



Emsworth Methodist Church & Pastoral Centre



**a serving and worshipping Christian church in the heart of Emsworth,
working closely with other churches and with the local community**

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Monthly news sheet

March 2017

Message from the Manse

I'm pretty poor at remembering dates. Fortunately, though, I do remember the date Jan and I were married: Monday the 31st March 1975. It also happened to be the day after Easter Day.

One of my indelible memories of that day was the marquee which had been erected a week earlier in my future in-laws' back garden for the reception. In the final week of March there was heavy snowfall so that, by the weekend, the roof of the marquee had sagged to within three feet of the ground. The marquee men were summoned. The boss made his way into the collapsing tent. After a lengthy absence he finally reappeared and said, 'Well, it'll be fine if you're all eskimos.' At any rate, that's what he said minus the colourful language.

There we were, in the midst of high tension, expectation and celebration. On the spiritual level there was the celebration of the eternal message of the resurrection. On the human level, there was the expectation of a new life for Jan and me. On the tension level there was the absurd image in my mind of a hundred guests potentially crawling, in all their wedding finery, into a marquee with a ceiling height of three feet.

Mind you, I think life generally is absurd. Most days, if you keep your eyes open, you can see the sublime rubbing shoulders with the absurd. And it's often at the point where you think life has got too ridiculous for words that you realise that you're learning a lot from the strange turn that your life has taken.

I take Lent and Easter to be times when we see the pinnacle of God expressing the sublime through the absurd. The idea of anyone offering himself up to die for people who reject him; refusing to defend himself when he was accused; being proclaimed alive after his execution; people even today spiritually walking with him to the cross. It all seems crazy. And yet billions of people testify to the truth of it all, and to the fact that his dying has brought them life.

In our personal lives, and in the lives of worshipping fellowships, we see the sublime continually walking hand in hand with the absurd. The question is: can we embrace the absurdity, enjoy it and celebrate what we learn through it? Or do we feel we need simply to end it?

In our case – as in many cases – both things happened. The marquee men set up industrial hot-air blowers the size and shape of anti-aircraft guns. The snow melted, the ceiling rose, and the guests drank their bubbly in an upright position.

But I still cherish the image of having a wedding reception in an igloo in West Sussex.

I wish you an absurdly sublime Lent.

Bill

Compass Course

Bill and Laura's Compass Course on Friday evenings offers the opportunity to learn more about the Christian faith and the opportunity to 'refresh'. See the posters on church noticeboards for details. Each week is a 'stand alone' session.

John Buchanan

After a long battle with cancer, fought with courage and characteristic humour, John died on 9th February. We are glad to know his life ended peacefully. He will be greatly missed by his friends here in the church. We send our love and prayers to Brenda and the family.

John's Thanksgiving Service will be on Friday 24th March at 2.00pm, with refreshments afterwards in International Hall. Full details will be announced in the weekly notices.

Pastoral Care

One of the jewels in the crown of Methodism is the way in which brothers and sisters in the church care for one another, and offer that care to the wider community.

A major way in which that's done is through the Pastoral Visitor system. Personally, I prefer the term 'Pastoral Carer' – because some of the most effective carers I've known haven't been able to go visiting, but keep in contact with people by phone, letter, card and seeing them on a Sunday.

A Pastoral Carer has responsibility for just a few people. Rather than being expected to meet every need they come across, they're asked to ensure that anyone who has need or a celebration to share is referred to the minister or some other appropriate person. Some Pastoral Carers still keep the age-old tradition of bringing all their group together from time to time for fellowship, discussion or just a cup of tea.

Do you think you may be called to this valuable role? If you think you might be, please have a word with Diana, Laura or me so that you can find out more.

Yours in Christ

Bill

Women's World Day of Prayer

The Women's World Day of Prayer is an interdenominational movement that can trace its origins back to the 19th century. Each year an act of worship is prepared by a different nation. This year we pray with, and for, the people of The Philippines, and those prayers will be said across the whole world on the same day, March 3rd 2017.

At the time when preparations were started in 2013, the typhoon 'Haiyan' struck and claimed thousands of lives, but The Philippines is a country which faces many challenges apart from its vulnerability to natural disasters. The Christian women of The Philippines have chosen the theme 'Am I being unfair to you?'

The Emsworth service is to be held on Friday 3rd March at 2pm in the Pastoral Centre around the tables in the Café. There will be refreshments and ALL are welcome.

Janet Baker

Lent

Christian Aid Lent Lunches

On Wednesdays in Lent, starting on Ash Wednesday (1st March), there will be lunches of soup, bread and cheese served in the Pastoral Centre from 12 noon. These simple lunches are held to raise money for Christian Aid. Last year we raised over £600 and we look forward to your support this year. The Lent Lunches continue up to and including Wednesday 5th April.

