

# CONTACT

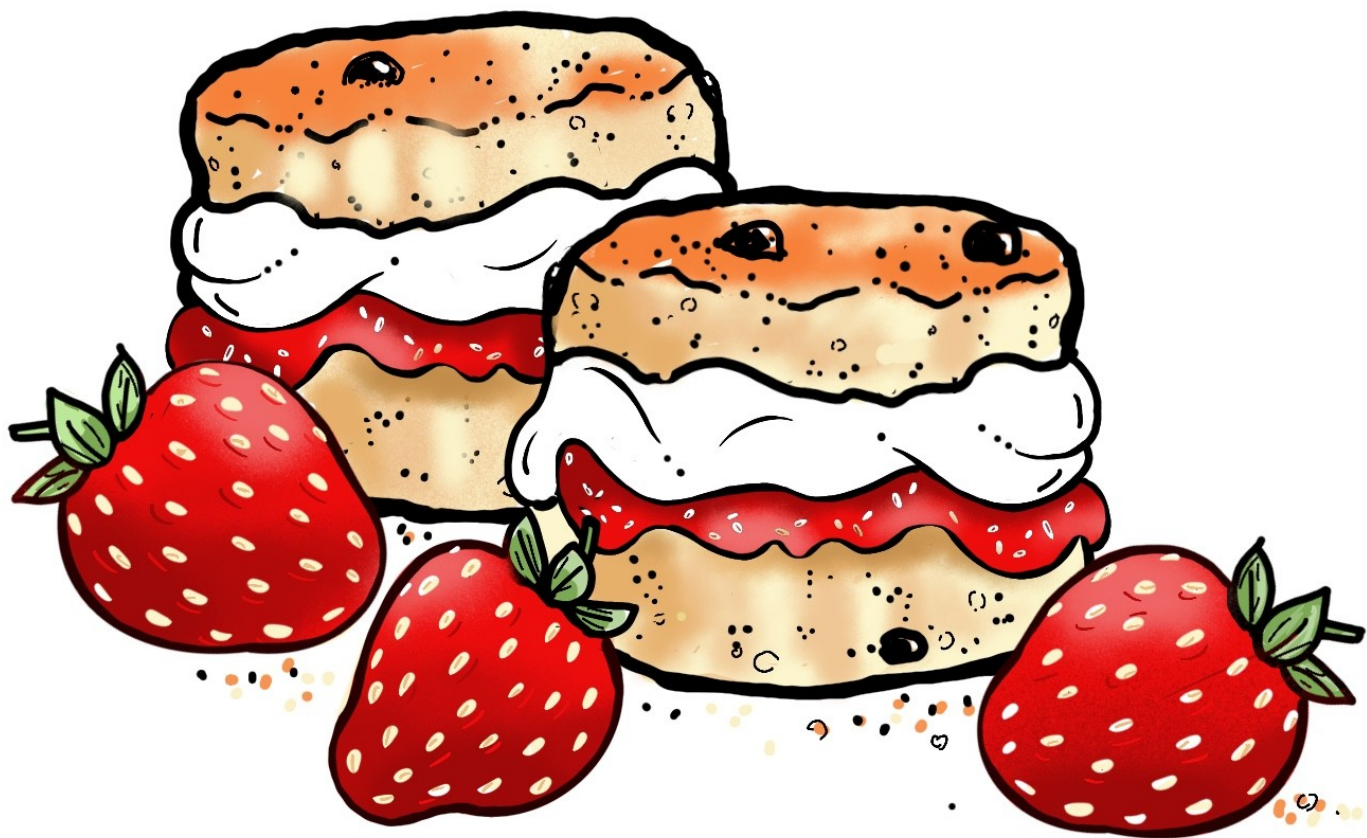


Magazine of Erdington Methodist Church  
Station Road - June 2024

GROWING GOD'S KINGDOM IN ERDINGTON, THROUGH WORSHIP,  
PRAYER, ACTION AND FRIENDSHIP

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# Using Rest to Pray

Most of us think of prayer as a very demanding activity, but did you know it can be extremely restful?

One of the great verses in the Bible says this: 'Be still and know that I am God' (Psalm 46:10). It suggests we experience God most fully when we are still. When we cease rushing around, pausing for a moment of thought and recollection, we are becoming prayerful, and God is very near. Even a break for a morning coffee can be a moment of prayer, if we slow ourselves down and allow our thoughts to turn towards God.

An essential part of resting is to breathe slowly. Christian tradition has always made a connection between prayer and breathing. You can learn to pray to the rhythm of your breathing, using chosen prayer words to focus. As you breathe in, you might say 'Abba', and then as you breathe out, add the word 'Father'. Choose words which are meaningful to you, deliberately slowing your breathing so you become relaxed and peaceful.

