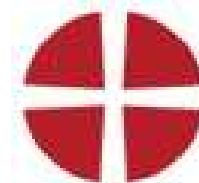


# CONNECT



The Magazine of the Swansea and Gower Methodist Circuit

## Action for Children Charity Celebrates 150 years



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### *Tell us all your news*

Keep us informed with news of people, activities and special events by sending your contribution to the Editor or sending her an email.

***Deadline for the next issue is  
Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019***

### Editor

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Action for Children, the children's charity of the Methodist Church, is celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year. It was founded in 1869 by Methodist minister Rev Thomas Bowman Stephenson in response to the poverty and danger faced by vulnerable and destitute children and young people living rough on the streets of London.

Today, Action for Children, (formerly, NCH - National Children's Home) has grown to become a leading children's charity running over 500 projects and working with more children and young people affected by poverty, disability and abuse than any other UK charity.

*(continued on page 7)*

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*The Swansea and Gower Methodist  
Circuit is a Registered Charity  
No 1134882*

**news in brief**

**Uniting Church Sketty**

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September – Coffee morning 10 a.m. –  
12 noon - Save the Children

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September – Coffee Morning 10 am –  
12 noon – Macmillan

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October – Coffee morning 10 am - 12 noon –  
Operation Christmas Child

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November - Coffee morning 10 am –  
12 noon – Shuktara – Charity in India which helps  
disabled children

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November – Quiz Night – 6.30 pm for 7 pm –  
ticket price tbc – Muscular Dystrophy

**Brunswick**

Coffee mornings on the last Saturday of every month.  
Bible study every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at  
11 am in the Welcome Room.

Prison Fellowship every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month now  
meets in Capel Gomer

**Mumbles**

Theo's Coffee Shop open daily from 9 am – 5 pm

Wednesday Lunchtime Worship – 12.15 pm

Prayer Hub (Worship Area) Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> to Saturday  
12<sup>th</sup> October 10 am – 4 pm

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 10 am – Christmas Fayre –  
Victoria Hall

**Wesley**

Bible Study every Tuesday 9.30 am

Lite Bites – Every Thursday 12 noon – 2 pm

Asian Fellowship – 3.30 pm 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of every  
month

**Penlan**

Gardening Project – Monday's (weather permitting)

Tel: 208154

After School Meal & Play every Monday in term time  
3.30 pm (Booking required)

Messy Church 8<sup>th</sup> September, 6<sup>th</sup> October and  
3<sup>rd</sup> November at 3 pm. Please contact Rev.Howard Long  
or Mrs.Cerys Davies for details

**Clydach**

Tea and Hymns 11<sup>th</sup> September, 9<sup>th</sup> October and  
20<sup>th</sup> November at 2.15 pm at Capel y Nant

28<sup>th</sup> September MacMillan Coffee Morning 10 am –  
12 noon organised by the Wesley Guild

5<sup>th</sup> October CYTUN Prayer Walk – 10 am. Tel: 845942 for  
details

16<sup>th</sup> November Christmas Fayre for Mr.X Appeal –  
1.30 pm – 4 pm organised by the Wesley Guild.

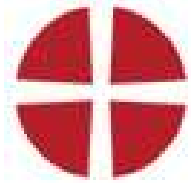
**Murton**

Coffee morning 10 am every Tuesday followed by an  
informal prayer meeting at 11.30 am

Luncheon Club 12.30 pm alternate Thursday's. Booking  
essential Tel: 234045

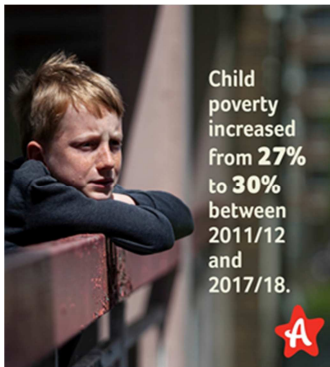


## Message from the Superintendent



Welcome to the Autumn edition of Connect, a magazine about the work of the Methodist church here in Swansea and throughout the UK. A big thank you to all those who have contributed to this edition with interesting stories about the exciting work of God taking place in our churches and communities at the moment.

### Action for Children



We wish Action for Children well in this their 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary year and say a big thank you to Gill Worrall, our Action for Children representative, and all supporters in our churches.

