



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

May 2026

The following poem by WH Vanstone is written about Easter, but there's a sense in which the title is relevant to Ascension as well.

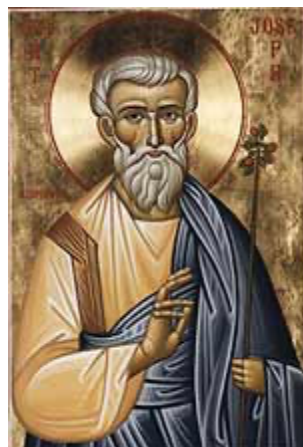
Joseph of Arimathea's Easter

"He's gone", says Joseph, and, with Pilate's
leave

Eases the nails and lowers him from the Tree,
Wraps him in reverent and tender thoughts
And lays him in the cave called Memory.

That cave is deeply hewn in Joseph's heart:
All that's within will always be his own:
In memory's cave the treasure of his past
Is safe for ever, walled and sealed by stone.

"He's safe", says Joseph, "safe in this cool place
And no one now can take my Lord away.
In years to come I'll still see his dear face
As clearly as I've seen it on this day."



"He's gone!" cries Joseph at the empty tomb:
But Mary says, "He's left a word for you:
He cannot rest content to be your past,
So he has risen to be your future too".

We may add another "He's gone" as the disciples watched as Jesus ascended into heaven. They were told he would return. He went promising to be with them always – promising to be with us always.

This year Ascension Day is 14 May. It marks Jesus' rule in kingly power with God in heaven. 24 May is Pentecost marking the way in which he is always with us as the Holy Spirit comes in power to comfort and inspire. He has gone but is always here; risen and ascended to be our present and our future too.

David Muskett

Image on previous page: a 19th-century painting of St Joseph of Arimathea by an unknown artist. From Wikimedia Commons

Image below: adapted from a photograph by David Harris

Church Anniversary

We shall be marking the 149th Anniversary of Emsworth Methodist Church on **Sunday 10 May**, when Revd Bill Stillwell will lead our service. This will be followed by a salad lunch. To help with catering, a sign-up sheet is now available on Sunday mornings, and there will be an opportunity to make a donation on the day to cover costs, with any surplus being given to **All We Can**, the Methodist Church's relief and development charity.

Veronica Hickox



Church Services in May

3 May	10.00am	Café Church led by Matthew Patis
10 May	10.00am	<i>Church Anniversary Service</i> led by Revd Bill Stillwell <i>see page 2</i>
	6.30pm	Holy Communion at St James to which we are invited
17 May	10.00am	Service of Holy Communion led by Revd David Muskett
	6.30pm	Evensong at St Thomas à Becket to which we are invited
24 May	10.00am	Morning Worship for Pentecost Based on the Circuit Digital Service produced by David Arnott
	6.30pm	Reflective Evening Service led by Revd David Muskett
31 May	10.00am	Morning Worship led by Celia Withers

Circuit Service

There will be a Circuit Service at Eastney Methodist Church at 3.00pm on Sunday 10 May. It will include the accreditation of Local Preacher Trish Chiwera, and the dedication of the *Methodist Women in Britain* Easter Offering. The service will be followed by refreshments; to assist with catering, please let Judy Emerson know if you are planning to attend.

Special days in May

- **5–8 – Methodist Diaconal Order Convocation**

The **Methodist Diaconal Order (MDO)** is a vibrant, prayerful community of people called to embody Christ's love in practical, transformative service.

It is both an Order of Ministry and a Religious Order within the Methodist Church in the UK.

Formed in 1989, rooted in the legacy of the Wesley Deaconess Order, the Order is open to people of all genders who feel drawn to a life of service, witness and devotion.

Deacons are one of the two types of ordained ministers in the Methodist Church, the other being presbyters.

Diaconal ministry offers a distinctive pathway of ministry focused on nurturing community, enabling others in their discipleship and helping the Church live out its calling to be a sign of God's hope in the world.

