

INSIGHT



***HERTFORD METHODIST CHURCH
QUARTERLY MAGAZINE***

April – June 2019



Indifference

When Jesus came to Golgotha they hanged him on a tree,
They drove great nails through hands and feet, and made a Calvary;
They crowned him with a crown of thorns, red were his wounds and deep
For those were crude and cruel days and human flesh was cheap.

When Jesus came to Birmingham they simply passed him by.
They never hurt a hair of him, they only let him die;
For men had grown more tender, and they would not give him pain,
They only just passed down the street, and left Him in the rain.

Still Jesus cried, "*Forgive them, they know not what they do!*"
And still it rained the wintry rain that drenched him through and through.
The crowds went home and left the streets and without a soul to see
Jesus crouched against a wall and cried for Calvary.

From 'The Unutterable Beauty' by G. A. Studdart-Kennedy

MESSAGE FROM OUR MINISTER

The first Easter morning dawned. That wonderful, life-filled moment when the whole purpose of the last few days now begins to come into some sort of focus for those who met with the Risen Christ. It was still a time of confusion, but now the sad, pain-filled confusion of Jesus' arrest, 'mock' trial, crucifixion and death is replaced with joyful amazement as they begin to discover that the end, as they believed it to have been, was actually the new beginning. We can only ever begin to imagine the thoughts and feelings of the likes of Peter, James and John, and of Mary and the other women.

But what does this story of long ago mean for us today?

It is not just Jesus story (History), but 'our story'; the story of the whole Christian Church throughout all ages. Christians all around the world will have begun worship this week with the cry 'He is risen'. The resurrection story in Mark 16 verse 6 has 'a man dressed in white' saying to the women looking for Jesus' body 'He has risen.' The NT Greek word used is ἡγέρθη (agertha), more literally meaning 'has been raised'. It is in the aorist passive tense of a past, completed action. God the Father **has raised** Jesus. An action in history that is completed, but whose effect is ongoing. Jesus' resurrection became a 'forever moment' that impacts on all history.

We as the church, keepers of the Easter story, need to be more prepared to celebrate, understand and share this reality in our own time and context.

If we believe that Jesus rose from the dead as the culmination of God's plan of love, grace and forgiveness for all, as scripture tells us it is, then it matters. It mattered not only 2,000+ years ago but it continues to matter today.

If Christ's resurrection is as transformative as the Church says it is how, many of you may ask, is it that there is still so much that is wrong in the world; evil, selfishness, hardship, struggle?

The world, our own nation, our communities and neighbourhoods are only touched and transformed by the message of Easter if we as the 'keepers of the story' learn how to share and live it with the power it holds; not power born of violence and oppression but power born of love, grace, forgiveness and sacrifice. Easter people are those who follow in the footsteps and example of the risen Lord Jesus, bringing life and hope to all we seek to service and love.

Debbie

MAYBE DREAMS DO COME TRUE...

The following article appeared in the Hertfordshire Mercury on 21st November 1986:

"Bookshop, coffee bar inside church?"

Hertford Methodist Church could, in the future, be used as a bookshop, coffee bar and counselling centre. This vision of the church's future was related by the minister, Rev. Brian Gameson, at a church meal held at Morgan's Walk School, Hertford, on Saturday. How far the vision materialises depends on the response from church members who have been given a questionnaire relating to the concept of an "Open Church."

The idea evolved during preparations for a three-week Stewardship Renewal Campaign which is currently being held at the church. The challenge was reinforced by a play 'Come unto Me', which highlighted the pressures of life. It was presented by Mrs Yvonne Blake, Mrs Tricia Goldsmith, Mr Richard West, Miss Vivienne Elsam, Mr Iain Goldsmith and Mr Martin Hillary.

The meal, which was part of the Stewardship Renewal, was attended by over 150 members and friends of the church, including Mr Ron Paige, southern region director of the Methodist Stewardship organisation. People were welcomed by the church renewal campaign chairman, Mr Reid Winter, and the meal was served by friends from Leaside Church, Ware."

Thanks to Michael Searle for submitting this piece of our history.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER (formerly 'Women's World Day of Prayer')

This year's service, on Friday 1st March, was held in St Andrew's Church, and the service was planned by the women of Slovenia (part of former Yugoslavia and originally part of the Christian Austro-Hungarian Empire) where 82% of the population are Slovenes, but a very mixed population.



