

# Hanham Methodist Church Magazine

January / February 2017 



New Year is not about changing the Dates but Direction;  
It's not about changing the Calendar but Commitment;  
It's not about changing the Actions but Attitude;  
It's not about changing the Fruit but Faith, Force and Focus!  
May you Commit and Create the best New Year ever!

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# Welcome to the magazine of Hanham Methodist Church, a member of the Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit.

Our services are open to all, whether or not you are a Church member. We have a loop system for those hard of hearing. Notices and service sheets are available in larger print and services on CD are available for the housebound on request.

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Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect Church policy. Enquiries should be directed to the Editor.

## Contents

Wesley's Wisdom – Taking Communion.....	3
Christmas at Eastwood Park.....	4
Y's Men Concert.....	6
Note from the Treasurer.....	6
HMC Youth Church.....	7
HMC Inferno!.....	8
Prejudice & Selfishness.....	9
About Christmas Trees.....	11
Signposts.....	14
Quiz page.....	15
Flower rota.....	16
For Your Diary.....	16

# WESLEY'S WISDOM

## 6. Taking Communion

The celebrating of Holy Communion within Methodism has changed quite considerably during my lifetime. When I was confirmed in the late 1950's communion was tagged on to the preaching service and only the 'faithful few' remained for it, gathering in a huddle at the front of the church where it was often received while you remained seated in your pew.

The 1975 Methodist Service Book changed all that and communion became not just an integral part of worship but the climax of it. The number of communion hymns in the old Methodist Hymn Book, 18, which increased to 38 in Hymns and Psalms (published in 1983) demonstrates the change of emphasis.

Wesley, being an Anglican held a high view of the sacrament of Holy Communion and through the years as Methodism grew and lay preachers became more prominent he agonised over whom should preside. But his words were clear. He writes *'The first reason why it is the duty of every Christian to do so (take communion) is because it is a plain command of Christ This is food for our souls: this gives us strength to perform our duty, and lead us onto perfection.* And writing to the societies in Bristol he commands *'lose no opportunities of receiving sacrament'*. Indeed elsewhere in his journal we find him commending members who trudged 10 miles on foot in adverse weather to receive the bread and wine.

Alister McGrath tells of a maiden aunt of his who died in her 80s. Whilst clearing out her effects they found a battered old photograph of a young man. Making enquiries McGrath discovered that, as a young woman his aunt had fallen in love with the young man but the

romance ended tragically. She never loved again but kept and cherished that photograph as a reminder of those days with her lover. McGrath suggests that one reason that she kept the photo was that as the years past she would find it hard to believe that once she had really meant something to somebody, that someone had regarded her as his everything. The photograph was to sole link with that world.

McGrath suggests that the communion elements are like that photograph. They assure us that something that seems too good to be true- something we sometimes might suspect of having been invented really did happen. They are reminders of that day when the Son of God gave himself for us, assuring us that we matter profoundly despite our sin. They are the tokens that remind us that good will eventually overcome evil and that love will conquer hate.

*Tim Lansdown*

*Chairman, Worship Committee*

## **Christmas at Eastwood Park**

It may come as a surprise to some of you to know that a small group of members have been visiting Eastwood Park Women's Prison at Falfield for about 15 years. It all began when Don was a Free Church Chaplain at the prison and he thought that a "Meditation" around Christmas with music, readings and slides might go down well. In those days the ladies came for stints of twenty minutes to half an hour, returned to their blocks and were replaced by another group. It was possible to repeat the slide show and readings, now we have one group who stay for about an hour, or hour and a

half. Over the years since Don's death we have visited also at Easter. Now our visits have become an integral part of the approach to the two great Christian Festivals. Over the years too our approach is more organised with particular people in particular roles, however we are always delighted to welcome new faces.

