KESWICK METHODIST CHURCH

NEWSLETTER



Photo: Our cross under the Christmas lights. Brian Moffat

Lent & Easter 2023





Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy. 1 Peter 1:8

As I write, The Green Comet, or to give it its official title - C/2022 E3 (ZTF) – sometimes abbreviated to E3, is heading away from the earth. I understand the best time to have seen the comet was between 5.30am and 6.30am on 2 February 2023, when it passed closer to earth.

The Green Comet got quite the 'drum roll' as the media excitedly reported its once-in-a-lifetime appearance flying past earth for the first time in 50,000 years, offering stargazers a one-off opportunity to witness the celestial spectacle before disappearing from our solar system forever. One newspaper carried the headline, "How to see E3 in the sky tonight before it disappears forever." Despite all the publicity, which to be fair was well in advance of the event, guess what? I missed it! To be honest the thought of a 5.30 am start to the day didn't appeal as well as having to search for our binoculars!

But the whole episode got me thinking. How many once-in-a-lifetime events have I missed? Some will have been the result of a personal choice (like not getting up at 5.30 am to watch a green comet!). Others will have been beyond my control – I wasn't around at the right time or in the right place. I reflected on the unique event of God incarnate. The gift of Jesus Christ to the world. The Word made flesh.

I have had conversations with people asking what must it have been like to have encountered Jesus when He walked the earth? We can only imagine – and that's not necessarily a bad thing, in my book anyway! When I indulge myself in my imagination, I don't picture myself being present at one of Jesus's miracles, rather I find myself wondering what it must have been like to listen to Jesus. To hear Him share a parable, to listen to the incredible Beatitudes, or to simply sit with Him on the shore of Lake Galilee and just . . . talk. I guess that is why prayer is so important.

When Saint Peter wrote to the Churches, he was well aware that he had a distinct privilege – he had known Jesus as a human being, spent time with Him. The readers of his letter hadn't had that joy and neither have we; but although they never knew Jesus in the flesh they still loved Him; although they never saw Him with their own eyes they still believed in Him. And that belief gave them a joy and a certainty of the salvation of their souls.

There's a big difference between the unique events of a passing green comet and the visit of the Son of God. The green comet would have made a spectacular appearance BUT has disappeared forever. Jesus promised never to leave us or forsake us and we have been blessed with the glorious gift of the Holy Spirit.

There is a tradition called Lectio Divina as a way of becoming immersed in the Scriptures very personally. We read a passage slowly, several times and even imagine ourselves in the story too. By placing ourselves in the story we gain a fresh perspective or understanding. As we approach Lent and Easter Jesus invites us to take this powerful and poignant journey with Him. It is a story I guess we are all familiar with, and as a post-Easter generation we know how it unfolds. But still I would encourage you to take that journey with Christ in your personal devotions or Lent groups. Jesus still speaks. May we have the grace to listen and allow ourselves to be transformed.

Deacon Kína

Church Family News

We are very pleased to see that David Hasson is now without the sling that he has been having to wear since falling on the ice and breaking his collar-bone before Christmas. I gather it can still be a little painful at times but it is obviously healing well.

Penny Dutson is also out of plaster and getting back to her usual routines. She is now able to take Keswick's foodstuffs to the Foodbank in Cockermouth for us again, but still finding lifting heavy things is not a good idea! We wish both David and Penny good recoveries.

We are pleased to be able to report that Dave Robert's hospital procedure a week or so ago went well and seems to be healing nicely. If all continues well by the time you are reading this Dave will be able to embark on his new regular routine. As ever we send Dave our love and prayers.

It has been good to see Jim from Oklahoma visiting us over the last few weeks. We were all very surprised, though delighted, to see him as we usually have to wait until August for his annual visit!

The weather over the last couple of months has meant that several of us have not wanted to go out as much as usual. We particularly think, however, of our housebound members at this time, of Tom Fitzgibbon, Elizabeth Grisdale, Greta Grave and Arthur Ibbotson. We assure them of our continuing best wishes even though are not able to get to church.

