the preacher for that Sunday, who happens to be our own Minister, to bless them as they begin their journey.

The tradition of having the figures of Mary, Joseph and a donkey travelling from home to home during Advent is becoming more and more popular in our country. The tradition originated in Mexico where it is called a posada. Posada means Inn.

We will once more be looking to church members to give them hospitality for a few days before passing them on to the next a home. A signup sheet will be available.



‘BROTHERS IN PERFECTION’

Do you long to be perfect? Just recently I’ve been re-reading

Charles Wesley has not received the attention from Methodists that he deserves. In the eyes of the general public, John has been seen as the founder and driving force behind Methodism, with Charles simply as his ‘assistant’ and as a hymn writer par excellence. It is also often assumed that the two brothers shared the



same views on most things – apart from the two obvious issues of John’s marriage and the break with the Church of England, of course. It is true that their early careers for the most part followed a parallel course, and that their ‘conversion’ experiences in May 1738 bear superficial similarities, but it would be quite wrong to relegate Charles to a subsidiary role in the development of Methodism and say, as one historian has done, that ‘Charles’ genius was derivative’.

One area of theology – the concept of Christian perfection – provides an interesting example of how John and Charles were in agreement over basics, but held different views over some important aspects of the subject.

John Wesley believed that an individual Christian could reach a state of perfection, though he was careful to limit this. He never said that a person could attain ‘sinless perfection’, nor could he or she be perfect in knowledge or complete freedom from human mistakes, infirmities or temptation – which he called ‘involuntary sins’. In his sermon on ‘Christian Perfection’, John wrote that Christians could be ‘saved in this world from all sin, from all unrighteousness... freed from evil thoughts and tempers.’

Despite the way in which John qualified his statements, Charles felt that there were inherent dangers in what his brother taught. He agreed with John that the concept of perfection grew out of the commandment to ‘love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself’ (Mark 12.30). However, whereas John believed that perfection (as he understood it) could be attained in this life and be instantaneous, Charles had grave doubts. He saw perfection rather as being part of a more gradual process and was deeply suspicious of anyone who claimed to have achieved it in this life.

The brothers held their different views for many years, and as late as 1766 John wrote to Charles complaining, 'when you and I talked together, you *seemed* at least to be of the same mind with me, and now you are off the hooks again!' The concerns John had were very real, since the early Methodist preachers looked to Charles as well as John for leadership and guidance. In 1768 John was again writing to his brother, saying that he was 'weary of intestine war, of preachers quoting one of us against the other...'

John and Charles never did reach complete agreement on the issue of perfection, which is not surprising in view of the complicated nature of the doctrine. Indeed, John produced no fewer than three treatises on the subject and had constantly to correct the misunderstandings which inevitably arose in the minds of his followers. Nevertheless, both he and Charles made an important contribution to theology in the eighteenth century. Their views on perfection – even allowing for disagreements – struck a balance between, on the one hand, those who over-emphasised justification (i.e. pardon and acceptance) and became preoccupied with faith alone, and on the other, those who gave undue weight to merit and works in the process of salvation. But above all, John and Charles Wesley's theology was essentially optimistic, and the ultimate testimony to the validity of their teaching is that they were capable of being followed by those who became their fellow believers.

Rev Barrie Tabraham

Museum of Methodism Open

The Museum of Methodism has re-opened. Please note our new opening times from September 2021 and until further notice, every Tuesday - Friday, 11am - 3pm. Sadly, access to John Wesley's House remains limited, please speak to a heritage steward on arrival.

Wesley's Chapel has re-opened for worship and heritage visits, but services can also be accessed via their [livestream](#).

[The Museum of Methodism](#) tells the history of Methodism from John Wesley to the present day and its contribution to shaping Britain's political and social history. [John Wesley's House](#) stands next to the Chapel. It was his home for over a decade, and is one of the finest surviving small Georgian townhouses in London.



George Loveless

George Loveless 1797 – 1874

Tolpuddle Martyrs

When we drive to Dorset we always pass the road signs for the 'Tolpuddle Martyrs' museum. Having learnt about them (or so I thought) whilst studying English social history in my 'yoof', we decided to detour the 10 minutes off the main road to visit the museum. I discovered that there was a major gap in my education! I was aware of their so called rebellion against a weekly wage of 10 shillings per week (50p in today's money) and their quest for a living wage, the unfair trial, their transportation, subsequent reprieve and eventual emigration to Canada. What was never mentioned during that period of study was that many of them, including George Loveless who was considered to be the leader, were Methodist local preachers. These men are accredited as founders of the modern day Trade Unions. After their pardon and return from Australia most of the group emigrated to Canada where they were instrumental in building a Methodist church at Siloam and continued to worship God amongst the local community.

The museum is situated a mere 10 minutes off the A35 in the village of Tolpuddle. Entry is free and it is well worth a visit (limited parking). So if you are in the vicinity of Dorchester or Wimborne or heading further west to the coastal towns of Weymouth, Bridport, Lyme Regis or even Sidmouth, why not break your journey and visit the museum.



Martyrs Memorial

<http://www.dorsetmuseums.co.uk/tolpuddle-martyrs-museum>



Prayers

It has been a very busy month for prayer requests:

Charlotte and Amelie have contracted Covid (all but 4 of Amelie's classmates have had it).

Our superintendent minister and his immediate family are currently suffering from Covid.

Stan is trying to get his operation organised but is being given the run around.

Carol and family are mourning the death in a car accident of a member of their extended family.

The Circuit team have commenced the Stationing process which is stressful for all.

Linda's cousin has finally been moved from hospital to a care home but continues to cause concern.

There undoubtedly other requests of which we are unaware but we bring all our prayers, known and unknown, to the God of love.



We live in a world where peace is at a premium in many areas; this is not a new situation and as we approach the time of Carols of which one, written in 1849, has the lines

'and man at war with man hears not, the love song which he brings' we remember that for much of the world very little has changed in the many years since it was written.

Let us pray for peace in the words of the hymns below.

Put peace into each other's hands
and like a treasure hold it,
protect it like a candle flame,
with tenderness enfold it.

Put peace into each other's hands
with loving expectation;
be gentle in your words and ways,
in touch with God's creation.

Put peace into each other's hands
like bread we break for sharing;
look people warmly in the eye:
our life is meant for caring.

As at communion, shape your hands
into a waiting cradle;
the gift of Christ receive, revere,
united round the table.

Put Christ in to each other's hands,
he is love's deepest measure;
in love make peace, give peace a chance,
and share it like a treasure.

AMEN