This year on the Tuesday before Christmas, seven of us visited, we had about 35 ladies who attended (all having applied previously to come) Numbers are very much hit and miss, as ladies can be called away at short notice to attend meetings or speak to Probation Officers or Social workers. They were all very respectful and joined in with the singing of well-known carols, they also lit candles, under the watchful eye of Jennifer, and wrote prayers. Prayers are always shared towards the end of the worship and this year one of the ladies read them alternately with me and some were particularly poignant.

It's always a blessing to visit but it's also a relief to breathe the fresh air when we again finally emerge from the corridors with locked doors.

The Chaplaincy has invited members from our Church to visit for a Coffee Morning, when we can meet the ladies. We shall have a date in Spring and the possibility of taking about 25 people, I will keep you posted, it's an experience not to be missed.

*Pam Blackmore (Mission)*

## Y's Men's Club of Hanham

By popular demand The Rock of Life Band and Mount Zion Choir are coming to perform for us on Saturday 18th February... we know many of you will wish to attend so please put the date in your diaries. Full details will be published soon in the Church and in the notices.



Thank you  
*Pam*

## The Photocopier

I have been advised by the company from whom we rent our photocopier that there will be an increase in the cost of usage by 5% with effect from the New Year.

This means that we will be charged .0585 pence for a black copy and 5.787 pence for a colour copy. May I ask you to consider carefully if you need to make copies and if so how many you require. Also please note that colour copies are almost ten times as expensive as black only copies and even if you use just one word in colour on a document that counts as a colour copy and is charged at the higher rate. So please only use colour if it is absolutely necessary.

Also may I please remind you to record all usage of the photocopier in the book.

*Tim Lansdown*  
Treasurer



# FAMC Youth Church

*A place for faith! A place for Fun! A place to flower!*



**Is your child aged 3 to 13 years old? Do you want them to learn more about Jesus Christ? Do you want them to learn important Christian values?**

**Then Hanham Methodist Youth Church is the place for you!**

**At Hanham Methodist Youth Church, we utilise children's curiosity and creativity to help them learn more about Jesus and Christianity.**

**We meet every Sunday at 10:30am until 11:45am at Hanham Methodist Church**

**For more info contact Natalie Everson at:  
nataliemarieeverson@hotmail.co.uk**

# TEENAGER

(n): Human beings who are unsure whether they are adolescents or adults.

**Feel like you're being treated like a child yet expected to act like an adult? Unsure of how your faith fits in with today's world?**

**Then join us at Inferno!**

**A youth group where you can discuss issues that are important to you.**

**Where: Hanham Methodist Church**

**When: 1st, 2nd and 3rd Friday of each month**

**Time: 6pm to 8pm**

**Age: 13 years old to 19 years old**

**For more information contact Natalie Everson at:  
nataliemarieeverson@hotmail.co.uk**



## **PREJUDICE & SELFISHNESS:**

*This is the concluding part to the article published in the last magazine.*

### **Fear & Prejudice:**

We are instinctively defensive and usually reluctant to participate in an unfamiliar situation and engage with those persons associated with it, particularly in a social group that is different from our own.

In such a situation fear and intolerance are simply more intense emotions caused by our defensive mechanism that functions in the name of self-comfort and preservation. Fear, whether real or imagined can distort a situation both at the time and in its retelling as the following story "A Face of Evil" illustrates:-

*They say evil wears no face*

*Indeed, there was no emotion on his face*

*No flicker of empathy as he inflicted still more pain*

*Couldn't he see the terror in my eyes or the panic in my face? He calmly, even professionally continued his dirty work, and then glibly said: "Rinse, please".*

With the passing years and improvements in modern dentistry, I have (rationally) overcome my childhood prejudice and now I merely experience unease rather than fear when confronted with a visit to the dentist. Nevertheless these memories and their emotions linger like an echo and are not easily denied.



