

CONTACT

July - August 2010

MAGAZINE OF PRESTBURY AND OVER ALDERLEY METHODIST CHURCHES
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MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear All

This is the bumper summer edition. I used to love it as a child when the summer holidays came and my dad came home with the bumper summer edition of the Topper, Dandy or Beano; it made the holiday that bit more special. Please be assured I am not going to write twice as much. As I write I am preparing for my

2 week holiday and I reminded that the word holiday comes originally from the words Holy Day. These were the days when people were given time 'off' for the holy days in the calendar, Easter Christmas etc., yet over the years people were given longer holidays as a break from the routine. Yet maybe there is still a good spiritual element in what we are about; for holy means to make separate, to set apart. So our holidays are times when we set aside separate time, time away from the routine of work, set apart very often in different surroundings, set apart with family and friends. In setting time apart we give ourselves chance to relax, to gain space in order, as they say to recharge our batteries. When I was younger and they used to pray for people on holiday I remember once thinking what's the point, they're okay, I think it's because we rarely went on holiday when I was growing up (ahhhh I hear you say). Yet I recognise that these times feed us mind, body and spirit. We learn and experience more of the world around us, we deepen our relationships and do come back refreshed and energised. As I pack my fishing tackle and toothbrush I am also conscious of what a gift my holiday is, two weeks fully paid and the chance just to be, enjoy time with Diane and maybe, just maybe catch a fish or two. So if you are preparing for holidays we trust that you will have a safe, relaxing and enjoyable holiday.

Andy

PRESTBURY NEWS

Services at the Beaumont

These will be held at 11:00am, Tuesday, 22nd July. Your support is welcomed.

The Craft Group

The group will be meeting on 12th and 26th July, and 9th and 23rd August. Meetings start at 2.00pm

Beta

B The group meets throughout the summer continuing the series on "Walking the Way of Christ". **Wednesday, July 14th** 'Belonging', and **Wednesday, August, 11th** 'Questioning'. Both meetings starting at 7pm

Bible Studies for Dummies

The group restarts in **September** meeting on **Tuesday evenings** at 7:30pm on the following dates: **7th, 14th, 21st & 28th**. We will be looking the Holy Spirit in the Bible and in the church.

Re-opening of the Guiding HQ Saturday 10th July at 11.30 a.m.

After 6 long months, the Guiding HQ has now been fully refurbished, making good the damage caused in January's 'Big Freeze'.

The Unit Leaders are moving their stores and equipment back in and 'normal service will be resumed' for the start of the autumn term. However, the Leaders and the FoGiP Committee are unanimous in that we all need to mark the occasion. And we want to share that celebration with members of those village organisations who have been so helpful in accommodating the displaced units over the last months.

All church members are therefore cordially invited to the re-opening and to see what has been achieved over the last 6 months. Sir Nicholas Winterton DL, who first opened the HQ when it was built in 1997, will again be on hand to 'cut the ribbon'.

The celebration will be from 11:30 a.m. till 2:00 p.m. on Saturday 10th July and light refreshments will be available. We look forward to seeing you there and to celebrating together this milestone in the part that Girlguiding plays in our village's life.

Poynton Male Voice Choir are holding a concert in our church on **Friday September 17th** at 7.30pm to raise much needed funds for Wellspring. Please put the date in your diary and support the event if you can.

Lay Witness Week-End

This important event will take place next year - **March 4-6th**. Though this may seem a long way off I hope you will put the dates in your diary. The weekend will run from Friday evening with a meal to Sunday evening with a celebration. All ages of our church family will be catered for and welcome to share in the weekend. Members of the team came to visit us on 27th April to help us begin our planning and thinking. If you could not make the meeting, I have a short DVD you could borrow, or you could visit their website www.laywitness.org.uk/.

If you would like to talk further about the event please don't hesitate to contact me. In the meantime book the date in your diary. There will be further details in a later edition of Contact. Andy

Social Events

The **Ramblers Group** meet each Thursday at 10.00am outside church for the ramble and 12.15 approximately for a light lunch at the Admiral Rodney. All welcome to join us for both – or just the lunch! The Ramblers' Group have arranged a trip to Highgrove on **August 13th**.

Faith Lunches continue (12.00 for 12.30 pm) on the first Monday of the month - **5th July, and 2nd August**



July 19 – Trip to **Llandudno** – cost of coach £11.

....and looking further ahead...

- A visit to **Frodsham Market** is planned for Thursday **23rd September**.
- Bookings are being made for a visit to **Stockport Plaza** on Friday **October 29th** to see 'Half a Sixpence'.
- **November 22nd** - **Oswaldtwistle Mill**
- A visit to **Arley Hall** is to be arranged in **December**.



