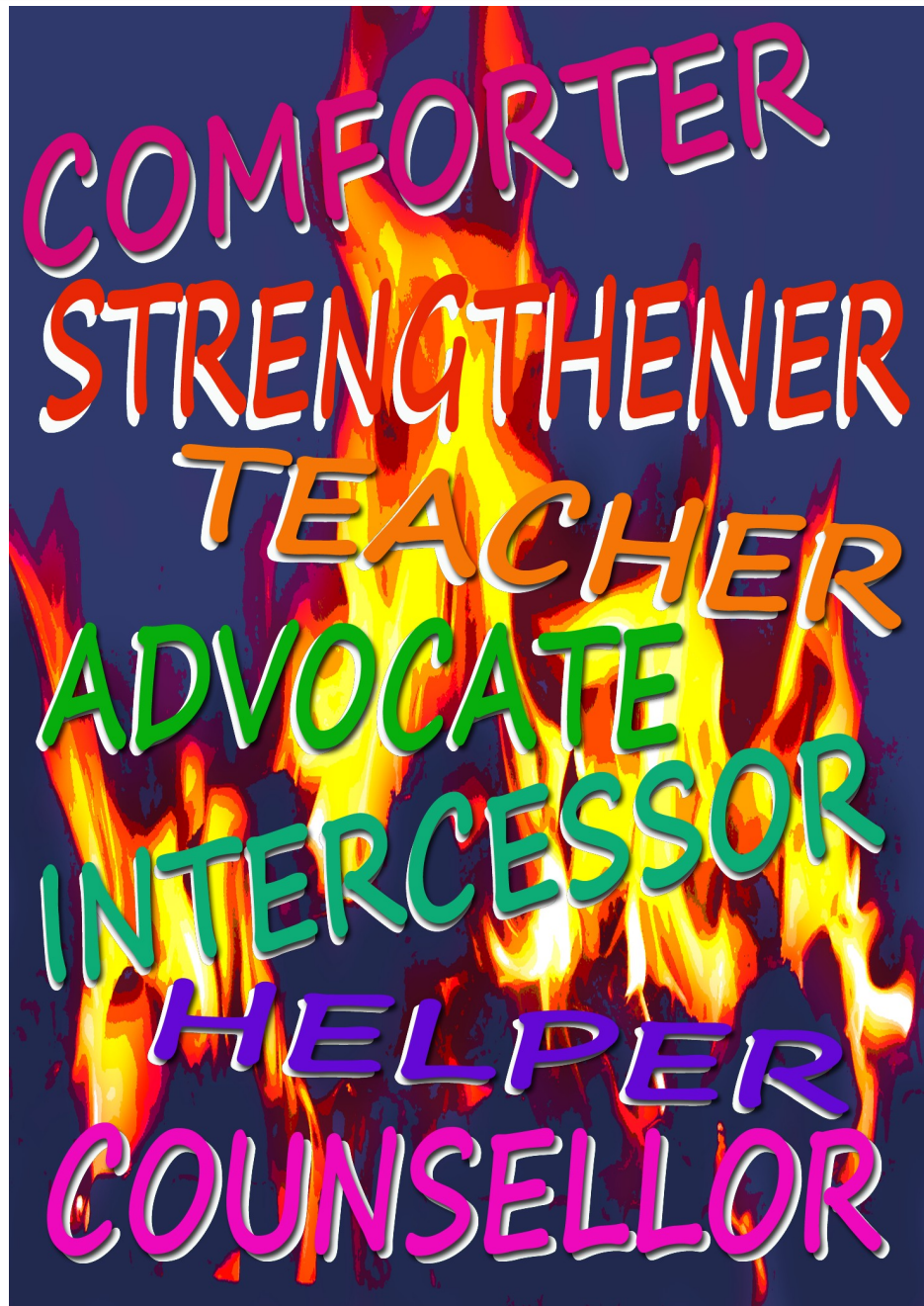


# CONTACT



Magazine of Erdington Methodist Church  
Station Road - May 2023

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

# Contents

Spiritual Disciplines : Prayer	3
Come and support Christian Aid	4
Tuesday Club	5
Common Noises - Intolerable?	5
Christian Aid Week - Esther's Story	6
John & Charles Wesley, evangelists & hymn-writers	9
Life abundant	11
The Fire of Pentecost - 28th May 2023	12
A Pentecost Prayer	13
Fire	13
Amnesty International Day 28th May 2023	14
Worship - May 2023	16



# Spiritual Disciplines : Prayer

An important spiritual discipline is prayer, where we can both listen and talk to God. However, it's not always easy, and as Pentecost tells us, we have the Holy Spirit to help us to pray.