- **10–16 – Christian Aid Week** *see page 5*
- **14 – Ascension Day**
- **24 – Aldersgate Sunday**
- **24 – Wesley Day**

Aldersgate Sunday is usually celebrated on the Sunday preceding 24 May ('Wesley Day'), but this year they fall on the same day. Aldersgate Sunday marks one of Methodism founder John Wesley's own transformative experiences, as he felt God's love in a most personal and life-giving way during a meeting with other Christians. Wesley described the experience as his heart feeling 'strangely warmed', and afterwards his relationship with God became more real and heartfelt. His brother, hymn writer Charles Wesley, had a similar experience shortly before, at Pentecost; he experienced 'a strange palpitation of heart', which caused him to exclaim, 'I believe, I believe!'

- **24 – Pentecost**
- **31 – Trinity Sunday**



Christian Aid

As Christian Aid Week starts on **Sunday 10 May**, we will be holding a **Springtime Coffee, Cake and Table Sale** on **Saturday 9 May** from 10.00am until 12 noon in the church. We are being supported by Dot, selling handmade fabric items, and The Men's Shed, selling bird houses and other useful items. Please join us for a cup of coffee and a chat.

On Sunday 10 May envelopes will be available should anyone wish to make a donation.

On Sunday 31 May at 6.30pm Christians Together in Emsworth will be holding their fifth Sunday evening service at the Baptist Church. During the service we will be thinking about Christian Aid and hearing from Kathy Childress their Legacy Partnerships and Training Manager. Please join us for this service to hear firsthand about the wonderful work being done by Christian Aid.

Gill Cooper, **Marian Hughes** and
Margaret Sawyer



They also serve

On behalf of all of us, I'd like to express my thanks to all those who serve tea, coffee and biscuits (and sometimes even cake!) at the end of our services each week, and at Café Church before and during the service too.

Speaking as one who could no more carry out such a role than fly, I'm very grateful for the prompt and efficient way that refreshments are served up, and equally to those who wash up and put away the cups, saucers and plates. It's much appreciated.

Jane

Image by Sashasan from Pixabay



...urban farmers can grow hope.

Sunday 31st May 6.30pm
Emsworth Baptist Church
Kathy Childress from Christian Aid will
speak to us during this
Christians together in Emsworth service.

Fridah holding her grandson, Quillan, outside their home

Join us this Christian Aid Week (10-16 May) and support someone like Fridah to fight hunger and grow hope.

Join us today: caweeek.org/CAW



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Beauty for brokenness – the mosaic West Window in Winchester Cathedral

The original West Window was damaged during the Reformation, and then destroyed by Parliamentary troops during the English Civil War. It was rebuilt in 1660 after the Restoration of the Monarchy using the shattered glass found around the church after the war.

Image from Wikimedia Commons



fun and friendship

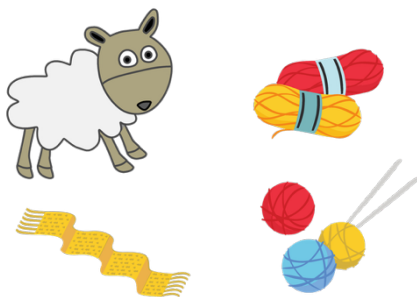
Thursday mornings at 10.30am in International Hall

7 May Knit and Natter

14 May Hoy Bingo!

**21 May Keeping Safe
at Home**

28 May Musical Moments



Wednesday Group

**2nd and 4th Wednesday evenings at 7.00pm in
International Hall**

**13 May Portsmouth Street
Pastors
with Jan Stillwell**

27 May AGM



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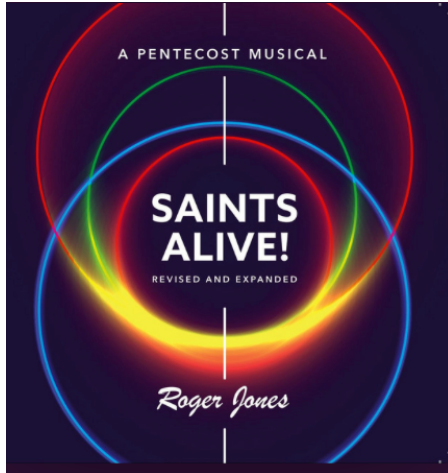
Saints Alive!

There will be a performance of this Roger Jones Pentecost musical in aid of *Havant Passion Play* by a choir from churches across the Circuit.

At: Havant Methodist Church

On: Sunday 17 May

Time: 2.30pm.



An afternoon of worship and music with light refreshments. Entry by donation in support of the Havant Passion Play 2027 production.

