

Brunswick News



August - September 2023

Talking more about our faith

Some 500 years ago, the Dutch-born Christian humanist scholar, and early proponent of pacifism, Erasmus of Rotterdam, produced his own translation of the New Testament. In this translation he translated 'logos' from the prologue to John's gospel not as 'Word' but as 'Conversation'.

I wonder even back then if Erasmus thought of the word 'conversation' as being a helpful way for disciples of Jesus to consider how they talk more with others about their faith in Christ. In our midweek bible study group recently we looked together at Erasmus' translation of John's gospel. Here are the opening three verses (alongside the translation, in italics, which we would commonly read):

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

It all arose out of a conversation, conversation within God, in fact the conversation was God.

He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

So, God started the discussion, and everything came out of this, and nothing happened without consultation."

When we use the word 'conversation' in the context of church life, we often call it 'Christian conversation' as this is how we can grow in our discipleship. The question was asked in our bible study: 'Should Christian conversation not be found in every part of a church's life, not just in a bible study or a church membership group?' Our answer was emphatically 'yes'! So, I wonder how we speak about the things of God in each one of our church meetings or in the informal conversations we may have in our building or in each other's homes?

It is interesting how Erasmus, in his translation, uses the phrase 'conversation *within* God'. Is this an illusion to the Trinity and the sharing of love and intimacy by each member of the Trinity? God, known to us as Spirit, Son, and Father, is the one who initiates and then we are invited to respond, as Erasmus puts it later in

John chapter 1, “(His) children were born out of sharing in the creative activity of God. They heard the conversation still going on, here, now, and took part, discovering a new way of being people.”

So, my friends, perhaps picking up an alternative translation of a well-known bible passage can be helpful to us from time to time. As also finding a place within the life of our church to take part in the Christian conversation whose subject, quite naturally, is Jesus himself. As we do this then we can consider how our lives, our choices, our relationships, our attitudes do, or do not, reflect the life of Jesus and encourage one another in the ways of Christian discipleship.

Our bible study group will resume on a Thursday afternoon in September should you be interested in joining us. We also have regular times of prayer each week which, again, you are warmly invited to share in. You can see the times for these in our weekly notices.

Shalom, Paul



Local Church News

Our **Coffee Shop** is usually open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10:30am until 1:15pm and on Saturdays from 10:30am until 12:30pm. We will be taking a break during August but we will be open on Saturday 5th, 12th and 19th August only.



We will open again for normal service from Tuesday 5th September.

Local Church News

Thanks to all who supported our last two social events - the Coronation Party and the Strawberry Tea on 24th June. It was good to see so many people there. We had quizzes, food, a sing-a-long and even dancing!

The next social event will be for Harvest.

Joan & Eileen



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The Methodist City Centre Network (MCCN)

The MCCN brings together lay and ordained people who all work in a city centre context and who wish to share and learn from each other's experience of what we know can be quite different to ministry conducted elsewhere. In April we offered to host the network in our own city and so we prepared a day programme which was supported by our Chair of District, by friends from our Circuit, by our staff based at Brunswick, and which was attended by those travelling from cities like Sheffield, Bristol, and London.

The content of our programme touched upon the emerging story of our Chinese Methodist congregation, Sue (our centre-based worker) shared about her community profiling work, we heard from Shieldfield about their creative Christian arts project and Stephen Lindridge led us in some theological reflection.

We also had two prayers walks, one of which headed to the north of the city centre, the other south. Here is a quiz question for you:

'Whereabouts do you find the birds in the picture and what do they represent?'

The MCCN is taking on increased importance as, at this year's Conference, it was decided that the 'City Centre list' was no longer representative of city centre ministry but that our network is now the forum in which we learn and grow together. Of course, we took the opportunity of taking the group around our building and Fiona shared about how our church serves very much as a 'community hub' and offers hospitality to so many user groups, as well as offering a safe space for many of our more vulnerable friends. Thank you to all who made this day a great success!

