

The METHODIST CHURCH DERBY CIRCUIT NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2018

SIMPLY WORSHIP

(The following is a copy of an article which appeared in the Methodist Recorder earlier this year)

On one particularly poorly attended Sunday at St Thomas' Road Methodist Church in Derby, Revd Jenny Dyer found herself preaching to about a dozen people, two of whom had learning difficulties. "I was preaching about the Chilcot Report," she says, "and thinking what on earth are they making of this. Not only did two of the worshippers have learning difficulties, but another had left an adult son with learning difficulties at home. Others on our membership list have either learning difficulties or dementia. It was a lightbulb moment. I thought: we have to change our worship to be more accessible to these people."

It was the beginning of a new initiative. The church got together with Prospects (now part of Livability), an organisation that promotes worship groups for people with special needs. Prospects came and led a training day, attended not only by the faithful few from the church but by Local Preachers and Worship Leaders from around the circuit, and people from other churches in Derby and beyond.

Then the services started. Since February, St Thomas' Road has been running a service it calls 'Simply Worship', at its usual service time, once a month. 'Simply Worship' aims to be accessible to everyone, including people with special needs or dementia. "It is a bit of a challenge though," says Revd Jenny, "because it also needs to have enough meat in it for our other worshippers. But so far everyone seems to enjoy it."

The congregation sit café-style round tables, and tea, coffee and squash are served as people arrive. There is always something on the table for people to do and help each other to do, as they settle in. Sometimes it has been craft, and once it was a puzzle. Once it was baking: "It was a Sunday soon after Easter and we made 'empty tomb marshmallow croissants!'" The worship is informal, interactive, visual, colourful. "We aim to keep it simple, but with depth," says Revd Jenny. And it always finishes with the Lord's Prayer with actions.



Future challenges? “We need to get it better advertised,” says Revd Jenny. “So far we have not been successful in attracting people who are not already connected with us, but we hope that will change soon. And also I’d like us to learn some simple Makaton signs to go with some of the songs.”

THE CHURCH ON OAKWOOD

What a great summer we have had with planned summer activities such as holiday club and activity days, along with God blessing us with the amazing summer weather that allowed us to host picnics on the park each Wednesday afternoon during the summer holidays for all ages and family units. It is amazing what conversations can happen through offering a packet of crisps, a bottle of water and a football to young people already on the park.

We had the same response through being hospitable also at the Oakwood Festival in July, through offering fliers, Bibles, Diary of a Disciple mini-books, resources, biscuit decorating, sweets, goody bags and a chance to win a hamper for free. There is nothing more special than showing God’s love to people through blessing them with freebies and engaging in conversation and connecting them to the church through things on offer.

Our Monday Fellowship group for retired people, who meet on a Monday afternoon, to listen to guest speakers, go on trips out or host games afternoons following a pre-planned programme of events each week, have just celebrated their 25th birthday. This is not only a big occasion due to amount of years the group has been running, but a celebration as a few of the founding members are still in attendance 25 years on!

In September, because of the age of the young people attending on a Sunday morning, we have started a group for youth on 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month alongside JAM who is for 3-11’s. The name is yet to be confirmed, but it has been a

blessing in bringing one young person back to church who hasn't been in a while and has made others come more regularly. The young people are also being encouraged to play a bigger part in the church family currently giving out books, welcoming people and taking the collection during a Sunday morning service and serving drinks, helping with crafts and leading songs and prayers during Messy Church.

As we head into winter, we are finalising the plans for Christmas and ways in which we can bring light into the darkness through sharing the gospel message with our local school, wider community and families connected and those not yet connected to the church.

Becky our Family Worker has found something that we will be using again at Christmas this year and would encourage others to sign-up and order this FREE resource to give out to children in your church or local community. 'The First Christmas' is a great book that is written by Gemma Willis (writer of Diary of a Disciple) and FREE from the Scripture Union website. This is a great gift to give to children to share with their families at Christmas.

ALL WE CAN

Next year All We Can (AWC) will work more closely with the World Church Relationships team (WCR) to provide Methodist global partner churches with more comprehensive support and resources. WCR has partnership co-ordinators for Africa, The Americas, Asia-Pacific, and Europe, and co-operation with AWC will strengthen Methodist global churches for mission and development. All We Can will continue to provide relief and development, including its successful work with other NGO's, in addition to supporting WCR. This new initiative is not a merger between WCR and AWC - donations to World Church and All We Can will continue to be channelled separately to each organisation.

An urgent Appeal has been launched by the Methodist Church, and All We Can in the aftermath of the recent devastating earthquake and tsunami in Sulawesi, Indonesia. The city of Palu was engulfed, and many neighbouring towns and villages are cut off by debris and landslides. The death toll could be in thousands, and survivors who have lost everything are in desperate need of water, food, shelter, and access to medical care. Thousands of people are so affected, and Laura Cook (AWC Humanitarian Aid Co-ordinator) urges people to give generously, so that we can make a rapid response.