It's sad that we still need charities like Action for Children today but with child poverty on the increase in the UK they are needed more than ever. I urge you to join Action for Children's campaign to urge the government to take action and put the needs of children first and protect them from harm.

Vulnerable children are being ignored, left without support to face abuse and neglect, domestic violence, deprivation and poor mental health. Join the campaign at [www.actionforchildren.org.uk/choosechildhood](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/choosechildhood)

### Ogof Adullam

It's hard to believe that Ogof Adullam marks its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary this October. Ogof Adullam is our project for the homeless based at our Brunswick church in central Swansea. On the opening night in 2014 we welcomed 9 guests

but now we regularly welcome over 60. Only through our Ogof team of Huw Davies, Rachael Fox, Heather Davies and amazing volunteers can we provide the warmth, food and Christian friendship that's so desperately needed. Are you willing to become a volunteer at Ogof? Whatever time you can offer would be really appreciated and will make huge a difference. Please e-mail Rachael on [rachael.fox@ogofadullam.com](mailto:rachael.fox@ogofadullam.com) You will see from the plan that all our churches are being asked to remember the work of Ogof Adullam on Sunday November 3rd.



### Circuit Project 2019-20



The circuit project this year will be focusing on the environment and caring for God's creation. This will be launched at our circuit service at Uniting Church Sketty on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October at 6.30 p.m.

The purpose of the project this year is not necessarily to raise funds but to raise awareness of the most important issue of our times.

The naturalist David Attenborough was recently speaking to the business, energy and industrial strategy committee in the House of Commons on how to tackle the climate emergency.

*(continued on page 4)*

(continued from page 3)

He said: "The most encouraging thing that I see, of course, is that the electors of tomorrow are already making themselves and their voices very, very clear. And that is a source of great comfort in a way, but also the justification, the reality, that these young people are recognising that their world is the future.



"I'm OK, and all of us here are OK, because we don't face the problems that are coming. But the problems in the next 30 years are really major problems that are going to cause social unrest, and great changes in the way that we live, and what we eat. It's going to happen."

Asked by the Labour MP Vernon Coaker to expand on how public attitudes were shifting, Attenborough replied: "There was a time in the 19th century when it was perfectly acceptable for civilised human beings to think that it was morally acceptable to actually own another human being for a slave. And somehow or other, in the space of 20 or 30 years, the public perception of that totally transformed."

He said: "I suspect that we are right now in the beginning of a big change. Young people in particular are the stimulus that's bringing it about. People are understanding that to chuck plastic into the ocean is an insult. To have the nerve to say: 'This is our rubbish. We'll give you money and you can spread it on your land instead of ours, in the far east,' is intolerable. And for some reason or other young people understand that. And that's a source of great hope to me."

As Christians we are challenged in the epistle of James to be does not merely hearers of the Word (James Ch 1 v 22). We are not saved by good works but are saved for good works in response to what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. God hasn't

saved us to enjoy life in a comfortable pew but to roll our sleeves up and get involved in this messy, fragmented, sin stained planet by helping others and by being church in the world.

Every blessing

Howard

### Ogof Adullam says thanks to Cerys

Members of the Ogof Adullam Management Group along with guests came together in July to say thank you to Cerys Davies as she stepped down as the Deputy Project Coordinator after over 4 years in the post. Everyone was very grateful to Cerys for her hard work over the years.



### Circuit Mission Sunday – October 13<sup>th</sup>

The circuit will come together for worship at Uniting Church Sketty on Sunday October 13<sup>th</sup> at 6.30 p.m. The new Circuit Project 'Creation – Wise' will be launched. Preacher : Rev Pam Cram



## Rev Thomas Bowman Stephenson - the founder of Action for Children

Thomas Bowman Stephenson was the founder of The Children's Home, now Action for Children – which has grown from its first home at 8 Church Street, London to run hundreds of projects and work with over 250,000 children, young people, parents and carers, all over the UK.

Stephenson was a Methodist Minister, as was his father. He was his parents' sixth child, born in 1839. He travelled around, due to his father's vocation, and trained for the ministry himself at Richmond College, graduating from London University. He then served at Norwich, Manchester and Bolton before moving to Lambeth in London in 1868 where he was shocked and moved by the plight of children living on the streets.