Paul



Forthcoming Worship Services

Sunday 6 th August	10.45am	Worship led by Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe (Holy Communion)
Sunday 13 th August	10.45am	Worship led by Mr Rob Wylie
Sunday 20 th August	10.45am	Worship led by Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe
Sunday 27 th August	10.45am	Worship led by Canon Peter Dodd
Sunday 3 rd Sept	10.45am	Worship led by Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe (Holy Communion)
Sunday 10 th Sept	10.45am	Worship led by Mr Tim Rogers
Sunday 17 th Sept	10.45am	Rev Ann Shepherdson
Sunday 24 th Sept	10.45am	Rev Paul Cleever-Thorpe (Harvest Festival)



Church flowers, 16 July 2023

BRUNSWICK CLUB PROGRAMME

Meetings are held in the Church Hall on Tuesday mornings between 10.30 am and 12.00 noon

Date	Speaker	Subject
Sept 5	Prof Neville Harris	John Mortimer and Rumpole of the Bailey
12	John Gibson	The Tirpitz – The Lonely Queen of the North
19	Ron Hindmarch	Forensic Investigations
26	Brian Burr	The Musicals of Stephen Schwartz
Oct 3	Robert Moon	Our Finest Hour
10	Dr Peter Jones	Where does our language come from?
17	Ben Haddon	The 1960s and my part in them
24	Peter Sagar	Newcastle United and the Saudi PIF
31	Julian Harrop	Images from the Beamish Museum Collection
Nov 7	Barry Mead	Wonders of Wansbeck
14	Peter Reynolds	Travel by Camera
21	Rev George Lackenby	Arguments with my Dog Collar
28	Anthea Lang	The Landowner, the Actress and the Museum
Dec 5	Jennifer Tindall	How the Victorians reinvented Christmas
12	Carol Service	
2024		
Jan 9	Pat Lowery	Shopping Spree
16	Alan & Pat Porrett	Gateshead Garden Festival 1990
23	Amanda Hepburn	The Jarrow Crusade
30	Martin Disbray	Charles Darwin
Feb 6	Mike Goodwin	Touring on a Motor Cycle
13	Ernie Coulthard	The Dambusters (Operation Chastise)
20	Allen Curry	Political Incorrectness
27	David Faulkner	Antony Gormley

Programme Secretary: John Herdman Telephone: 0191 487 9836

E-Mail: johnherdman@blueyonder.co.uk

The Connexion Magazine, Issue 31

'Inspiring Stories from the Methodist Church'



In the latest edition of this magazine, on pages 14 and 15, there is an article and photos about our Chinese congregation! You can download it here:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/29845/theconnexion31.pdf>

or phone 020 7486 5502 to arrange to have free a free copy sent to your home every quarter.

There is also an article on pages 20 and 21 entitled 'Wesleyan passion for social justice' – John Wesley's words resonate just as loudly today as in the 1700s.

What is the Connexion?

Methodists belong to local churches and also value being part of a larger community. In calling the Methodist Church in Britain 'the Connexion', Methodism reflects its historical and spiritual roots.

In the 18th century a 'connexion' simply meant those connected to a person or a group – for instance, a politician's network of supporters. So when people

spoke of “Mr Wesley’s Connexion” they meant followers of the movement led by John Wesley.

Wesley believed that belonging and mutual responsibility were fundamental Christian qualities. The language of connexion allowed him to express this interdependence, developing its spiritual and practical significance in the organisation and ethos of his movement. Both language and practice are important for Methodists today.

Taken from the inside front cover of issue 31 of the Connexion magazine



More from The Methodist Connexion and the recent Conference

As was reported in the last edition of this magazine, David Stabler was invited to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in recognition of his charity work raising money for Action for Children. Here is an article about that charity:

Action for Children services ‘are needed more than ever’

The work of the Methodist-founded charity Action for Children was warmly commended by the Conference after its new chief executive officer Paul Carberry described the challenges faced by vulnerable young people, from exploitation to mental health.



Introducing a report on the charity, which delivers 447 services supporting children across the country, Mr Carberry told representatives that amid a cost-of-living crisis it was needed “more than ever”.