## **Disciplining Human Nature:**

We need to analyse the often subconscious causes for our emotional responses, subjecting them to a rational accountability. Christian teaching reminds us that God's Love recognises a single measure of "equality of worth" for everyone whatever their circumstances and if we are to aspire to this Love, then we need to discipline our prejudice, intolerance and dislike of others notwithstanding the risk of personal ridicule and rejection even within our own society group.

To do this, we need a reliable moral framework for practical guidance. At the centre of this framework, for the Christian, is Jesus' second commandment, namely to "Love your neighbour as yourself" and from this principle the necessary behaviour objectives and performance standards are derived. Such a subject is beyond the scope of this article; however I offer the following imaginary story by way of an introduction.

In this story "Colour Blindness", the second elderly lady shows a commendable moral state of mind.

*At a multi-racial conference a group of three black professional politicians were chin-wagging during a coffee break when they were joined by Tom Sewell the white senator from Arizona and the next conference speaker. Also enjoying the coffee break was an elderly black lady from the audience who asked her friend "Which one of the group is Tom Sewell? The second lady replied "The one wearing the yellow poker-dot tie". Over to you!*

ARGI

## About Christmas trees....

Today most of us associate Christmas trees, originally, with Germany. Probably even today most German families will decorate their tree with more delicacy and seriousness than any other country, with the lighting of candles on Christmas Eve of uttermost importance. (However I should be careful as I realise that in England too some people take the decorating of their tree as a major feat of engineering and approach it thematically, in colour and design. For others it is merely the decision of natural or artificial and today trees come in a range of colours - artificial of course - with or without lights or is it LEDs?)



Long ago, pagans in the wild unconverted lands of Germany worshipped the trees and the forests. When St. Boniface came to bring them the Gospel, he taught them to worship the Creator, not the creation. When he witnessed them worshipping a great oak tree, he cut the tree down, later he suggested to them that they decorate a little pine tree to celebrate Christ's birth. (Here again is the idea of pagan idolatry incorporated into something more noble and important) St. Boniface incidentally was born in Crediton, Devon but went to the old Germanic states as a missionary and became Bishop of Mainz.

It was Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband and consort, who introduced the Christmas tree to England. He wanted his children to enjoy some of what would have been memories from his own childhood in Saxe Coburg.

For many years it was the custom to decorate the tree and put up other decorations, usually of greenery, only on Christmas Eve, now of course there appears to be a race as to who can get their decorations up the earliest!! (Some appear in November, although I feel that in our cosmopolitan society, it could be for Divali)

Which brings me to the church Christmas tree, did it by magic appear in the church in time for the Gift Service in early December? No, there was a carefully thought out plan, which involved John B contacting a friend, who supplied and helped raise the tree in the church (this has been happening for many years.) This year the Johns thoughtfully attached a star and some lights before the tree was raised as it is no mean feat to complete this once the tree is in situ. A day or so later a little working party decorated the tree, this involved step ladders and the use of a specially fashioned implement (JL), which gave extra reachability for attaching baubles and tinsel.

During the Gift service many gifts appeared under the tree and were later collected by "Home Start", for later distribution to vulnerable families. (We have received a letter of thanks for these and an assurance that they will be enjoyed by the recipients)

All over the Christmas period the tree stood majestic, with twinkling lights, a reminder to the outside world that the Saviour of the world was to be born on Christmas Day.

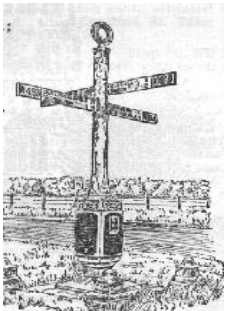
Today the tree saw its demise. Again a small group (the three Johns, B,I and L) came to witness it and to stow away the container until Easter. First the reachable tinsel and baubles were removed, then the lower branches were lopped and trimmed ready for carting to the tip, when all the decorations except the star and highest lights were removed, the tree was lowered and the trunk sawn into pieces. All that remained was the use of a hard broom to remove the majority of pine needles and the use of “Henry”, to vacuum up the residue. When you enter the church sanctuary on Sunday all evidence of a Christmas tree will have disappeared for another year.