*'There they were', he said, 'ragged, shoeless, filthy, their faces pinched with hunger and premature wretchedness, and I began to feel that now my time was come. Here were my poor little brothers and sisters, sold to hunger and the devil, and I could not be free of their blood if I did not do something to save some of them.'*

Stephenson came up with the idea of a home for young boys, where they would be safe from poverty and crime. Stephenson along with two Methodist friends Alfred Mager and Francis Horner moved quickly and bought 8 Church Street, a disused stable, for the first home.



Lay Wesleyan Methodists such as John Chubb, Sir Francis Lycett and Sir William McArthur also provided support and within a matter of months the first two boys, Fred and George were admitted to The Children's Home – on 9 July 1869.

Stephenson was determined not to create another workhouse. He wanted it to be a home: and Mr and Mrs Austin, who were first appointed to run 8 Church Street, were named 'Father' and 'Mother'. By January 1871, the neighbouring house had been taken over, and 29 boys lived at the Home. George Oliver, the first ever child there, would sign himself 'G Oliver No 1' for the rest of his life. The work of The Children's Home would be Stephenson's greatest calling for over 30 years.

In 1871, a new home was found at Bonner Road, East London, which could house 100 young people. The Home also secured a rural base. The Edgworth branch was built on the Lancashire moors in 1872. Stephenson believed that the country environment, combined with protection from parts of city life, would help children who would struggle at Bonner Road. The Home grew rapidly to meet the needs of orphaned and neglected children, with branches opening in Ramsey (Isle of Man), Chipping Norton, Farnborough and Birmingham. Homes focused on giving children the skills to earn a living in trades such as carpentry, printing and domestic help.



Stephenson's exacting views on childcare also found expression in the creation of the Sisterhood of the Children in 1878. Stephenson had been influenced by the approach to child care in Hamburg, Germany, with children in small groups – but was concerned by the lack of any female presence there. He felt very strongly about the Sisterhood: this was to be a demanding, skilled role. The Sisterhood remained an important part of the Home and continued right up to 1985.

*(continued on page 8)*

(carried forward from front page)

**Carol Iddon, Action for Children's Managing Director of Services, said:** "Every day at Action for Children we still see families under threat of losing their home, living with problems like domestic violence or struggling to put food on the table. All the while, children's services are continuously being stripped back due to lack of government funding. "Our 150th year is a time to remember the past, but it should also serve as wake-up call to the work government and charities need to do now to invest in our children today and give them the childhoods they deserve."

In this issue of Connect we look at how Action for Children began and focus on its founder Rev Thomas Bowman Stephenson as well as looking at the work of the charity today. To coincide with the anniversary the charity launched a new logo which we are proud to put on our front cover.

### A Majority Of The Welsh Population Still Claim A Religion



New statistics published by Stats Wales in June, based on the Annual Population Survey 2015-17, provide an interesting and informative picture of religious identification in Wales today. The statistics show that some assertions often made in the media are not true.

In particular, the figures show that over half of the population of Wales identified as Christian (52.8%), whereas 42.7% of the population stated they had no religion. However, these figures varied by region. In North Wales, 60.0% of the population identified as Christian and 36.9% stated they had no religion. This compares with 48.6% and 46.1% of people in South East Wales respectively.

Nearly 50,000 people (1.6% of the population) identified as Muslim. Over two thirds (69%) of the Muslim population in Wales were domiciled in South East Wales.

A higher proportion of women than men identified as having a religion (61% compared with 53%) and the proportion of people identifying as having a religion increased by age group. This contrasts with the proportion of people stating they had no religion which notably decreased as age increased.

Article taken from CYTŪN POLICY BULLETIN  
July/August 2019

### Wesley Methodist Church Eaton Road - Brynhyfryd



Lite Bites is open on a Thursday from 12.00 noon to 2.00 pm during school term time. It is a meeting place for friends and families to get together and chat while enjoying a three course meal with tea or coffee for £6.00. We are now into our 14<sup>th</sup> year. Do come and join us.

## Messages from Murton



I have pleasure in extending to you an invitation to join us at Sidholme on the South Devon Coast for a late Autumn break of rest, spiritual refreshment and some time 'away from it all'. We leave Murton on Tuesday 5th November, returning on Friday 8th.

This will be the third holiday that we have held in recent years, and those who have attended previously have found them to be a real source of fellowship and fun; a genuine time of rest, and with gentle spiritual input enabling us to draw nearer to Jesus.

