



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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Newsletter

September 2025

'What's the story in Balamory? Wouldn't you like to know?'

So goes the song at the beginning of the children's TV programme. I'm not sure that I'm actually on tenterhooks to know the story in Balamory, but it does highlight that we are generally interested in stories that people might have to tell.



You might have a story that applies to many situations. For instance: have you ever woken up on holiday in an unfamiliar room and wondered where you are? When you've worked it out, have you ever wondered how you got there? Hopefully you've been able to answer those questions quite quickly.

Suppose you apply those questions to your life in general. Think about where you are in life in terms of geography, relationships, job, occupation, groups or activities that you're interested or involved in. Then ask, 'how did I get here?'

Some other questions that might help:

Was there a significant moment that led me to a certain person who became a life partner?

Was there an occasion that got me interested in a certain subject?

Was there a significant person who sparked my passion for... ?

When you piece those events, occasions and people together, you have your story (or stories) that explain aspects of who you are. St Paul kept telling his conversion story because it explained so much of who he was – not because of its dramatic nature.

Just because your story – of whatever kind – might not be as dramatic, people are still likely to be interested. Just about everyone is interested in other people: who they are, what they're interested in, why they're interested in it, what brought them to where they are in life... If you can tell the bare bones of a story in less than a minute, most people will probably want to know more about some aspects of it. Try it sometime.

And why not listen to other people's stories? It's the best way of finding out why your friends and colleagues do what they do or came to be where they are or why they believe what they believe. Christians have been telling stories for 2000 years, and they have stories to tell about themselves just like everyone else. Listen to their stories and you might find out something of what that's really all about.

David Muskett

Image of Tobermory waterfront from Wikimedia Commons

Circuit Service on Sunday 14 September

The East Solent and Downs Circuit will be celebrating their 12-year anniversary with a special service at 3.00pm on 14 September at Hart Plain Methodist Church.



The service will also give thanks for David Muskett's ministry as Circuit Co-Superintendent and welcome Elize Goddess as Circuit Superintendent from September 2025.

Church Services in September

7 September 10.00am **Café Church**
led by Margaret Sawyer

14 September 10.00am *Harvest Festival Service*
led by Revd John Illsley
Please see page 6

6.30pm **Holy Communion at St James**
to which we are invited

21 September 10.00am **Service of Holy Communion
and Covenant Service**
led by Revd David Muskett

6.30pm **Evensong at St Thomas à Becket**
to which we are invited

28 September 10.00am **Morning Worship**
led by Wendy Corney

6.30pm **Reflective Evening Service**
led by Revd David Muskett

PEACE WITH CREATION
SEASON OF CREATION 2025

Evening Prayer
to open the
Season of Creation

Sunday
31st August
6.30pm

Please join us on the 5th Sunday of the month
At Ss. Thomas Church, New Brighton Road, Emsworth
All welcome

*Please see
also page 9*

Special Days in September

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Education Sunday

Education Sunday is a day of prayer and celebration for those involved in education, held annually in England and Wales on the second Sunday in September. In 2025, it will be on September 14th.



Education Sunday is a longstanding tradition, dating back to 1848 for the Catholic Church and over 100 years for other denominations. It's an opportunity to give thanks for those working in education, pray for its future, and celebrate achievements.

The theme for Education Sunday changes each year, and is determined by an ecumenical steering committee.

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Peace Sunday

Peace Sunday is a chance for the church to pause and reflect on what it means to follow the Prince of Peace today. The Fellowship of Reconciliation encourages churches to have a service on the Sunday closest to the United Nations International Day of Peace (21 September), but churches are free to schedule it for the Sunday that fits their calendar.



The Fellowship of Reconciliation
Building Peace, Seeking Justice, Bringing Hope

This year we are thinking about how we make time for peace in ourselves, our communities and our lives. It's an invitation to celebrate what we already do and an invitation to take one more action for peace.

Image for Education Sunday: Back to school by RosZie from Pixabay

fun and friendship

Thursday mornings at 10.30am in International Hall

4 September

Knit and Natter

11 September

Beetle Drive

18 September

Quiz

25 September

Arty Crafty



Wednesday Group

**2nd and 4th Wednesday evenings at 7.00pm in
International Hall. All are welcome**



10 September

**A pilgrimage to the Holy Land
*with Nigel Bloodworth***

24 September

**Our spiritual life as we age
*with Marian Muskett***

Harvest Service

A reminder that we shall celebrate Harvest at our morning service on Sunday 14 September. Our preacher will be Revd John Illsley, a retired minister who lives in Liphook.

