Brunswick News

April - May 2018
New challenges, new possibilities!

These are certainly challenging times for churches. Having served in the Methodist church now for twenty-eight years, this feels to me like a very different climate in which to ‘minister’. We have known, for many decades, that the membership of most denominational churches has been in steady decline but perhaps we have still thought that we can just continue in the same way and somehow the downward trend will reverse.

How do we see things now? Without wishing to limit what our great God can do, there must be massive questions about the future viability of many churches. No church, including our own, can afford to live in a ‘bubble’ but we need to look around us at Circuits and Districts across the country and ask the question: ‘What can we learn from those places where the hope of the resurrection is apparent in Methodist churches which have been re-invigorated by renewal and have a clear sense of direction and purpose, perhaps in partnership with Christians from other traditions.’

A recent meeting was held at the Tyneside cinema for all those affected by, or interested in, the planned major redevelopment of our city centre. There are ambitious plans for transforming Northumberland Street, and all the roads and alleyways off it, into a colourful, fun, clean and welcoming place which, it is hoped, will attract a far higher footfall into our city centre.

Just think of all the possibilities this could create for a church like our own! How we could potentially engage outside the walls of our building with the life of our city, raise our profile, help to build a sense of community, whilst keeping daily worship and prayer at the heart of our city.

An American pastor called Chuck Swindoll has said this: “Others will not care how much we know (as Christians) until they know how much we care!” If he is on to something, which I think he is, then how should this influence the kind of ministry which we offer at Brunswick this Eastertide and in a city centre with so many grand plans for its future? Two suggestions: that we look inward and that we look outward!

Can we aspire to be a church where our members care for one another,
support and encourage one another, worship, pray and grow in their faith together, and have a strong sense of belonging. If we could find our way to becoming a church of this kind then I am sure that many could find a new home with us over the coming years.

The gospel accounts of the first Easter day however do not have an inward focus, do they? For those who witness the empty tomb have only one thing in mind after doing so. They are compelled to go and tell others, even a grieving Mary is told to ‘go’ rather than to stay in the garden with Jesus.

Let’s keep this balance in mind, then, as we look to the risen Christ as the source of our hope and life. Happy Easter!

Paul

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Dear Friends

Over the past few weeks I have occasionally been mooching through our home, opening drawers I haven’t looked in for a while, poking my nose into the tops of cupboards which have not been explored in ages, reaching into those dark and mysterious places at the back of storage spaces… I have even brought down the loft trap, climbed to the top of the ladder and popped my head through the hatch and I ventured into Richard’s most holies: the garage! Needless to say, my exploration and exits from the last two places mentioned were brief and swift.

There are certain things in life one best pretend do not exist.

It is of course approaching that time in our lives as an itinerant family, when we need to prepare to move on to where we feel God is calling us to serve next, and although I am not ready to engage with thoughts of leaving beautiful Newcastle and its lovely people, I do love a good clear out! And nothing provides a better opportunity than a house move.

I often reflect upon (joke about!!) the fact that 15 years ago I arrived in the United Kingdom with a 20kg suitcase (which at the bottom contained some packets of instant soups from my mum to tide me over until I found the
supermarkets). Now it seems we will need more than a 12-ton truck for our next move!

Why do we accumulate so much stuff? Do we really need it all? Think about your own living spaces for a moment. Might there too be tops of cupboards, dresser drawers, the bottom of chest freezers that you have not dared venture into …. spaces that simply contain *stuff!* Stuff we do not need, do not use and simply gather dust. Stuff we need to let go of!

Well, we might not all be physically moving, but there is always spring (we live in hope)! Spring for me has always been a great time of year when we can at last throw the windows open, move the sofas and have a good clean out and clear out.

On a spiritual level, spring, emerging from Lent, which hopefully provided us with a season of self-examination, now allows us to put some of those deeper thoughts, discoveries, realisations, into action: What is it that we really need to live a fulfilled, Godly life? Why do we cling onto things, ideas and concepts which once were relevant but no longer translate? How can we best follow Jesus into His way and His mission without getting held back by the clutter and dust of the things which are really not as important as we once believed?

