

Dear Friends

As you read this the time of Pentecost will be approaching, unless of course you are late getting your copy of the Link, in which case it may well have passed. Either way it is Pentecost I want to focus on and the story that we find in Luke's second work which we call "Acts".

There have been over the centuries many artistic works produced on this story as people try to put into image what they interpret is happening in this story. Most of the paintings I have seen, though not exclusively, focus on the disciples and the artists' interpretations of the Spirit in the guise of doves, flames and so on. One of my favourite paintings of Pentecost is by the modern Chinese artist He Qi. As I can't reproduce the picture here I would encourage you to have a look if you have access to the internet. It has the usual interpretation of the Holy Spirit, on this occasion as a flame in the shape of a dove, but that is not the reason for my liking the picture. It is the setting or background that makes this one of my favourites. He Qi has set the picture in the midst of various everyday outdoor places. Unlike John's account of Pentecost (20:19-23), where the disciples are locked away in fear and it is a very private occasion, here in Acts the story moves very quickly from a house to outside where a large crowd has gathered to find out what the commotion is.

Let's not, at this point, get stuck on the old question of how people are hearing the story and what sort of "tongues" or "languages" the disciples are speaking, for I believe this only leads us down a dead end, and is the wrong question to be asking.

I wonder, do you know what happens if you place a tuning fork in a block of wood, and place it next to but not touching, an identical tuning fork in another piece of wood and then strike the first fork? As the first one begins to ring out its note the second one will also ring out that same note. I'm sure all you musicians and scientists out there already knew that, but it fascinated me. Put very simply (and I like simple) there is a transfer of energy between the two forks which only happens because they share the same frequency. This is known as 'resonance'.

This is what I see happening in our story in Acts. The disciples are telling their story of their experience of God, through Jesus and now through the Spirit of God. They are doing it in their own way, but most importantly they are resonating with others. The same has to be true for us. We are all called

to share our own experience of God through Jesus. Now for some that may be with words, with others it will be through action, and each way will be right for that person as it will come from their experience. However we do it, we have to do it in a way that resonates with others.

Jesus clearly resonated with people and people of his age – and by that I don't mean 30 year olds but people of the age in which he lived, he used language, stories, illustrations that connected with people of the day. He welcomed, included, and loved everybody equally showing no exclusion.

God's Spirit is present with us, in us, and around us not just at Pentecost but all the time and it challenges, and encourages us to resonate with those around us. My challenge to each one of us this Pentecost is how can you share the love of God as found in Jesus in a way that resonates with someone else?

Till next time

**Andrew**

## **WORSHIP IN MAY**

|    |                              |                 |
|----|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 05 | 10.30 Rev. Graeme Dutton     | Holy Communion  |
|    | 6.30 Chapel Allerton         |                 |
| 12 | 10.30 Prof. Peter Howdle     |                 |
|    | 6.00 Roundhay                | Circuit Service |
| 19 | Pentecost                    |                 |
|    | 10.30 Mr. John Summerwill    |                 |
|    | 6.30 Rev. Andrew Atkins      | Holy Communion  |
| 26 | Trinity Sunday               |                 |
|    | 10.30 Mrs. Dorothy Turnpenny |                 |
|    | 6.30 St Andrew's             |                 |

## **LADIES GROUP**

The Ladies Group meet fortnightly on Thursdays in the Youth Hall. All are welcome

|        |           |   |
|--------|-----------|---|
| 02 May | 7.30 p.m. | “Bring and Buy” Coffee Evening            |
| 16 May | 7.45 p.m. | Ms J Oakshott “You're on Next”            |
| 30 May | 7.45 p.m. | Rev. Graeme Dutton Annual General Meeting |

## **SIMON ON THE STREET**

There is to be a Pudding Evening on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00 pm to help raise funds for the project. Six puddings will be served and you are expected to eat them all! Tickets, which are strictly limited, will cost £8 and are available from Ruth/Gary Albiges, Val Faint and Liz/Stan Pearson. We hope you will have an enjoyable evening.

**Val Faint**

## **ACTION FOR CHILDREN (NCH)**

Collections and donations received over the Christmas period were £71.15p for diaries and Christmas cards, £333.07p for the collection at our carol service on 23rd December and £483.62p from home collection boxes. Thanks to all for your generous support

Action for Children have moved their regional offices from Harrogate to Leeds, 21 Saville Mount, LS7 3HZ ([www.actionforchildren.org.uk](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk)). Anyone interested in having a Home Collection box or further information about Action for Children's work please see me.

**Peter Bennett**

## **WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT?**



If you don't recognise Mary Patchett from this photo see the next page for an explanation of what on earth she has been getting up to now.