If you wish to bring a Harvest gift to the service, please bring items for the Food Bank.

The service will be followed by a salad lunch. There will be an opportunity to make a donation to cover the cost of the lunch, with any surplus being given to the Food Bank. A sign-up sheet will be available to give us an idea of numbers for the lunch.

Veronica Hickox



Creative Worship Evenings at The Meeting Place

David Muskett has received information about the Arts in Worship Experiment events at The Meeting Place, Westbourne. These include creative evenings and movie nights. 'Creative Space' includes music, poetry, prayer and expression, as well as local and guest artists leading workshops. The sessions start at 5.00pm. *continued on next page*

The website states:

'The Meeting Place began life in 1867 as the home of Westbourne Free Church, when the world was a very different place.



THE MEETING PLACE

Create : Connect : Care : Celebrate

'From the start it has been a place where all are welcome – from Mr Barham, the local draper who eventually became the first minister, to crowds from the Workhouse in the north of the village who were only allowed out on Sundays! In 1908 the name changed to Westbourne Baptist Church to reflect a new affiliation to the Baptist church family, which continues to this day. In 2012 the name changed again to The Meeting Place after a consultation with the village.

'Today's trustees are eager to uphold a warm welcome to the community and play their part in encouraging the next generation to create, connect, care and celebrate life in all its fullness.'

For more information or to find out about September's events, please contact

Abi Belcher, *Worship Pioneer*, The Meeting Place, PO10 8SP; email westbourneawe@gmail.com

From The Methodist News

Charles Wesley's House in Bristol is re-opening to the public – giving visitors a rare opportunity to step inside the beautifully restored home of the greatest hymn writer in history.

The house is open Monday to Saturday from 10:30am to 4:00pm, primarily for pre-booked groups. Individual visitors are advised to contact the Methodist Heritage website at

<https://www.methodistheritage.org.uk/visit/charles-wesleys-house/>

The house is located at 4 Charles St, Bristol, BS1 3NN.



New edition of Peter's book on Roots

The second edition of Peter Gregory's *Plant Roots: Growth, Activity and Interaction with Soil* is due to be published this month. It's an academic publication, so it will have a relatively small print run and thus will be very expensive – most copies will be bought by universities and other research institutions. We've included an image of the cover artwork here.

Peter writes: One amazing coincidence concerned the cover for my new book. In August 2023 we took our grandchildren to the Royal Maritime Museum at Greenwich. Outside was a collection of painted globes which were part of the 'The World Reimagined' project allied to slavery and Black life issues. One of the globes depicted tropical crops with their roots. I thought this would make a good book cover, so I commissioned a new painting and secured the rights to publish part of it. A few days after completing the transaction the artist, Carol based in Dominica, emailed me to say that the University of Reading (my university) had bought the globe, so I contacted them and was invited to the unveiling. Subsequently, Carol and I had a Zoom meeting with the university's curator of pictures to see how we might organise an arts/science celebration of 'roots'; this is scheduled for 2026.

Book cover for *Plant Roots*, published by Wiley Blackwell





A Rocha UK's Eco Church programme equips churches in England and Wales to care for creation

A Rocha highlights the month of September as the Season of Creation. This is an annual ecumenical celebration of prayer and action for creation that Christians on six continents have commemorated for many years. During this period of the church calendar, many churches celebrate Harvest, thanking God for his provision through the land and the food that is grown. It's a time when churches and congregations are called to pay special attention to the responsibility of humanity for the Earth and all that lives upon it, and to pray for our world.

You can find out more at www.arocha.org.uk/what-we-do/season-of-creation You can find the 'Easy Eco Tips' 2025 Calendar on the noticeboard near the coffee bar in our church.



From the Methodist News

A small pilgrimage with a small pilgrim

By Jill Baker, writer and former Vice President of the Methodist Conference

Would you like to come on a pilgrimage? I asked my four-year-old granddaughter while we were all holidaying together on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. Probably because she had no idea what I meant, she agreed,

so we pinned our pink knitted scallop shells to our coats and set out, just the two of us.

Our first pause was on the threshold of our holiday cottage, where we discussed what it means to '**Depart**'. For someone just getting used to the idea of going to school, that had relevance. As we walked, we thought about '**Rhythm**'; we felt our hearts beating, we looked at the tide timetable, we agreed that just saying 'Left foot, right foot' over and over again can keep us going sometimes.

Then a new word as we considered '**Horizons**' – very different here from at home. Big horizons can help us find our place in the world.