Please contact Rev. Andy Walker for details.  
Tel: 01792 232867  
e: [andrew.walker@methodist.org.uk](mailto:andrew.walker@methodist.org.uk)

On 24th July at 2:30 pm, the Gower Churches, under the leadership of Rev Andy Walker from Murton, celebrated the Baptism, - and re-affirmation of Baptismal promises (using the new Methodist rite), of Natalie, Penny and Chris. Around 50 people attended this powerful act of witness on Caswell Bay beach, and holiday-makers joined in the celebrations.

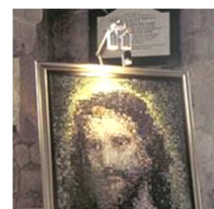
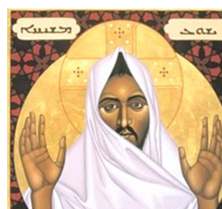
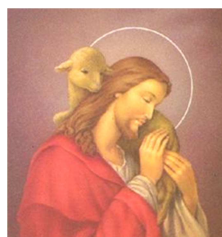


## Community Service

The last Saturday in July saw the Clydach Village Fair, recently revived by the Community Council, and now hugely popular. On the following Sunday, CYTUN Clydach organised a short, informal Community Service, and this year 50 or so people from most of the churches in the village came together to sing (accompanied by a saxophonist), to pray and be challenged by Rev. Leslie Noon about how we picture/imagine Jesus. Of course, afterwards tea and cakes were served by our wonderful ladies of the Wesley Guild!



## Four Images of Christ



Alan Cram



(continued from page 7)

Stephenson's interest went beyond the Home, though. He founded the Wesley Deaconess Order, wrote hymns and played a leading part in editing the *Wesleyan Hymn Book* of 1878. He was also one of the earliest supporters of the reunion of British Methodism.

Stephenson resigned as Principal of The Children's Home in 1900 and became Superintendent minister at Ilkley, near Leeds.

He retired in 1907 and died in 1912. By then, over 2,000 children were cared for by what had become the National Children's Home and Orphanage.

Stephenson was married twice: to Ellen Lupton in 1864 and, following her death in 1890, to Ella Macpherson in 1893. He had one daughter, Theodora, with Ellen.

### Action for Children Today

Over time, Action for Children's work has shifted away from children's homes towards community-based projects like children's centres and supporting vulnerable families as well as been active in forming national childcare policy.

The famous words of John Wesley to 'go not only to those who need you but to those who need you most' eloquently and simply describe the charity's vision and values today. Close links are maintained with the Methodist Church and the Council of Trustees is appointed by the Methodist Conference – to which they report annually. A number of Methodists are trustees and all of the national committees in England, Scotland and Wales have at least one Methodist representative.

### Action for Children in Wales

The first Welsh project opened in Cardiff on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1911. Today the charity runs over 130 services across 50 sites in Wales, supporting over 15,000 of the most vulnerable and neglected children, young people and their families in local communities.

### Action for Children Projects in Swansea

These include Ty Laura, Swansea Short Breaks, Stepping Stones Development Centre, Swansea SAIL, and Swansea Young Families.



*Brigitte Gator, the National Director for Action for Children speaking at the Swansea SAIL Garden party at Penlan Methodist Church in July.*



*Debbie Morgan, Chair of Trustees for Wales together with Brigitte Gator and Action for Children managers, Deb Parker, Sue Marsden and Alison Long with the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cake.*



*Staff at Ty Laura in Newton were joined by Clive Williams, a former resident at Killay House to bury a time capsule to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.*



## A Visit to Zambia

Susan Jones, a member of our Mumbles church, spent some time over the summer visiting Zambia working as part of the Jesus Cares Ministry.



In June I had the privilege to spend a month with Tearfund Go in Zambia, as part of a team of eight volunteers-seven young girls (student age) and me (71). In Zambia, Tearfund works in partnership with a local charity, Jesus Cares Ministry (JCM), and it was with this organisation that we spent our time. We had a very full and varied timetable.

Street evangelism was the activity that put us all out of our comfort zone as it was so alien to us. After a time of fellowship we would be divided into groups of three or four and each group would go out and start speaking to people about the Christian message. What amazed me was how willing the people were to listen to the gospel, even a group of teenage boys. We even did the same work in hospital wards.