Finally, the snowdrops are all out (see Sheila's lovely article later in the Newsletter) and I have a few little yellow winter aconite in with them and now the daffodils are starting to show their cheering faces. And today I saw the first primrose flower in my wild-life garden! The birds also are getting busy, pairing up and nesting. Yes, Spring is really on its way. By our next Newsletter it will be May when all starts growing in abundance. Wonderful!

Joyce

Keswick Leadership Team Update

What have we been up to recently?

We have continued to meet monthly to discuss all aspects of church life. Sally has joined the team which is really good news.

One of our major tasks during the last few weeks has been organising a Property Team. We are grateful to everybody who has come forward to take on new roles, which, in a lot of cases are very much out of their comfort zones! It is still very much a work in progress, so do bear with us.

We hope to have a church cleaning event in the Spring and also as the weather improves (hopefully!), Sheila will be asking for volunteers to work in the garden. Do look out in the notices for these events as your help will be needed!

ECO 🌽 CHURCH

Eco church has provided a focus for things of late and we have been rewarded with the 'Bronze Award' very recently which was great news. Our next focus is the 'Silver Award' and Richard's article will explain how we'll be able to achieve this. Please do read the 'Eco Tips' which Anne puts in the weekly notices, as these all contribute to our Eco church status.

The Roof Fundraising Group

Richard and Sally have volunteered to manage the roof project in whatever form that will take. The group, who meet regularly, will be organising more events to continue raising money for the fund. They would always appreciate ideas, so please have a think and let one of the group know. (Sheila, Anne, Sally, Pauline, Brian).

'Leading the Church into Growth'

In the first week of February we started following this course. It's not too late to join in with this if you haven't already so please do think about coming along, as the more of us attend the better. It's important that we all play a part in this as we think about growing our church.

Worship

We put quite a lot of thought at our meetings into who we can invite to preach and Anne does a great job with the invitations. Consequently we've welcomed a good variety of preachers which I'm sure you have all have appreciated.

Sadly, we are unable to have a preacher planned for every Sunday due to the limited number of Presbyters and Local Preachers in the circuit. This

means we have to organise a number of services ourselves ('Local Arrangements'). Of course we are only volunteers with very limited experience of this, so we remain hopeful that we will be provided with some training/support to help us.

Services

There are 2 Circuit Services coming up on 16th April at Maryport and 25th June at 3pm (venue to be confirmed). Whilst it is important to come together as a circuit, another benefit of this is to help with the plan with the afternoon service replacing the morning service. It would be good to have as many of you attending these services, so transport in the form of car sharing will be organised in order to help get you there. 2 other services to look out for are the World Day of Prayer Service and the Churches Together in Keswick (CTiK) Fairtrade Service (details later in Newsletter).

Groups

The Housegroup has continued at Briar Rigg with a varied programme. Joyce has taken the decision to step down in the Summer. We are extremely grateful to Joyce for her inspirational leadership and to both her and Roy for their hospitality over the years. Although the group will be thinking about the way forward with this aspect of our church life, it is also an opportunity for the whole church to reflect on further opportunities for fellowship and spiritual growth.

Future events to look out for

We look forward to Easter when participants in the Good Friday 'Walk of Witness' will be invited to our church for drinks and hot cross buns afterwards.

There will also be a Sunrise Service at 6.30am in Crow Park on Easter Day which will be led by Paul.

On 30th April, our Annual Church Meeting will follow a 'Bring and Share' lunch after the service.

The Convention Subgroup will also be meeting very soon to talk about Convention 2023...yes, it's that time already!

Best wishes to you all.

Helen North, on behalf of the Keswick Leadership Team

News of Our Christmas Tree Prayers from

Jill Sturgess

Do you remember the Christmas Tree Festival?

I realise you will not be reading this until March, and the Christmas Tree Festival will therefore be largely forgotten. However, of particular note, one of the trees was specifically for anyone who wished to write a prayer and hang it on the tree. It was hugely encouraging that a total of 64 prayers were written, categorised as follows:

- 19 prayers for peace on earth, particularly Ukraine
- 16 prayers for families and for healing of a family member
- 12 prayers remembering the loss of someone and the bereaved
- 12 prayers to say 'thank you' to God
- 2 prayers were for animals
- 1 prayer for the Prime Minister and the Government
- 1 prayer for comfort and joy for those on their own
- 1 prayer to 'get work sorted'

This demonstrates a desire, indeed need, in all of us to take problems large and small to God in prayer, and to thank God for his blessings to us. These prayer topics were used at the second Thursday Prayer Group in January, once the Christmas trees had been dismantled. The Prayer Group has recently lost some regular members due to frailty and it would be lovely if others would come along and join us.