Perhaps you have a favourite chair where you are able to unwind easily. For a few moments sit and do nothing. Simply become aware of the present moment, reminding yourself you are in the presence of God. As you feel yourself relax, bask in the knowledge of God's love and acceptance of you. Sense His smile of approval upon you. You don't have to do anything, just 'be' for a moment.

This too is prayer.

Sometimes we are forced to rest by circumstances... illness, disability, growing older and so on slow us down and we can't rush around like we used to do. Never mind. Don't fight against your circumstances. Enter into the place of rest that God is giving you. He loves you for who you are, not for what you do. Turn your thoughts into prayer and offer them to God. You don't need to advise God as to what He should do; simply hold people before Him, leaving the outcome to Him.

Prayer should be a natural expression of our relationship with God. Sometimes we have words, sometimes silence is enough. We don't need to impress God with our fervour. We can relax and be rested, even as we pray.

*Tony Horsfall - a retreat leader and author - Parish Pump*

## **Tuesday Club**

Tuesday Club will not be meeting at Church until our AGM on 10th September at 2.00.

Please join us for a Garden Party on 11th June from 12.30

see Val Long for details.

# **Common Cause 2024 – UPDATE**

## **Home Leone – Building new, sustainable villages and communities in Sierra Leone**

Our total keeps on rising and we have now achieved £203.86. £84.61 was donated over the weekend of the 11th & 12th May during Saturday coffee morning and after Sunday worship for refreshments which included a range of cakes. Thank you for your generosity. Upcoming events include a Table Top sale at Kingstanding Methodist Church on 15th June. 11am to 2pm. Our table is booked and I would still welcome any items which you feel may be suitable. We are also planning a Garden Party on Saturday 17th August and a Quiz night later in the year. So, watch this space for further details. If you have your own ideas for fundraising then come and have a chat about it.

### **More Information about Homeleone.**

In the process of building new homes within Destiny village, Homeleone is focusing on creating communities, which involves addressing the wider aspects of healthcare, education, utilities and employment. Home leone established Destiny village clinic in 2022 which addresses the health care needs of the community spanning all age needs.

The following is taken from the Homeleone website:

### **Healthcare**

With an average life expectancy of just 52, with insufficient and inadequate primary health care across the country, addressing health provision is at the heart of our new village plans. Whilst at Destiny Village primary healthcare is at the core, Home Leone's

leaders are building on their healthcare relationships to support other medical and care needs. This is led by Dr Clive Thursfield. We are seeking to link UK healthcare providers with this vital work.

### **Village Health Centre**

In mid-2022, we established a local clinic in the village. World Hope wonderfully donated a “Clinic in a Can,” which provides a consulting room in a container. We are in discussion with the local District Medical Officer, the wider Sierra Leonean government, and the local AHS hospital at Waterloo, in designing our full health care strategy for the village and the wider community. The above design is in discussion. For many, health care is unaffordable. Some say they won’t pay for operations, as they want to save money for the funeral! Our clinic prices will be manageable for the local population, but clearly once significant problems occur, it can be a challenge.

### **Elderly Care Home**

We will build and run a care home for seniors in the village. This provides jobs for those relocating and addresses the unfulfilled demand for this type of care in the country. We have gained significant experience in our relationship with the King George Memorial Home who our leaders have been supporting since 2003 and where we have recently added facilities, provided staff and addressed their lack of water supply.

### **Partnership with the AHS Hospital in Waterloo**

Since 2004, our leaders have built a significant part of the hospital and brought teams and supplies. Their development and love for

the people they serve is inspiring. We are discussing how we can work together.

### **City of Rest**

Mental Health and Drug Rehabilitation services are threadbare in the country. We are aware of only 1 psychiatrist for the 7 million people. Our leaders were responsible for building City of Rest's new facility at Grafton and Home Leone is in discussion as to how we can best assist them in their goals.

**Please explore the website for more information.**

**[www.homeleone.org](http://www.homeleone.org)**



When it was Mrs Wilson's turn to do the flower arrangements, she always kept the vicar's hay fever in mind





On 15th June 2024 Kingstanding Methodist Church are having a Table Top sale and I intend to book a table for our Common Cause. If you have any items which you feel are suitable for this sale then please let me have them.

Books, toiletries, plants, stationary, etc

Also, if anyone can spare an hour or two to pop along, between 11am & 2pm, to help me that would be much appreciated.

*Christine Rossiter*

## **Techie trouble**

The vicar at our local church experienced some technical problems with the sound system one Sunday. Instead of starting the service as usual with 'The Lord be with you', he said: "There's something wrong with the microphone."

