



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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Registered Charity No 1127747

Newsletter

5 September 2021

Message from the Manse from Stephen

The pandemic has exposed the fragility of the human condition, and not just in terms of our hold on life itself. Issues of personal well-being, especially our mental health, consume the media. In my life at least, never has our vulnerability been so evident. In other times of crisis, in other eras, it might have encouraged people to turn to their spiritual roots, which invariably meant the church and Christian faith. I don't sense any such return this time, though there's still time, I suppose. But my preliminary judgement underlines the difficult place in which the church and its faith finds itself. One of these difficulties involves our history. With episodes which include the likes of the Inquisition and the Crusades and, more recently, paedophile priests, the church stands accused of doing more harm than good. Christians have to be honest and admit the failings of the past.

However, church history is not an account of one calamity after another. Our critics have been very good at representing it this way. It means that the enormous contribution of Christians and churches is largely forgotten. Someone who attempts to present a more balanced view of things is John Dickson, whose book *Bullies and Saints* has been part of my summer

reading. I thoroughly recommend it. Dickson pulls no punches when it comes to the church's failure, but he also highlights some wonderful data – not the least of which is the church's passion for those who go without. It is inspiring to read for example, that as early as 300 AD the church was in the business of providing (what we would call) clothes banks for the needy.

There is another side to the sorry tale of church failure, and it is not only we who need to know of it; so do our friends and contemporaries. It might just encourage them to take a second look at something they have thus far dismissed.

Stephen

Morning Prayers from St James

At our recent Church Meeting, James Mant from St James told us about their daily morning prayers on Zoom, and invited us to join them.

The prayers take place every morning except Sunday, at 9.00am. Someone always shares their screen so that you can see the service and readings. The time includes about 10 minutes of open prayer, which is entirely voluntary.

If you would like to receive the link, please contact Jane Gregory.

Christian Aid Summer Sale

We had an excellent morning on 31 July when we raised £488.00 for Christian Aid's Global Hunger Appeal. We are so grateful to the church family for all the support you gave us from baking cakes, donations of money and goods, and for those of you who were able to join us on the day.

With the current restrictions we weren't sure how much support we would get, but realized we had to do something to support the Global Hunger Appeal. Fortunately, the people of Emsworth have been most generous and we are very thankful.

Gill Cooper, Margaret Sawyer and Marian Hughes

The Church Office phone number and email address are not in use at the moment. If you need to contact anyone urgently for pastoral or safeguarding reasons, please use the minister's contact details shown on the front page of this Newsletter.

Sunday Worship

There is no longer any need to book a seat for worship in church (see page 10 for further details)

Sunday 5 September at 10.00am
Worship led by Revd Stephen Wright

Sunday 12 September at 10.00am
Songs of Praise led by Dot Warren

Sunday 19 September at 10.00am
Holy Communion led by Revd Stephen Wright

Sunday 26 September at 10.00am
Harvest Celebration led by Revd David Muskett

Sunday 3 October at 10.00am
Worship led by Mrs Alison Rice

Sunday 10 October at 10.00am
Worship led by Revd Stephen Wright

Sunday 17 October at 10.00am
Holy Communion led by Revd Stephen Wright

Sunday 24 October at 10.00am
Worship led by Mrs Milly Aquilina-Gray

Sunday 31 October at 10.00am
Worship led by Geoffrey Eardley; preacher Revd Geoffrey Senior

If you have any questions about how to join in worship via Zoom or YouTube please ask Peter, or email newsletter@emsworthmethodistchurch.org



Farewell and thanks from Bill

Dear friends

This is to thank you for a number of things, now that I'm officially 'sitting down'; or 'fully retiring', in ordinary English.

Firstly, thank you for embracing me into the Emsworth family for the last five years. I've said before how much I value the memory of the support and encouragement the fellowship gave to me, Jan, Kate and Amy when we first turned up here. I hope what little I've done will stand at least as some practical gesture of gratitude, especially for that.

Secondly, thank you for your warm farewell. It was a pleasure simply to relax and chat to people face to face when Pamela and Geoffrey invited us round to their garden on 8 August, for which I gratefully thank them. And it was great to be able to share in a final act of worship on 22 August, and humbling to hear David's unwarrantedly warm words.

Thirdly, thank you for sharing your lives, hopes, fears, dreams and doubts with me in so many ways.

Fourthly, thank you very much indeed for the tangible gifts you gave me. You've been enormously generous. The gentle picture of the harbour awaits a suitably prominent place on our wall!

There's no ending without a new beginning. That's why I don't just wish you well in all the days that lie ahead: I pray for God's continual renewal, hope, vision and inspiration in all that you do and all that you are in order to share God's Good News of love and new life.

Be warned: although I'm sitting down, I shall continue to stand up to lead worship and do odd jobs around local churches, so our paths may yet cross again.

In the meantime, God goes with you.

Bill

Good News!

Congratulations to Amy S. and Betty B. who both celebrated their 90th birthdays during August.

Congratulations to Barrie and Sylvia on the birth of their great grandson.



