

Hello Church,
Christian greetings!

As we navigated through the restrictions imposed by the necessity of the lockdowns, there were moments of legitimate trepidations. We wondered if we would ever be safe from the lingering deadly presence of the pandemic, and still, some of us wonder! Others are a bit nervous and unsure about the future! Meanwhile, let us rely on these reassuring words of our Lord, "I am with you always". Even when Jesus appears to be silent, we are not alone and we will never be. "Peace! Be still!" is our guaranteed assurance (Mark 4:40).

During those times of isolation, we may have equally received an inspired vision of what a new church would look like in a post-pandemic life. Guess what, we are now gradually emerging from the pandemic as some key restrictions are being eased. Do you mind sharing with the wider church the vision of that new church our Lord has placed upon your heart? Again, as disciples, you may have received a call, or you may have been invited to revisit your call in the light of the post-pandemic life – do you mind sharing? I would personally really love hearing from you.

To enable your sharing with us, I wonder if the following points may be of some help:

What we have in the church and wish to keep.

What we have and do not want.

What we do not have and wish we had.

In brief, what's the Lord's vision for the church (your local church too)?

I look forward to hearing from you and being blessed with your discernment!

Peace! Be still!

Marcus

In this issue:

- 1) A Word from our Superintendent
- 2) Arley Methodist Chapel 100 years
- 3) Circuit Calendar of Events
- 4) Aldergate Chapel at Coventry Central Hall
- 5) EGAP (Part 6)
- 6) Bedworth Methodist Church

2) Arley Methodist Chapel - 100 years

Over the weekend of 4th and 5th July we will be celebrating our Centenary. Due to Covid our celebrations will be scaled back, but it is important to celebrate the life of worship and faithfulness shown by so many over the last 100 years, as well as preparing for the next chapter of life and witness in the Chapel. Although a little obscure, the beginnings of a Methodist witness in Arley seem to correspond with the expansion of the village due to the growth of coal mining. A new opportunity was seen, due to the change in the social situation, and in the Autumn of 1916, the first worship was held in the Arley Council School. In 1916 a Lay Evangelist from Cliff College, Mr Williams, was appointed by the Central Mission to begin evangelistic work and in September 1919 an application form for the erection of a new chapel was completed. Pastor Jacklin who succeeded Mr Williams was in turn succeeded by Pastor Jackson and by the time he left five years later, the Society of Methodist People were well and truly established.

In 1920 Arley had a population of over 1,500. This was largely families who

worked for the Arley Colliery Company. A sum of £30.00 was paid for the site of the Methodist Chapel by the mine owners, Messrs. Knox and Sons, on land which was part of Arley Hall Estate. The new chapel was indeed built with new bricks, but the rest of the building was transported from Holbrook Lane in Coventry when the Holbrook Wesleyan Institute was demolished. The eventual cost was £5700, raised by a great deal of sacrificial giving by the Methodists who lived in the area. The Arley Colliery Company also gave regular financial help and perhaps paid for the house of the Pastor and part of his allowance. Wesley Hall continued to be a separate Mission Church until January 29, 1934, when the annual Trustees Meeting agreed that it become part of the Nuneaton and Atherstone Methodist Circuit. In the years that followed there was a faithful and steady commitment to the work of God. Arley means 'High Place' and for many Methodists Arley Chapel has been a place of worship and encounter with God. In 2005 major work was needed in the Chapel and with faith, prayer, and trust in God a major refurbishment was begun.

