



MARCH 2024



LOCAL METHODIST CHAT

Message from Rev'd Noel



Mark 1:9-15

When a potter makes an object on the wheel, if it goes wrong they just squash it up and start again. Don't you sometimes wish you could do that with life? With your own life? With the world? Today's world familiar with new starts. It calls them "relaunches". Some politicians and pop stars do them continually. They are often more spin than substance, and it is frequently difficult to see what has really changed afterwards. But not just frustrated human beings that call for a new start. So does Jesus. At the very beginning of His ministry, and all the way through, he called on people to "repent and believe the Good News." Although this word "repent" has become weakened today to the point where it means no more than "be sorry", the words Jesus used meant a great deal more than that! Both the Greek word Mark uses and the Hebrew word behind it implied a complete change of attitude and way of life. It meant a complete revolution. A turning round and going in the opposite direction. A returning to God and allowing Him to rule your life. There was no saying sorry and then going and doing the same things all over again. True repentance meant a complete new beginning. And this time of Lent gives us the

chance to examine ourselves once more to see if we are indeed travelling God's way, if we have indeed made this new start. And, if we have not, to "repent and believe the Good News". So what, then, is this new start to which Jesus calls us?

1. NEW BEGINNING

Jesus made a new beginning at baptism. He left behind his old life as carpenter at Nazareth and committed himself to task his Father had called him to. Later he calls others to make same choice (Mark 1: 16-20). This involved abandoning home, family, livelihood and living according to God's will. There was no going back. Jesus may or may not be calling us to leave home or work, but he is certainly calling us to leave behind old life lived for self, and to live a new life with God in control. This involves working for God as well as living for Him. God's work and mission are our work and our mission, not just His. They belong to us all and not just to those called to full-time service. This also means our lives must be worthy of our Master. Are they? If not, repent, return to God. Receive the forgiveness He offers us in Christ, and make a new beginning!

2. NEW TESTING

Immediately after Jesus had committed himself to Father's mission, the Spirit "throws him out" (like a heavenly bouncer!) into the desert where he is tested. Note God's active role in this. Didn't just allow Jesus to be tested, but pushed him into it! Testing an essential part of serving God. The person who has not undergone testing is either a very new Christian, or one who has ducked every challenge and has therefore been unfaithful to their Master. If even Jesus was tested, we cannot expect preferential treatment. And we are not just talking about sexual sin and chocolate. We are talking about pride or undue humility. Laziness or undue busy-ness. Ignoring prayer or excessive religiosity. We are engaged in a constant battle with the forces of evil. We are tested also through suffering, through enforced idleness, through disappointment and disaster. The people of Israel, Moses (on Sinai), and Elijah went through such times. So must we. Only if we face the test, holding firm to God and His way, can we be sure we have truly made the new start Jesus asks of us. He never promised us an easy ride. But If we hold firm to the end, we will share in His glorious kingdom.

3. NEW SUPPORT

It seems a tall order. A new way of life, new tasks to perform, and a constant battle with the forces of evil and with tests of various kinds. But Jesus had help. The Holy Spirit descended on him at baptism and angels ministered to him in desert. As we follow Jesus and continue his ministry, God will not leave us without help. The Spirit given to Jesus was given to all church at Pentecost. He is available to us in our struggle and work. God will never leave us without resources. All the riches of the Spirit are at our disposal. We also have the spiritual forces of goodness working alongside and outside of us. God is working in us and around us to accomplish His will

CONCLUSION

Therefore, let us heed Jesus* call and make the New Start he asks for, making a new beginning in our lives - living and working for God, not ourselves; facing up to and holding fast in the new testing this new beginning will bring in its wake; and doing all with the help of the new support God gives us through the power of His Holy Spirit working in us and through His own work outside of us and around us, so our lives may be to the praise and glory of God's Holy Name and so we may, at last share in His kingdom in glory.

AMEN.

Christmas Interactive Event for Schools 2023



At the end of November, we were delighted to welcome over 160 five, six and seven year olds and their teachers and helpers, from 3 local schools, into church to share the Christmas story with us and join in a variety of activities. In small groups, the children met different characters from the story (some are pictured above!). Having listened to each story, the children enjoyed making paper 'Marys' and 'Josephs' and hanging them on a Christmas tree. They also completed a maze helping the Wise men to find the stable, unscrambled Christmas words and wrote or drew about what makes them feel special. There is a display in the church hall showing more of what we did.