The majority of our time was spent at the Transit Centre - a place for children found alone on the streets of Lusaka. JCM would then try and find out where they came from, and reunite them with their families if possible. The children were very well cared for by two ladies called the Mothers. These ladies were so lovely and what dedication they had to spend all their time looking after the children. We spent our time at the centre playing games with the children and doing some craft work and drawing.

We visited a Life Skills centre to see the work JCM did in training young people for work. They ran classes in IT, vehicle mechanics, cooking, carpentry, electricians and dressmaking. Some of the equipment they use comes from Tools for Self-Reliance - the circuit project.

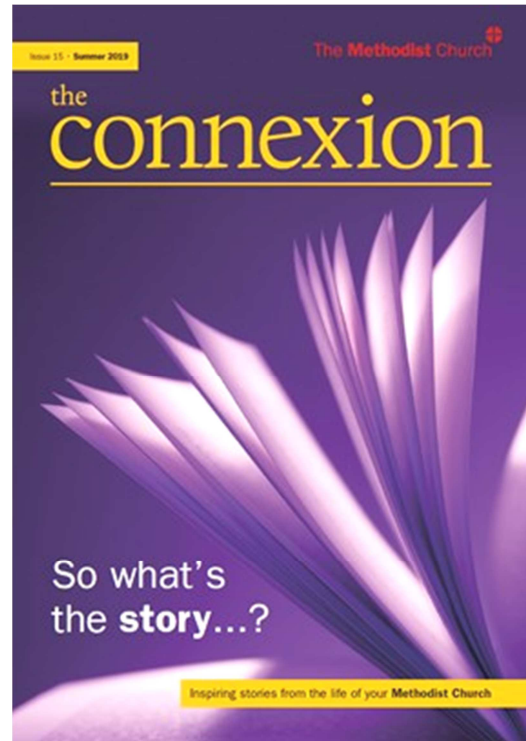
We visited several self-help groups that had been set up to help women to set up their own businesses. Each meeting started with a devotional time before the start of business.

We visited some schools where we did some teaching, played games, made posters and encouraged the children to stay in education.

The month was challenging and tiring but it was a privilege to spend time with the staff in Zambia, seeing how they dealt with difficult challenges and their dedication to improving the lives of young people.

**Susan Jones**

## Out Now



**the connexion** is a free magazine about the life and work of the Methodist Church, bringing together inspirational stories from Methodist people who are passionate about sharing God's love to change lives.

## Becoming Creation-Wise!

The 2019-2020 Mission Project is going to be very different. It doesn't involve raising money, but it does invite action! We're challenging the Circuit's churches to think about environment and sustainability. What might you do, as individuals and as Church, to enhance the local environment; reduce your climate 'footprint'; or protect species and habitat? Churches will get information about the Eco Congregation scheme as a way of focussing on what might be possible. For some congregations it may be appropriate just to do one or two things from the options offered without a greater commitment, but our hope is that at least some of our churches will sign up to the Eco Congregation scheme.

Support in exploring these issues will be offered via the Environment Centre in Pier Street and their current Manager, Philip McDowell, who has access to a variety of experts and resources. We hope to arrange one or two open mornings at the Environment Centre when church members are invited to pop in, and Philip will give guided tours of the building and its activities.

The launch for our project will be in the Circuit Service at Sketty on October 13<sup>th</sup>. Very conveniently the period leading up to our launch service is accepted by the worldwide church as Creationtide or the Season of Creation. On the Sundays between September 1st and October 4<sup>th</sup>, the Feast of St. Francis, we're invited to reflect on aspects of Creation and our place within it. In many of our churches the Harvest Festival comes during this period as well.

For those preparing worship during these weeks there are special resources on the Church of Scotland website

*We have known for decades that this time will come. We have been made aware of the rapid extinction of beautiful and unique creatures. Thanks to the honest and disciplined work of climate scientists, we know (unless we fall victim to fake news) right now, that our lifestyle is unsustainable, and our dominant philosophy of 'permanent growth at all cost' carries the seeds of the destruction of the life that God called good.*

*Over and above the foolish stewardship of land and resources, yet closely allied to it, is the crisis of values, and of spirituality; a twisted and self-deceptive view of 'profit'. The whole Christian family now has an unprecedented opportunity and calling: to bring together mission, justice, stewardship, and study: to bring out of our 'treasure' the determinative priorities and values that are so different from those piloting Creation towards catastrophe. And above all, to take note of, and act on, and trust in, the worth we are given (each and all of us) in Christ. May we cherish and be empowered by the knowledge of our enduring and transforming worth in the sight of God. Even if, until now, we have indeed pursued 'worthless things'.*

During our project year, let's grasp the opportunity to do some really creative and positive actions for the wellbeing of the whole planet and ourselves.