All We Can not only provides relief in a crisis, but also works with some of the world's poorest communities in development projects to help transform the lives of these people. In the Extraordinary Christmas Appeal, AWC has catalogues of Extraordinary Gifts, the proceeds of which, together with donations to the Christmas Appeal, can help some of the world's poorest communities. To help with fund

raising, Catalogues, Gift Aid Envelopes Posters, a Film, and Worship Resources may be ordered by calling 020 7467 5132, or e-mailing info@allwecan.org.uk You may also like to invite an AWC speaker to a service or event, at the above contact number.

Many thanks to all who continue to support the work and vision of All We Can, and new supporters are very welcome

DOROTHY ROBINSON
Derby Circuit Rep. 'All We Can'

KNITTING PROJECT NEWS JULY 2018

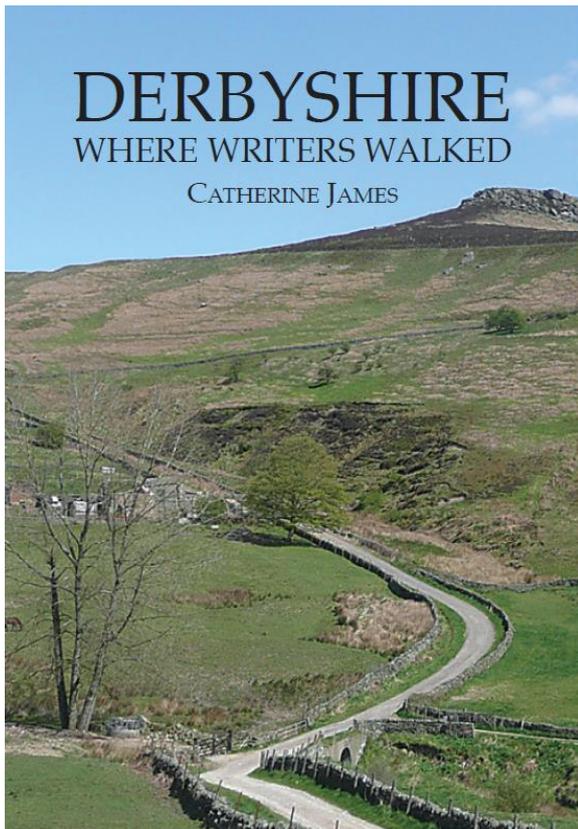
Although Aquabox closed down for August for packing, they were very busy sending out Aquaboxes containing £90,000 worth of water filters and humanitarian aid. These were mainly destined for Kerala, South India to help people cope with the devastating floods there. Boxes were also sent to Cameroon, where thousands of people have been displaced because of fighting between government forces, and non-state armed groups. People have been forced to flee from their villages, preventing them from farming their land, thus losing their livelihoods. Children, women, and elderly people are the most affected, and dependent on aid.

Aquabox has received further requests for aid from the Philippines, Eritrea, and the Yemen. Providing this emergency aid is very demanding on funds and resources and they would welcome any donations to help the work to continue. Our knitted goods are also appreciated, particularly in situations where people have lost all their possessions. We rely on our courier, Derick Perry to take our knitted goods to Aquabox, and sadly, he is now recovering from the recent loss of his wife Anne, so please remember him in your prayers. We are now able to begin supplying MHA with knee blankets and twiddle muffs. About 30 twiddle muffs, supplied by a knitting group at Sinfin have been taken to Willowcroft MHA at Spondon, by Richard and Jenny Dodson of Oakwood. They visit regularly, as Richard plays the organ for a service there. They report that the residents received the twiddle muffs with great joy, thinking that Christmas had arrived. Items for Willowcroft may be left at Oakwood Church for Richard and Jenny to deliver. Barbara Sims will also receive goods for MHA at Mickleover Methodist Church, and she is in the process of taking 20 blankets, and 10 muffs to Maple Leaf House MHA, Ripley. Barbara also intends to take knitted items to Willowcroft. Our contact at MHA, Lesley France, sends the following message: 'Thank you all, and keep knitting!' If you are sending knee blankets, please make sure that they are the correct size – 28” x 28” (made up of 16 x 7” squares), as other sizes are not suitable.

I shall not now be away from Derby for the next few weeks, helping my sister, as her operation has been postponed, and I hope that the knitting continues to flourish. Many thanks to you all for your efforts, which bring comfort to many, both at home and abroad.

DOROTHY ROBINSON (Co-ordinator)

CATHERINE JAMES, LOCAL PREACHER AND MEMBER AT ST JOHN'S M C,



has written a book exploring the references to the places in Derbyshire in the writings of authors who visited them. Whilst researching the book Catherine's travels took her to the villages and towns of the Peak District and Derwent Valley and there are fascinating stories to discover in the chapters which focus on authors such as Jane Austen, Daniel Defoe and John Wesley.

For your information the ISBN no is 978-1-910489-54-3 Price £14.99

Articles for the next Newsletter should reach Angela Davies
at the Circuit Office by

1st March 2019

Email: office@derbymethodists.org.uk