## **MARY'S SMILEY HAIRSHAVE**

I just want to say a huge, huge thank you to each and every one of you who gave money to Comic Relief and voted as to whether or not I should have the hair shave done.

The 'yes's voted £635 and the 'no's voted £379.20

The total to date is £999.20. Your money will make an immense difference to a lot of people we may never know, AND we had a lot of fun doing it. Thank you.

If you have not made a donation yet but would like to, please let me know.

You can pay to me or directly to Comic Relief at:

<https://my.rednoseday.com/sponsor/marypatchett>. Do it if you think I'm mad or zany. If you think I'm just stupid just keep it a secret.

Thank you again

**Mary Patchett**

*The updated total now stands at an amazing £1246 – well done Mary.*

## **MARRIAGE AND METHODISTS**

*When she's not busy getting her hair cut Mary is also busy helping to sort things out. We have had a selection of views on marriage and Mary has pointed me to an official Methodist briefing on marriage. You can find it on the Methodist website but I thought it would be worth including the first few points from it here.*

### **What is the Methodist understanding of same sex marriage?**

Within our Church there is a spectrum of views on human sexuality. Methodist Standing Orders, however, state our belief, "that marriage is a gift of God and that it is God's intention that a marriage should be a life-long union in body, mind and spirit of one man and one woman." At the same time we have for nearly twenty years explicitly recognised, affirmed and celebrated the participation and ministry of lesbians and gay men, and been committed to a pilgrimage of faith to combat discrimination and give dignity and worth to people whatever their sexuality.

### **Will Methodist churches be forced to conduct same sex marriages?**

No. The Bill clearly states that there will be no compulsion on religious organisations or individuals to conduct same sex marriages. Each faith group will decide whether it wishes to "opt in". For the Methodist Church this decision would be made by the Methodist Conference. If Conference decided to opt in, then the trustees of an individual church would need to decide whether to apply to register their building for same sex marriages. Finally an individual minister at that church would have to be happy to conduct a same sex marriage. All three stages would be needed before a marriage could take place.

### **Will Methodist churches or ministers be allowed to conduct same sex marriages?**

Methodist ministers and churches will only be allowed to authorise same sex marriages if the Methodist Conference decides that as a denomination we should opt in.

### **Will the Methodist Church "opt in" to offering same sex marriages?**

Given our position on the definition of marriage, and the Methodist position that blessings of civil partnerships should not take place on Methodist

premises nor be carried out in the name of the Methodist Church, the Methodist Church would not be in a position to “opt in” without a lengthy period of consultation and theological reflection.

*There you have an outline of the official Methodist view. All I will say is why am I not surprised that “the Methodist Church would not be able to do anything without a LENGTHY period of consultation and theological reflection”?*

## **INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE**

In the Easter Sunday service, Andrew spoke of the different ways in which the Bible could be regarded, and how these different ways were acceptable to Methodism (I’m definitely at the “liberal” end of the spectrum). This brought to mind the Ecumenical Covenant service earlier in the year when David Paton-Williams asked us to read the ecumenical covenant. In doing so I read “I accept the authority of scripture” and my immediate reaction was “No, I don’t!”

I don’t know how others interpret “authority of scripture” but the phrase sounds decidedly “fundamentalist” to me. I have huge problems with the OT as the God so often depicted there is not the God I believe in. Also, as it pre-dates the birth of Christ it is the scripture of Judaism and I wish the Christian church would concentrate on Christ and not what went before.

Even with the NT, I always bear in mind that it was written by fallible human beings and therefore should be read critically.

**Gillian Clements**

## **LET THERE BE LIGHT**

In reply to Confused of Leeds, Graeme was right, ‘ministers’ is the inclusive term for presbyters and deacons.

That’s the easy part! The simple answer to Confused’s question, “What is a presbyter?” is that presbyter is the name now given to those we have always called ministers.

I think what it is all trying to say is that presbyters and deacons are both orders of ordained ministry with equal status but different roles. The focus of a presbyter’s ministry is preaching, presiding at the sacraments and exercising pastoral responsibility, while the focus of a deacon’s ministry is service and witness.

For more information, the website of the Methodist Diaconal Order is very helpful (I am happy to provide more information for non-computer users).

The Methodist Worship Book of 1975 uses the term presbyter, I expect we'll get used to it eventually.