*A sculpture made from rubbish collected on a beach in Pembrokeshire.*



Pam Cram



## New Citizens!

The Atif family left their home in Pakistan in 2011 and came as asylum seekers to the UK. Elisha was 9 and Maresha was 5 and life had become increasingly hard for this Christian family. They were placed in Swansea, and very soon after they arrived, found their way to Sketty Methodist Church (on the advice of Rev Irfan John, the Wales Synod Enabler for Culturally Diverse Congregations). Here the congregation welcomed them with open arms, arranging lifts to and from church and helping them to settle in the UK. In return Atif and Saima and the children found their way into the hearts of the members of the congregation through their generosity and deep faith. When Angel was born, the whole congregation celebrated.

The church was so sad when the family made the decision to leave Swansea and move to London to be nearer Atif's brother and family. But members kept in touch, and it felt like an answer to prayer when the family decided to return to Swansea. It was their church family whom they had missed the most.

**Fast forward to 2019** Elisha and Maresha were confirmed in June and made members of what is now Uniting Church Sketty. And finally, after much hard work on their part, the whole family became British citizens at a special ceremony at Swansea's Civic Centre on 22 July 2019.

When arranging the ceremony with the Registrar, Atif asked how many guests they could bring. "Only two," was the reply, "unless you pay for a private ceremony, in which case you can bring up to 70". There was no question for the Atifs! Of course they wanted their church family to celebrate with them.

And this is what led to around 60 people from Uniting Church Sketty descending on Swansea Civic Centre to support Atif, Saima, Elisha, Maresha and Angel as they became British Citizens. When the Registrar opened the door to the waiting room, she did a double-take and couldn't believe all the people present. After a wonderful ceremony, in which Atif and Saima made their promises using the Church Bible and all the family,

including 6 year old Angel, signed a special book, both the British and the Welsh national anthems were sung. As you can imagine, the singing completely drowned out the recording of these songs. Afterwards, the Registrar told Rev Leslie Noon, that never before had they seen so many people come to support one family. She was simply amazed! And when she asked Atif which church the family attended, he proudly told her "Uniting Church Sketty. And they are my family". There wasn't a dry eye in the house!



*Atif, Saima, Elisha, Maresha and Angel Gill at the Citizenship Ceremony*



*Some of the congregation from Uniting Church, Sketty*

God to enfold you,  
Christ to uphold you,  
Spirit to keep you in heaven's sight;  
so may God grace you,  
heal and embrace you,  
lead you through darkness  
Into the light.

**John L. Bell**



## Letters from Bethlehem



It was a pleasure to welcome the Rev John Howard to the Circuit in June: a meeting organised by CYTUN (Churches Together) in Clydach. John had recently been a Methodist Mission Partner in Israel/Palestine, based in the Methodist Liaison Office in Jerusalem for two years, and previously a human rights observer in a tiny Palestinian village called Yanoun. Most of us will never make the journey to Israel/Palestine or, if we do, it is only to visit the religious sites, and not to meet the people. John painted a graphic picture of what life is like for the Palestinians living in the occupied territories, specifically the West Bank (of the Jordan): the separation wall snaking between communities, which sometimes prevents people accessing their vineyards and orange groves; the early morning queues at the checkpoints which Palestinians must cross in order to get to work or hospital, and the frequent harassment they receive there from Israeli soldiers; the illegal (under international law) building of Jewish settlements on Palestinian land; the fear generated by night-time raids by security forces on families in their homes. John also took us to Gaza and the three refugee camps which have existed in Bethlehem since 1948.

John stated that his two years in Israel/Palestine broke his heart: he saw the hopelessness of so many good faithful, honest Palestinians, who had lived all their lives under occupation and saw no prospect of any improvement. Sadly, many of the most gifted, including Palestinian Christians (the "living stones"), were deciding that they simply had to leave. But amongst all this suffering, there are signs of hope: Israelis who challenge the policies of their Government, for example, and people on both sides of the divide working for peace.