We are starting to make several trips to the charity shop. Letting go of some things are harder than others. For example, we definitely do not still need Nicholas’ booster seat (as much as we love the bright yellow, green and red colours and the lovely memories of Bolognese sauce and raspberries rubbed all over it). But it is time to let go of it. He has matured beyond that seat and it makes little sense to cling on to it.

I am going to try and use the experience of physically needing to move, not just to clear out some material things we no longer need to carry, but also to try and let go of those things that stop (and bind!) me from living more fully for God, from more consciously noticing Him in everyday life, those things that stop me from resting in Him. As someone reminded me in one of our Lent groups of the importance of time to sit, and be and listen to the Almighty; and as someone else in a second Lent group put it: we need to stop sweating the
small stuff and learn to enjoy more of the goodness and blessings that God has for us.

My prayer is that this be a journey more of us will embark on afresh during this season of renewing and new life.

With love and with prayers

Liesl
On Mothering Sunday, the Brunswick Church Family came together for an All Age worship service, focusing on celebrating God’s love. This was a new experience for us, as we are used to having a short time of worship all together at the beginning of the service, and then the KidzChurch go out for their activities while the rest of the church stay for the rest of the service. On Mothering Sunday we came together as the body of Christ, to share in our faith and learning. This was definitely a special time for us as a church - the atmosphere was relaxed, fun and full of joy!

I felt blessed to be a part of this service and enjoyed portraying God’s love through illustrations and activities for the whole Church Family. After the service I reflected on what All Age worship meant, and what its purpose was.

All Age worship is more than a gimmick or a trend; it has a much deeper meaning. God has called us to be a family, part of His family, to be brothers and sisters in Christ, and All Age worship shows God that we ARE a family, who want to worship Him! All Age worship also helps us to learn from one another and be open to different ways of worshipping. When we restrict our idea of worship, we miss out on experiencing God’s love in new ways. Worshipping all together helps us to break down any barriers we might put up, the children can see the adults worshipping in the ways that they feel comfortable, and vice versa, ultimately enabling us to see and experience God through each other! Being invited to take part in each other’s elements of worship allows us to be free and open to how God can move amongst us, thus strengthening us as a church and making space for growth.

I found our first experience of All Age worship so encouraging and inspiring, and I am looking forward to more opportunities when we can share together all as one Church Family.

Georgia Harrison
Building the Kingdom – a staffing update

We are delighted that, from September, Chris Carroll will be working with us in helping to build the Kingdom of God in the city centre. Chris, who will continue to work within the ‘Presence’ outreach project at Pottery Bank Community Centre, is to work in clearly defined areas of missional work, some of which has been covered within the current diaconal ministry role.

The three principal areas where Chris will focus her time and use her gifts are the ‘BFG’ (Brunswick Friendship Group), ...in support of 'GAP' (Girls are Proud), the project run by 'Changing Lives' which supports women who have experience of sex work, or who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation, and helping to grow our new mission partnership with ‘Junction 42’ through participating in their expanded ‘Job Club’ programme (we are praying for a positive decision in response to a funding application submitted in support of this).

We shall be greatly blessed to have Chris with us! Please pray for her, especially in her new work with a debt advice project recently launched at an Anglican church in Byker and for which Chris is currently serving as Project Manager.

“Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious. And however difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at. It matters that you don’t just give up.”

Stephen Hawking 1942 - 2018
The President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, the Revd Loraine N Mellor and Jill Baker, have offered their condolences to the family of US evangelist the Revd Billy Graham, who has died aged 99. Graham, best known for preaching to audiences in large arenas, died at his home in North Carolina on February 21. He became a Christian aged 16 after listening to an itinerant evangelist and was ordained as a minister four years later. The President said: “We send our thoughts and prayers to the family and friends of Billy Graham, without doubt one of the greatest evangelists of the last century. He shared the love of Jesus Christ to millions around the world.”

