

KESWICK METHODIST CHURCH

NEWSLETTER



Into the New Year

Photo by Helen North – more stunning photos inside

*January &
February*

2023

Rev Paul
and
Deacon Kina
Saunders



The Methodist Covenant Prayer

A covenant with God

I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing,
put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you,
or laid aside for you,
exalted for you,
or brought low for you;
let me be full,
let me be empty,
let me have all things,
let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.
And the covenant now made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven.'



Do we take Covenant too lightly?

Each year in Methodist Churches up and down the country the Methodist Covenant Service will be held (usually early in January, though some churches now use it to celebrate the start of the Methodist Year in September). It is a tradition dear to many of us Methodists and is one of those distinctive offerings which we bring to the Ecumenical table.

The service, and the prayer at the centre of it, date back to John Wesley himself, and the prayer in particular reflects his spiritual views that our relationship with God is one in which we should be constantly seeking to grow in grace and holiness. Our hymn book still features a section on exactly that topic, with many Charles Wesley hymns featured, though we have allowed a few others in now.

The prayer itself, and much of the original service, is adapted from the work of puritan preacher Joseph Alleine, whose approach centred on pastoral and spiritual guidance, and Wesley was insistent that the service be rooted in this. The Methodist Church website explains the preparation for the service.

"There would be a series of meetings about the Covenant involving sermons, explanations and exhortations. An invitation would then be issued for "those as will" to come to the Covenant Service. After a day's "Retreat" for people to prepare themselves in prayer, fasting, reflection and self-examination there would be the Covenant Service itself."

Clearly there was no way that those early Methodists took covenant lightly! But what about Methodists today? In the past I have known members of my churches who deliberately do not come to the service, because they find the prayer too difficult, and I respect and to a degree understand that view. However, I feel that in feeling that way they have misunderstood the nature of the covenant relationship.

What we are celebrating in the service is a two-way relationship summed up in the introduction to the covenant –

“In this covenant God promises us new life in Christ. For our part we promise to live no longer for ourselves but for God.”

To use the words of Psalm 23, the prayer does not fight shy of the fact that our Christian life is not always “laying down in green pastures”, and that sometimes we do “walk in the valley of the shadow of death” but it does remind us that God “is with us, His rod and His staff comfort us.” To pretend that the Christian life is never difficult is to do a huge disservice to those who are genuinely struggling, and the covenant prayer reminds us that this is sometimes part of Gods plan for us. It is not that he has abandoned us, rather that he is walking beside us in the darkness.

The covenant service is rich in symbolism and meaning, and it can be all too easy to allow its familiarity to rob us of its significance, especially for those of us who will lead a number in the coming weeks. Sometimes we do take it too lightly, just turning up and going through the words unthinkingly. Not that I am advocating a return to Wesley’s long lead up to the service, but maybe I am suggesting that in the days before the service we take a little time to read and reflect upon the words that we will be using. In that way we will be more prepared, and more understanding of what we are praying.

God Bless

Paul

Covenant Service
Sunday 8th January
10.30am

Preacher: *Rev James Tebbutt*

Church Family News



A very Happy New Year to everyone, especially to our housebound members and those not able to worship with us at this present time.

Especially we send our love and best wishes to Tom Fitzgibbon (whom we were pleased to see at the church Christmas lunch), Elizabeth Grisdale, Greta Grave, Arthur Ibbotson, and Margaret Shortland.

During December we were delighted to welcome Janet and David Selby into our church family and also to welcome Margaret McQueen. Margaret is a URC member from Cockermouth but who now finds it difficult to attend worship there. Also we are pleased to see Barbara Neale back after her recent fall.

We wish Sophie Lynn (granddaughter of David and Anne Hasson) as she moves into her own flat, with much assistance from handyman grandad I hear, (lucky Sophie!).

Not so lucky David, however, as a slip on the recent ice resulted in a broken collar-bone. Commiserations David, we hope it heals well and it is not too painful. Also a victim of the ice was Penny Dutson who is a member at St John's, but who actively supports us in many ways, including taking the food from Keswick and neighbourhood to the Foodbank in Cockermouth every week. Penny's fall gave her a broken right arm. We wish Penny and David well and look forward to seeing both of them back in action soon.

Earlier in December Dave Roberts had a nasty fall and his back was bruised and painful for quite a while. We are pleased that is easing but we send our prayers and best wishes to Dave as he embarks on some medical procedures.

January and February can be difficult months, especially with the weather, so go carefully and stay warm. I write this on 22nd December which means our days will begin to get longer again!

Wishing you all well

Joyce

Leading the Church into Growth

This course, led by our minister Rev Paul Saunders, is open to all members and friends of our church. It will take place fortnightly at the Church on Wednesdays at 2pm.