Please pray for the people of Israel/Palestine.

PS I have a number of copies of John's book "Letters from Bethlehem" at £5 each. John's photos and the original articles written for the Methodist recorder can also be found on

<https://lettersfrombethlehem.wordpress.com>

The Amos Trust (founded by Garth Hewitt) is one UK based charity that works to highlight the plight of the Palestinians, and both John and the Amos trust organise "meet the people" visits to Israel/Palestine <https://www.amostrust.org/palestine-justice/> John also highlights many other relevant organisations and resources in his book.

Alan Cram

## FLOWER ARRANGING DEMONSTRATION

by Daphne Furneaux

at RHOSSILI VILLAGE HALL

**Wed. 25<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2019**  
**at 10:30am**

**CAKE STALL AND RAFFLE**

**Entry £6**

**Proceeds to:**



**Event enabled by Pitton and  
Horton Methodist Chapels**

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The Methodist People of Wales, as have all other Methodists, have been asked to dedicate themselves to fifteen months of prayer, in as many creative ways as is possible.

If you don't have access to a Prayer Labyrinth, you could devise a Prayer Walk. Perhaps there is a park near you, an area of woodland, an old railway track or an area of water where you, or a group, can walk, where it is fairly quiet.

The area I have envisaged for the Prayer Walk is a Botanical garden within a large park. The reasons I have chosen this garden include – there are parking spaces for people with Blue Badges; the walk into the garden and around it is flat, for the most part and access is easy for wheelchairs and electric buggies. For those who can walk, but with some difficulty, there are many seats, flowers and trees, birds and squirrels to look at, as well as human beings!

Obviously, an outdoor prayer walk can only be undertaken in dry weather, so it has drawbacks! The main consideration is how to produce the liturgy. Should it be produced on A4 sheets, held together with tags, so that the text is large enough for people with sight difficulties or in booklet form, or both?

Another consideration is to think about whether the prayer walk should be done as a group activity or whether one person might prefer to do it alone. The liturgy I have written can be used in both ways. Another is, should it be “tried and tested” by several people, before the final version is produced and modified, if necessary.

The liturgy which I have written consists of seven sheets. The stopping points are entirely optional. Not all the sheets have to be used, so it is flexible.

THANK YOU FOR A NEW DAY – centres your thoughts at the beginning of the walk.  
STOP.....BE STILL.....LISTEN.....breathe in for the count of 7.....breathe out for the count of 11.

BLESS – BODY – pray for people's physical needs  
    LABOUR – pray for all the labour of our hands  
    EMOTIONS – pray for people's emotional needs  
    SOCIAL – pray for our relationships among one another and other people  
    SPIRITUAL – pray for all our spiritual needs  
STOP.....BE STILL.....LOOK UP....BREATHE.... (as above)  
HEARTS – HEARTS – Luke 8:5-15  
    EYES and EARS – Matthew 13:15 and 2 Cor 4:3-4  
    ATTITUDE – John 16:8  
    RELEASED – 2 Timothy 2:25-26  
    TRANSFORMING – Romans 12:1-2  
    SENT – Matthew 9: 35-8  
STOP.....BE STILL.....SMELL....BREATHE ....(as above)

PRAYERS OF THANSGLIVING, PRAISE, REPENTANCE – add your own prayers and end with....The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

Amen.

**Janet M Neilson**

## Zambuko Ra Jehova

During her sabbatical, Reverend Siperire went to Nangababwe in Zimbabwe, which is where the children and young people we support live and go to school. There were two reasons for the visit: the first was to undertake some research into what impact the ZRJ funding has had on the lives of those we support, (this was one of her sabbatical activities); the second was to purchase and distribute clothing and food to the orphans.

As many people as possible from both the primary school and the secondary school were involved in the evaluation, including the school heads; chairpersons and their deputies of the school development committees; other teachers in the primary school; other teachers in the secondary school; the guardians of the orphans; the chief and the councillor of the district; children who left school after primary school; children who left school after secondary school and children still at school.



