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QUIZ—How well do you know your Circuit?

When did Coventry and Nuneaton Methodist Circuit start?

Who was the 1st Superintendent Minister of the Circuit?

Unfolding Promises of God!

We owe our lives, as our predecessors did, to the unwavering fulfilment of the promises of God. To our ancestors, the promises were as true, sure, and unwavering as they should be for us today. As God fulfilled promises made to the Israelites, “By day, the moving glory-cloud led them forward. And all through the night the fire-cloud stood as a sentry of light” (Psalm 78.14). Again, standing on the promises of God, Charles Wesley enabled us to sing “What troubles have we seen, what conflicts have we passed, fightings without, and fears within, since we assembled last!” (hymn 456: 3). Today, because of fulfilled

promises, our lives are a series of miracles such that we thankfully look to the future with renewed hope for more. In face of this pandemic, we refuse to “turn away from faith and walk away in fear” (Psalm 78.22). No, we will not. Since our past journeys in the Lord have been great, future journeys promise to be incredibly great. A lasting inheritance in life is the unwavering promises of our God. Let us therefore stand on these promises to press on with faith in the strength the Spirit provides. “Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise” (Hebrews 10:23).

Marcus

Updates from the Churches around the Circuit in the new lockdown restrictions

Trinity Atherstone

Trinity Church, Atherstone, are continuing with weekly online services on Sundays at 9.30am, arranged by our minister, Rev Dr Allan Smith. All church members get service sheets plus meditations from 'Roots' either online or by post. Each church council member continues to support several church members with phone calls and practical help.

Balsall Common Methodist Church

It is with sadness that we have made the decision to close our building during lockdown and tier 4 restrictions. We feel that this is best for the congregation and for preachers travelling to visit us. However, our Church is not closed, we will continue to meet over zoom, and we will be asking all preachers to provide their service over zoom if they are happy to do this. We also recognise that not all our congregation have access to on-line technology, so we are also asking all preachers to provide a service sheet that we can distribute to these members of our Church.

Bedworth

During lockdown, Bedworth Methodist Church Family have found the weekly worship at home sheets, plus accompanying pastoral letter, an invaluable aid in encouraging us to set aside a special time each week to come to God. Pastoral care via telephone and doorstep/window visits all fosters a feeling of togetherness - we

are still church. Over the Christmas period we decorated the outside of our building with a lovely tree, lights, and window decorations of the Christmas story. This showed our community that with worship and prayer at its heart, our church continues to hold fast to the truth as revealed in the birth of our Saviour. We look forward to the time when we can worship in our church, without restrictions, and sing our faith. What a wonderful day that will be! God Bless Friends.

Coventry Central Hall

Central Hall have made the decision to follow the advice from the District to suspend all live worship for the duration of this period of lockdown. We will be on Zoom every Sunday and it will be livestreamed so that people who have access to the internet will be able to join in. Service sheets will be sent out by email and by post as much as we can, and Bible study will continue on Wednesdays. Stephen and Sheila will send out a monthly letter to make sure contact is maintained. People are being encouraged to phone others if they are feeling alone, a bit down or just need to hear another human voice. Hopefully with the vaccine, things will feel more positive soon. Our pastoral leaders will be keeping in contact with those for whom they are responsible, other members of our congregation will be dressing our window (please check it out if you read our newsletter). Not forgetting our neighbours, Toilet rolls will be swapped for eggs and peoples well-being always considered. All of this is faith in action.

Nuneaton

Happy 55th Anniversary!!

We commenced Worship in Church on Sunday 6th December. On the 20th of December we had a Carol Service with normal readings and Carols from power point which was a success and the congregation enjoyed under the circumstances. We held a Midnight Service on Christmas Eve through Zoom and Christmas Day Morning Service in Church which was supported and appreciated by the members. We held our final Service in Church before lockdown on the 3rd of January which was our annual Covenant Service and Communion.

As we are now in lockdown, we are continuing our Services by Zoom and Conference call on Sunday evenings, and some of the congregation are joining in with the District Morning Service on face Book or YouTube.



On the 24th of January as a Church we are celebrating our 55th Church Anniversary, this Service is being led by Rev Neil Bishop this Service now will probably be on Zoom, but we are continuing our celebrations on Saturday 30th January with a Zoom quiz. As a Church we are continuing with the Zoom Coffee Morning on a Friday, Bible/ Prayer group on a Monday Evening, Oasis Zoom on a Wednesday Evening, and a Zoom singing group on a Tuesday Afternoon..