**Judith Clinkard**

## **PRAYER FOR CHANGE**



*This prayer appears in the magazines of Lidgett Park, St Andrew's and St Edmund's.*

Father, we pray today for all who work closely with the natural world,  
For farmers and gardeners who grow our food,  
For scientists and technologists who probe the secrets of life,  
For foresters who plant and harvest trees,  
For photographers, artists and poets who capture beauty for others to see,  
For conservationists and all who guard the precious heritage of the earth.

**Amen.**

## APRIL COFFEE MORNING



*This was as jolly as ever – don't miss the May one.*

*(Yes I know that the photo breaks every rule of composition and exposure – but it was taken by Pat Brooke so what do you expect? Don't be harsh, she is no David Bailey).*

### **THE FIG, THE VINE AND THE OLIVE**

The Editor has asked me for a copy of the sermon I preached at Lidgett Park in February. This is the first instalment of a three-part edited version. *(The reason I asked John to produce a hard copy was that it was a great sermon. If you were there read this and enjoy it again; if you weren't then you are in for a treat.)*

#### ***Introduction***

You approach Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Israel, by walking through an avenue of trees called the Avenue of the Righteous Gentiles, in which every tree has been planted in memory of someone who helped Jews to escape from the Nazis. Oskar Schindler, who saved 19,000 Jews, is one of them. Trees are often used to commemorate or represent people. In Israel the Jewish National Fund has planted millions of them, serving both to remember individuals and to renew the land's forests for the benefit of all.

In the Bible too, trees often have a symbolic role. Micah's vision of a world at peace involves not only swords turned to ploughshares, but 'every man shall sit under his own vine and under his fig tree', enjoying the fruits of peace (Micah 4:4). Jesus identifies Nathanael as 'an Israelite indeed' when he has seen him sitting under his fig tree (John 1:47-48).

Among the dozens of different trees that the Bible names there are three that are particularly important and valuable in the traditional economy of the Holy Land, and which play a part in the story of the last days of Jesus' life. Reflecting upon them during Lent (or at any time) can help to focus us upon the meaning and purpose for us of Jesus' life and death. They are the fig, the vine and the olive.

### ***The Fig***



Figs grow everywhere in Israel except in the wilderness and desert places. They are easy to grow and are valued both for their fruit and for their shade. In Bible times they were a particularly important source of sweetness in cooking in a land that did not know sugar.

In Luke 13:6-9 Jesus tells a parable about a man who plants a fig tree in his vineyard, but when it fails to fruit after three years he orders the vinedresser to cut it down. The vinedresser suggests giving it a last chance. 'I'll dig about it and manure it, and if it bears fruit next year, well and good,' he says. 'If not, you can cut it down.' The message to Israel is that Jesus' ministry is Israel's last chance to respond to God's call.

Mark 11:12-14, 20-21 has a story of Jesus seeing a fig tree in leaf the day after his entry to Jerusalem on a donkey—the event we celebrate on Palm Sunday. When he finds no fruit on it he curses it, and the following day they find it withered. In Matthew's account (21:18-19) it withers instantly. As an event, it is extremely unlikely. Passover is in March or April; figs fruit in June and September. Jesus was far too observant of nature not to know that there would be no fruit on a fig at Passover time. It is very doubtful that he would have cursed a tree, and beyond belief that his curse would have killed a tree.

The existence of these three versions of one story, though, is helpful in showing us how a story can change. It probably started out as a parable, as in Luke, and Jesus may have acted out a pretend search for fruit on an actual tree to illustrate his point. The story then became exaggerated into an incident of coincidence (Mark) and then an illustration of Jesus's authority (Matthew), with the focus shifted from fruitfulness to a rather less convincing claim about the power of faith.



Luke's parable is the most useful version, as well as probably the most authentic. Its message still has relevance for us. We must be fruitful, or we are of no use. Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount speaks of the sound tree bearing good fruit and of the test by which we can know the genuine from the hypocritical: 'You will know them by their fruits' (Matthew 7:15-20). Paul talks of fruitfulness when he writes about the fruit that the Spirit produces in us if we are open to the Spirit's influence—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22).

Of what use are we to God if we only talk of caring and do not actually care; if we have an appearance of piety but no real spirituality? Lent is a season for remembering that we must answer to God for what we are. God requires of us fruitfulness. The fig tree is a warning, a sign of judgement—the judgement under which we live—and of the danger to ourselves if we do not produce the fruits of goodness.

**John Summerwill**

## **LETTER TO THE EDITOR: OWN UP TIME**

Dear Ed

You "describe yourself as a Christian" therefore it does not ring true when you put that "you do not believe in God".

The Bible says in Psalm 14 v1 :- "The fool had said in his heart, there is no God", and I say that you are no fool, and that you do know God through Jesus his son.