He said the problem of the criminal exploitation of children was one that was growing worse and worse across the UK, but which went back to the days of the

charity's founder, Methodist minister the Rev Dr Thomas Bowman Stephenson who created the first National Children's Home in 1869. He said: "It is an area where we are increasingly trying to help young people who are enslaved and ensnared by these individuals."

Mr Carberry, who took over from Melanie Armstrong in March, said he had worked for 29 years with the charity, most recently as national director for Scotland and interim national director for England, and he was "proud" of its links with the Methodist Church. "We share so many values with the Methodist Church," he said, including the determination "deep in our bones" to campaign against child poverty.

"We are truly grateful as an organisation for the culture that we share with the Methodist Church and the amazing relationship, and we would like to thank you all for the incredible support you have given us." Examples of this included the efforts of one church to raise £3,300 in a sponsored hymnathon, while another had raised £5,000 through various activities.

Mr Carberry said that 150 years ago, when Dr Stephenson first helped underprivileged children living under the arches of London's Waterloo station, many of them were criminally exploited by ruthless organised groups, and that problem was still evident today. He introduced one young charity worker from Cardiff who said he himself had found himself being exploited by a gang, which had "caused a lot of issues in my life to the point of not having a way out".

Thankfully, the charity had given him new hope, he said. However, some young people did not have the chances that others did, and as someone who had been through that experience he was able to bring them compassion and encouragement.

The report was strongly backed by the Rev Ian Rutherford (Conference-Elected), the city centre minister at Methodist Central Hall in Manchester, who said the breadth of the charity's work was "outstanding". After a round of applause, the report was overwhelmingly approved by the Conference in a show of hands.

From the Methodist Recorder, 30th June 2023

Conference Business Digest

If you would like to read the 'Conference Business Digest: A report for local churches about the business of the 2023 Methodist Conference', it is available here as a pdf: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/29895/conf-2023-business-digest.pdf> or you can ask in the church office for a paper copy. It is three pages.

President and Vice-President 2023-24

At the 2022 Conference, the Methodist Conference elected the Revd Gill Newton to serve as President and Deacon Kerry Scarlett to serve as Vice-President, starting their year of office on Saturday 24 June 2023.



The Revd Gill Newton is a life-long Methodist, raised in Cornwall, with experience of circuit ministry and has served as the Sheffield District Chair since 2014.

Following the announcement of the election results, the Revd Gill Newton said: "I am both humbled and honoured to have been entrusted with this role by the members of the Methodist Conference. With God's help and together with the Vice President Designate, Deacon Kerry Scarlett, I look forward to the opportunities we will have to encourage, inspire and challenge the Methodist people during our year of office."

Gill Newton chairs the Ministries Committee overseeing the development of the church's ministry in many varied contexts. She also serves on the Strategy and Resources Committee and on the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes Board and has previously chaired the Ministerial Candidates and Probationers Oversight Committee and served as Chair of the Chairs.

Deacon Kerry Scarlett, from the Birmingham District, has a passion for justice and seeks to enable and amplify the voices of others. Kerry founded ADAVU, an anti-trafficking charity and participated in regional network and anti-trafficking campaigns.



Speaking following the election, Kerry Scarlett said: “It is an honour and a privilege to have been elected Vice-President Designate. I am very much looking forward to working with Gill Newton, and am very grateful for the opportunity to serve the Methodist Church in this way.”

Kerry has served the church in a number of ways including theological education, the Learning Network, a variety of committees including the Candidates Committee and has contributed to and facilitated complex reviews.



From the Methodist Recorder

Prof Jolyon Mitchell has been appointed as the new principal of St John’s College, Durham, succeeding the Methodist minister the Ref Prof David Wilkinson who retires this summer. St John’s is home to 500 undergraduates and 160 postgraduates from all disciplines and backgrounds, and includes 80 members of Cranmer Hall, a theological college. Prof Mitchell is moving from the University of Edinburgh where he is Director of the Centre for Theology and Public Issues. He was formerly a producer and journalist with the BBC World Service. Scientist and theologian Prof Wilkinson has for the last few years led a project entitled “Equipping Christian Leadership in an Age of Science”.

