



# The Good News Letter

COULSDON METHODIST CHURCH

No.307

July/August 2019

---

## From our minister

Dear Friends,

The time has come for me to write this, my last letter as your Minister, as I prepare to move to Solihull at the beginning of next month. It is a strange feeling being in two places at once; that is how it feels as I finish the work I have been doing here and begin to look to the work I will do in the Birmingham Circuit.

As I reflect on the privilege of serving God in this place for the last five years, I want to say thank you for the love and support I have received from you, particularly during my probation when I was finding my feet and flexing my ministerial muscles. We have had ups and downs, joys and sorrows, challenges and blessings, however, through it all I have felt the presence of God overshadowing all that we have done together.

We have seen shoots of growth which have been watered and come to fruition, not least new lay leaders, work with families and outreach to those who live alone. The church is beginning to look seriously at future mission and ministry and explore creative relationships with secular groups to bring others into the knowledge of the love of God.

New beginnings and possibilities and holding on to the promises of God and allowing them to unfold, to take shape in ways we could not even imagine, is the gospel we preach, teach and share. In the weeks and months ahead as you continue the journey with another minister, I know that God is still there, saying trust me, my plans for you are not finished!

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

*Acts 2:42-47*

The first disciples were together in a common goal - may this be true for you as you continue to seek God and work together to share the gospel, love and support each other and seek to grow your church.

Peace in Christ always,

Love, Sue

## Sue's leaving service

As you all know, Rev. Sue Shortman will be moving on this summer to a new Circuit in the West Midlands. Sue's leaving service will be on Sunday 28th July with Tea at 4.30pm and the Service at 6pm. As well as us, Sue looks after two other churches in the Purley Circuit, so the service will take place at South Croydon United Church, Aberdeen Rd, Croydon, CR0 1EQ. Buses 60, 166 and 466 pass close by, but if you would like a lift, don't be afraid to ask around!

## **Welcome service for Revd. Martin Knight**

The seven churches of our Circuit will be joining together at 4pm on Sunday 25 August to welcome Revd. Martin Knight, who will serve as minister at South Croydon United Church. Martin is a minister in the United Reformed Church, with whom we share the church in South Croydon. The service will take place there – see the article about Sue's leaving service for details of the church address and local buses.

## **Circuit meeting**

Purley Circuit Meeting on July 7th in our church; it starts at 3pm, and is open to all members of our congregation. The main item on the agenda will be the report from the Circuit Mission Group, which will be discussed by the meeting.

## **Purley Food Hub**

The Purley Food Hub is a vital resource for many people in our neighbourhood, providing food and other items to people in crisis. In June, it provided **2,187** meals for its clients and their families, taking 2019's total meals so far to just short of **14,000**. Since the Food Hub started in January 2013, it estimates that it has provided more than **145,000** meals overall.

The Food Hub is dependent on donations from individuals, churches etc, and for some time we have been collecting items in a box at the back of the church, which is regularly taken to the Food Hub for distribution. There is clearly an ongoing need, and the church leadership team has agreed that we should continue to support it.

Each month, there is a new list of items that are particularly needed, so please check the list on the box at the back of the church and donate whatever you can.

## **Methodist Church recognises a climate emergency**

Faced with a climate emergency the Methodist Conference has called on the UK to achieve net zero emissions well before 2050.

This follows recent initiatives including participation in the #TheTimesNow Climate Coalition lobby of MPs in London last month as well as engagement with investor bodies on reducing humanity's global carbon footprint.

Single use plastics were singled out at the week-long Conference, being held at the NEC in Birmingham, with single use water bottles or cups unavailable for use by representatives.

The Conference encouraged its members and churches to reduce plastic pollution and for church cafés to consider signing up to a refill scheme, offering free refills for water bottles.

Earlier this year the Methodist Church launched Eco Circuits and Eco Districts in partnership with A Rocha, a Christian organisation engaging communities in nature conservation. The first Methodist Church to receive a Gold Eco Church Award was announced in June as Stratford-upon-Avon Methodist Church.

Barbara Glasson, President of the Conference, who walked 133 miles along canal towpaths to the Conference raising funds for communities across the world affected by climate change, said: "As a Church we believe in the possibility of transformation. Our church has heard the voice of communities around the world that are already suffering severe consequences of climate change. Our response must be both individual and corporate to do all we can to tread more lightly on the earth."

Steve Hucklesby, Policy Adviser for the Methodist Church said: "Next year the critical COP26 international climate summit may well be hosted in London. Our nation has the opportunity to provide inspiration for others. The UK must back up targets with clear policies and urgent investment to bring about a zero-carbon future."

### **Celebrating Multi-Faith Britain**

You are warmly invited to share in an entertaining and informative evening to mark Inter-faith Week 2019 on Tuesday 12 November. From 6pm to 9pm, Methodist Central Hall Westminster will host several guests from other faiths to help us "celebrate multi-faith Britain", including keynote speaker, Canon Dr Sarah Snyder, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Advisor for Reconciliation. There will be food representing a global kitchen and an opportunity to share insights of our different faith journeys. Entry is free, but please do visit [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/celebrating-multi-faith-britain-tickets-60571353549](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/celebrating-multi-faith-britain-tickets-60571353549) to register your attendance and dietary requirements.

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

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

#### **2. Assurance of God's love**

*"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society at Aldersgate Street, where one was reading from Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change that God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation. And an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."*

John Wesley

If we have mixed feelings about faith, or are unsure whether we are feeling the right things, or unable to get away from feelings of guilt, it helps to know that we are not alone.

John Wesley wrestled with difficult feelings on his journey of faith. Although already an ordained minister in the Church of England, he did not feel he was truly loved and forgiven by God until the famous moment described in his journal for 24 May 1738 (*see above*).

John Wesley did not give up on his search - he actually did go and listen, even if very unwillingly. He put himself in the right place, and found that God gave him freely the sense of joy and assurance he was looking for.

Our faith rests not on our own feelings, but on the promises of a faithful God.

### **Church diary**

<b>Sun 7 July</b>	8.45am	Bible study and breakfast
	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> (Rev. Sue Shortman)
	3pm	Circuit meeting ( <i>see above</i> )
Mon 8 July	12.30pm	Forum lunch at Fleeting Brook, Caterham
	8pm	Open to question ( <i>at Sanderstead M.C.</i> )
Thu 11 July	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 14 July</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (Brian Brooks)
Mon 15 July	10am	Coulsdon craft club ( <i>Another flower brooch</i> )
Thu 18 July	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 21 July</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (Jill Gradon)
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> (Rev. Faith Nyota)

Thu 25 July	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 28 July</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (Rev. Sue Shortman)
	4.30pm	Sue's leaving tea
	<b>6pm</b>	<b>Sue's leaving service</b> ( <i>see above</i> )
Wed 31 July	2.30pm	Time for tea
Thu 1 Aug.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 4 Aug.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> (Rev. Stephen Mares)
Thu 8 Aug.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 11 Aug.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (local arrangements)
Mon 12 Aug.	8pm	Open to question ( <i>at Sanderstead M.C.</i> )
Thu 15 Aug.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 18 Aug.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> (David Akuffo)
Thu 22 Aug.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 25 Aug.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Morning worship</b> <i>at Whitethorn Avenue</i>
	<b>4pm</b>	<b>Welcome service</b> ( <i>see above</i> )
Wed 28 Aug	2.30pm	Time for tea
Thu 29 Aug.	10.30am	Open church
<b>Sun 1 Sept.</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> ( <i>t.b.a.</i> )