**Billy Graham once said, “Some day you will read or hear that Billy Graham is dead. Don’t you believe a word of it. I shall be more alive than I am now. I will just have changed my address. I will have gone into the presence of God.”**

**When Billy Graham Visited Newcastle**

Billy Graham first came to England in 1946 and to Newcastle at the invitation of Youth for Christ. The actual speakers were in the City Hall but so many people wanted to hear the message that the service was relayed into the Baths hall next door. I went each night with my parents and we queued round the block from about 5.00pm to make sure we got in at 7.30pm. The City Hall was very luxurious in those days so there was a good atmosphere. Before the message Cliff Burrows, Beverly Shea or Geoffry Leicester sang and gave their testimonies. I always wore my brown hat with a red tartan band. One
night Billy actually said “I see my little friend is here in her hat” and pointed to me.

After the sermon Billy Graham always offered an invitation to the congregation to come forward as the hymn “Just as I am” was being sung. I was twelve years old that night I had been challenged. I was used to hearing the gospel in the Brethren Assembly which we attended. As Billy spoke that night he reminded us that unbelievers might not enter heaven. He kept saying that at the Day of Judgement God might say “Depart from me ye cursed I never knew ya” (American accent). This really spoke to me and I just had to make this right with God and I accepted Jesus as my own personal Saviour.

Long years have passed and I have had my share of happiness interrupted with serious health problems and sadness but God has been there throughout. Billy Graham always followed up converts and I still have my Hour of Decision promise box which was sent.

I was recently talking to a man who told me that Billy Graham had actually spoken in Brunswick at that time – probably at a lunchtime meeting.

By Miriam Medd
TWO HUNDRED YEARS IN 2021

Many of you will know the 200th anniversary of Brunswick Methodist Church is to be commemorated in 2021. As part of the commemoration it is intended to present a celebration in words and music of the history of the church from the origins, through its successes and occasional tribulations, and to look to the future in these very challenging times. Many of you, young and old, will have memories of the life and work of Brunswick, in some cases stretching back many decades. Those memories are a time capsule and we want to tap into them using the material to enhance the bold facts of the history. These personal stories, hopefully a mix of the cheerful, sad and possibly tragic, will be woven into the presentation.

How are we going to extract these memories? Put simply we are going to talk to as many of you who are willing to share your memories, and possibly your hopes and fears for the future. We might want to talk to small groups, so your memories bounce off each other and provoke perhaps other deep-seated recollections. Some of you might prefer a more one-to-one opportunity to share your history. We also want to talk to individuals who may have never been part of the Brunswick community but have experience of it. You might well be able to point us in the direction of those. Groups on the periphery may also be a source of material. It is intended that we record these memories to avoid putting our own interpretation on your memories. You might prefer to write down your memories, hopes and fears.

So, who are ‘we’ and how do ‘you’ get involved? The ‘we’ is a working party from within Brunswick and without, charged with creating the celebration. You can get involved by volunteering, though to be fair you might be gently press-ganged when it is thought you might be a good source. But, above all we hope as many of you as possible contribute to what may be a valuable archive.

I have been asked to say something about this at the AGM (15th April) but if you want to know any more before then please speak to me.

Peter Aughton
Newcastle Methodists celebrate Chinese New Year

Brunswick Methodist Church (the 7-day church at the heart of the city) has morning worship at 10.45 and evening worship at 6.00 p.m. – a service which is shared with the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army have their own morning service in the downstairs hall at 10.00. At 1.00 p.m. there is a Chinese Methodist service so the building is pretty busy on Sundays.

However on Sunday February 11th the Methodist service was deferred and the Chinese service advanced and we shared a joint service at 12.00 noon. The service was led by Kevin Cheung – a member of the Chinese congregation who is also on trial on the circuit plan as a local preacher. He spoke principally in Chinese with a young lady translator. The hymns were projected in both English and Chinese characters as were some of the prayers and readings. The readings were: one in English – with Chinese translation on screen and the other in Chinese with English translation.

The preacher was Rev. Lawrence Law, a minister in the Darlington District who also has pastoral charge of the Newcastle Chinese Methodist Church. As the new Chinese Year is the year of the Dog he took as his theme “Dogs” starting off with Lassie and going on through the good things dogs are responsible for, ending up with the gospel story of the Syro-Phoenician woman who pointed out to Jesus that even the dogs under the table can eat the crumbs the children drop. The translator had to speak very rapidly because the preacher was speaking quickly so I didn’t catch everything that was said but it set me thinking.