*Rev Prof David Wilkinson lives in our circuit with his wife Alison, minister at Jesmond Methodist Church
The Methodist Recorder 9th June 2023*

Connexional Service of Thanksgiving

As you may know, my father, who died in January, was a Methodist minister. As you may not know, every year at the national Methodist Conference, a Service of Thanksgiving is held to give thanks for the life and ministry of all ministers (presbyters) who have died during the previous year, and friends and family are invited to take part. So it was that I received an invitation to attend this service at the Conference in Birmingham on 23rd June. Unfortunately my sister was not available due to a celebration in her husband's family, so I attended with some family friends of ours who live not too far from Birmingham, and who are Methodist and had known my Dad well.

On arrival at the Hilton Hotel at the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham, where Conference took place this year, we were warmly welcomed by a very well-organised group of people whose role was to 'look after' us, the families. Also on hand to guide us through proceedings was the Chair of the Newcastle District the Rev Stephen Lindridge. Each family was accompanied by the Chair of the District the deceased minister had been living in and this was their priority for those few hours.

After conversation over a cup of tea, we were invited to join the Conference delegates (only presbyteral ministers at this stage of Conference) for the service – the delegates stood in silence as our group of about 80 or 90 people entered the hall to take our seats. We were welcomed by the Rev Sonia Hicks, a past-President of Conference who presided at the service, and I was particularly touched by the emphasis placed on thanking us, the ministers' families, for all we had done to support the ministers so they could carry out their work.

During the service we sang three very appropriate hymns (744, 746 and 747 in Singing the Faith), heard two readings, from 1 Corinthians and Matthew, shared in an Act of Thanksgiving, and listened to the Calling of the Roll. This was a long list of about 95 names of presbyters who died in 2022-23, but it was read out by Rev Jonathan Hustler (Secretary of Conference) in a measured respectful way,

with all names given equal worth. The service lasted 45 minutes and was a very powerful and moving tribute. It touched me far more than I had expected!

Afterwards we were invited for 'a light lunch' – I was expecting the usual Methodist sandwiches and sausage rolls, but in fact it was a delicious hot meal with plenty of choice! My friends and I then enjoyed chatting with friends and browsing the different stands displaying their work – books, MHA, Fund for Human Need, Cliff College etc, before leaving to return home.

You will be pleased to know that I was able to have a lovely chat with Deacon Eunice Atwood, formerly Deacon at Brunswick, who was there in her capacity as Church at the Margins Officer, and she sent her greetings to all at Brunswick! Later on that same day I received an email from Rev Eden Fletcher, formerly minister at Brunswick, who is now in Hong Kong and had watched the livestream of the service and heard my Dad's name read out. He too sends greetings!

Overall, I was very pleased that I had made the effort to go, as I felt that this event was a very thoughtful and appropriate tribute by the Church to those who, like my father, had given so much of their lives to the church they loved.

Ruth Colclough

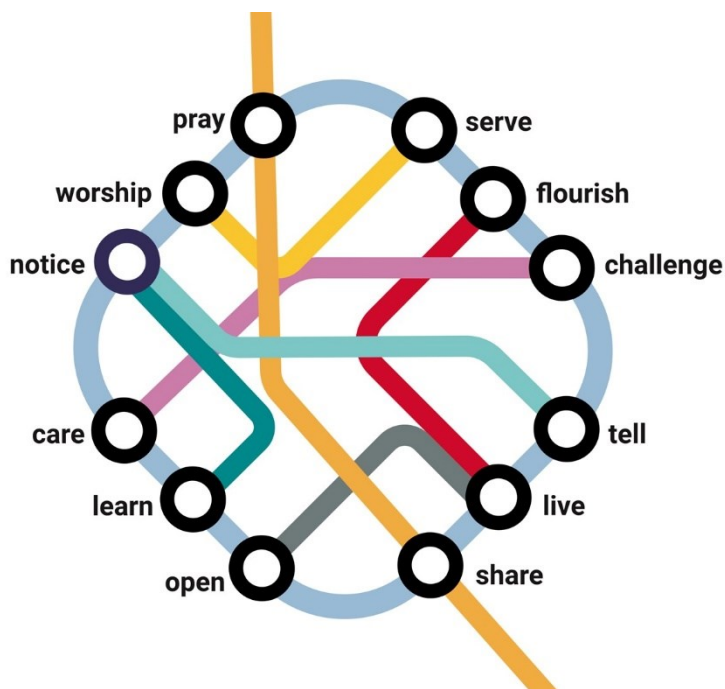
*"They marked the footsteps that he trod;
his zeal inspired their breast;
and, following their incarnate God,
possess the promised rest." (StF 747)*