Action for Children

A reminder that, although the first of several organised sponsored walks has already taken place there are still opportunities to walk in aid of Action for Children at the following events:

Rivington Reservoir Walk, Sat 7th August, approx 3 or 6 miles.

Hilbre Island Walk, Sat 21st August, approx 2 miles.

Morecambe Bay Walk, Sat 4th September, approx 8 miles. 1.45pm start.

As fine silver...

Malachi 3:3 says: *"He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver."*

This verse puzzled some women in a Bible study. They got to wondering what this statement meant about the character and nature of God. One of the women offered to find out the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible Study.

That week, the woman called a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn't mention anything about the reason for her interest beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest, so as to burn away all the impurities.

The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot, and then she thought again about the verse that says: "He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver." She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed.

The woman was silent for a moment. Then she asked the silversmith, "How do you know when the silver is fully refined?" He smiled at her and answered, "Oh, that's easy - when I see my image in it."

If today you are feeling the heat of the fire, remember that God has his eye on you and will keep watching you. His aim is not to abandon or destroy you, but to refine you - until he sees his image in you.

Did you know that you were over the hill?

If you are 58 or more, it seems that others may think that you are. A new survey has found that most of us consider 'youth' to be over by 35, and 'old age' to have begun at 58.

This may come as a surprise to many people who are more than 58, but who do not feel quite in the twilight of life just yet! After all, older people are living more active lives than ever before. The survey was done by the Economic and Social Research Council in London.

However old you are, here is an encouraging promise, found in Isaiah 46:3,4 : "I have upheld you since you were conceived, and carried you since your birth. Even to your old age and grey hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you." So no matter when you 'go over the hill', God knows all about it, and is there to help you, if you call on him.

[This resonated for me, as someone about to hit that number in a few weeks, Editor!]

The Methodist app now available on app store

The Methodist Church has launched their first app for the iPhone and iPod touch. The Methodist App enables people to view daily Bible studies, prayers and news from the Church.

Toby Scott, director of communications and campaigns, said, "In today's society our lives are busier, fuller and more distracted than ever before. We hope this app will offer Christians from all backgrounds a little spiritual oasis in the midst of their busy lives. This is only the start for how we'll use these technologies, but already this is something that people will find useful and inspiring."

The Methodist App features include:

- daily audio and written Bible studies, featuring a different author each week
- prayer of the day
- the latest news stories from the Methodist Church in Britain
- topical podcasts from Methodist Web Radio
- the latest tweets from the Church's Twitter feeds.

The Methodist App is available now for free from the App Store or at <http://www.itunes.com/appstore>

COFFEE MORNINGS & BRING and BUY



10.00am-12.00noon
in the Village Hall

Saturday, 31st July
for the work of the
Methodist Relief Fund

&

Saturday, 28th August
In support of
The Wellspring, Stockport

Home made cakes, greeting cards,
raffle, bric-a-brac, books etc.

COME & BRING YOUR FRIENDS

Growing in Discipleship

We may hear people talking of 'growing in faith' or 'growing as Christians' and wonder what on earth they mean. Do they mean becoming superconfident preachers or pray-ers or study group



leaders? Even becoming church ministers? And how does this growth happen? There is actually no mystery about growth, if we think about what goes on in the garden. Given the right combination of light, warmth and moisture, a garden shrub will flourish. And while light, warmth and moisture are essential for plant growth, different species will need them in different combinations and degrees in order to develop as they should. In the same

way, we can grow as Christians, providing the conditions are right – and that depends on who we are as individuals.

Once we have been 'planted' in the soil of faith, we can start to grow spiritually. The basic requirements for such growth are prayer, gathering for worship and fellowship with other believers, and getting to know the Bible. Some will find all of these a delight, while others will find that they struggle with each one of them. For most of us, one will come more naturally than the others, and that can be our starting-point for growth, the essential 'fertiliser' of our personal faith that builds us up. As we gain strength, we will in time develop good roots, holding us secure in what we believe and why, and also strong and supple shoots that not only reach up towards God but out towards others.

At the same time, we should remember that, just as there is a rhythm to the seasons of the natural year, so there are seasons of growth but also seasons of dormancy in our lives as Christians. Realising that we

are going through such a 'quiet season' ourselves should not be a cause of alarm but for patient waiting on God. Dormancy is essential as a time of gathering strength and building reserves in order then to develop even further, higher and stronger.

As we wait for new growth, we can prayerfully hold on to the hope that one day, through the gracious work of the Holy Spirit, we will produce 'the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God' (Philippians 1: 11).

By Richard Fisher of the Bible Reading Fellowship.

For more information about discipleship resources from BRF visit www.brfonline.org.uk and [www.foundations21.org.uk](http://wwwFOUNDATIONS21.org.uk)

***Copy date for the September edition of Contact will be Monday,
16th August***