When at last the work was completed the building was once again a place of



worship for all ages but also a place for the community to use. Our journey which began 100 years ago is not yet complete, but in the words of the hymn writer, Charles Wesley,

*This, this is the God we adore
Our faithful, unchangeable friend
Whose love is as great as His power
And neither knows measure nor end.*

*'Tis Jesus the first and the last
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home.
We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust him for all that's to come.*

3) Circuit Calendar of Events

Thursday 24 th June to Thursday 1 st July 2021	Methodist Conference at the National Conference Centre, Birmingham,
Sunday 27 th June 2021 at 4pm	Ordination Service for Deacons at Kenilworth Methodist Church and Ordination of Doreen Koffie-Williams at Shirley Methodist Church, West Midlands
2 nd July — 4 th July 10am-5pm	Arley Flower Festival , outdoor refreshments available
Saturday 3 rd July at 2.30pm	Arley Special Centenary Celebration Service led by Rev'd Ian Howarth
Sunday 4 th July at 4pm	Accreditation Service for Tendai Munemo at Central Hall

4) Aldersgate Chapel at Coventry Central Hall

Last year our Church Council asked the Stewards to oversee the restoration and refurbishment of our chapel on the ground floor.

We initially met a couple of times to discuss what we wanted the chapel to look like what feeling we wanted to create and how to achieve this.

The chapel was then cleared, and we were all surprised how big it is and how high the ceiling is! After a lot of preparation work and discussion on colours the painting began! The paint for the pillars was kindly donated and the rest came from our very small budget. We had a small but dedicated team of helpers who worked extremely hard. The furniture has been rearranged and banners hung on the walls. The banners will be changed regularly according to the church season. When not in use, the door of the chapel is left wide open, and the cross is always lit.



The chapel is used for Morning Prayer at 9.00 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and, in future, we hope for Bible Studies. It will also continue to be used by the Zimbabwean Fellowship on Sundays from 12 noon and the Zimbabwean Sisterhood on Saturdays 12-2.00 p.m. We were delighted to have a wedding service in there recently. In September, paintings from the Methodist Modern Art Collection will be displayed in there.

As we begin to open our building, the chapel will be available for anyone needing a quiet, safe place and for private prayer.

5) Evangelical Growth Action Plan of the Circuit: EGAP (Part 6)

How the Circuit Streams outwork into the Circuit Churches. In this edition we focus on Stream 2 Discipleship through Learning & Caring

Goal: To inspire churches in their spiritual growth through small groups (class, life, cell, or prayer groups) as a means of grace.

By: praying consistently for Church & Kingdom growth; enabling the restructuring of local churches for mission through small groups; resourcing and energising home Bible study/small groups; providing models for fruitful pastoral care and general training in discipleship; promoting biblical literacy, spiritual accountability, and generous giving; sharing knowledge, spiritual practices & ideas across the Circuit; developing & exploring the '6 practices of devotion' & 'the Streams of Living Water' (Richard Foster); organizing retreats, seminars, conferences, and spiritual walks towards maturity in Christ; developing other ideas in response to community needs.

How can you help?

- Do you have experience of leading Bible studies and prayer?
- Do you have a desire to deepen spiritual understanding?
- Are you good at encouraging churches to try new things?
- Do you have good organisational and communication skills?
- Do you have experience of and value being part of a small group?

Then this could be your calling. We are looking for committed disciples from each church with a love for pastoral care and small group meetings to work alongside a dedicated Circuit Steward.

6) Bedworth Methodist Church

How good it is to take some small steps towards normal church life.

In the last three weeks we have resumed actual regular worship each week and managed a coffee and chat get together after worship on



Sunday last. We are blest with a small outside area at the rear of our church so now the weather has improved it is ideal for small outside gatherings. We have even managed a fish and chip lunch in the sunshine, so we are counting our blessings and doing what we can (with safety in mind) to move towards better days. Praise the Lord!

We welcome Churches and individuals to offer prayer concerns, news items, inspirational poems, moving testimony (up to 200 words), or even a Bible puzzle or crossword to be included in the next Newsletter. Due to summer holidays there will be a delay until the next edition. Please send any articles, by 10th September 2021, to the Circuit Office c/o Bedworth Methodist Church, Mill Street, Bedworth, CV12 8JZ, Email: office@covnunmethodist.org.uk, or Telephone: 07517693474