We do retain a tree in its bare state to use as our Lenten Cross, after all Christmas points us to that, the greatest of Christian festivals and is an integral part of our belief.

By the time you read this Twelfth Night will have come and gone and all decorations should be safely packed away for another year but perhaps this year you might think a thank you to all those people who work week by week to enhance our worship in so many different ways.

*Pam Blackmore*

## Signposts



Some 15 years ago the opportunity arose to contribute to the magazine. Signpost used as an indicator of the way we might go. Only intended to be not too long and give a few indicators.

Having been born in Bath and knowing the twists and turns of local lanes and the hills all the way round, also having spent much time on Devon and Cornwall (my parents living in Plymouth) I also knew the tortuous turns of the West country. During the war many indicator boards were removed or turned round to confuse if an invasion occurred. In North Wales the signs painted out in green and overwritten in Welsh. The WAY not too clear. In time things might get better.

But now in 2017 it seems more confusing, from the Middle East, Syria, War, Africa – poaching. Power struggles. Greed. Nuclear armament maybe in North Korea, Russia or America.

To me the only true message came a few days ago at Christmas, God with us in the world.

The son of God, Jesus – Lord and Saviour to all who would come to him. Hearing the voice of John the Baptist – Prepare the Way of the Lord.

ACW

# New Year Wordsearch!



BEGINNING  
CALENDAR  
CARDS  
CELEBRATION  
COLD  
CONFETTI  
END  
FIREWORKS  
GLASSES  
GREETINGS



IN  
MIDNIGHT  
NEW  
OLD  
OUT  
REFLECTION  
RESOLUTION  
SNOW  
TOAST  
WINE

## Flower Rota:

Jan	8 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>	29 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Church</b>	Nesta Hogg	Hazel Wheeler	Free	Martin Sagar
<b>War Memorial</b>	Rosemary Ireland	Hazel Wheeler	Free	Ann Houlden
Feb	5 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>	26 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Church</b>	Audrey Dayer	Joan Brabon-Hibbs	Joyce Godwin	Barbara Lewis
<b>War Memorial</b>	Pat Webber	John Brown	Carol Haycock	Barbara Lewis

## For Your Diary

<i>8<sup>th</sup> Jan</i>	<i>10.45am</i>	<i>Barry Bishop - Covenant Service</i>
	<i>12.15pm</i>	<i>Lunch and Party with Messy Church</i>
	<i>6.00pm</i>	<i>No evening service</i>
<i>15<sup>th</sup> Jan</i>	<i>10.45am</i>	<i>J Seward</i>
	<i>6.00pm</i>	<i>Barry Bishop</i>
<i>22<sup>nd</sup> Jan</i>	<i>10.45am</i>	<i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - B Isherwood</i>
	<i>6.00pm</i>	<i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - Tabernacle</i>
<i>29<sup>th</sup> Jan</i>	<i>10.45am</i>	<i>P Jones</i>
	<i>6.00pm</i>	<i>Cluster Service at Summerhill</i>
<i>5<sup>th</sup> Feb</i>	<i>10.45am</i>	<i>H Wilson</i>
	<i>4.00pm</i>	<i>Messy Church</i>
<i>12<sup>th</sup> Feb</i>	<i>10.45am</i>	<i>Pastoral Visitors' Re-dedication - Barry Bishop</i>
	<i>6.00pm</i>	<i>J Lee</i>
<i>19<sup>th</sup> Feb</i>	<i>10.45am</i>	<i>R Hick</i>
	<i>6.00pm</i>	<i>H Gray</i>
<i>26<sup>th</sup> Feb</i>	<i>10.45am</i>	<i>D Edwards</i>
	<i>6.00pm</i>	<i>Barry Bishop – Holy Communion</i>