The Methodist Way of Life (MWOL)

Over the months of 2023 we shall be following themes in our Sunday worship and in our bible study groups which help us to understand what it means to be disciples of Jesus as those who worship and serve in a Methodist church.

The twelve practices which form the MWOL each help us to grow as disciples, welcome others into the church community, and be part of a missional church together.

The following diagram sets these practices in the form of a train map with each one representing a station on the map.



As we explore together these twelve practices so we hope to discover how discipleship can be a *dynamic* process. The path is not normally linear, but it is more like travelling on a train network.

Each station is a place where disciples grow in maturity and step out in mission and action. We look forward to sharing, learning and growing together over the coming months!

A **Methodist Way of Life** is a way of living. It is how we try to live our lives in response to God's love, made known to us in Jesus. A Methodist Way of Life is both new and old. It is new, in that Methodists first discussed such a way at the 2018 Conference, although it is based on **Our Calling**, agreed in 2000. That, in

turn, was built on what Methodists have always done, since the days of John Wesley, in trying to follow Jesus and live out the Christian faith – just as those first followers in Acts did. May we be a blessing within and beyond God’s Church, for the transformation of the world.

Discipleship Pathways: travelling together

The process of **discipleship** aligns our lives to keep following Jesus, and becoming more like him. We do this as individuals and a community by shared spiritual practices and reflecting together. Discipleship is a dynamic process. The path is not normally linear, but more like travelling on a train network.

Each station is a place where disciples **grow** in maturity, and **step out** in mission and action.

We learn as we **reflect** together on what happens at each station.

The **Holy Spirit** should be driving! We go where the train takes us.

A Methodist Way Of Life expands the Methodist Church’s core **Our Calling** statement, and provides a rhythm to live life. There are twelve practices that will help us mature as disciples, welcome others into the church community, and be part of a missional church together. The twelve practices are: pray, worship, notice, care, learn, open, serve, flourish, challenge, tell, live, share.

In each of the six editions of Brunswick News in 2023 two of the practices will be featured, continuing here with ‘serve’ and ‘flourish’.

Serve

We will help people in our communities and beyond

“Who is my neighbour?” was the question a lawyer posed to Jesus.

In response, Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan – a moving story of a man who acted with compassion towards another who had been attacked and robbed (Luke 10:25-37).

The surprise in the story is that the neighbour is neither the person next door nor someone in the village. The shock in the story is that the person showing kindness is Samaritan, a member of a group despised by many Jews.



In using a parable, Jesus shifts the notion of neighbour away from locality to the arena of need, and compassionate action. Anyone you come across might be a neighbour to you. You are being a good neighbour when you help a person in need.

Being a good neighbour can be the simple action of
lending a garden tool to the woman next door
buying the Big Issue from your local vendor
befriending a housebound person in your street
talking to someone on a train
volunteering at the local hospice
lending an ear to a work colleague facing a difficult situation.

In all of these things the service is **mutual**: both sides give and receive. Churches have a good record of serving their communities. Church buildings are often meeting places for many community groups. In addition, the church may support coffee mornings, toddler groups, luncheon clubs, uniformed organisations and many other activities.

Flourish

We care for creation and all God's gifts

Service also includes how we use personal and shared resources for good.

We are increasingly conscious of the threat to our planet and Christians, alongside many others, are seeking to do the right thing through activities such as recycling, buying fair trade goods, and campaigning for more environmentally friendly ways of living. The earth is a gift from God and we are called to be good stewards of its life (Genesis 2:15). As Christians we will also want to reflect on how we use the resources we have been given.