Charles Wesley wrote in his Journal May 23rd 1738 a hymn on his conversion, was persuaded to break it off for fear of pride, but then when Wesley prayed to Christ he was reassured and finished this well loved Hymn:-

"And can it be that I should gain  
An interest in the Saviour's Blood?  
Did he for me who caused his pain  
For me who, him to death pursued  
Amazing Love! How can it be  
That Thou my God, should's't die for me?"

Charles Wesley wrote:-

Jesus is glorified  
And gives the Comforter  
His Spirit to reside  
In all his servants here,  
The Holy Ghost to man is given  
Rejoice in God sent down from Heaven

Charles Wesley says:

- 1) God in Jesus died for me
- 2) Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit the Comforter to reside in us His followers
- 3) We should "Rejoice in God sent down from Heaven"

God is love, God in three persons: blessed Trinity.

When we have fellowship with other Christians who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, living for Jesus godly lives, they lead us closer to our Heavenly Father God by their example of Holy living and their faith, such as Cora now in glory.

Editor:- All true Christians believe in God and Psalm 14 v1:- says we are fools otherwise.

1 Corinthians 6 v14 "God has both raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by his own power,

11

John Wesley wrote "Anything that cools my love for Christ is of the world.

The last word goes to wonderful Charles Wesley who truly loved God:-

Lord in the strength of grace,  
With a glad heart and free  
Myself, my residue of days,  
I consecrate to thee  
Thy ransomed servant, I  
Restore to thee Thy own  
And from this moment, live or die  
To serve my God alone.

### **Joyce Wood**

*Thanks for this Joyce; I knew you would not let my comment go unchallenged. I have to admit though to being a bit puzzled that, as yet, I've not had any comments or spiritual guidance from any Lidgett members. Can it really be that my views are not that unusual in the Methodist church?*

## CAPTION COMPETITION



“How about phoning a friend? “

Suggested by Audrey Gabbitas

Lidgett Park Drama Group  
presents  
**‘TEN TIMES  
TABLE’**

A comedy by Alan Ayckbourn  
on Thursday/Friday 30/31 May &  
Saturday 1 June, 2013  
at 7.30pm  
Adults £6      Children £3  
(Tickets - 267 8506)

The leading lights of the village have decided to hold a pageant of local history based on a somewhat vague event. On the committee is a left-wing schoolteacher who decides to turn the project into a rally for proletarian revolution. Committee meetings become symbolic battlefields for conflicting views and the event itself turns into a violent confrontation between the two extremes with cataclysmic results. Anybody who has ever served on a committee will recognize characters in what is an extremely funny and farcical romp.

**FOR MEN ONLY** by Graeme Dutton

*Men are definitely in the minority at Lidgett and in the Church generally and here Graeme addresses the issue.*

Sometimes it seems, it can be quite hard being a bloke in church.

It seems like when you say you're a Christian, to some people that suggests that you are somehow less of a man. I think this may be due to the way in which we, as men, evaluate ourselves through other men's opinions. Or maybe it's even more complicated than that. Maybe we evaluate ourselves through our opinions of what we think other men's opinions are of us!

If you're still with me at this point.....well done!

It's perhaps a lot to do with courage and the suggestion that somehow if we engage in Christian community we are somehow hiding from the world. So it's not that we men are scared of religion or talking about our feelings. It seemingly has more to do with being scared about what other men may think when they hear of our involvement in church.

I was reading Corinthians again this week and decided to read two particular verses in a few different versions including the King James version and the English standard version.

The passage in question was 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

here it is from the King James.....

'Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity.'

and from the English Standard version.....

'Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love'

In the King James version it's important to note that 'quit you like men' means act like men.

So here we have a clear directive to 'act like men'. It seems fairly clear here that Paul expects his readers to understand what he means when he says that. There is also a directive that everything we do is 'done in love'. These two instructions are clearly not separated, it is not a call for those of us who are macho to be manly and those of us who are tender to loving. It's an understanding that our Christian faith requires both.

Paul challenges us to retain the identity that we have as men and bring that manliness into the way we serve God and love one another. It's a call to show the courage to other men that we will stand for love, and the courage to show the church that when we do that we still stand as men.

**THE PANTO RIDES AGAIN**



*One last chance for you to come up with a witty caption!*

### **THIS MONTH'S QUIZ**

Each clue leads to one word. Add extra letter(s) to make the name of a garden plant. (Example – Clue: 24 hours (3 + 2) Solution: DAY + IS = DAISY)

1. Sister-consort of Zeus (4 + 4)
  2. Italian sparkling wine (4 + 3)
  3. Small metal fastener (3 + 2)
  4. Fish eggs (3 + 1)
  5. ...on the cob (4 + 2)
  6. Many headed water monster (5 + 4)
  7. Not verse (5 + 3)
  8. French wine (3 + 2)
  9. Where to find tents (4 + 5)
  10. Christian festival (6 + 5)
-

Graeme asked in "March Link" do you allow God to be as much a part of your hobbies as your study?