Each session finished with us sharing in singing a Christmas song accompanied by the organ. We then sent the children off back to school with a colourful Christmas card each, to remind them of the true meaning of Christmas and of their time at LMC.

Whilst this is hard work and challenging for the dedicated interactive team, it is a joyful experience and we are much encouraged by the positive feedback from schools.

Plans for the next Interactive Event at Easter are now underway!

Karen Tomkins

The Christmas Tree Festival

We invited all the organisations who use our church premises to enter a tree in our festival to be held over the weekend December 16/17th. We had 17 trees entered. They were all beautiful and creative. Everyone who came to see them were impressed. The archaeological Societies' "Memory Christmas Cards and Postcards" received the most votes, the stitchers "12 Days of Christmas" was close behind. Share and Care's "Oh Christmas Tree" was the most original. Thank you very much to all who participated. With the help of the ladies serving teas and mince pies, we raised £220.00 for our church funds.. Yvonne Coulson



Notes from the Stewards' Team

Following Rev'd Jane's early retirement due to ill health and some reorganisation within the circuit, Rev'd Noel Nhariswa took over pastoral care for LMC from last September, initially for 12 months. We have been pleased to have Noel's leadership and guidance at our meetings and welcome his desire to get to know us and to share in LMC's worship and activities.

However, matters remain unsettled in the circuit at present. We went through the stationing process at the end of last year to try and appoint a new presbyter to the circuit. This was successfully achieved just before Christmas when the Rev'd Brain Hutton accepted the invitation to join the circuit in September this year with pastoral responsibility, initially, for Daventry, Broadwell and ourselves. We were delighted by this news but, unfortunately, it was quickly followed by another unsettling announcement. The Methodist Church UK is struggling to fill all its superintendent and presbyter vacancies. With the appointment of Rev'd. Brain to our East Mercia circuit, it was deemed that our circuit is 'overstaffed', something we, as stewards, find hard to understand since we only see a presbyter once a month for a service. However, we do appreciate that other circuits are in even more difficult situations. This has resulted in our East Mercia Superintendent, Rev'd Andrew Farrington, agreeing to move, from September this year, to the Leicester Trinity Circuit as Superintendent, which is seriously understaffed. So, the East Mercia circuit is once again needing to reorganise itself, not least to agree which of the current staff will take on the superintendency duties. We hope to hear the outcomes of the Circuit Leadership Team's deliberations very soon and will update all members at LMC accordingly.

All our stewards' meetings have a full agenda and are carefully minuted. We are required to include agenda items such as Safeguarding and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) but we always also include a review of events that have taken place and planning for upcoming events, as well as updating ourselves on fundraising, church finances and property issues.

As well as trying to ensure the smooth running of the church from week to week, the stewards are involved in many different aspects of the church's life from organising rotas and lettings, running and supporting various events and outreach activities, to safeguarding, fund-raising and managing the finances.

There's never a dull moment! We are also expected to attend training in EDI and Unconscious Bias. These are mandatory courses for preachers, stewards and some officers across the Methodist Church.

Looking back over the festive season, LMC was a very busy place! Events included the 'open church' on the evening of the town's switching on of the Christmas lights, our interactive event for local school children, our Christmas Tree Festival weekend, our Carol Service and a Christingle service for the Brownies and their families. A communion service on Christmas Eve and a Christmas morning service were also much appreciated.

Looking forward, the fundraising committee has created an exciting programme of events for the next few months. There will also be special services for Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday whilst the Bible Study Fellowship will be studying a Lent course. We'll be making Mothering Sunday posies again to put on the railings for passers-by and running a Schools' Easter interactive event. All are welcome to donate flowers and/or, assist with this activity. The more the merrier!

Alongside the church finances, finding folk to take on some of the essential roles in church continues to be a worry. Currently, we are particularly in need of someone to take on the role of Church Council Secretary. We thank Jess for her time in the role. However, we have much to be thankful for and pray for God's guidance as we seek the way forward for LMC.



