



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

February 2019

Message from the Manse

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding...

John 2: 1-2

Imagine that you have planned a big party.

It might be an important birthday party for a loved one.

It might be an anniversary party for yourself or for someone else.

It might even be a wedding.

Planning the food and drink, entertainment, seating plans etc can feel like weeks of work!

Imagine hundreds of people milling about, eating and drinking. Enjoying the celebration and one another's company. At the time of Jesus weddings were massive events lasting days. Whole communities would attend and providing for the guests was seen as a sign of social standing.

Yet, at this particular wedding, slowly the supply of food and drink dwindles and dwindles until it becomes dangerously low.



Here, surrounded by the ordinary-ness of life, Jesus performs what might be seen as one of his least consequential miracles. A man who performs healings and raises the dead; someone who can walk on water and calm a storm; and yet he begins his ministry by turning water into wine at a wedding.

At the time of Jesus most water wasn't safe to drink. There were very few options available and so to run out of wine or any other liquid, particularly given the hot, humid climate, presented a very real danger. This is more than just a simple mistake easily laughed off, this is an event that would have brought shame on families and blighted relationships.

The fact that Jesus steps in and turns undrinkable water into wine is, of course, a miracle; but what is perhaps even more amazing is that he calls to the servants to bring water and uses what they bring to produce wine that is far better than the best that had already been served. It's surprisingly good. Here, for perhaps the first time, Jesus demonstrates the outrageous, some might even say ridiculous, grace of God – working through the most unlikely people.

The people at that time were expecting the Messiah to deliver them from political oppression, not save people's honour and protect vulnerable individuals from shame. Who would have thought that the Son of God would be interested in the minutiae of some wedding? Who would have thought that he would reveal himself first to the lowest in society, while the rich fail to see what is going on in front of them.

God's grace frequently comes to us in ways that we don't see coming, through people we would never have expected.

Ours is a God of surprises. May we all be surprised, blessed and challenged by his grace.

Away Day – a date for your diaries

St. Peter's Place, Fishbourne, Saturday 23rd March, 10 am to 4 pm

And the disciples said to Jesus: 'Lord, teach us how to pray'

What is prayer? What are we doing when we pray? How should we pray? Do we find using objects such as pictures, candles, etc. helpful? 'Prayer' literally means just 'asking for things', but what else do we think it should involve? How easy do you find praying in silence without your thoughts wandering, and what can we do to help us keep focused? Where do you find it easiest to pray?

These are just some of the questions that may flutter through the minds of many of us from time to time. Even the disciples, who spent whole months at a time in the presence of Jesus, had questions about how to approach God in prayer.

On our Away Day we hope to explore these and other questions together; not because any of us profess to know all the answers, but because looking at these topics together and learning from one another can only bring us closer as a community and closer to God.

Tea and coffee will be provided but please bring your own lunch.

We hope you can join us!

Laura and Bill

Laura Doing London - Cake Sale

As you probably know I'm doing the London Marathon this year and am raising money for Autism Hampshire, an excellent local charity. I'm delighted to say that my fundraising is going to involve **cake!**

On Thursday 28th February, from 10am, we will be holding a cake sale in the Pastoral Centre. Please come along and buy (or bake!) a cake.

Laura

See also Laura's online fundraising page:

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/LauradoingLondon>



Worship Consultation

The Circuit is exploring different ways of worship across our churches, finding out what people most appreciate, and other ways of worship which may be explored. Andrew de Ville, David Musckett and Claire Simpson are visiting each church for a Worship Consultation.

David will be at Emsworth on Monday 11th February at 2pm to hear your views.

I hope that as many people as possible will be able to come, to take part and talk about how our future worship might evolve. Everyone is welcome – do come and join in the conversation!

Bill

Bible Study

The next Bible Study will take place on Tuesday 19th February at 10am in the Wesley Room.



As always the theme of the Bible Study is related to Café Church. This month we will be looking at 'Food for the Journey.'

It would be great if you could join us.

Laura and Bill

Wesley Guild

On 3rd January the Wesley Guild welcomed 2 speakers from Hampshire Fire and Rescue. This was a most interesting evening concentrating on making our homes safe especially for those with mobility problems. As part of their role they visit people in their homes to check for safety and to install smoke alarms where necessary.

If you are over 65 and feel you would benefit from a visit, please phone 02380 626751 to make an appointment.

Gill Cooper

Faith in Film



Our next 'Faith in Film' event will take place on Friday 22nd February at 1.30pm.

As you will probably know by now licensing laws prevent our advertising the title here. Let's just say that if you like cartoons with princesses, ice and catchy song lyrics then this is definitely one for you!

Although this film is classified as a 'PG' it is very popular with young families – which is why we've chosen it for half term!

Speak to one of us if you'd like more information. Why not bring a friend (or two!)? Children are particularly welcome! Popcorn provided!

Laura and Mandy

Christians Together in Emsworth – Meeting 10/1/19

Report of recent activities – Revd Andrew Sheard, Chair, expressed thanks that the village commemoration for the end of WW1 and the switching on of Emsworth's Christmas lights had welcomed the presence of the churches in Emsworth. The Christmas card had been appreciated. All churches reported a good attendance at their Christmas services.

Easter card – All arrangements were put in hand. Mike Nalder from St James gave notice that after Easter he would be handing over his role distributing collated bundles of cards to street wardens and he was thanked for his long service. If you feel you could help with this role, please speak to Dot Warren or Sue Dudman for further information.

Arrangements for Good Friday – AS offered his observations on the 2018 walk and posed two questions – was it too long and was it visible enough as a witness given the services were held inside the churches? After much discussion the following was agreed: The walk would start at Waterside URC with a short act of worship followed by a short act of witness at The Harbour and The Square, with a longer time of worship outside the Baptist Church. The Baptist Church offered coffee and hot cross buns to conclude the event. It is anticipated that the event would be no longer than 90 minutes or so. Revds Andrew Sheard, Harry Lanham and Joel Ferreira agreed to co-ordinate it.

