



# The Good News Letter

COULSDON METHODIST CHURCH

No.308

September 2019

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## **From our minister**

Dear Friends

This month officially marks the beginning of Chapter 3 of my ministry among you. I don't know if this establishes some sort of record but it is certainly unusual, for a church and a Minister to be linked on three separate occasions. My first spell came after Rex Owen's departure in 2000 and lasted seven months. My second came when the Circuit was slightly reorganised after Nigel Bishop's departure and lasted six years to 2011. This time I am offering just one year – and that on a half-time basis covering both Coulsdon and Hurst Green.

Much has changed over the years – both in the look of the church (inside rather than outside) and in the make-up of the people who attend. The building has changed from a very traditional “high” Wesleyan building to one which is lighter, more airy and much more flexible. The congregation has changed, reflecting the changed nature of Coulsdon. The area is much more cosmopolitan, and so are the people of Coulsdon Methodist Church. That is only right and proper.

There has also been a change in my energy levels, especially since 2000, when I was still in my 40's. This month marks a personal milestone; September 1st marks 40 years since I began work as a Methodist Minister. The combination of my lessened energy and the part-time nature of what I am offering means that things will not be as they were. Shortly after taking over at Hurst Green, which happened, much to my surprise, in March, I was asked to write for their Annual Report. I pointed out to them the same limitations as I've just mentioned here – and reminded them that the Church is not the Minister. We move on, while the congregation remains – and the life and mission of the Church depends on all who share in the life of the Church.

So, as I begin my third stint, my word must be one encouraging you all to play your part in the life of the church. As Paul put it “You are Christ's body, and each of you a limb or organ of it” (1 Cor. 12: 27). That body only works when each part works together. Every local church needs people with their different talents each to play their role. What part might you be able to play? How can we together serve the people of Coulsdon?

Yours in Christ

***Stephen***

## **What is distinctive about Methodism?**

*(The third in a series of short articles, reproduced from the website of the Methodist Church)*

### **3. Living a holy life**

The longing for holiness is not about wanting to be 'holier than thou'. It is about wanting the love of God to permeate all of our life, and for that love to be shown through our lives to other people.

God gives us the Holy Spirit, and when we respond, there is no limit to what the grace of God is able to do in a human life. John Wesley taught about 'Christian perfection.' He believed that a mature Christian can reach a state where the love of God reigns supreme in our heart. We can't be perfect in an absolute way, as God is. But we can be made perfect in love.

However, we do not become holy all on our own. Methodists believe in what John Wesley called 'social holiness'. It is vital to meet and worship with other Christians in order to grow in the Christian life and to understand what is God's will for us and for our community.

The Methodist movement began in the eighteenth century when John and Charles Wesley got together with like-minded friends in Oxford to meet regularly for prayer, Bible study and Holy Communion, and to visit prisons and workhouses. It was called the Holy Club.

Holiness is not just about personal spirituality and prayer. It will also be expressed through a commitment to social justice and to enabling other people to become followers of Jesus.

### **Purley Food Hub – can you help?**

Firstly, can I remind you that we are still collecting food and other items for the Purley Food Hub, which is a vital resource for many people in our neighbourhood. There is a box at the back of the church for any items you can donate. Please check the list at the back of the church, which shows the items that are particularly needed this month.

Secondly, at the end of each month, we need to deliver the items we have collected to one of the Food Hub collection points (including Purley URC, and Christ Church, Brighton Road). If you would be able to help with this from time to time, please let me know. Many thanks!

*Nick Foster*

### **Church diary**

<b>Sun 1 Sep.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> (Rev. Stephen Mares)
Thu 5 Sep.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 8 Sep.</b>	8.45am	Bible study breakfast (Colossians)
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (Peace Furusa)
Mon 9 Sep.	8pm	Open to question ( <i>at Sanderstead M.C.</i> )
Thu 12 Sep.	10.30am	Open church
	8pm	Circuit meeting
<b>Sun 15 Sep.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (local arrangement)
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Holy Communion at Whitethorn Avenue</b>
Mon 16 Sep.	10am	Coulsdon Craft Club ( <i>Brazilian bracelets</i> )
Thu 19 Sep.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 22 Sep.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (Jill Gradon)
Wed 25 Sep.	2.30pm	Time for tea
Thu 26 Sep.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 29 Sep.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Harvest festival</b> (Rev. Stephen Mares)
Thu 3 Oct.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 6 Oct.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> (Rev. John Nyota)