May I encourage you to come along and try the Prayer Group, that meets in Church each Thursday at 9.30am for half an hour, followed by tea/coffee and a chat. Each week I bring along topics for prayer, and the group adds others. I then pray aloud and include a short time for anyone wishing to pray either out loud or silently in their heart. No one is expected to pray aloud, so don't let that thought put you off. Do come along for a time of fellowship together, it is a lovely way to start a Thursday morning.



World Day of Prayer

Friday March 3rd - 10.00am

at Keswick Methodist Church

'I have heard about your faith'

The World Day of Prayer is an international ecumenical Christian initiative led by women and celebrated annually in over 170 countries on the first Friday in March.

This year the theme has been chosen, and the service written, by women of Taiwan.

The Keswick service will again be in our church followed by light refreshments.

All are welcome; men, women and children

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A Prayer for Victims of the Earthquake - from CAFOD

God of mercy, we pray for the people of Türkiye and Syria following the recent earthquakes. We mourn the death and destruction. and pray for those who have died and those who grieve.

We hold in our hearts those who are injured, and those who have lost loved ones, livelihoods, and homes.

Sustain and guide all responding to this disaster. Grant those affected courage and resilience, as they rebuild their lives and communities.

Inspire us to unite in solidarity, acting swiftly and generously, so that help may reach all who need it.

Lord, bring them comfort, strength and renewed hope. Amen

News from the Methodist Church in Ukraine

- made available through The Methodist Church



Background

On 24 February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This came eight years after the illegal annexation of Crimea and the beginning of conflict in the Donbas region. It is difficult to estimate how many people have died as a result of this war, but it is likely in the hundreds of thousands. Around 8 million Ukrainians have been internally displaced, with a similar number seeking refuge abroad. The loss of homes and lives has been truly devastating.

While combat is now concentrated on particular areas in the east and south of Ukraine, Russia has increasingly targeted missiles on critical infrastructure and cities across the country. Air raids and blackouts have become a regular part of life for many Ukrainians, who are enduring a cold winter without power, fear for their loved ones on the frontlines, and grief for those they have lost.

Bishop Christian Alsted, who has episcopal oversight of the United Methodist Church in Ukraine, writes:

"Things are getting worse, and the war is taking its toll on the strength of the pastors and leaders. Nevertheless, an amazing ministry of hospitality to fellow Ukrainians and care for the community is going on, and in the churches, people continue to gather for worship, prayer meetings and even children's and youth ministry; where in person gatherings are not possible, people meet online.

There are three main prayer concerns lifted by our people in Ukraine: Pray for the protection of the Ukrainian people who are facing a long and cold winter with frequent missile and drone attacks.

Pray for the protection of critical infrastructure such as power plants and water supplies.

Pray that God will stop the war and bring peace, justice and reconciliation to all of the Ukrainian people."



Fairtrade Fortnight 27 Feb-12 March 2023

Sunday , 5th March : 6pm Churches Together Service at the Methodist Church

One sad piece of news that I learned during the last month, is that the organisation Traidcraft has gone into administration. You will remember that we used to have a Traidcraft stall at church selling Fairtrade products. This included groceries and craft items.

Many were made in co-operatives where the producers were guaranteed a fair price for their produce. They also received an added supplement for their villages to use to improve facilities in their community. This may have been installing a fresh water supply in their village, building a school or medical centre and so on. The community itself would decide what they should spend the money on.

It is very sad for us that the people who will be affected most by the closing of the Traidcraft organisation, after about 40 years, are the workers who supplied Traidcraft with their groceries and craft items. Everyone is hoping that there will be other organisations who will be able buy their goods under the same Fair Trade conditions.

The one thing that we can do is to review our spending at the supermarket and try and buy as many items we can which have the Fairtrade label.

I do hope that as many people as possible will be able to support the Fairtrade service arranged by Churches Together, which this year is being held at our church on 5th March at 6pm.