The findings included the fact that most young people are not able to find work after leaving school because of the economic situation. One key recommendation is to consider how we can organise more vocational training and life skills for them, including practical projects such as dressmaking, keeping poultry and/or rabbits

and/or fish for food and for selling, and market gardening. A weakness which we had already identified is the lack of infrastructure for the charity in Nangababwe. A stronger board of trustees is needed there to oversee local projects and ensure due diligence in expenditure incurred. Reverend Siperire had constructive talks with several local people who are willing to be involved.



Everyone interviewed was very appreciative of the support given by ZRJ and confirmed that the orphans have benefitted from being able to go to school. We shall continue to support them and we thank everyone who has contributed in the past and those who continue to contribute to this work.

**Win Hawkins**  
Chair of Trustees ZRJ



## The President and Vice President of the Methodist Conference 2019/20



The Revd Barbara Glasson and Clive Marsh were inducted as President and Vice-President as the first item of business at the Methodist Conference in Birmingham, on Saturday 29 June 2019.

Barbara's ministry with the Bread Church working with diverse people in Liverpool, Touchstone, a Methodist interfaith project in Bradford, and with people who have experienced abuse following the Past Cases Review, shows her work with 'prophetic communities for transformation'.

The Revd Glasson said: "It is a privilege to serve as President. My interest is in enabling and honouring Connexional communities that are courageous and rooted in prayer. God is transforming the old and calling us into new things that are a joyful outcome of our Methodist inheritance. I believe that if the Church is authentic and inclusive it will also grow numerically and spiritually."

Professor Clive Marsh's 35 years as a Methodist has shaped his work profoundly. He has sought to help people think creatively about how faith, life and popular culture interweave, and what happens to theology as a result.

Clive has taught in theological colleges and universities and is currently Head of the University of Leicester's Vaughan Centre for Lifelong Learning and an International Research Consultant at the Queen's Foundation. He is a church member, local preacher and tutor in the Leicester Trinity Circuit. Clive was also Faith and Order Committee Secretary from 2000-2007.

On hearing of his election, he said: "It is an honour to be elected Vice-President. I have a deep commitment to encouraging others in learning, no matter what their stage of life or what previous experience they have. My calling as a Methodist leads me to prompt people to think creatively about their life experience and the world around them, in developing a practical, theologically-informed faith."

## Christian Aid Cutbacks



As Christian Aid plans to save money, its staff members' jobs are at stake. The anti-poverty charity said it has a goal of saving £7 million a year as part of its new global strategy, called Standing Together, and that "political uncertainty and a tough environment for unrestricted fundraising" means some staff may have to be made redundant. Christian Aid will withdraw from 12 countries in order to reduce unrestricted spending from £47m to £40m a year. The countries the charity is leaving are Angola, Egypt, Zambia, Mali, South Africa, Ghana, the Philippines, Nepal, Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala and El Salvador. Amanda Mukwashi, chief executive of Christian Aid, said: "After careful consideration of every piece of work Christian Aid does, the senior leadership and trustees have made the difficult decision to exit from some countries and instead, in some cases, work regionally to have greater impact. The charity said it will still be working in 15 other countries and the new strategy will help it to be "more focused and deepen its interventions in fewer countries and to do so as good stewards living within our means".



The following article was written by Janet Neilson and printed in the Methodist Recorder in July.

## WALKING IN PRAYER

When THE ARTS in worship is mentioned, what pops into your mind? Singing, organ music, choir practice.....or are you prepared to “think outside the box”? Do your churches include drama, dance, Powerpoint and other visual aids during worship? Have you used prayer creatively, so that it can be described as one of the Arts, in worship?

A Prayer Labyrinth was built at the Amelia Trust Farm, near Barry, South Wales ([www.ameliatrust.org.uk](http://www.ameliatrust.org.uk)). The labyrinth covers a large area. You can walk the labyrinth, which is a quiet oasis at the farm. The beds and banks were planted with a variety of plants and flowers to attract insects, and to give off scents as people walk around. Prayer boards were added with seasonal and general prayer liturgies.

As you walk the labyrinth you have time to slow down, be still, look around, look up, look down and generally relax. Or, if you don't want to walk or are unable to walk you can sit and meditate using your own words and thoughts.



*Prayer Labyrinth at Amelia Trust Farm*

Prayer labyrinths don't have to be outside. You can make a temporary one on the floor inside your church, hall or smaller space. In Chislehurst Methodist Church has been built into the floor permanently.