Not hearing this, the congregation responded:  
*"And also with you."*



# Boxes of Privilege



A while ago I put a link to a video that the congregation at Hove Methodist Church had watched, on the EMCC WhatsApp group and if you watched it, this picture will be familiar. The voice on the video talked about asking people to reveal secrets of their lives by moving into an appropriate box, bullies or bullied, straight or gay, happy or depressed, hearing or deaf to name but a few from memory. This short video was shown as a conversation starter at a Chatty Café church worship. During the feedback from our Chats the relationship between the boxes and ‘privilege’ was raised. The idea of ‘privilege’ is an interesting concept which has moved up the ladder of social awareness in recent years.

The dictionary suggests a privilege is “something that you are proud and lucky to have the opportunity to do” or “the rights and advantages that rich and powerful people in a society have” or “a special right or advantage that a particular person or group people unknowingly perceive that they have”.

Historically I have always associated privilege with the first of these definitions. I remember feeling privileged when I first walked onto the University of Birmingham campus to start my Doctorate. Then more recently I have become a little cynical about the political classes in relation to the second of these definitions and number of Prime Ministers who were educated at Eaton and appear to have been members of the Oxford Bullingdon Club. But it is the third definition of privilege that concerns me today, the rights which people unknowingly perceive that they have i.e., their 'privileges', particularly with respect to how this affects how they interact with disadvantaged or vulnerable people.

This was brought home to me many years ago now. I grew up in the world of being a young man of 6'1", a world where I was taller than any women, I might meet either at work or socially. However, when I was doing some teaching at The School of Pharmacy in London, I came across a female post-doctoral researcher who was quite clearly taller than me. This caused me quite a lot of difficulty. I found that I could only interact with her if I was sitting on a lab stool or at least perched on some other convenient piece of lab furniture. I came to realise that my height gave me a 'privileged' view of the world, because if I made an effort to avoid it, i.e., not stood up face to face, then suddenly I had no problem.

However, this is just a trivial example of an unknowingly perceived 'privilege' and the associated problems. One of the things that we noticed when we moved to Hove from Birmingham was the difference in the local population. In Birmingham the population is ethnically diverse, but in Hove the population is almost entirely white with a significant proportion of Europeans. In Birmingham we had experience problems in discussions with church members

about same sex marriage but on our second Sunday morning worshiping in Hove the service included the marriage of two women. These differences could make the unknowingly perceived 'privileges' of people in Birmingham and Hove quite different.

This set of unknowingly perceived 'privileges' that we all develop as we grow and which constantly form the basis for how we interact with the world can be very difficult to change, as my interaction with the post-doctoral researcher demonstrated. For me as I grew up the world I lived in was a tall, dark, handsome!!! middle-class, church going, singer, then later car driver, house owner etc, etc. Unknowingly perceived 'privileges' are all pervading. We all have them and at a practical level they form the basis of our prejudices. Have you ever stopped to think what your unknowingly perceived 'privileges' are and how they underpin your prejudices and thereby influence your view of the world.

However, as Christians we are told to 'love out neighbour as ourselves' and therefore that must be irrespective of how our neighbour is viewed through the lens of our unknowingly perceived 'privileges'.

Putting it another way, we have to love our neighbour as another person made in the image of God, but our unknowingly perceived 'privileges' mean that we may have to work a bit harder to like them.

Also, there is one other thing we need to feed into our list of 'privileges' from the hymn 'What a friend we have in Jesus' -

*Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?*

*(but) What a privilege to carry  
Everything to God in prayer!*

*Peter Farley*

## **Planted in the love of the Father**

Planted in the love of the Father  
You can grow, dear one,  
You can grow.

Watered by the spring of the Spirit  
His fruit you'll show,  
His fruit you'll show.

And when the sun scorches,  
And the thorns threaten,  
And the storms around life's garden blow –

Your roots will hold,  
And hold secure,  
Because you're planted in the love of the Father.

*By Daphne Kitching - Parish Pump*

# Archbishop of York praises church magazines

*Many of you will know that I rely fairly heavily on the website 'Parish Pump' for articles and illustrations for our monthly magazine - Parish Pump is now 25 years old - which means I have been producing the Contact magazine for longer than that!! - the following article is the cover for this month's material and I thought it worthwhile reproducing in our magazine - so - from Parish Pump . . . . . ed.*

The Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell has praised the work of church magazine editors, as a service providing them with news, features and illustrations celebrates its 25th anniversary.

Parish Pump has supplied up to 3,000 publications each month since its launch at the Christian Resources Exhibition in May 1999. The online resource regularly reaches many tens of thousands of readers in the UK and overseas.