Joyce Ellís





Eco Church is an award scheme for churches "who want to demonstrate that the gospel is good news for God's earth."

The work that we do enables us to gain awards at Bronze, Silver and Gold level. Gold is very challenging to attain – only three Methodist Churches have reached this so far.

Our journey for this award started formally last spring when we mapped out all that we currently do as a church. We have to answer questions in five areas:

Worship and Teaching. Buildings, Land. Community Lifestyle.

You will recall articles in the newsletter and notices, together with specific services, that have enabled us to answer the questions asked of us in a positive manner.

To gain an award we need to reach a specific threshold percentage of positive responses to the questions that are asked of us:

Bronze (25%), Silver (50%) and Gold (75%). We also need to ensure that we are at that level in all five aspects. In December we were successful in gaining the Bronze award which now means that we can target Silver in the coming months.

Our current status is:

	Current marks	Current percentage	Award Level	Marks needed for Silver	
Worship and Teaching	68/90	75%	Gold		
Buildings	250/450	56%	Silver		
Land	60/125	48%	Bronze	3	
Community	90/230	39%	Bronze	25	
Lifestyle	81/160	51%	Silver		

To gain Silver we need actions like the following for example:

- Install a bug hotel or bat box
- Encourage our church users to minimise the use of resources
- Take steps to reduce food waste (composting etc)
- Support an environmental charity.

As you can see these are manageable, but we do have to provide an evidence trail. You can see that from the grid above that we were already in a good position to target Bronze and Silver due to the work that we have done on our buildings and also the way we work together as church.

Aiming for Gold will be much more challenging! Richard North



Voices from the Congregation

Valerie Redpath

In 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Universe', the answer to 'life, the universe and everything' is forty two. On an evening, many years ago, which was dark in more ways than one, I was told, realised or just knew (take your pick) that the answer was God. From that moment to this I have had a deep, if simplistic and naive faith. That evening did not make me a churchgoer but it has brought me through my life to now.

Despite wandering off the path and working in shops and offices, I always knew I wanted to teach and completed my initial training in Ripon, North Yorkshire before returning to the south where I taught in various primary schools. I left London so I could afford better than a one bedroomed flat and landed first in Blackpool, then Kendal, Cockermouth and now Keswick – and if I describe Keswick as my spiritual home I know more than one of you will understand (otherwise read John Ruskin's feelings towards Coniston Water)

My parents met in one of the walking clubs which became popular in the 1930's and we walked as a family in the areas around Dorking, Epsom and Leatherhead which were an easy train journey from our home. My father was a Lancastrian who had succumbed to a love of The Lakes as a boy and which he retained after the family moved to London. When I was about thirteen our annual seaside holiday was replaced by holidays in the area, usually staying in Mrs Airey's B&B on Lake Road.

Soon after starting my first school teaching job I returned to Ballroom dancing, which I had enjoyed as a teenager. I was encouraged to train to teach and studied hard for the exams which remain some of the most difficult I have ever taken comprising of practical demonstrations and extensive oral examination. Luckily I enjoy teaching.

When not walking or dancing I enjoy reading. I've just reached the 19thC in a long project I've undertaken to study English literature from the beginning. I also do cross stitch, 'Killer' Sudoku and other puzzles and have enjoyed trying to create my 'forever' garden – something that will probably take me forever!

A card from Margaret McQueen



St Luke: carpet page from the Lindisfarne Gospels

Loss comes into every life, and it has come into mine during the last few weeks. Dark days in the darkest time of the year.

Yet there are many blessings for which I am most grateful. A card of sympathy was pushed through my door from 'your friends at K.M.C.' It was such a comfort and support to know that I was thought about. That expression of care meant so much and my spirit was uplifted. Thank you all.

Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted.

Margaret McQueen

Western Fells Circuit Website

www.westernfells.uk

Thursday Lunch Club (T.L.C)

I thought rather than the usual type of update on what's been happening at TLC, I'd share some of the stats that might just be of interest!



DID YOU KNOW? for example......