Then Charles Wesley's hymn came to mind based on Leviticus 8v35;-  
"Keep the charge of the Lord, that ye die not."

v1 A charge to keep I have  
A God to glorify  
A never dying soul to save  
And fit it for the sky

V2 To serve the present age

V3 A strict account to give

V4 Help me to watch and pray  
And on Thyself rely  
Assured, if I my trust betray  
I shall forever die

This is how Francis Ridley Havergal in her hymn also makes clear "The charge of the Lord"

V1 Take my life, and let it be consecrated Lord to Thee

V2 Take my hands, take my feet

V3 Take my voice, take my lips

V4 Take my silver, gold

Take my intellect, my powers

V5 Take my will, take my heart

V6 Take my love

Take myself, and I will be ever only all for thee

Everything we are, including Graeme's hobbies comes under "a charge to keep" and Albert Osbourne's song says it all.

1) I have no claim on grace  
I have no right to plead  
I stand before my Maker's face  
Condemned in thought and deed  
But since there died a lamb  
Who guiltless, my guilt bore  
I lay fast hold on Jesu's name  
And sin is mine no more

V3 Through Christ I know the love of God  
And see the Father's face

I now set forth thy praise  
Thy loyal servant I  
And gladly dedicate my days  
My God to Glorify

**Joyce Wood**

### **IS THE CHURCH RELEVANT TODAY?**

As part of our increasing senescence Barbara and I have started watching “Pointless” – an aptly named quiz programme. As a background to this they ask 100 people to answer the questions and then the contestants have to find answers that few of the 100 people thought of.

Recently, as a change from asking about soap stars, they had a round on “The Church of England”. One of the questions was “Who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 2002 to 2012.

I know that much of the time we haven’t understood what he has been saying but I thought Rowan Williams had a high profile and was often in the media.

How many people out of the hundred knew the answer? Nineteen.

Justin Welby seems to have got off to a flying start and we wish him well, but it looks as if he has a mountain to climb.

Anyhow here’s a question for you good Methodists. Who is the current President of Conference? (O.K. I’ll admit it – I have no idea).

**Ed Dodman**

### **CAPTION COMPETITION; PART TWO**



“Do you think  
I should take it  
to a charity  
shop?”

This also came from  
Audrey Gabbitas.

Come on the rest of  
you see what you can  
come up with.



## ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S QUIZ

Each clue leads to one word. Add extra letter(s) to make the name of a tree.  
(Example - Clue: Instep. (4 + 1) Solution: ARCH + L = LARCH)

- |                                    |                |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Hive insect (3 + 2)             | BEE - BEECH    |
| 2. All right (abbr) (2 + 1)        | OK-OAK         |
| 3. What Oliver Twist wants (4 + 4) | MORE-SYCAMORE  |
| 4. Cleopatra's snake (3 + 2)       | ASP-ASPEN      |
| 5. Newspapers (5 + 2)              | PRESS-CYPRESS  |
| 6. Prickle (5 + 3)                 | THORN-HAWTHORN |
| 7. Ray of light (4 + 4)            | BEAM-HORNBEAM  |
| 8. White bear (5 + 1)              | POLAR-POPLAR   |
| 9. Small road (4 + 1)              | LANE-PLANE     |
| 10. Start of a tennis game (5 + 2) | SERVE-SERVICE  |

*No – I'd not heard of a service tree either – but it is correct.*

## EXTRA QUIZ

*There's just half a page spare and just room to slip in another quiz for you. It is pretty difficult, but the letters you find spell out the answer in the correct order; so once you have got a few clues the rest do get easier. Good luck.*

Each clue gives rise to two words which differ by one letter. The differing letters spell out a slippery customer.

1. The horse-drawn vehicle can easily carry this weight. (4,5)
2. I ramble with a snipe. (6,5)
3. The viceroy wore a thong! (6,5)
4. It is rare. What a fright. (6,5)
5. The keystone was one of five. (5,4)
6. The rodents walk in a camp way! (4,5)
7. Wear down but still smile. (5,4)
8. Prison steps. (4,5)

## FINAL QUESTION

*Who wiggles his hips while delivering the sermon?  
Elvis Presbyter.*

**KEEP SMILING – summer WILL come!**