1 st February	Creating a prayerful culture of growth
12 th February	Implementing the 4 P's
1 st March	Practice fruitful evangelism
EASTER	
19 th April	Develop engaging worship
3 rd May	Become an inviting and welcoming church
17 th May	Making a pathway for seekers to become Disciples
31 st May	Begin a planned journey of growth

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Walk 30K in November for Pancreatic Cancer UK

I would like to say a huge "thank you" to all friends who supported me and my friend Dot from Threlkeld, with generous donations during this challenge. Together with our dogs, Barney and Sandy, we walked many more than the 30K required, despite the incessant rain in the second half of the month.

We would like to thank all the family and friends whose generous giving enabled us to raise a wonderful total of **£2544**, far exceeding our expectations. We hope that the money raised by all taking part in this challenge will help fund new research for a blood test to identify this deadly cancer in the early stages, and develop more effective treatments. Thank you all!

Sheila

Charity Coffee Mornings



Saturday Coffee Mornings are restarting in 2022
- we look forward to seeing you there!

Many thanks to everyone for the support you've given to our Saturday Charity Coffee Mornings in 2022. We're looking forward to welcoming you to our events in the New Year.

14th JANUARY 10am-12 pm

You'll have read in the last Newsletter, how Sheila Files and her friend Dot ("The Threllkeld Two") were walking throughout November to raise funds and awareness for

Pancreatic Cancer UK.

Our January coffee morning is looking to continue raising much-needed money on behalf of this charity.

11th FEBRUARY 8.30am-12pm

The February event is in aid of the

Church Roof Appeal.

It'll be starting earlier so that we can also provide a "toastie" start to the day with a breakfast buttie! So you can pop in for breakfast then come back later for your elevenses!

If you're able to help with these events by volunteering on the day (there's a sign-up sheet on the Noticeboard), by baking, or by donating to the bric-a-brac stall and raffle, please let me know.

(tel 07968003258)

Pauline Huggan

Christmas Tree Festival 2022



Our tenth annual Christmas Tree Festival was a great success. The 30 trees were incredibly inventive and creative. Schools, churches, youth groups, societies and businesses all came up trumps, resulting in a display that many thought was quite magical as they followed the trail round the church. Five of the trees were put together by church members. These were the Action for Children Tree, the Church Tree, the Prayer Tree, the Foodbank Tree, and the delightfully different Herdy Tree.

The great variety of nativity scenes, reflecting the culture of the many countries they came from, were enjoyed by more than 600 visitors, as they reminded us of the true meaning of Christmas.

This year the winner of the popular fun “Vote for your favourite tree” was Threlkeld CE Primary School’s upcycled tree decorated with pinecones and wooden decorations. Only two votes below was the imaginative Keswick Alhambra Cinema tree, second for two years running. A worthy third was Keswick St John’s Knit & Natter Tree with bright white branches covered with colourful hand-knitted Christmas decorations! It was incredibly hard to compare trees to choose a favourite, as they were all so different. As one person wrote on their voting slip, “They are all winners. Well done.”

On Saturday there was a count-down outside on Southey Street at 4pm, culminating in the lighting of the Nativity Scene silhouette window. Everyone then moved inside for carols and hot chocolate with the added attraction this year of the Marron Valley Hand-bell Ringers who accompanied some of the carols.



The service on Sunday was taken by members of the congregation, from material provided by Action for Children. It illustrated the variety and extent of the charity's work, undertaken with vulnerable children. We also featured something different; the John Lewis Christmas Advert. This year the company have partnered with Action for Children, to support disadvantaged children, so look out for the video over the Christmas period!

The Festival raised the wonderful amount of £1,496.62, which we hope and pray will bring some light into the lives of those children.

Sheila

Celebrating Christmas 2022



This last year, and over the Christmas period, we have been raising money for **Action for Children**

So far we have collected:
£ 1.538.00

There will be still more to be added from the collections from our Christmas services and other sources. We will let you know when we have the final total.

A Ram's Tale

The ground was hard, the path was icy,
The sun slumbered on, resting from winter's toil.
Sheep arose from cold night's air,
Sleepwalking, dreaming of sumptuous fair,
Slowly, treading through frozen grass,
Last night minus ten had come to pass.

The single ram stood stock still
at first light of dawn,
Handsome, with a twig caught in his
horn
An adornment he thought,
And sure enough, attention it brought.
A fleeting moment on the ice,



A look, a sniff, then it was gone
in a thrice,
He stared at me, with twig held
high in the air,
But to remove it, I did not dare



Dogs on leads passed by,
The sheep retreated, he went his way, I did not stay,
There will be another day
Waiting for the warmth of spring,
And the new life that will bring.

