



# The Good News Letter

COULSDON METHODIST CHURCH

[www.coulsdonmethodistchurch.org](http://www.coulsdonmethodistchurch.org)

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## **From our minister**

Dear Friends

I have had great difficulty deciding on the thrust of this month's article. I was tempted to enter the arena of politics and comment on some of the happenings of the last few weeks – but I do not want to immediately alienate half of the readers. (I am also aware of the fact that by the time you read this, there may be further developments – and anything I write may be out of date.)

So I have (eventually) decided to write something about “The season of Creation”. That is a relatively new innovation in the Church Year, which breaks up the very long run of Sundays in Ordinary Time (or after Trinity). A coalition of churches and church agencies, like Christian Aid, encourage the Church to keep a period which is the month of September and a few days into October as “Creation Time”.

For many Churches, including ours, that includes a harvest festival, when we not only celebrate and give thanks for the creation but perhaps think a bit about our stewardship of this planet. The Methodist Church is not one of the official partners in this “season”, which might explain why you may not have heard of it. There is however a booklet with suggestions and guidance produced each year by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland – so it is part of the main-stream of the Christian church in this country.

One of the reasons for having a season of creation is that it is a subject on which the Christian Church has traditionally been silent – or nearly so. The tradition of the church, particularly in Victorian times, has been much more interested in the “saving of souls” – bringing people to personal salvation – than in our involvement in and responsibility for the creation. There are still those Christians who believe it more important to prepare for God to end this world – than to think how we may keep this planet working for future generations.

I am not among those. I believe that our responsibility and stewardship of this planet should be high on our agenda. It is good to spend some time thinking about our place in Creation. However, I think the Christian Church has a lot of catching up to do. Sundry voices are telling us that we are in a climate emergency – and need to change direction before global warming hits even harder – and especially on the poorest of the world. The loudest voices about this come from “Extinction rebellion”, from young people and their school strikes and from Greta Thunberg, the young Swedish activist – who even gets heard by the United Nations. There are movements such as “Eco-church”, and individual Christians are playing their part in securing the future of the planet, there is much more to do. How do we shape our individual lives? How do we act as a Church? How do we respond to this “climate emergency”?

Yours in Christ

Stephen

PS While I was uncertain what to say about the current political situation, the President of Conference, Barbara Glasson, has offered some words:

I pray that we can see past the chaos of the moment and focus on the kind of society in which we wish to live. The yardstick for our actions should not be “Does it help me win today's battle?”, rather whether it helps us create the sort of society in which all of us can flourish.

God of bounty and brilliance,  
when public life is tarnished,  
when we fail to discern the common good,  
and when some shine at the expense of others,  
whatever our political allegiance and persuasion,  
conform us to your will and your way. **Amen.**

### **Open Church – every Thursday**

A reminder that the church is open for anyone to come in between 10.30am and 12 noon every Thursday. Tea, coffee and biscuits are available, and at 11.45am there is a short prayer service when we remember people for whom we are particularly concerned. If you are free one Thursday, why not pop in? You don't have to stay the whole time, or come every week, just come when you can.

### **Breakfast Bible Study**

Please note that the Breakfast Bible Study is now on the second Sunday of each month, in the church, with a light breakfast at 8.45am and around 45 minutes of Bible study from 9.00am. For the next couple of months, we will be studying Colossians. Everyone is welcome.

### **Church website**

Please take a look at our website: [www.coulsdonmethodistchurch.org](http://www.coulsdonmethodistchurch.org) It has a statement of our mission, details of all activities, information on forthcoming events, a copy of the most recent newsletter and a brief history of the church. The more times we access the website, the more likely it is to come up when someone googles something like 'methodist church in coulsdon'!

### **Harvest Festival**

Our Harvest Festival this year took place on Sunday 29 September. The food donated will be taken to Nightwatch, a charity that has been caring for homeless people in Croydon for the past 30 years. Gifts of money are also requested for All We Can, the Methodist charity providing relief and development to those in greatest need. Its mission is to help find solutions to poverty by engaging with local people and organisations in some of the world's poorest communities. Donations may be made until Sunday 13 October.

### **MWiB Autumn lunch**

Methodist Women in Britain, Purley Circuit, are holding their Autumn Lunch at our church on Wednesday 23 October at 12.30 for 12.45. The speaker will be Mr Keith Smith from Air Ambulance Kent Surrey Sussex, and there will be a bring and buy stall. Tickets are £5, available from Dorothy Pearson. All are welcome.

### **Church diary**

<b>Sun 6 Oct.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> (Rev. John Nyota)
Thu 10 Oct.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 13 Oct.</b>	8.45am	Bible study breakfast ( <i>Colossians</i> )
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (local arrangement)
Mon 14 Oct.	8pm	Open to question ( <i>at Sanderstead M.C.</i> )
Thu 17 Oct.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 20 Oct.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (Rev. Stephen Mares)
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> (Rev. Stephen Mares)
Mon 21 Oct.	10am	Craft Club ( <i>CD butterflies</i> )
Wed 23 Oct	12.30pm	MWiB Autumn lunch ( <i>see above</i> )
Thu 24 Oct.	10.30am	Open church

<b>Sun 27 Oct.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (David Akuffo)
	<b>6pm</b>	<b>Circuit service</b> ( <i>Warlingham</i> )
Wed 30 Oct.	2.30pm	Time for tea
Thu 31 Oct.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 2 Nov.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Church anniversary</b> (Rev. Faith Nyota)