Notes from the Treasurers

We are pleased to report that we continue to hold our heads above water as we move into 2024, although not by much! We have managed to put sufficient funds on one side to pay the compulsory Circuit Assessment requirements in February and May (approximately £4500 each) whilst holding, we hope, sufficient funds in the Current Account to pay the gas bill each month during the Winter (about £900 per month).

Some amazing news is that we have received an unexpected bequest of £10,000 which is extremely generous. Together with some other funds, specifically designated for the renovation of the toilet block, we should be able to move ahead with this. In order to further help fund this, we will apply to the Circuit for a grant, once we have three up to date quotes for the work needed: the maximum they will award is £5000.

In addition, we hold £2500 in Fundraising as we make a start towards funding the next big project, renewal of the very elderly boiler and heating system! We are extremely grateful to the fund raising group for what they have raised so far, and I encourage you all to support them in the wide variety of activities they are planning over the rest of 2024. We can have some fun whilst we raise money!

If anyone else would like details of how to make their regular giving online, or to agree to Gift Aid, please see one of us.

With our thanks for all your support.

Coventry Road Door

In order to comply with Safeguarding regulations, we have had a new easy-exit lock fitted to the Coventry Road door. This means that, in the event of an emergency exit being necessary, anyone in the building can leave through this door without needing a key. Simply push the lever and use the existing door handle to open the door. No unlocking is required.

If you have an old key for the original lock, this will no longer work, so please only enter the building through the car park door entrance. Lynn Blackhurst

Marmalade

Thank you for supporting the sale of marmalade in 2023. I was able to donate £150 to Church funds and £75 to the Children's Village in South India.

New season's marmalade is here now! I have made about 40 jars so far. There are some in the Welcome area and I can supply more when necessary! Please enjoy. Gwyneth Little



Quakers

Some Quakers from the Rugby group meet in our Welcome Area once a month. They are pleased to welcome anyone in Lutterworth to join them for a half hour time of silent worship and coffee/tea and biscuits and chat after.

Meetings are on the last Thursday of the month at 6.15pm. This is a lovely opportunity to meet this friendly group and experience different worship.

Further details from Gwyneth Little

Saturday Singles



These are just a few of our lovely folks who attend the monthly Coffee morning. Anyone who lives alone, for whatever reason, is welcome to join us for coffee, cake and chat (And lots of laughter!). We meet on the first Saturday morning of each month. The meeting in March this year will mark our second birthday, and we just keep growing!

Eve and Lynn

Interactive Display

Following the wonderful event we put on for children from the local schools before Christmas, Karen has put up a display in the School room. Do pop in and see what went on, and some of the activities the children undertook

Lynn Blackhurst



Lutterworth Community Transport

I recently attended the monthly coffee morning for village residents in Gilmorton, and a representative from the Community Transport was there to speak of the wide variety of ways in which they can help people without their own transport to get out and about. This maybe be shopping trips, outings, hospital visits, other appointments, lunch clubs etc., etc. They have vehicles which will accommodate wheelchairs as well as the regular mini-buses. There are leaflets in the Welcome Area about them and how to make contact.

Lynn Blackhurst

Bible Study Fellowship

We meet on alternate Wednesdays in the Welcome Area.. We gather at around 2:15p.m.; tea coffee and cakes are on offer throughout the afternoon! We are an informal group; we share news, we share our concerns, we have very open discussion, we pray together.

We followed the Methodist Advent course before Christmas. Since Christmas, inspired by our dear friend Sunday's love of the Psalms, we have looked more deeply into several of them. Members of the group have chosen those which are particularly special to them. We have used the beautiful book "Hope" which is produced here in Lutterworth by "Good News For Everyone".

We will be meeting weekly during Lent as we follow a Lenten course. We are a friendly group!! We are a group who learn so much from each other. If you're free on a Wednesday afternoon come and join us!!

Dates are listed below:

Weds. 7th February Psalms

Weds. 14th February Ash Wednesday Service led by Rev. Noel

Weds. 21st and following Wednesdays. Following Lent Course

Sheila Howell

FUND RAISING MEETING: SATURDAY 27th JANUARY 2024 - WELCOME AREA

AGENDA:

Review of past events.