Maundy Thursday – Services would be advertised to all.

Easter Sunday Service at 6am on the foreshore – This would follow the usual pattern with the message to be delivered by Revd Joel Ferreira from the Baptist Church.

An idea for Easter Saturday - to have five or so stations round the Millpond to tell the Easter story to families in particular but also to all passers-by. There is still to be a meeting to discuss this further but if it goes ahead a card will be produced giving full details of what is to happen together with details of all the Easter Sunday services.

Website update – We were told there have been 30 visits to the site, particularly to the events page, and this was very encouraging. The EMS had published articles about the Prayer Walk which took place last year, also the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Christian Aid update – Nell Jones from the Roman Catholic Church told us that the Autumn Sale had raised £332.05 and Carol Singing £170.23. There will be no Christian Aid Lent Lunches this year. However our meeting was also attended by Robina Richter, the Christian Aid representative from Westbourne Church, and she said all would be welcome to the Westbourne Christian Aid Lent Lunches which will be held on each Friday in Lent.

Fifth Sunday arrangements – These were confirmed as 31/3/19 URC, 30/6/19 Baptist, 29/9/19 Anglican at St James. Stuart Thompson from the Roman Catholic Church reported that Father Leslie had offered a non-eucharistic service, perhaps on a Saturday evening in Lent. This was warmly received and it was hoped this could be arranged for Lent 2020 as dates for services this year had already been planned.

News from around the churches

Baptist Church: a Youth Worker has been appointed, Heather Powning. A series from Kingsgate called 'transformed life' was being followed each Sunday and by life groups.

URC: New signage is being chosen. Revd Harry Lanham retires at the end of July. No decision yet on 'One Church on two sites'.

Methodist Church: Revd Bill Stillwell has study leave from May – July 2019.

Anglican Church: Revd Jo Northey has been appointed as Pioneer Minister.

Any Other Business – Fairtrade Fortnight 2019 is from 25/2 – 10/3. Details to follow.

Our next meeting and AGM will be on 9/5/19 at Waterside URC.

Sue Dudman



Prayer Prompts - February

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

Injustice: Racial Injustice Sunday February 10th; injustice in all societies. In places where there is war; refugees and asylum seekers fleeing from injustice.

The Pastoral Centre: Mandy and the challenges of managing the Centre; all volunteers; Laura and all new initiatives in the work and outreach of the Centre; all visitors, those with special needs.

Uncertainty: in Parliament, in relationships with Europe; in business; those who have lost jobs because of uncertainty due to Brexit. Uncertainty in life as we age; in family life and in community.

People in debt: the stress of this; difficulties with the benefit system; food banks. Families struggling financially; children unable to be fed properly; the elderly finding it hard to heat their homes.

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 email c.walters5@homecall.co.uk

A date for your diaries:

Church Away Day, Saturday 23rd March. See page 3

Church Calendar continued:

Friday	22	1.30pm	Faith in Film (see page 5)
Sunday	24	10.00am	Morning worship led by Deacon Laura Evans
		6.30pm	United Evening Service led by Rev Bill Stillwell
Monday	25	10.00am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		11.00am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
Tuesday	26	10.30am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: Table Games (IH)
Wednesday	27	7.30pm	Ladies Group.
			David Hughes: A painting Demonstration (IH)
Thursday	28	10.00am	Laura's Cake Sale (see page 3)

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY 2019

All events in Emsworth Methodist Church & Pastoral Centre unless stated otherwise
 IH = International Hall, URC = United Reformed Church, Bath Road

Sunday	3	10.00am	Morning Worship led by Rev Geoffrey Scarlett Followed by Traidcraft Stall
		6.30pm	United Holy Communion Service at St James' (Candlemas) led by Rev Julie Price, Preacher Rev Claire Simpson
Monday	4	10.00am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		11.00am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
Tuesday	5	10.30am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: 'My Favourite Photo' (IH)
Wednesday	6	6.15pm	Ecumenical Prayer Fellowship (URC)
Thursday	7	7.30pm	Wesley Guild. 'Angel Radio – The Power of Music and Memories': Tony Smith, Founder and Manager of Angel Radio (IH)
Sunday	10	10.00am	Café Church led by Deacon Laura Evans
		10.00am	United Holy Communion at St James' Celebrant Rev Bill Stillwell, Preacher Rev John Pilkington
		6.30pm	United Evening Worship (IH) led by Margaret Sawyer, Preacher Rev John Harwood
Monday	11	10.00am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		11.00am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Worship Consultation (see page 4)
Tuesday	12	10.30am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: Knit for Charity (IH)
Wednesday	13	7.30pm	Ladies Group. Vivian Watson: Flower Arranging (theme 'Love') (IH)
Sunday	17	10.00am	Holy Communion led by Rev Geoffrey Senior
		6.30pm	United Evensong at St Thomas, Warblington Led by Rev Andrew Sheard
Monday	18	10.00am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		11.00am	Chair-based Exercises (IH)
Tuesday	19	10.00am	Bible Study Discussion Group (Wesley Room). See page 4
		10.30am	Standing Exercises (IH)
		2.00pm	Activity Afternoon: 'Name That Tune' (IH)
Thursday	21	7.30pm	Wesley Guild. 'The Buriton Heritage Bank', an illustrated talk about Buriton's local history project: Doug Jones, Co-ordinator of the Buriton Heritage Bank (IH)

Items for the March news-sheet should be in the folder in the post rack or emailed to newsheet@emsworthmethodistchurch.org by **Sat 16 February**