That in the last 12 months

- TLC has been able to make a donation of £550 to the Keswick Methodist Church (KMC) general church funds to cover the cost of heating, lighting, cooking etc. This is not a requirement as it is very much part of the Church's mission, but once we were in a position to do so, it has been a fair thing to do!
- TLC has given £300 to a variety of charities. Each time a guest speaker or entertainer comes to lunch club they are asked who the charity of their choice is. Then in return for their time, a donation of £30 is made. The charities have included; The Ukraine Appeal, The KMC Roof Appeal, Guide Dogs for the blind, Hospice @ Home, The Calvert Trust, Crisis @ Christmas, The Northern Fells Group, The Cumbria Community Foundation & The Great North Air Ambulance.
- Being able to give back to our community as well as serving them is a great thing to be able to achieve through the success of TLC.

- TLC has served over 480 meals to guests and volunteers. Our numbers have grown from the low 30's just after we came back again from the Covid closures to the mid 50's. It is such a blessing to see the church hall filled with happy chatting members of, and visitors to, the Keswick community, coming together to share a hot meal, good company and a welcoming atmosphere. As each month passes we seem to be welcoming new and returning guests, always a wonderful sign.
- 176 posters have been displayed in 16 different locations around the town, including the Moot Hall noticeboard, in the Churches Together in Keswick emails to all churches, in Guesthouses, private homes, Booths Supermarket, Retirement villages, hair salons, newsagents etc. Despite the shortage of spaces to display posters, the venues have been very willing to support TLC which is fantastic.
- A team of 11 volunteers per TLC, from a bank of approx. 17 people ensure that everything runs smoothly on the day. From getting plates, bowls, pots & pans ready in the kitchen, to putting out and dressing the tables, then cleaning and putting them away again, welcoming the guests and booking them in, cooking the meals and serving them, buying the food, taking the

posters around town, arranging guest speakers, operating the AV systems for their presentations, sharing a meal and talking with people to giving notices and saying the Grace and much more.

Many times it has been said, and it will continue to be of great importance, that TLC **simply cannot happen** without the support and generosity of time of



our volunteers. Thank you to every single person who has helped make TLC the highlight of so many people's month. If you haven't yet signed up for lunch or to be a volunteer (which includes a free lunch) come and chat with Sally or Anne, we'd love to have you on board!!

Sally Lunson

(We all thank Sally for her skill, enthusiasm and organisation which makes TLC work so well. Ed.)

It's Snowdrop Season!



Part of the original collection



A double snowdrop

Recently I visited a National Trust house and garden, Anglesey Abbey, which is near Cambridge. One of the main attractions was the Snowdrop Collection which consists of about 400 varieties, a few of which are still not named. A few days earlier apparently, a knowledgeable visitor had spotted a totally new variety!



Look closely at the shape of this one, to understand it's name!

By coincidence, the Garden Club I attend held a Snowdrop Celebration on the same day. The photos show two of the classes. The second is Snowdrops planted in Moss balls.





Sheíla Fíles

Keep your Head Above Water



A scene of tranquillity sent in by Ros Roberts

Charity Coffee Mornings



Many thanks for the wonderful support everyone has given to our Charity Coffee Mornings so far this year.

In January, we raised

£225 for Pancreatic Cancer

when people had to brave some very poor weather conditions to join us.

February saw the Church doors opening early, so that people could treat themselves to one of Sally's delicious Breakfast Butties (a great start to the day!) followed by fabulous homemade cakes and coffee. We raised

£332.45 for the KMC Roof Appeal

11th MARCH 10 am - 12 noon

We will be raising money on behalf of the

Turkey and Syria Earthquake Appeal

We look forward to seeing you there!

(There will not be a Coffee Morning on the 2nd Saturday in April - but look out for details of a chance to get together on Good Friday, following the Walk of Witness)

Paulíne Huggan

SUNDAY EVENING HOUSEGROUP

It was decided by the group that this year we would attend the Church Growth course, run by our minister Paul, in lieu of a Lent course.