Journalist Anne Coomes has edited the subscription service throughout the quarter century from her home near Macclesfield.

In a message to celebrate the anniversary, Archbishop Cottrell said, "Well-produced magazines can play a vital role in helping churches reach out into their local communities, and to bring the Christian gospel into many people's homes. Even in a digital world, paper-based communications can help build bridges for local churches.

"I'm deeply appreciative of the effort put in by numerous church magazine editors, and of the important, creative support that Parish Pump has provided over the past 25 years. I congratulate its

editor, Anne Coomes, on her commitment to first-class communications through those years.”

Looking back, Anne says: “It has been a real labour of love to edit and produce Parish Pump over all those years. I have a wonderful group of contributors who write on a wide range of subjects, and we receive so many grateful messages from magazine editors.

“Parish Pump is a key part of my vocation to serve the Church. I feel passionate about church magazines, as they may be the only Christian literature that many people ever see, and so they are a wonderful way in which local churches can communicate the gospel to their communities.”

The increase in online communications and the difficulty in recruiting editors has led many churches to stop producing a printed magazine. That, and along with the effects of Covid, means that the number of Parish Pump’s subscribers has now dropped to below 1,400.

Anne said: “Each month, I receive news of magazines closing down – but also of new ones opening up. Overall, the trend is downwards, and that’s a shame as not everyone is able to go online. Magazines can reach people who would never search out a church website.

“The suspension of printed magazines during Covid was very difficult for many churches and editors. Many began posting their magazine online and that trend has continued.”

Anne, who co-founded and owns Parish Pump, intends to celebrate the Silver Anniversary with friends and contributors.

25 years is a long time – Parish Pump has been around for an entire generation!

And though I doubt PP will last another 25 years (I certainly won't!) we have no plans to close at present. We are very happy to simply carry on as usual. And we hope that you are, too!

Warm wishes

*Anne Coomes and the Parish Pump Team*

## **Newspaper headlines where you know what they meant!**

Couple Slain; Police Suspect Homicide

Red Tape Holds Up New Bridges

Man Struck by Lightning: Faces Battery Charge

New Study of Obesity Looks for Larger Test Group

Astronaut Takes Blame for Gas in Spacecraft

Kids Make Nutritious Snacks

Local High School Dropouts Cut in Half

Hospitals are Sued by Seven Foot Doctors

Typhoon Rips Through Cemetery; Hundreds Dead



# Two Beards and a Bike



by Vince Jobson

I'm Vince, and together with my friend and colleague Peter, we're the 'Two Beards and a Bike' duo. I've been letting my beard grow out, not just to catch up with Peter's impressive facial hair but also to spark conversations about why we're fundraising for All We Can.

Our first tandem training ride was quite the spectacle – it's much harder than it looks! The bike wobbled, we struggled to find our rhythm, and it was clear that tandem cycling requires a unique blend of teamwork and communication. But this challenge is symbolic of the journey that All We Can supports communities in undertaking.

Why do we believe so strongly in locally-led development? Because it's about putting the power back into the hands of local communities. All We Can operates on the principle that those who live in the community know their needs and strengths best. They are the experts of their context, and when they're in the driving

seat, development becomes more than just aid – it becomes empowerment.

This philosophy resonates deeply with us. Just as Peter and I must communicate and work together to steer our tandem bike, communities must be united and in control to navigate the path to sustainable development. It's not about imposing solutions; it's about fostering an environment where communities can thrive on their own terms.

All We Can believes in supporting initiatives that are community-led, ensuring that development is not something done to people, but something done by them. This approach is transformative. It builds on the assets, strengths, and ideas of the people within the community, making the development process more equitable and just.

The first time Peter and I tried to ride the tandem bike, we quickly realised that it was a true test of partnership. Steering required us to move in unison, to anticipate each other's actions, and to trust implicitly. It was a humbling experience, one that taught us that taking the easy route isn't always the most fulfilling.

By choosing to undertake this tandem bike challenge, we're demonstrating our support for All We Can's belief in locally-led development. It's a belief that aligns with our own values – that every individual should have the opportunity to be in control of their journey, just as we are on our bike.

So, as I let my beard grow and as Peter and I continue to train for our tandem ride, we invite you to support us. Your donations will help All We Can continue their vital work, ensuring that communities are in the driver's seat of their development.

Together, we can make a difference, one pedal stroke at a time.