I am currently reading Bishop Graham James’ book “A Place for God” and one of his places is the chapel in the Shepherds’ fields Beit Sahour (Bethlehem). There are three paintings on the wall of the chapel depicting the angels’ announcement to the shepherds, the shepherds at the stable and their return to the fields and in each picture there is a dog. Of course the shepherds would have a dog even though there is no mention in the Bible.

At this point the Sunday School children came in and what a joy it was to see so many. Rev. Paul Cleever-Thorpe took over the service and Deacon Liesl Warren assisted in communion after the children sang a song which they had learnt.
This was a wonderful way to join together in the fellowship of two cultures with but a single aim. The ministry teams of Brunswick Methodists and the Chinese Methodists meet monthly for lunch and prayers and this idea for a shared celebration for Chinese New Year came out of their regular time of meeting together. Hopefully we can repeat something similar before too long.

Sylvia Fuller, Brunswick Member and District Press Officer

If anyone would like to contribute towards church flowers please hand or send your donations into the church office where a record will be kept of any special requirements you may have. Thank you.

What is your favourite Wesley hymn?

The end of March marked 230 years since the death of Charles Wesley. Our hymn book, Singing the Faith, includes 79 of his hymns, together with three of his brother John’s. Between them, their hymns make up 11 per cent of those in the book.

If you contact the Singing the Faith website with your favourite Charles Wesley hymn in the hymn book, they’ll compile a “top ten”. You can email them (info@methodist-news.org.uk) or use Twitter: #charleswesley
April Item-of-the-Month – Tinned Fish

May Item-of-the-Month – Rice

Please donate 'normal' sized food items - the Food Bank staff are not allowed to split packets of food, so 5kg bags of pasta are a challenge! Also, please feel free to leave any unwanted plastic carrier bags beside the food bank box - they are used to put the food in for the clients. If you would prefer to make a financial contribution, you can make cheques payable to Newcastle West End Food Bank, or you can transfer money directly to their bank account, or you can post your donation to the treasurer’s address. There is an information sheet in the folder attached to our Food Bank box in the worship area. For any further details, please speak to Ruth, and thank you for your continued support!

TOONAIID JERSEYS, T-SHIRTS AND HOODIES IN AID OF NEWCASTLE WEST END FOODBANK!

Toonaid have launched a range of jerseys, t-shirts, hoodies and polo shirts all in aid of Newcastle West End Foodbank!
Stock is limited so order now to avoid disappointment

Email monju3582@gmail.com to place your order.
Puma Football Jersey (short sleeve) - £30
Puma Football Jersey (long sleeve) – £32.50
Hoodie – £35
Polo Shirt – £25
Tshirt – £20

P&P cost extra. You can pick up from NUFC Fans Foodbank retail unit in Grainger Market.

Payment via PayPal, Bank Transfer or cash.

Toonaid is a non-profit organisation fundraising throughout the year to support local causes and react to global emergencies. www.toonaid.org.uk
Brunswick Coffee Shop

Enjoy delicious freshly made food
Reasonably priced
in a peaceful friendly atmosphere

Monday - Friday
10:45am to 1:15pm

Saturday
10:30am to 12:30pm
Forthcoming Dates for your Diaries:
Brunswick Club for Men: Tuesdays - 10:30am – Noon

April
3rd - Shelter Box
   Speaker: Jonathan Ewan
10th - The Roman Military
   Speaker: Gordon Henderson
17th - The Rise and Fall of the Knights Templar
   Speaker: Malcolm Wilkinson
24th - Travels With Our Camera
   Speakers: Jan & Ron Clements

May
1st - Saints, Sailors and Sea Air
   Speaker: Susan Lynn
8th - The History of Espionage
   Speaker: Arthur Dodds
15th - Mining Art
   Speaker: Dr Robert McManners
22nd – Dickens the Lawyer
   Speaker: David G Raw
29th - Reflections on High Sheriff, Tyne & Wear, 2017/2018
   Speaker: Lt Gen Robin Brims
## Worship Leaders – April/May