Brian Moffat

The Stunning World we are Fortunate to call Home

All photos, taken on a walk from Ashness Bridge to Walla Crag by
Helen North



You are invited to come to **T**hursday **L**unch **C**lub (T.L.C)

*Come and enjoy some company, meet some
new friends and have a two-course hot meal
followed with entertainment*



12 noon until 2pm
Lunch served at 12.15pm
Cost £5



Please call Sally on 07514 687141 or Anne on 07788 990515
for more information and to leave your name to say you're coming

**19th January &
16th February 2003**



Relaxing after the T.L.C. Christmas lunch in December

Here is Arthur, one of our regulars, (but not able to come out now) sharing our dinner at his home.



N.B. Thanks to all who presented us with a magnificent Christmas Lunch. It was appreciated by everyone. Editor

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SUNDAY EVENING HOUSEGROUP

The housegroup meets fortnightly on a Sunday evening from 7– 9pm at the home of Roy and Joyce Ellis (38 Briar Rigg). If you would like to join us you would be very welcome – do have a word with Roy or I.

The Programme for January is:

Saturday	14 th Jan 6.30pm	New Year Party
Sunday	29 th Jan 7pm	'On Being a Deacon' Kina Saunders
Sunday	5 th Feb 7pm	Books we have read
Sunday	19 th Feb 7pm	<i>To be announced</i>



News from Traidcraft

Many thanks to all who purchased Christmas cards this year.

The total taken for Christmas orders was
£ 92



Dates for your Diary

- Sun 8 Jan** **10.30am**
Covenant Service
- Sat 14 Jan** **10am**
Coffee Morning for Pancreatic Cancer UK
- Thurs 19 Jan** **12.15 – 2pm**
Thursday Lunch Club
- Tues 7 Feb** **1.30pm**
Church Council in the church
- Sat 11 Feb** **8.30am – 12noon**
Coffee Morning for Church Roof Appeal
- Thurs 16 Feb** **12.15 – 2pm**
Thursday Lunch Club
- Fri 3 March** Women's World Day of Prayer

World Day of Prayer

Friday 3rd March



I have heard about your faith

This year the service has been written by the women of Taiwan. Although prepared and presented by women the service is open to everyone. Women, men and children are all welcome.

More details to follow.

Rotas for January & February

	Preacher	Steward	Welcome
Jan 1	R. Ellis	Sally	Ros + Christine
Jan 8	Tebbutt (Cov)	Richard	Valerie + Dave R
Jan 15	Herbert	Sheila	Helen D + Pauline
Jan 22	J. Ellis	Helen	Christine + Brian
Jan 29	P. Saunders	Pauline	Joyce + Nancy
Feb 5	Reynolds H.C.	Sally	Richard + Joyce
Feb 12	Christian	Sheila	Roy + Sally
Feb 19	Davies	Pauline	Valerie + Christine
Feb 26	K. Saunders	Anne	Ros + Nancy

	Tea/Coffee	AV
Jan 1	Joyce + Sheila	Anne
Jan 8	Jane + Ted	Anne
Jan 15	Joyce + Roy	Brian
Jan 22	Roy + Valerie	Richard
Jan 29	Jane + Ted	Sally
Feb 5	Ted + Jane	Anne
Feb 12	Christine + Helen D	Brian
Feb 19	Ros + Sheila	Roy
Feb 26	Pauline + Valerie	Richard

Flower Rota for January & February

Jan 1	Christmas Decorations	Feb 5	Sheila Files
Jan 8	Nancy Powell Davies	Feb 12	Barbara Neale
Jan 15	Joyce Ellis (in memory of Margaret Bamber)	Feb 19	
Jan 22	Hilary Baslington	Feb 26	
Jan 29			



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The deadline for the next newsletter, which will be for March & April, (Lent & Easter), is Sunday 12th February 2023

Services for January & February

Jan 1	10.30am	Roy Ellis	<i>Morning Worship</i>
Jan 8	10.30am	Rev James Tebbutt	<i>Covenant Service</i>
Jan 15	10.30am	Helen Herbert	<i>Morning Worship</i>
Jan 22	10.30am	Rev Joyce Ellis	<i>Morning Worship</i>
Jan 29	1030am	Rev Paul Saunders	<i>Morning Worship</i>
Feb 5	10.30am	Rev Nicola Reynolds	<i>Holy Communion</i>
Feb 12	10.30am	J.A. Christian	<i>Morning Worship</i>
Feb 19	10.30am	Jackie Davies	<i>Morning Worship</i>
Feb 26	10.30am	Deacon Kina Saunders	<i>Morning Worship</i>



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