Ladies Group Autumn Session 2021

The Ladies Group will recommence on **Wednesday 8 September** at 7.30pm in International Hall (Methodist Church). This will take the form of a 'get-together' evening when we can share our experiences of many months apart. Light refreshments will follow the meeting. There will be restrictions in place – wearing of face coverings, the use of sanitiser, and adequate ventilation. It is essential that we keep everyone safe and comfortable in the hall.

A programme will be available soon, but I can share our meeting dates now. They are as follows:

September 8 and **22** **October 6** and **20**
November 3 and **17** **December 1** and **15**.

A Sales Table will be available at each meeting.

We give thanks that we can again meet as a group, and we look forward to fellowship together.

Judy

Ladies Group Collection

We were able to send £233.75 to the Methodist Church World Mission Fund as a result of the collection taken at the Ladies Group Anniversary on 27 June. Thanks to all who contributed. *Peter*

September Special in the Pastoral Centre

The opening hours on **Tuesdays** will be extended during September until 1.00pm, with sandwiches available from 11.30am. Opening hours on other days remain from 10.00am–12 noon.

Collection for MHA

The special collection for MHA on 8 August raised £430.00. Many thanks to all who contributed. *Peter*

The Road to the Isles

– a journal of our holiday in the Western Isles

After spending a night at the lovely Pier House Hotel in Port Appin, we left the mainland heading for the Isle of Barra. For me the first trip on a Caledonian MacBrayne ferry, with its distinctive black, white and red livery, signals the start of the holiday (despite the problems the company has had this year.) I partook of a traditional Scottish meal of macaroni cheese and



chips, although I forbore to accompany it with the traditional Scottish beverage, Irn Bru (allegedly brewed from girders.)

The journey takes around four hours, sailing alongside the Isle of Mull then on to the open sea. The hotel on Barra is the Castlebay; it benefits from the view of Kisimul Castle, which sits on a small island in the bay and dates from 1427.

As to the hotel itself, it's not one of those I've rated most highly on TripAdvisor; if you check the site, you'll see that many other visitors have felt the same! (To see what I've written about this and other places we've stayed, look for the entries from [hoteljunkie99](#).)

We moved on from there to the Uists, staying on North Uist. Our room at Langass Lodge had sea 'glimpses' rather than views of the loch, but we had fun watching the rabbits on the lawn. The hotel arranged a fishing trip for Peter with a nice young man, and it was just a short walk to the Pobull Fhinn stone circle. Best of all were the machair flowers.

The colours and scents are amazing, and the perfume rises up around you as you walk through the dunes. There are blue harebells, pink and white clover, and yellow corn marigolds – the colours change through the season, and it's said that on the west coast of South Uist more than 40 plant species can be found within a square metre. While on Harris we came across an extensive area of wild orchids, as well as



Photo credit: Nick Withers

the rare and beautiful Hebridean bee; found only on a few of the Western Isles, it's a magnificent creature known as the Moss Carder Bee. With its bright orange upper body and yellowish lower half, it stands out against

the vegetation as it bumbles busily about. If you're lucky you may also see (or hear) the elusive corncrake.

For our second week we stayed in an amazing self-catering cottage on Harris. The lady who owns it with her husband is an artist, and has decorated nearly all the walls with paintings of local wildlife – the effect is very pleasing. We were just yards from the beach, and quite close to the ferry port at Leverburgh; the house was equipped with everything one could wish for including a double jacuzzi bath, and a sauna!

When we arrive in Harris any worries slip away and we just enjoy the astonishing 'lunar' landscape, with pools high up in the hills and filled with waterlilies. We walked along the coast to St Clements Church at Rodel; built for the Chiefs of the Macleods of Harris from local Lewisian gneiss in the late 15th/early 16th century, it was dedicated to Pope Clement I. The magnificent wall tomb (1528) commemorates Alisdair Crotach Macleod, the eighth Chief. The building has had many uses, including as a cow byre in the 19th century, but is now in the care of Historic Scotland.



Picture credit: Gvdwiele – Wikimedia Commons



Near to the church are some fields of lazy beds, a remnant of an ancient system of agriculture – a little like ridge and furrow, but with wider banks separated by narrow drainage channels. The system relies on using seaweed as a fertiliser; there were some of these beds very near the

cottage where we were staying.

We had dinner twice at our long-established favourite hotel, Scarista House – a Georgian manse adjoining an ancient church and looking down to the beach and bay (*Sgarasta Bheag*).

We were celebrating Peter's 70th birthday and then our wedding anniversary, and I can't think of a better place to do so. It was still light when we left, as it's so far north. We left with so many lovely sights and scents still in our minds, and lots of photos to remind us of a wonderful holiday.

Jane and Peter Gregory

Garden Party

Many of us enjoyed afternoon tea at Pamela and Geoffrey's home on Sunday 8 August. In the pretty and comfortable surroundings of their garden we enjoyed refreshments and fellowship. Amy brought her special (90th) birthday cake to share with everyone. It was a lovely opportunity to relax together, free from restrictions in the open air, and particularly to chat with Laura, Bill and Jan, Stephen and Louise. It was really good to see Mandy and John again and catch up with their news.