Count Your Blessings

During Lent we will again be running Count Your Blessings. While the money raised transforms lives, it also helps to concentrate our thoughts on the disadvantaged. If you would like to Count Your Blessings through Lent, pick up a leaflet, and return the tear-off slip and donation to Gill Cooper.

Knit for Lent

Calling all knitters! In partnership with our Anglican friends we are challenging ourselves to knit as many angels as we can during Lent! The patterns are simple and suitable for beginners.

The hope is that we will be able to distribute these angels to people in Emsworth village with labels attached to them giving details of our Easter Services and a brief explanation of the real meaning of Easter. It would be lovely if these labels could be hand-written, so if you'd like to be part of this exciting event but are not a knitter then there is a job for you, too!

This is an exciting and unusual initiative and it would be brilliant if as many people as possible could take part. Perhaps you know someone who would like to come along and knit in good company? Wool is provided so just bring some knitting needles if you can (I'm sure we will have spares!).

The knitting sessions will be as follows:

Every Wednesday from 1st March to 12th April in the Parish Office, 3-4pm
Fridays 10th March – 7th April (*not* 24th Mar) in the Pastoral Centre, 2-3pm

If you, or someone you know, would like to take part but can't make it to any of the sessions, let me know and I'll get you a copy of the pattern!

Laura

Augmented United Choir Easter Offering

We will be singing Josef Rheinberger's Requiem in D minor on Good Friday 14th April at 3.30pm in St James' Church. Weekly practices will take place on Monday evenings during Lent, commencing 6th March at 7.30pm in St James'. Music will be provided and there will be no auditions.

We hope you will join us – you will be most welcome. Please contact Sue Ingram on 01243-375063 or Sue Dudman on 01243-378600.

'Let's Do It'

As you may know, we have been running a Games Hour on Friday afternoons. Unfortunately this hasn't taken off as was hoped. It seems we picked the wrong day and time!

So on 1st March we will be starting a new session called 'Let's Do It!' Activities will include games, simple crafts and colouring. Our friends from Lane End have indicated that they would particularly appreciate such a session and others have said the same.

Do come and join us on Wednesdays between 10.30 – 11.30am.

Laura and Mandy

Pastoral Centre Magazines

Our magazine box is a great success, and we have had many positive comments about the contents. Please can I remind magazine buyers we would love to receive magazines on a regular basis.

The success has been down to the variety and most importantly the fact they are up-to-date. Please keep them coming!

Our next Police Surgery

Wednesday 1st March between 11.00 a.m.-12.00noon.

If you have a problem with anti-social behaviour, youth nuisance or any other matters, come along and speak to your local Neighbourhood Community Police Team in the Pastoral Centre.



Red Nose Day 24th March 2017.

Every alternate year we help raise funds for Comic Relief.

This year might be a little different so keep your eyes peeled for events around Red Nose Day!

Men's Breakfast, run by Immanuel Church, Chichester

This is open to all men who would like to join for fellowship, an excellent breakfast and an interesting speaker. All men are welcome. Invite your guests. They meet on the fourth Saturday of the month at The Gatehouse (Wetherspoon's), Chichester Gate, Chichester PO19 8EE, at 9.00am. The cost is £5 for a breakfast of your choice. Please see the noticeboard or ask Mandy for more details.

Fairtrade Fortnight 2017

27 February - 12 March.



The Big Brew

Traidcraft's theme for Fairtrade Fortnight this year is 'The Big Brew'.

The Parish Fair Trade Group at St James' Church are holding a Tea Party, with cake stall and Traidcraft goods for sale, on **Saturday 4th March from 2.30 – 4.30 in St James' Parish Hall.**

I will be helping with this as part of our shared commitment to promoting Fair Trade, and it will be lovely to see some of you there to enjoy this event with tea and cakes, and support the vital work of Traidcraft with small producer groups around the world.

Dot Warren

Anglican-Methodist Walk

The next United walk will take place on Sunday 19th March.

We will meet at Hilsea at 2.30pm and the walk will be around the Hilsea Lines. Parking is available on the left immediately after you come off the Hilsea roundabout towards Portsmouth. The walk is a figure of eight, the first 'loop' being 2.5 miles and the second 'loop' 1 mile. The walk is flat and mainly on good pathways.

If you wish to get there by bus, the 700 leaves Emsworth Square at 1.58pm and gets to Hilsea at 2.22pm (current timetable)

Further details from Pamela and Geoffrey Eardley, 07768 373742.

The Accreditation Service for Shirley Haynes as a Local Preacher will take place on Sunday 2nd April 2017 at 3.00 pm at Trinity Methodist Church in Southsea. The preacher will be the Rev'd Janice Morgan, a former Minister at Emsworth and Trinity. There will be refreshments served after the service. Everyone is encouraged to attend to celebrate this occasion. Directions of how to get to the church can be found on the Circuit website, or please contact the Circuit Office for more details.

Prayer Prompts - March



You are invited to use the suggestions listed below in your prayer times. The monthly diary is also an aid for our prayers.