Judy's feathered friends

My woodpecker has deserted me, but it has been replaced by a number of very handsome white doves visiting my garden. When they are all present there are about fourteen in all.

Of course doves feature strongly in the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, as messengers and symbols of peace.

I will make sure they are loved and well fed!

Judy



From Christine Walters

News of Laura Evans

Some of you will already know (through Laura's Facebook page on social media) that in recent months, she has resigned from being a Deacon in the Methodist Church. This takes effect from 31 May, and she has shared that it has been a very painful process making this decision. You may remember that, with great courage, she told the congregation at her pre-Ordination Testimony Service, that she had recently been diagnosed as having Aspergers – which is on the Autistic Spectrum. Laura deeply feels called by God to ministry, but the cost to her health of working this out has proved too much. **Please hold Laura in your prayers as she faces the unknown future, also her parents who support her.**

People on the autistic spectrum find all sorts of jobs and situations challenging; equally, people not on the spectrum find it difficult to accommodate them. Those on the spectrum – and we all know folk who are, even if not diagnosed – so often have great gifts and inspiration to share. For some, meeting a crowd of people in one place is difficult – too many faces, too much noise, too many colours, no quiet place provided – so, even church buildings and other public places can seem unwelcoming. I remember a little boy who could not manage church, because organ music was too piercing and loud, and 'did things' to his brain. Many are creative people – from drawing the London skyline from memory to thinking of new ways of spreading the Gospel. Others are loners, content to be so – the old 'Professor type', head in books, sometimes labelled anti-social, brilliant mind but ordinary conversation difficult; others unable to differentiate between 'suggestion' and being 'told' to do something, so pick up the wrong message, try to do everything, please everyone. There is a bit of all these things in us all; all our brains work differently. But all of us are children of God, called to be inclusive, equal, valued, allowing others to share their gifts.

The Gospel challenge we all need to work on – love one another!

There will be a **Cream Tea** fundraiser in aid of the Alzheimer's Society on **Tuesday 12 May** from 10.00am to 2.00pm in the Pastoral Centre. Fruit or plain scones with clotted cream and strawberry jam, plus a hot or cold beverage. Recommended donation £4.00.



From The Methodist News

Celebrations have been held at Centenary Methodist Church in Boston, Lincolnshire to mark the completion of the building's renovation.

Centenary is a busy, much-loved church and community hub at the heart of Boston. Worship is held in multiple languages, and its twice-weekly, free community meals attract over 80 guests. Other community services at Centenary include Boston's Wellbeing Hub and the Nightlife Café. However, the persistent damp, tired décor and an old fire safety system all required urgent renovation.

The Revd Dr Val Ogden, superintendent minister of Boston's Methodist churches, commented: 'We were already bursting at the seams with community mission activity, but we were concerned about facilities becoming outdated. It was Centenary's existing reputation in Boston as a Christian centre with a heart for all things community that brought about this opportunity. The challenge was to keep serving God effectively for the current age in an old building while attracting new people.'

The project has also enabled the church to install new, state-of-the-art digital AV equipment and improved toilet facilities for the conference and meeting rooms.

The Centenary Methodist Church project manager, Martin Criddle, said: 'Groups were coming to us almost before the paint had dried to enquire about using the space, as there really is a demand for good quality space in Boston.'

The project was made possible with a grant of £250,000 from the Boston Partnership Fund. Another grant of just over £13,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund also contributed to the improvements.



The organ is a very fine three-manual instrument by Cousans of Lincoln

Prayer Pointers

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

The period between Ascension Day (14 May) and Pentecost (24 May) has become the 'Thy Kingdom Come' period.

- We are encouraged to pray for five people among our family, friends, neighbours or colleagues to come to know God in Jesus.
- Look out for prayer and/or worship opportunities on and between those dates to join with others in the area to pray along with this year's theme of 'God with us'.
- Use one of the Prayer Resources of the Novena and/or the Prayer Journal which will be available from church.
- Pray for the coming of God's Kingdom of justice, peace, freedom, truth and love to come **on earth** as it is in heaven.



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 **June** Newsletter to jane@janegregory.co.uk or newsletter@emsworthmethodistchurch.org by **Saturday 30 May** – or earlier if you can!