St Cuthbert's habit of escaping from his monks to spend time alone on the tiny adjacent island led to a conversation about '**Separation**' and how that can make us feel. Sometimes being away from other people is good, sometimes it feels lonely, but God is still there.

The little church houses a sculpture of monks carrying Cuthbert's coffin – we studied their faces and thought about the '**Devotion**' which led them to do this before we continued to another church with its tiny boiler room chapel, hidden down some steps at the back.

This was to be our place for '**Prayer**' and it surprised me by being the favourite stop of the entire route – pilgrimage always offers the unexpected. I had to relearn the need to allow things to happen in God's timing (and that of a four-year-old).

We paused in the Gospel Garden, where we sat in '**Wonder**', surrounded by beauty, colour, scent and sound before finishing, as all good pilgrimages do, with hot chocolate and cakes in the Pilgrim Coffee Shop, sharing our pilgrim adventures with family members, and noting that every journey's end is the beginning of the next.



*Image by
yorkshireman
from Pixabay*

Small Miracles

Spiny seahorses have returned to Studland Bay in Dorset, after efforts were made to boost the growth of the seagrass in which they live.

Coming across a seahorse here used to be a rare event, but this summer divers have seen a surge in numbers, with 33 seahorses counted in one survey. Neil Garrick-Maidment, the executive director and founder of the Seahorse Trust, said they used to be pleased to spot one or two seahorses and often found none.

Studland Bay is a key spot in the UK for two species, the spiny (or long-snouted) seahorse and the short-snouted seahorse. The trust launched the Studland Seahorse Project in 2008 to try to boost numbers, and in 2019 the bay was designated a marine conservation zone. The seagrass where the seahorses live lies about 100 metres out and 2 metres down.

The picture shows a fanciful depiction of a seahorse among seagrass, and is by Aristal Branson from Pixabay.



Shared Evening Worship in Emsworth – the Methodist–Anglican connection

Partly because of recent staff changes, ahead of the start of the Methodist year in September we have had a look at the pattern and range of our worship opportunities, especially the Reflective Evening Worship. This review quickly highlighted the value of Anglican–Methodist collaboration. Both churches felt it would be helpful to re-state how our two denominations work together in this aspect of the life of the Church in Emsworth.

In the evenings, a pattern is followed over each quarter of the year, starting in September:

- **An evening service of Holy Communion** is held at St James on the second Sunday of each month and features a Methodist preacher in September, December, March and June.
- **A service of Evensong** is held at St Thomas on the third Sunday of the month and features a Methodist preacher in November, February, May and August.
- **An evening service of Reflective Worship** is held at the Methodist Church on the fourth Sunday of the month, and an Anglican minister provides a reflection in October, January, April and July.

As can be seen, this arrangement offers a fruitful range of contributions to evening worship in Emsworth and can help foster more of an overall sense of worship in our village. Furthermore, churches can appreciate how they support each other in terms of both ordained and lay resources.

We are particularly keen to promote the contribution of the Reflective Worship service, since this offers a slightly different style, including readings, prayers, images and music, and some input to prompt reflection, but not a sermon or accompanied hymn singing. It can be quiet, momentary silent, but also interactive. The term 'reflective' implies a variety of elements that encourage worship. There are sometimes printed programmes or further questions to take away to ponder.

Revd David Muskett says:

Evening services offer an opportunity for worship in a different style or 'flavour' from a 'normal' Sunday morning. It is hoped that this might appeal to the tastes and preferences of those for whom something quieter,

perhaps more meditative or contemplative enables a greater sense of the presence of God. The context of the buildings and varying amounts of words, music, silence and pictures all contribute to the atmosphere of these three opportunities for evening worship.

Revd Andrew Sheard says:

I am very glad for this partnership in our pattern of evening services between Anglicans and Methodists. It enriches our worshipping opportunities, and I am convinced that God delights to see all his children united in Christ. I also value the pattern of a united 'Christians Together in Emsworth' service on Sunday evenings when there is a fifth Sunday in the month.

MHA

Thank you to everyone who made a donation to Methodist Homes, following the service in July. £375.00 including Gift Aid was donated and has been transferred to this charity.

Catherine Hall

From The Methodist News

'God Welcomes All: How faith informs safeguarding' (Study Guide)

God Welcomes All is a four-session study guide containing new short films with activities and questions for discussion and reflection. The study guide is based on the Methodist Church's report on the Theology of Safeguarding 2021 and is accompanied by an 8-page facilitator's guide, a 6-page reader's guide, and a series of short films.