Funds raised.

Spring Fayre:	March / April
Tea Dance?	May/June
Summer Tea and Beetle Drive?	July/ August
Autumn Fayre	October
Switch on Night:	November
Christmas Tree Festival:	December
Salvo Brass:	September?

UPDATE on FUNDRAISING

We had a very successful 2023 with our fundraising. We have raised £2000:00 in all which is excellent. A very big thankyou to everyone

We had a very positive planning meeting in January and have been able to put together a varied programme for this forthcoming year.

DATES for YOUR DIARIES!:

Spring Fayre:	Saturday 13 th April, 10:00a.m. to midday
Salvo Brass Concert:	Friday 10 th May
Tea Dance with "Our House":	May/ June Final date to be confirmed
Summer "1950's Tea" and Beetle Drive:	August Final date to be confirmed
Autumn Fayre:	Saturday 12 th October. 10:00a.m. to midday
Switch on Night:	Friday 29 th November
Christmas Tree Festival:	Weekend of 14 th /15 th December

We are trying to improve our advertising of events. We are investigating the use of banners for the major events i.e. Spring and Autumn Fayre: Christmas Tree Festival.

Two of us are going to try to produce some leaflets that can be handed out and left in the Welcome Area. We would like to use social media and use Facebook – possibly the Lutterworth Facebook page but we're not sure how to do it. Can anyone help please?

Future ideas include the putting together of a recipe book, and replacing the smarties tubes with Church Fundraising Change Pots!! Any other ideas are always welcome.

It is amazing what we can achieve together and whilst having fun, getting to know each other even better!! Who knew Carol could sell ice to the Eskimos?!!!

Seriously, thank you to everyone. Onwards and upwards!! Here's to another successful year.

P.S. We are looking to "change" our stock of second hand books to sell so please look out all those books that you have read and have decided not to keep. Fiction and non-fiction, cookery books etc.etc. Thank you.

Sheila Howell

Speak Their Name

We have, sadly, said our farewells to several former dear members of our church recently. Poems are often included in memorial and funeral services these days and the following one seems very fitting just now.



Someone I love has gone away
And life is not the same
The greatest gift that you can give
Is just to speak their name
I need to hear the stories
And the tales of days gone past
I need for you to understand
These memories must last
We cannot make more memories
Since they're no longer here
So when you speak of them to me
It's music to my ears.

Speak Their Name

An Easter Poem

WHO WAS THIS MAN? By Margaret Dutton

*Who was this man called Jesus,
the one they crucified?
What do they mean when people say
"It was for us He died?"*

*What has He to do with me,
what difference does it make?
If He had done no wrong at all
was it some grave mistake?*

*Jesus was quite innocent
of any sort of crime,
but we had turned away from God;
the sin was yours and mine.*

*But God so loved His people
that in His boundless grace
He sent His own beloved Son
to suffer in our place.*

*My friend, the news is wonderful!
God did not leave Him there
but raised Him up to conquer death
and banish our despair.*

*Jesus says "Believe in Me,
I offer you new life!
Not freedom from all troubles
but peace amidst the strife.*

*So come into His outstretched arms;
let this new life begin.
Make Him your Lord and you will live
eternally with Him.*

Dementia Friendly Service

Are you or your loved one affected by dementia?

At Lutterworth Methodist Church, we offer dementia-friendly services throughout the year for people with dementia and carers, former carers, and volunteers.

The services are on a Saturday morning from 10.30-11.15am on the:

30th March
6th July
28th September.

They are followed by light refreshments.



Everyone is welcome to come and join us.

Sunday Services for this Quarter

March

3 rd March		P. Kent
10 th March	Mothering Sunday	Deacon G. Brooks
17 th March	Passion Sunday	P. Muir
24 th March	Palm Sunday	Rev'd Noel
31 st March	Easter Sunday HC	Rev'd D. Collinson

April

7 th April	G. Gibbens	
14 th April	Rev'd Canon N. Clarke	
21 st April	G. Glenn	
28 th April	Rev'd A. Farrington HC	

May

5 th May	Local Arrangement	
12 th May	D. Lill	
19 th May	Deacon G. Brooks	
26 th May	Rev'd Noel HC	