As usual by taking part we became part of a great wave of prayer encircling the globe, beginning as the sun rose over Samoa and ending 38 hours later back in the Pacific! The theme of the service was 'Come - everything is ready!' This was an open invitation for all to come to God's table. A table was set at the front of the church symbolically with items of food as eaten in Slovenia. We heard the stories of three women with very different backgrounds and problems:

- A mother with an illegitimate child who managed to get a University degree.
- A grandmother of a very poor family all living on her small pension and keeping themselves alive on what they could grow on their small farm. Neither her son nor her daughter-in-law could get jobs.
- A young mother brought up in a violent household of drunken parents, with a husband who subsequently also took to drink.

In addition to these accounts there were hymns and prayers. The Bible reading was the parable of Jesus, as told in Luke's gospel (Chapter 14), of the great feast prepared for many but to which those invited did not want to come. Members of all the Hertford churches took part in the reading and Jen was our reader. Slovene hymns had been translated for us - one on the theme of the Luke reading and one sung between prayers.



Altogether a lovely service followed by refreshments.

Jean Luscher

ILLUMINATE HERTFORD 2019

After months of planning and preparation Illuminate Hertford came to town at the end of February/beginning of March. It started with a band called LZ7 (landing zone 7, is a military term for landing in enemy territory). They are all Christians and are led by a very charismatic man called Linz. They spent a few days going into local secondary schools, playing their music and talking to the students about Jesus. Tickets were then on sale for their two gigs at the Corn Exchange in Hertford on 1st March.

The two concerts were both well attended but we ran out of tickets for the later concert! Both concerts went well (some young people were overcome with dehydration at the later concert as it was so hot in the venue). Linz and the band talked about faith between the songs. At the end of the concert the young people were asked to close their eyes and raise their hands if they wanted Jesus to come into their lives. They were offered an AAA lanyard. Access All Areas lanyards then had information on how to move forward from this point. Over 400 young people took lanyards and most logged on to Linz's follow-up sessions. They were also informed of places they could attend follow-up sessions locally.

This brought us to the next stage in the process. Churches in Hertford and Ware set up AAA follow-up groups that any of the young people could attend. At Hertford Methodist Church we set up a Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday. We didn't have any AAA students attend. Despite being disappointed we enjoyed ourselves tossing pancakes at the front of our church and inviting young people on their way home from school to come in for pancakes.

Several weeks since then Jen Doragh and I have opened up Oasis from 3:30 each Tuesday and offered various delights to passing students. We have not had any AAA students turn up at all.

Although over 400 students took AAA lanyards the take up of follow-up sessions arranged around Hertford and Ware has been very low. We are praying about this and looking for God to show us a way forward in meeting the spiritual needs of secondary school aged youngsters of Hertford and Ware.

Please keep our young people in your prayers.

Yvonne Clarkson

HAVE YOU LOOKED AT OUR NEW WEBSITE?

Our church area (Herts and Essex Borders Ecumenical Area – usually shortened to HAEBEA) has a new, updated website, which is full of information.

A message from the webmaster, Michael Fischer:

"Please take a look at our updated Area Website: I'm always on the lookout for news items and good news stories for our newsroom: <https://www.haebea.org/p/newsroom.html> and activities or groups that may be of interest to your local communities:

So, if there's something you'd like to share, just let me know, <https://www.haebea.org/p/churches.html> and remember to check the website on a regular basis for all the latest information."

You'll also find out about the various churches in our area, any special events and projects, as well as notices about meetings and worship. Under the 'Churches' tab and 'Hertford' there is an item about our Oasis Coffee Shop.

Just explore **www.haebea.org**



Our coffee shop is very popular and staffed by a team of volunteers from all around the town, some from churches, some with no church connections but happy to serve the community. If you have a couple of hours to spare on a weekday and would like to help, please ring Chris Lawn on 01992 552669 – he will be delighted to hear from you!

CONGRATULATIONS to Anne and Gordon gentry who recently celebrated their Diamond Wedding. Anne kindly shared some of their story:

We met in 1956. Gordon was reading for his degree at University College London and was living at Westminster College, while I was at Southlands Teacher Training College, both Methodist foundations.

We were married at Trinity Methodist Church in Wallasey Cheshire. Gordon and his best man stayed at my grandfather's house. Gordon wore his demob suit and Mike had borrowed from his brother. We were poor in those days! The photographer would not believe that Gordon was the groom as he was wearing his old duffle coat. My grandfather wasn't keen on the duffle coat and gave him a pair of yellow gloves to carry! Memories are of a very happy day. We went on our honeymoon to Snowdonia in our old 1932 Hillman Minx.