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Earlsdon

On Tuesday 5th January 2021 Earlsdon Methodist Church, Minister and stewards had to make a quick and executive decision to close the church for Worship for at least January. Due to the current circumstances this of course may continue for longer, but we are a people of faith and in all of this we know that God walks with us and is with us wherever we are. We continue to worship together either via zoom or privately, as we are sure that you also do and at EMC we are lucky enough to be able to have Sunday coffee so we also enjoy fellowship. Tuesday prayers can still be held just not in the church, we find that like the first disciples we are learning to do things differently. Our pastoral leaders will be keeping in contact with those for whom they are responsible, other members of our congregation will be dressing our window (please check it out if you read our newsletter). Not forgetting our neighbours, Toilet rolls will be swapped for eggs and peoples well-being always considered. All of this is faith in action.

Meriden

We are a very small congregation at Meriden, and we are keeping in touch and supporting each other by telephone or email. We have cancelled services until at least mid. February. However, Orders of services are being sent by Ministers and Lay Preachers and we are forwarding them on by email or post. Weekly Bible Study is planned via Zoom. Rev. Willey and Deacon Sheila Dawson came to us during December and we all felt happy and "cheered up ". As a small congregation we can look after each other as a group of friends.

Ridge Lane

At Ridge Lane we have been keeping in touch with one another through telephone conversations. Our Minister, Rev Jane Braund, and our supporting Minister, Rev Keith Salter, have also been telephoning or emailing all our members. The preachers who should have been coming to Ridge Lane have been sending an email to Jane of their service material and then she distributes them to each person who attends our church. This could be by email or by letter, as not everyone is contactable via a computer. Whilst this is not ideal it is the best method that can be adopted at the present time. We are all looking forward to the time when we can meet, greet, and sing together in church once again and we are praying that it will not be long now.

Coffee Shop Sunday

Coffee Shop Sunday will continue to offer online worship opportunities. There will be no physical in person services. We have four 9pm Prayer Sessions per week - two on Zoom and two on Facebook 'live' – all are welcome. In addition, we offer alternate Sunday online worship gatherings on either 'live' through Zoom or pre-recorded services posted on the CSS You Tube Channel. Contact Pastor Trevor Gay for more information.

Fillongley

We have since July been holding social distancing services each Sunday but in addition have sent out by email a weekly bulletin incorporating Church, Diocesan and Circuit news along with a reflection prepared by the rector Rev. Ali and a full transcript of the service including sermon for the following Sunday. Although religious services can still take place we have decided, because of the seriousness of the current situation, to suspend services for the next 6 weeks. The weekly bulletin will still be emailed, and copies posted or delivered to worshippers and others who have expressed an interest in receiving it.

Woodside

Greetings and good wishes to our circuit friends from Woodside.

Recent months we have experienced joy of meeting for live worship at church and disappointment that we now have closed. Yet we are blessed to now continue pre-recorded services accessible on 'you tube' via our web site www.woodsidemethodist.org.uk Sundays 10.30am. Do feel free to join us, all are welcome. Messy Church meet via Zoom 3rd Sunday of the month at 3pm

Our services are also accessible by phone for those without computer access and we have prepared printed copies which we distribute each week via our pastoral group leaders to those who need such. We were immensely pleased to have had our Annual Covenant

News from the Streams

Looking After the Workers

This year we have recruited three new employees and experienced inductions that Covid-19 made like none before. Jane, Ruda and Ady have settled in well and certainly deserved the break they had over the Christmas and New Year period. As with all employees in the UK the three of them enjoy the benefits of a contract and various rights under employment law. However, for some of the 'Circuit Staff' this is not the case.

Ministers (Presbyters and Deacons) are not employees of the Methodist Church. Rather, they and the church (Conference) enter a covenant relationship which, in a nutshell, says that the ministers will



account to the church through the fulfilment of their calling in God's ministry and the church will look after them in terms of deployment and support. In practice they do not have any contract of employment: no contractual hours; rate of pay; overtime etc. Instead, they are reliant upon us, the church members, to take all the appropriate steps to ensure that their well-being is always in our focus.

Please be a good friend to all our workers, ministers, lay employees, stewards, and volunteers, remembering them in our own pastoral concerns; let them know they are loved and encouraging them to take time to rest (Mark 6: 31).

Andy Pinks, Stream 5
Staffing and Staff Well-being

Service with Holy Communion Sunday 10th January, led by our pastoral minister, Rev Richard Wilde. We are indebted to our worship leaders for their support and cooperation in partnering to deliver these services. There is a real sense that 'God is with us' and our ministry is far more accessible now than pre COVID-19. Some of our community have now been vaccinated so we are increasing hopeful of restoring live worship before too long. We have over recent months installed equipment to live stream services and are currently providing a new toilet and drinks station to further improving safety for everyone. All are welcome. Every Blessing to all who share our experiences as we learn from one another.