Christians around the world: Women's World Day of Prayer, those praying together or at home; those who are persecuted, who live out their faith in difficult situations.

Families: Mothering Sunday, parents struggling in difficult economic situations, refugee families, those facing extreme poverty; all children from broken homes.

People in need known to us: the bereaved and grieving; those who are frail and alone; all who care for us – doctors, nurses, hospital staff, local care workers.

In Lent: our corporate and individual journey of faith towards Easter; the Lent Communion services; Christian Aid Lunches; United Choir singing on Good Friday.

We have a small **Prayer Chain** working within the church. If you, or anyone you know, is in need of prayer please do contact Chris Walters on 01243 379254 or c.walters5@homecall.co.uk

Church Calendar continued:

Sunday	19	10.00am	Holy Communion led by Rev Dr Beryl Wright
		6.30pm	United Evensong at St Thomas' Warblington led by Rev Bill McCoubrey
Monday	20	10.30am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
		7.30pm	Augmented United Choir rehearsal at St James
Tuesday	21	10.30am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: 'A Kiwi Adventure: Laura's Travel Tales'
Wednesday	22	10.30am	'Let's Do It!'
		12 noon	Christian Aid Lunch
		1.00pm	Lent Communion led by Rev Trevor Payne (IH)
		7.30pm	Ladies Group. Deacon Laura Evans: 'A Kiwi Adventure' (IH)
Thursday	23	10.00am	Cake Stall
Friday	24	12 noon	Pastoral Centre Closed
		2.00pm	Thanksgiving Service for John Buchanan

Sunday	26		Mothering Sunday
		10.00am	Morning Worship led by Rev Leslie Judd
		6.30pm	United Evening Worship Led by Rev Bill Stillwell
Monday	27	10.30am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
		7.30pm	Augmented United Choir rehearsal at St James
Tuesday	28	10.00am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: Table Games
		3.00pm	Bible Discussion Group (Wesley Room)
Wednesday	29	10.30am	'Let's Do It!'
		12 noon	Christian Aid Lunch
		1.00pm	Lent Communion led by Rev Andrew de Ville (IH)
Friday	31	11.30am	Bacon Butties
		2.00pm	Knit for Lent
		7.30pm	Compass Course (Wesley Room)

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR MARCH 2017

All events in Emsworth Methodist Church & Pastoral Centre unless stated otherwise

IH = International Hall, URC = United Reformed Church, Bath Road

Wednesday	1		Ash Wednesday
		10.30am	'Let's Do It!' (see page 5)
		11.00am	Community Police Surgery (see page 5)
		12 noon	Christian Aid Lunch (see page 4)
		1.00pm	Lent Communion led by Rev Peter Cole (IH)
		6.15pm	Ecumenical Prayer Fellowship (URC Hall)
Friday	3	11.30am	Bacon Butties
		2.00pm	Women's World Day of Prayer Service
		7.30pm	Compass Course (Wesley Room)
Saturday	4	2.30pm	Traidcraft Big Brew Tea Party in the Parish Hall (see page 6)
Sunday	5	10.00am	All Age Worship led by Deacon Laura Evans Followed by coffee and Traidcraft stall
		6.30pm	United Holy Communion at St James' Celebrant Rev John Pilkington, Preacher David Muskett
Monday	6	10.30am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
		7.30pm	Augmented United Choir rehearsal at St James (see page 4)
Tuesday	7	10.30am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: 'Sow your own Salad' (IH)
		7.30pm	General Church Meeting
Wednesday	8	10.30am	'Let's Do It!'
		12 noon	Christian Aid Lunch
		1.00pm	Lent Communion led by Rev Geoffrey Senior (IH)
		7.30pm	Ladies Group. Mrs Christine Stuckey: 'God Moments' (IH)
Friday	10	11.30am	Bacon Butties
		2.00pm	Knit for Lent (see page 4)
		7.30pm	Compass Course (Wesley Room)
Sunday	12	10.00am	United Holy Communion at St James' Celebrant Rev Brian Hammond, Preacher Deacon Laura Evans
		10.00am	Second Sunday at the Centre led by Mrs Janet Baker
		6.30pm	United Evening Worship Led by Mrs Margaret Sawyer, preacher Rev Bill McCoubrey
Monday	13	10.30am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
		7.30pm	Augmented United Choir rehearsal at St James
Tuesday	14	10.30am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: Knitting for Charities (IH)
Wednesday	15	10.30am	'Let's Do It!'
		12 noon	Christian Aid Lunch
		1.00pm	Lent Communion led by Rev John Pilkington (IH)
Friday	17	11.30am	Bacon Butties
		2.00pm	Knit for Lent
		7.30pm	Compass Course (Wesley Room)

Church calendar continued on inside back page

Items for the April news-sheet should be in the folder in the post rack or
emailed to dianaharris@btinternet.com by **Saturday 18th March**