Spring Programme 2023 at 38 Briar Rigg, at 7pm Church Growth Meetings at Church at 2pm 29th January **On Being a Deacon** Kina Saunders 1st Februarv **Church Growth** - Creating a Prayerful Culture of Growth 5th February **Our Favourite Books** Members 15th February **Church Growth** - Implementing the 4 Ps 19th February How my faith has shaped my life Nancy Powell-Davies 1st March **Church Growth** - Practise Fruitful Evangelism 12th March My journey to learning new ways to worship and pray Joyce Ellis New hymns in Singing the Faith for 19th March **Holy Week and Easter** Helen North (at Church or Holly Bank)

There will be 3 more sessions of the Church Growth course in May. All are very welcome to come and join us at any or all of our meetings.



Dates for your Diary

27 Feb – 12 March	Fairtrade Fortnight	
Fri 3 March 10.00am	World Day of Prayer; at Keswick Methodist Church	
Sun 5 March 6.00pm	Fairtrade Service at Methodist Church	
Sat 11 March 10am-12noon	Coffee Morning for Earthquake Appeal	
Thurs 17 March 12 - 2pm	Thursday Lunch Club	
Thurs 6 April 7.00pm	Maundy Thursday – Lord's Supper	
Fri 7 April 10.00am	Good Friday Worship	
Fri 7 April 11.00am	Good Friday Walk of Witness - Churches Together – meet at Wishing Well by Theatre	
Sun 9 April 6.30am	Easter Sunday Sunrise Service - Churches Together – at Crow Park	
Easter Sunday 10.30am	Service of Holy Communion	
Sun 30 April 12 noon	Church Lunch & Annual General Meeting	
14 – 20 May	Christian Aid Week	
Sun 14 May 10.30am	Christian Aid Service	
16 July - 5 August :	Keswick Convention	

Keswick Methodist Church on the Internet www.keswickmethodistchurch.org.uk

Rotas for March & April

Mar 5 Mar 12 Mar 19 Mar 26	Preacher Ellis H.C. P.Saunders Wilson J. Holliday	Steward Sally Pauline Anne Sheila	Welcome Janet + David Christine + Sally Roy + Joyce Brian + Anne
April 2 Apr 6 MTh Apr7 GF April 9 April 16 April 23	Members Ellis H.C. Members Rushton H.C. 3pm <i>Circuit Service</i> a Herbert	Richard Pauline Pauline Helen <i>t Maryport</i> Richard	Christine + Brian Pauline David + Janet Nancy + Sheila Joyce + Ros
April 30	P.Saunders	Sheila	Christine + Nancy
	Tea/Coffee	Music	
Mar 5 Mar 12 Mar 19 Mar 26	Valerie + Roy Ted + Jane Nancy + Pauline Janet + David	Helen Helen Helen Recorded	A/V Anne Richard Sally Roy
Mar 12 Mar 19	Valerie + Roy Ted + Jane Nancy + Pauline	Helen Helen Recorded Helen Helen J.Bromley	Anne Richard Sally

Flowers

Mar 5 Joyce Ellis Mar 12 Pauline Huggan Mar 19 Alan Smith Mar 26 Joan Boothroyd April 2Catherine JacksonApril 9Arthur IbbotsonApril 16April 23April 23Sheila FilesApril 30Margaret Shortland

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The deadline for the next newsletter, which will be for May & June, is Sunday 16th April 2023

Services for March and April 2023

March 5	10.30am	Rev Joyce Ellis	Holy Communion Lent 2
March 12	10.30am	Rev Paul Saunders	Morning Worship Lent 3
March 19	10.30am	John Wilson	Morning Worship Lent 4
March 26	10.30am	Jennifer Holliday	Morning Worship Lent 5
April 2	10.30am	Members	Palm Sunday
April 9	10.30am	Rev Keith Rushton	H.C. Easter Day
April 16	3pm at Mar	yport Circuit Servic	ce
April 23	10.30am	Helen Herbert	Morning Worship Easter 2
April 30	10.30am	Rev Paul Saunders	Morning Worship Easter3

Holy Week and Easter Services

Palm Sunday	2 April 10.30am including Distribution of Palms
Maundy Thursday	6 April 7pm The Last Supper & Tenebrae Holy Communion Rev J Ellis
Good Friday	7 April 10am Service & Meditation 11am Churches Together Walk of Witness meet by Theatre Car Park
Easter Day	9 April 6.30am Sunrise Service at Crow Park followed by tea/coffee 10.30am Easter Holy Communion

 Minister:
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