Looking After the Finances

You may be aware of the Circuit 'assessment'. This is the portion of church income that is paid to fund the work of our Circuit and the wider Methodist Church. The word "assessment" is often viewed negatively similar to "tax". We all have our own views on tax – some do all they can to reduce their liability. Others are happy to pay as it means (for example) access to healthcare for everyone and not just the wealthy. Churches pay between 60%-65% of their income to the Circuit each year. Of the total assessment, 78% pays for Ministers and the administrator (who work across all churches in the Circuit). 19% goes to the District and wider Connexion activities (eg. training of new Ministers).



2 Corinthians 9:7 says "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." When giving to your local Methodist Church, you are contributing to Gods love being spread across the whole of the Coventry and Nuneaton area irrespective of an individual churches' wealth. If you or your church can afford to, please do consider giving generously towards the work of our Circuit and reducing the assessment for less wealthy churches.

There are a variety of ways to give if you are able, and your local church can provide details. Examples include using envelopes, monthly standing orders, or online payments. You can also consider bequeathing to donate to the work of Methodism in your local and wider church.

Mike Hobbs, Stream 6
Financing and Resourcing (Treasurer)

A Reflection from Graham Hargreaves – Fillongley Church

My parents were active members of Coundon Methodist Church which sadly closed its doors five years ago. A few years ago, one of our regular members, Malcolm Whittle, a local preacher who moved to Hinckley died and, in his memory, we paid for a hardwood bench to be made which we placed in the gardens of the Willersley Castle Guild Home overlooking the river Derwent. Plaques to other members who have since passed on have been added. Sadly, Willersley Castle has now been sold and one of the members managed to rescue the bench from a pile of property destined for the skip. Please see below an article from Mike Skinner the gentleman who rescued the bench which explains its rescue and its new local resting place. Many of the old Coundon members still worship at other Churches around the Circuit and I am sure would be very interested to read this story.

YPF Memorial Bench

Another public bench has been installed in the walled garden after an enquiry from former members of a Coundon church demolished several year ago. One of the group Mike Skinner, who restored the bench and transported it to the garden in November, recalled its interesting background. He said:

“Our group of friends started off as members of the Guild and Young People’s Fellowship at Coundon Methodist Church in the mid-50s. Many became Sunday School teachers and Society Stewards at the church and some eventually lay preachers, missionaries and one, a Superintendent Minister.

“At the time there was a network of holiday homes around the country specifically for Methodist Guild members and many of our group spent summer and

Easter holidays at these places. In time, many of them became Christian Guild holiday and conference centers for all denominations. A particular favorite of our group was Willersley Castle at Cromford in Derbyshire and most of our members have happy memories of times spent here.

“It was in 2010 after one of our members died of cancer that I had the idea of putting a memorial bench at Willersley Castle with his name plate on it together with name plates of those that had previously died. Twenty members contributed to the cost of the bench and I purchased it and assembled it on site. We then met up at Willersley the following July for a dedication ceremony. Since then, others have passed away and further name plates added. “Some months ago, it came to our notice that Willersley Castle was to be sold and a fortuitous visit revealed that the various memorial benches in the grounds were destined for the skip. Our bench was rescued and brought back to Coventry and a new location was sought. “Allesley Park Walled Garden was suggested, and this was thought to be an ideal site as it was not very far from our old church at Coundon. We would like to thank the APWG Group for allowing us to re-site the bench in very fitting new surroundings.”

Pictured to the right is the bench, with Mike Skinner standing right alongside fellowship members Brian and Maureen Roebuck.



Circuit Events

Collycroft Church Council 7pm	22nd January
CLT Meeting 7.30pm	2nd February
Central Hall Church Council Meeting 7.15pm	25th February

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. Please send, by 7th February 2021, to the Circuit Office c/o Bedworth Methodist Church, Mill Street, Bedworth, CV12 8JZ, Email: office@covnunmethodist.org.uk, or Telephone: 07517693474

There are many Virtual activities happening across the Circuit: Prayer Meetings, Bible Study, Fellowship & Praise. If you would like to attend any of these, please contact the Minister.

Rev'd Marcus Torchon – 024 7673 4785 or 07722 488411

Rev'd Jane Braund – 016 7653 3737 or 07706 956070

Deacon Sheila Dawson – 024 7631 0707 or 07845 238921

Rev'd Doreen Koffie-Williams - 024 7671 3314 or 07534 453909

Rev'd Stephen Willey – 024 7625 2411 or 07817 210207

Deacon Sue Fry - 024 7631 7338

Rev'd Richard Wilde - 07971 218356

Rev'd Allan Smith - 024 7792 1338

Rev'd Keith Salter - 024 7634 5524

Rev'd Ali Massey - 07837 124509