The [Joint Public Issues Team \(JPIT\)](#) provide some excellent resources with information and practical advice. (www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues/environment)



More resources and information can be found on the Methodist Church website: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/a-methodist-way-of-life/>

An extraordinary time celebrating 130 years

In the Methodist Recorder of 21st July there is a full-page article by our former minister, Rev Eden Fletcher, about the church anniversary celebrations at his current church, Methodist International Church, based in Wesleyan House in Hong Kong. The article is too long to reproduce in these pages, but there are photocopies of it in the church office if you'd like to read it. Here are the photos from the article:



A service being held in the Methodist International Church.



The Rev Eden Fletcher.

Brunswick Giving



I would like to report that Brunswick has made some significant donations to charities and Connexional church funds - some are regular commitments 'allocations from giving' and some have been made following appeals or fundraising.

This is not a full list as Eileen Todd has raised a lot of money for good causes over the last year, as well.

The Fund for Presbyters & Deacons	£38
The Property Fund	£152
The Fund for World Mission	£412.13
Mission in Britain Fund	£303.81
All We Can	£371.99 [Methodist Relief & Development Fund]
Action For Children	£643.47
Methodist Homes for the Aged	£242.65
District Lay Training Fund	£38
Leaders of Worship & Preachers' Trust	£50
Methodist Ministers' Housing Association	£50
Network 'Easter Offering' – world mission	£66
MacMillan	£100
Meth Care [book stall] Church, Sri Lanka]	£1,237.57 [Moratumulla Methodist Lanka]
Total	£3,705.62

We are most grateful for the commitment, work and generosity.

David Stabler



COST OF LIVING APPEAL

In response to the rising cost of living, we are looking for more donations of toiletries and food essentials!

We collect these items year round for people in receipt of the hardship fund, however, money is tight for everyone now and people are struggling to buy these essential items week on week.

We would like to build up our stocks to be able give out items to everyone we work with.

SHAMPOO CONDITIONER
SHOWER GEL TOOTHPASTE
TOOTH BRUSHES DEODORANT
SHAVING GEL HAND AND BAR
SOAP SANITARY TOWELS
NAPPIES (ESPECIALLY LARGER
SIZES 3+) SLEEPING BAGS
VEGETABLE OILS SALT LONG-
LIFE MILK

Donations drop off: Monday - Thursday, 10am - 4pm at WERS

The West End Refugee Service (WERS) is based at St Philip's Vicarage, St Philip's Close, Arthur's Hill, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 5JE
Telephone: 0191 273 7482



Sing on Songs of Praise!

There are two opportunities in August to sing on the BBC's Songs of Praise.

St Mary's Church, Scarborough
Castle Road, Scarborough YO11 1TH
Saturday August 19th from 15:00 to 18:00

We are delighted to be recording in this historic building and will be singing traditional hymns.

St George's Church, Jesmond
St George's Close, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 2TF
Monday 21st August from 18:30 to 21:30

We are delighted to be recording in this magnificent building and will be singing traditional hymns.

To book your FREE tickets for these recordings email us at singwithus@ctvc.co.uk. Please tell us which recording you want to book for by putting Scarborough or Jesmond in the subject heading. Or you can telephone us on 07734 030888.

Please note this is not an automated system. Our office team will respond to your email or phone call as quickly as possible.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/xNr50mkCxVDxzNgLfh5kJ8/tickets-and-forthcoming-events>

Diary Dates

6th August - Hiroshima Day is observed annually on 6th August on the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945

23rd August - International Day for Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition

1st September-4th October - Creation Time, Creationtide or Season of Creation

10th September - Education Sunday (England and Wales)

17th September – Disability Awareness Sunday

17th-24th September - World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel

21st September - UN International Day of Peace

24th September - Peace Sunday

Taken from the website of the Joint Public Issues Team <https://jpit.uk/>



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Submissions for future editions are welcomed

**Please forward these to Ruth Colclough or Fiona Wells
(fiona@brunswickmethodist.org.uk) by the 17 September
2023**

**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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**Brunswick
Methodist**

A church with a heart for Newcastle