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<td>April 1</td>
<td>Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe <em>(Easter Communion)</em></td>
<td>Mrs Margaret Harrison</td>
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<td>Rev Janet Jackson</td>
<td>Major Gotobed</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td><strong>Service at 10.30am</strong></td>
<td>Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe</td>
<td>Major Gotobed</td>
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<td><em>(Café Style Worship)</em></td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Mr Keith Jones</td>
<td>Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe <em>(Easter Offering Service)</em></td>
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<td>May 6</td>
<td>Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe <em>(Holy Communion)</em></td>
<td>Rev Gavin Hume</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Deacon Liesl Warren</td>
<td>Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe <em>(Holy Communion)</em></td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Pastor Tom Leighton</td>
<td>Major Gotobed <em>(Café Style Worship)</em></td>
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Morning Prayers in the Prayer Chapel – Monday to Friday from 10am - All Welcome

Space4Prayer – first Sunday monthly at 10am in the Prayer Chapel
Young Adults (Global Family) monthly on a Thursday at 7.00pm
Young Adults Bible Study in the Prayer Chapel on Tuesdays, 6.30-7.30pm

Brunswick Friendship Group (BFG) each Thursday at 4.30pm
The Over 60s Luncheon Club each Friday at 12noon

Worship Group – singing rehearsal – second Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm in the hall

G.I.G.G.L.E.S. (Girls in God, Growing, Learning, Eating, Sharing) meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 6.30pm in the hall. All girls of all ages welcome! See Eileen or Jean for more information.

The ‘Gathering’ – social activities for men and women of all ages! Third Tuesday of the month at 1.30pm

Bible Study meets fortnightly on Wednesdays at 2.00pm, on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month.

Kidzchurch – every Sunday during morning worship – all children welcome! See Liesl for more details.
Other events in April and beyond

**Sunday April 15th** 10.30am Morning worship led by Revd Kathy Reader leading into our Annual Church meeting which will end by 12.45pm. An invitation is extended to all who regard Brunswick as their Church, and who share in its life, to attend this meeting.

**Sunday April 29th** 6.00pm Easter Offering service being hosted this year by Brunswick - we shall be inviting friends from our Circuit.

**Bank Holiday Monday May 7th** - District Walk. A circular walk beginning at Strathmore Methodist Church, Rowlands Gill. Coffee and tea at 10am. Walk begins at 11am. Full details from the church office.

**13th to 19th May - Christian Aid Week** - [www.christianaid.org.uk](http://www.christianaid.org.uk)

**Sunday May 20th** 10.45am Pentecost all age worship led by Liesl Warren and a worship team

**Sunday May 27th** 9.15am Breakfast Church - the launch of a new time of worship and learning for all ages. All are welcome!


**GREAT EXHIBITION OF THE NORTH**

**June 22 - September 9, 2018**

Friday June 22 - The grand opening ceremony of the Great Exhibition will be at the Quayside. It will feature fountains on the Newcastle bank, reaching high to the top of the Tyne Bridge, a film – Get North – specially commissioned for the event and an anthem of the North, composed for the exhibition by Lemn Sissay. See: [www.getnorth2018.com](http://www.getnorth2018.com)
Thanks to all who made suggestions for I to Q! In the next edition of Brunswick News we will have R to Z! So please give your suggestions for words connected with Brunswick, beginning with the letters R to Z, to Ruth or to the office!
Brunswick Methodist Church

Brunswick Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7BJ
Tel (0191) 232 1692
e-mail: admin@brunswickmethodist.org.uk
www.brunswickmethodist.org.uk

Ministerial Team: Rev Paul Cleeve-Thorpe, Deacon Liesl Warren,
and Georgia Harrison

Submissions for the next edition (June - July) are welcomed
Please forward these to Ruth Colclough or the Church Office
by 20 May 2018

You should state clearly if the contribution is original
or indicate the source for copyright purposes

Due to limited space we cannot guarantee to include all submissions

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