We're very grateful to Geoffrey and Pamela for their generous welcome, and for offering us the chance to have this lovely afternoon together. Thank you.



Climate Sunday Celebration

**26 September at 4.00pm in the garden of St James' Church
Organised by Christians Together in Emsworth**

There is a growing movement ecumenically to celebrate the month of September as the Season of Creation, giving special thanks for the wonders of creation at harvest time and to deepen our understanding of our responsibility as stewards to care for the earth. This year the theme is 'A Home for All' – a great theme for us all to reflect on our openness and welcome, but also to play our part in creating a world where all people, creatures and plants can thrive.

With the climate talks happening in Glasgow this year, this is especially poignant. CTiE are holding this special service to focus on the climate and to pray for a greener, cleaner, fairer future. We are all invited to do our little bit – we hope to see you there.

A Prayer: as I put on my mask

Loving God,
as I prepare to go into the world,
help me to see the sacrament
In the wearing of this cloth –
let it be 'an outward sign
of an inward grace' –
a tangible and visible way of living
love for my neighbours
as I love myself.

Christ,
since my lips will be covered,
uncover my heart,
that people would see my smile
In the crinkles around my eyes.
Since my voice may be muffled,
help me to speak clearly,
not only with my words,
but with my actions.

Holy Spirit
as the elastic touches my ears,
remind me to listen carefully –
and full of care –
to all those I meet.
May this simple piece of cloth be
shield and banner,
and each breath that it holds
be filled with your love.

In your Name and
in that love.
I pray,
May it be so.
May it be so.

Revd Richard Bott, Moderator, the United Church of Canada
Submitted by Alan

Picture credit: maciej326



An Update on the Way Forward with Covid Practicalities

The Church Leadership Team has met again recently and has considered the ongoing practicalities for our worship on Sundays and for the Pastoral Centre during the week. We are still going to proceed with caution, as advocated generally, to fulfil our Duty of Care and to endeavour to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Sunday Worship As from the beginning of September, there will be no need to book a seat. The chairs will continue to be well spaced out, so that you can still sit well apart from others. We will continue to wear face coverings at all times. We have agreed one exception to this – the person leading the service will not need to wear a face covering all the time they are up in the sanctuary area, and well away from other people.

Pastoral Centre As from the beginning of September, we will no longer be asking people for their names and contact details as they arrive. The table layout will stay the same, and people will be served at their table. They will also be asked to wear face coverings when they are moving around, but can remove them when sitting to eat and drink.

We will continue to review the situation on a regular basis. Please be reassured that we will do everything we can to keep us all safe and well.

Joy to the World!

Southampton District Methodist Women in Britain invite you to a **Celebration Day** on **Saturday 25 September 2021**

at **St James Road Methodist** Church,
Shirley, Southampton SO15 5HE
10.00am for 10.30am – **3.30pm**

Bible Study led by Revd Andrew de Ville
Visit to Mexico Mrs Hilary Evans (Past MWiB
Connexional President)



Tea and Coffee provided Please bring your own packed lunch

Is there anyone out there who is IT savvy?

Chris Walters is looking for someone local who would join her as a 'manager' for the Pastoral Centre Facebook page.



There is little to do in this job, just occasionally changing 'posters' that advertise what is happening and I (Chris) am able to do that, but it would be good to have someone around who knows a bit more than I do about computers! There might be someone you know, or perhaps one of our Coffee Bar volunteers who could help? If so, please email c.walters5@homecall.co.uk or talk with Veronica in the Coffee Bar. Many thanks!

Church Organ

Those with a keen ear may have noticed that since our return to church in May, our organ has been making some odd noises at times. The General Church Meeting in August was invited by Alan to consider purchasing a replacement for this aged instrument and, thanks to the generosity of three anonymous donors who have met the cost of nearly £19,000, this has now been approved by the Church Council.

The new organ will be a Viscount Envoy 35-S (from the same makers as our current organ) and is expected to be installed in early October. We can all look forward with enthusiasm to singing with a first-class instrument.

Peter





Prayer Prompts

You are invited to use the suggestions listed below in your prayer times.

*Lift up our souls, O God, to the glory of your presence;
our minds to the beauty of your being
and our hearts to the purity of your love;
now and for ever. Amen.*

Pray for:

The **people** of Afghanistan, Somalia, Syria and other places in the world where there is pain and suffering, so many people in need. (*Just remember one country each day.*)

Refugees, settling in the UK and other countries, who have left all their possessions behind, praying that on arrival here they will experience kindness and patience.

The community of Emsworth: worshippers at our church and other churches; shops, businesses and all places welcoming people again; the Pastoral Centre, Community Centres.

People known to us who are finding life difficult at the moment; others we know who are bereaved, frail, or vulnerable; our neighbours, friends and family.

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



Please send contributions for the next monthly newsletter to
newsletter@emsworthmethodistchurch.org
by **Saturday 25 September**
Good news is especially welcome!