We've lived in Hertford over 40 years, coming here in 1976 and living at Danesbury Boys Approved School in Bengoe (now demolished). Gordon was 'head hunted' for the job by Herts County Council as he had previously worked with senior girls in Scotland at the Church of Scotland Girl's Approved School and at Chaworth Approved School in Surrey. The idea was that Gordon would introduce girls to Danesbury and make it co-ed. The staff hadn't been told of these plans by HCC so we didn't get a very warm welcome! Previously we'd moved around a lot, notably Chipping Norton, Warminster, Grimsby, Port Glasgow and Ottershaw, Surrey.

We've had five children. Stephen is a service manager for Herts Social Services. Susan lives in Corfu and amongst other things cares for five rescue dogs and rehomes many others. Michael died in babyhood from a rare children's cancer. Ruth works at Broxbourne School as an office manager. Kathryn is currently on maternity leave from her job as Children's Home manager.

We celebrated our actual anniversary by going out to lunch with three of our children and the following Saturday held a tea party at Hanbury Manor for wider family. Both lovely occasions. We can't believe that we actually made it to 60 years married. The Queen marked the occasion by sending us a card!

Anne Gentry

THY KINGDOM COME

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement, which invites Christians around the world to pray between Ascension and Pentecost for more people to come to know Jesus Christ. What started out as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in 2016 to the Church of England has grown into an international and ecumenical call to prayer.



Thy Kingdom Come in Hertfordshire 2019

This year we are looking forward to wide and diverse engagement with Thy Kingdom Come from churches of many different denominations across Hertfordshire.

It has been wonderful to see how this invitation to prayer has drawn so many people together locally, nationally and across the world. I hope this year, again, church members will be encouraged to join in the 10-day prayer journey from Ascension on 30th May to Pentecost Sunday.

Please save the date in your diaries for the **Beacon Celebration on Pentecost Sunday 9th June** which takes place at St Albans Cathedral and this year has been put together by an ecumenical planning group. This celebration will bring together representatives from across the local and regional Churches and we will also be joined by Paul Goodliff from Churches Together in England.

A wide range of free prayer resources from across the denominations is also available on the dedicated website www.thykingdomcome.global and there are various planned opportunities to come together for prayer across the county.

Doral Hayes
Ecumenical Facilitator, Churches Together in Hertfordshire

CONGRATULATIONS TO SONIA COUSINS

At the County Awards Evening at the Holiday Inn, Elstree, on 29th March, Sonia Cousins, who runs the 2nd Hertford (Methodist) Brownies, was awarded the County Good Service Certificate.



Sonia has run the Brownies since 2009 having previously been with 2nd Hertford Rainbows. During that time she has also been District Secretary, gained her Holiday Licence, been a very active member of Hertford Friends of Guiding and helped at the Badge Shop in Ware several evenings each month.

As Leader, Sonia runs the largest Brownie Unit in the District. She takes them on some amazing trips as well as the usual weekly meetings. Sonia has been very good at encouraging the girls to participate in church events and they have helped at 'Save the Children' Coffee Mornings. She has always had an open door policy to enabling girls from other units to join with 2nd Hertford Brownies for many of the events she organises, enabling them to enjoy experiences they would not otherwise have.

As a District Leader and Secretary she has supported the District Commission in many ways. In 2018 Sonia was one of the first to volunteer to help at the Anglia Region Trefoil Day organised by Hertfordshire Trefoil Guild, led by Ann Newman and Janice Hyde, helping with refreshments for the 200 ladies who travelled from across the Anglia Region to join us for a full day of activities.

Sonia works full time and her commitment to Girlguiding is second to none. She certainly goes way above and beyond her role as a Brownie leader and we are privileged that she runs our Brownies.

Janice Hyde (*Chairman - Girlguiding Hertfordshire Awards Committee*)



The past is not dead, it is living in us, and will be alive in the future which we are now helping to make.

William Morris

TAIZÉ MUSIC – what exactly is it?

We recently sang a Taizé chant, chosen by Jean Luscher at our 'Hymns & Cake' event, and there are several in our hymnbook, including the well-known 'Jesus, remember me' (number 777 in our hymnbook). So what exactly is Taize music, and where is it from?



The Taizé Community is an ecumenical Christian monastic fraternity in Taizé, Saône-et-Loire, France. It's composed of more than 100 brothers from Catholic and Protestant traditions who originate from about thirty countries across the world. It was founded in 1940 by Brother Roger Schütz, a Reformed Protestant. The community has become one of the world's most important sites of Christian pilgrimage, with a focus on youth. Over 100,000 young people from around the world make pilgrimages to Taizé each year for prayer, Bible study, sharing, and communal work. Through the community's ecumenical outlook, they are encouraged to live in the spirit of kindness, simplicity and reconciliation.