The new study guide encourages all members of the Methodist Church to look at our Christian calling that offers a welcome to all, while ensuring that our worship and wider church life is safe for everyone.

The Guide can be ordered from Methodist publishing at

<https://www.methodistpublishing.org.uk/books/SFGTOS23/god-welcomes-all>



Capel Rhondda

Capel Rhondda is a 19th-century chapel in Hopkinstown, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Wales. It is a Grade II listed building. Built in 1853, the chapel was the site of the first performance of the hymn tune *Cwm Rhondda* on Sunday 1 November 1907.



The tune was composed by John Hughes for a Welsh song festival in 1905; he was an official of the Great Western Railway, and the precentor of Salem Baptist Church in Pontypridd.

John Hughes originally called the tune *Rhondda* after the mining valley in South Wales, but had to add the word *Cwm* (valley) to distinguish it from an existing tune of the same name.

The hymn *Guide me, O thou Great Jehovah* (STF 465) is traditionally sung to this tune.

The chapel was recently put up for sale, and the local community started a campaign which raised enough money to buy the building. Local people have expressed hopes that the sanctuary and the organ can be preserved, and the side hall used for community space; it is hoped that the chapel may one day become a museum and visitor centre.

Based on information from The Church Times and The Guardian.

Image: Chapel – Hopkinstown by Alan Hughes from Wikipedia

Prayer Prompts

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

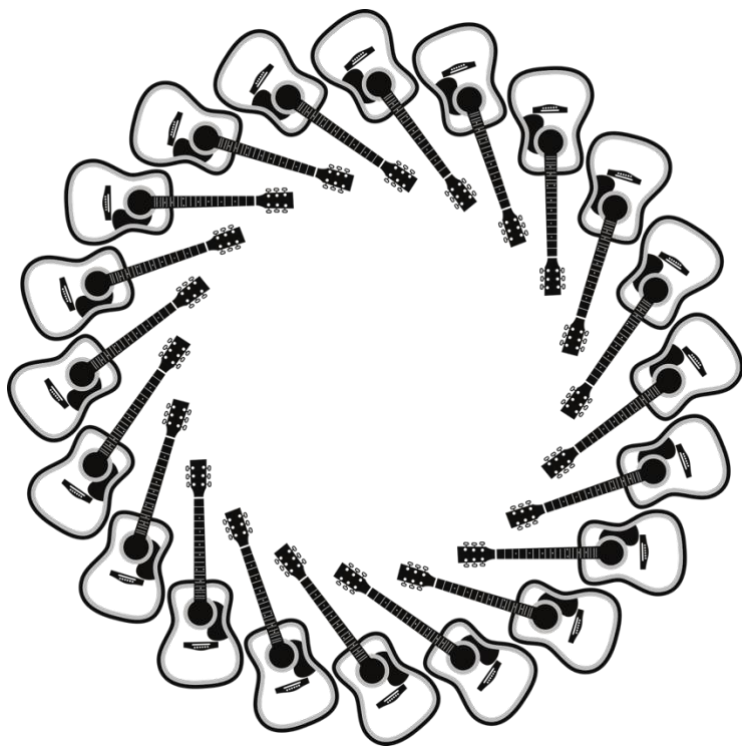
1. Take a slice of bread and tear a piece off.
As you eat it pray for those who come to mind whose lives are torn apart by any or all of illness, hunger, loneliness, war, relationship difficulties.
May they know God's presence, patience, strength and courage.
2. Thank about an aspect of injustice in the world – perhaps something that causes any of the issues above.
Stamp your feet as hard as you can and tell God how you feel about it.
3. Jesus, quoting Isaiah, said, 'He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.'
How might Jesus be inviting you to bring good news to people around you today?
4. If any of that – or anything else – worries you, breathe in for the count of three saying 'When I am worried...' and breathe out for the count of three saying, 'I will trust in you'.

We have a small **Prayer Chain** working within the church. If you, or anyone you know, is in need of prayer, please do contact Judy Emerson on 02392 474656, or email ajemerson113@gmail.com

Please send contributions for the **October** Newsletter to jane@janegregory.co.uk or newsletter@emsworthmethodistchurch.org by **Saturday 27 September** – or earlier if you can!

*For the music of creation,
for the song your Spirit sings,
for your sound's divine expression,
burst of joy in living things:*

*God, our God, the world's composer,
hear us, echoes of your voice –
music is your art, your glory,
let the human heart rejoice!*



*Words from a hymn by Shirley Erena Murray
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Image of guitars by GDJ from Pixabay*