If you would like to support our Ride London 2024 campaign, head to our just giving page: [HERE!](#)

## **Lost in translation**

A certain vicar had a kindly, pastoral heart. He often wrote little notes to any parishioners in distress, assuring them of his prayers. Then came the day he heard that one of his favourite old ladies in the church had been injured in a bad fall. The vicar felt so much sympathy that he wanted to add a note of pastoral affection. He thought of the little postscript that his young niece always added to her emails to him, which he took as a sign of her affection, and decided to add that to this note.

It read: "Dear Mrs Gantry, I am told that you fell down the stairs, broke both legs, and may be in hospital for some weeks. This is just to assure you that you are much in my thoughts." Then he added the postscript:

**LOL.**

# **Do you forget where your keys or wallet are?**

It may be irritating, but don't worry – it does not mean that you are losing your memory.

Instead, it is merely your brain forgetting them on purpose, so that it can store other information.

That is the verdict of two academics whose book *The Psychology of Memory*, sets out to explain why we forget some things that we assume we should always know.

Dr Megan Sumeracki and Dr Althea Kaminske argue that storing and retrieving information is far more complicated than people think.

Dr Kaminske of Indiana University School of Medicine said:

“Because we are most aware of our memory when we have trouble remembering something, our intuitions about how memory works might be a little biased.

“For example, I spend an embarrassing amount of time looking for my phone, water bottle, and keys. You may be unsurprised to learn that our memory systems are not necessarily designed to remember where we put our phones. Or keys. Or water bottles.

Co-author Dr Sumeracki of Rhode Island College added: “A degree of forgetting is natural to allow the brain to remember more general information. Memory does not work like a recording device, they say, but ‘more like a Wiki page’ because details can be edited.”

# Worship – June 2024

All worship at 10.30 am unless indicated otherwise

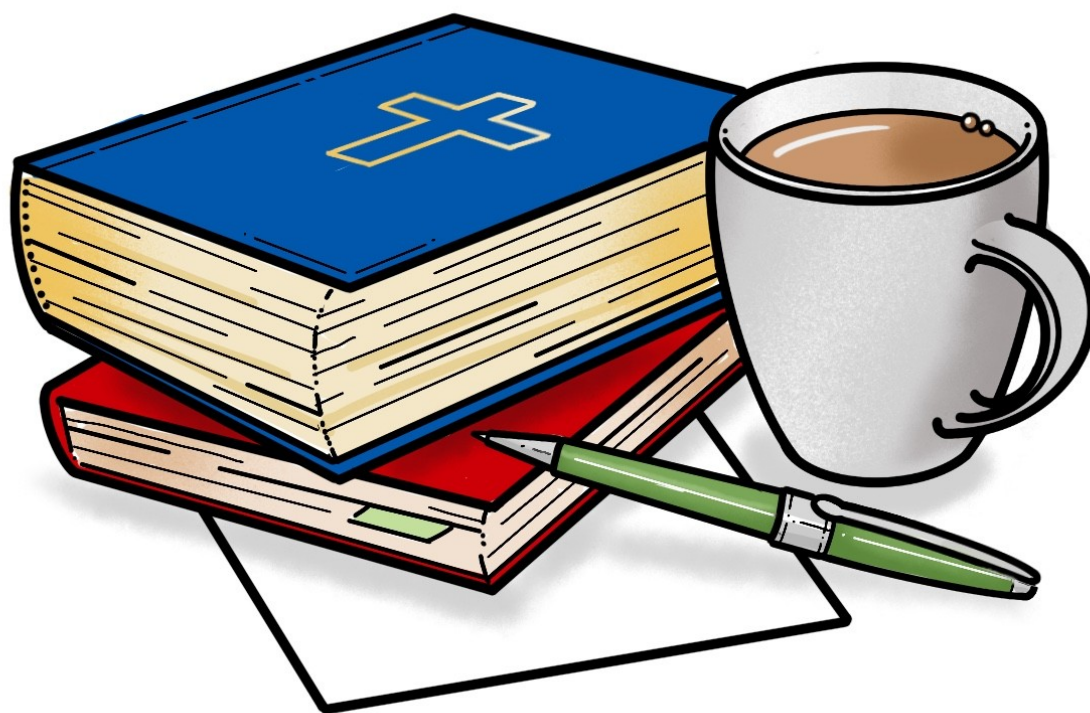
2nd - LOCAL ARRANGEMENT

9th - Kirsten Newman

16th - LOCAL ARRANGEMENT

23rd - HOLY COMMUNION - Rev Emily Young

30th - Peter Cashmore



*Please hand any items for the July/August CONTACT to me - Nick Riley  
by 21st June 2024 at the latest please, or alternatively email me:  
[spligosh@icloud.com](mailto:spligosh@icloud.com) with the words 'CONTACT MAG' in the title.*