The community, although Western European in origin, seeks to include people of all traditions. This comes across in the music and prayers where songs are sung in many languages, including chants and icons from the Eastern Orthodox tradition. The music emphasises simple phrases, usually lines from Psalms or other pieces of Scripture, repeated and sometimes also sung as a round. Ecumenical services based on this model and music are held in many churches throughout the world.

Taizé music is both simple and sophisticated. Brother Roger, founder of Taizé, sought to add a prayerful element to music, and a musical element to prayer, believing firmly in the old dictum, 'those who sing, pray twice'. The songs of Taizé are designed to be sung by those who have difficulty carrying a tune, as well as those whose training and background in music extends to much higher levels.

A typical Taizé-style service includes a number of chants, Bible readings - one usually followed by a short meditation, prayers and at least two periods of silence. It may begin in semi-darkness and during the first chant individual candles are lit. Music is provided so that those who wish to sing parts may do so. There may be instrumentalists too, playing the melody or gentle 'descant' style tunes which blend with the

voices. There is a feeling of calm and serenity, and worshippers are encouraged to leave in silence.

Taize worship is held several times a year in St Albans Cathedral, usually during half-term holidays, and also in the summer in St Leonard's Church, Bengoe (this year it will be on Sunday 28th July at 6.30pm). There will also be a special 'Taize and Iona Day' at St Mary's Church in Ware, organised by the Royal School of Church Music in collaboration with East Herts Church Choirs Association on Saturday 8th June. For more details of any of these, just ask me!

Trish Goldsmith

STAPLEFORD FLOWER FESTIVAL



Spring bank holiday - Sunday 6th and Monday 7th May 12 noon to 4.30 pm. This year marks 50 years of the flower festival. Every year the beautiful 12th century church is decorated with flowers in arrangements to fit the chosen 'theme' which this year of course is 'Celebration!'.

Inside the church there will be refreshments (teas, coffees, & home-made cakes) with an exhibition of the history of the church in the vestry. In the school hall (opposite the church) there is a wonderful art market on both days (open from 11.00 until 5.00pm). Outside there are stalls selling home produce, a bottle stall, raffle, and bric-a-brac. On Bank holiday Monday at 2.30pm there will be maypole dancing at the school. Also look out for the very popular scarecrow trail around the village.

Free entry and parking.

ST MARYS CHURCH, CHURCH LANE, STAPLEFORD, SG14 3NB

WHAT'S ON

Theatre Outing to **FIDDLER ON THE ROOF**

at the Playhouse Theatre in London.

Matinee on Tuesday 25th June

Ticket £69 includes transport both ways

For booking information ring Mollie Day 01920 463567

A few places currently available, early response recommended!



SUMMER GALA CONCERT

Hertford Choral Society

with Accordion5 & Blue Steel

Saturday 29th June at **7pm**

All Saints' Church, Hertford.

*Tickets from Wendy, Trish or Ron Skinner,
or at the door*



Handel - **SAMSON**

Ware Choral Society

Saturday 8th June at 7.30pm

with Crispian Steele Perkins and soloists

The Drill Hall, Amwell End, Ware.

Tickets from Andrea Graves

or at the door



HAILEYBURY MADRIGALS

Friday 21st June at 9pm

in the magical setting of the floodlit island at Amwell Pool

in aid of Isabel Hospice



See weekly notice sheet for more details and other events.

Church Contact Details

Minister: Revd Debbie Hodgson tel: 01992 462881
debbie.hodgson@methodist.org.uk

Stewards: April: Ron Doragh
from May: Yvonne Clarkson

Room bookings: Chris Lawn

Coffee Shop Anthea Slate

Magazine editors: Trish Goldsmith
Jackie Lawn

Websites www.haebea.org hertfordmethodist.org.uk

Regular Activities at the Church

Sunday	10.30am	Worship, Crèche and Junior Church
Monday	9.30am	Prayer Group meeting
	12.00pm	Stepping Forward Group (2 nd and 4 th)
	5.15pm	Rainbow Guides
Tuesday	12 - 1pm	Lunches served in hall (term-time)
	2.00pm	Women's Fellowship
	6.00pm	Brownie Guides
Wednesday	3.30 - 5pm	Messy Church (4 th)
Thursday	1.30 - 3pm	Parent, Carers and Toddlers' Club
Friday	8.00pm	Choir Practice (1 st)
Weekdays	9.00 - 2pm	Oasis Coffee Shop

Deadline for next INSIGHT magazine items: Sunday 30th June