*'In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.'* (Romans 8: 26,27)

## **The Spirit helps us in our weakness**

We often don't know how to pray for a person or situation. The Holy Spirit is alongside to help: 'He bears the burden with us'. He enables us to connect with God and assures us that He loves to hear our prayers: 'And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' (Romans 8:15).

## **The Spirit helps us in our ignorance**

When we don't know what to ask in prayer, the Spirit prays for us with a perfect understanding of God's will. The Spirit pleads on our behalf in 'wordless groans', which go beyond mere words. We are never alone when we pray, since the Spirit takes our words and brings them to the Father.

## **The Spirit helps us in our requests**

The Spirit intercedes for us according to the will of God. He translates the prayers we can't articulate or the requests we get wrong, so that they come to God in accordance with His will. In prayer we attune ourselves to the Spirit with our words or groans. Reading the Bible alongside our prayer is helpful, so that we can pray in agreement with God's Word.

When we pray, let's confidently ask: 'Come Holy Spirit.'

*Canon Paul Hardingham - Parish Pump*

## **Come and support Christian Aid**

There will be a Christian Aid Coffee Morning at Erdington Methodist Church. Saturday 13th May, 2023. 10.00am - 12noon

There will be a Raffle. Cakes, Bacon Baps Tea Coffee and Toast.

All are welcome.

*Norma Senior*



## Tuesday Club

All are invited to join us at our Tuesday Club on 9th May at 2.00 pm. Mandy Hulme will be hosting a Pointless quiz.

*This sounds like it could be an interesting meeting indeed - ed!!*

## Common Noises – Intolerable?

Do some common noises really bother you? If you hate everyday sounds like chewing, sniffing and even moderate breathing, then you may be among the one in every five people in Britain who suffer from misophonia.

In the first study of its kind, researchers from King's College London and University of Oxford have discovered that 18.4 per cent of the general UK population say certain noises can leave them feeling 'trapped' and 'upset'.

Misophonia is a psychological condition in which common sounds made in normal life trigger more than the occasional irritation. Instead, they can trigger a fight or flight response, sparking real anger and even panic.

Clinical psychologists say that while most people dislike the sound of loud chewing, slurping, snoring and loud breathing, people with misophonia frequently react badly to even normal breathing, footsteps and swallowing.



# Christian Aid Week – Esther's Story



Softly-spoken Esther Saizi (far right), 54, radiates joy and warmth.

Esther grows some truly special pigeon peas on her farm - with them she can bake delicious bread, support her daughter's dreams, and give her adorable little grandsons a happy future, full of love and laughter. But she wasn't always able to support her family so easily.

## **A fair price - at least**

For 10 years, Esther grew pigeon peas on her farm, but she could never secure a fair price for her crop.

She was robbed in 2021 when Cyclone Ana washed away her crops, leaving her feeling desperate. But when Esther joined a pigeon pea

programme run by our local partner - Nandolo Farmers Association - and started selling as part of a cooperative, she was able to earn much more.

*'I was able to sell the pigeon peas at a better price with a better market,' she explains. 'It provided financial stability.'*

## **The power of love, loss and legacy**

A doting mother and grandmother, Esther adds that growing pigeon peas also helped her through the loss of her husband.

Previously, they worked together on their land. When he fell ill, they spent time talking about how she could continue to grow the peas after his death.

*'My husband was a teacher in everything thing that he did,' she says quietly. 'Therefore, we can continue his legacy.'*

## **'It is food that makes a meal for the whole day.'**

And not just for the day, but for the future. With the money she's making, Esther has been able to feed her family and support her two daughters, Ziwone and Rashida.

She's been able to:

- buy tools for Ziwone's carpentry business
- pay for Rashida's school costs, the lodgings near her school, and a part-time tutor

- acquire a herd of 13 goats, who provide manure for her crops, saving on expensive fertiliser
- store her pigeon peas in a warehouse, safe from floods and storms
- buy a sewing machine

Through the cooperative and its equipment, Esther can bake pigeon pea flour bread and boost her income - and also make fish food, using a special machine provided by us.

### **How changes like this became possible**

Thanks to people like you, this change has been possible for Esther and her community.

Esther's dream is to see Rashida graduate from college and become a nurse, and to send her two grandsons to nursery.

With your gift this Christian Aid Week, you could help more families like Esther's have a brighter future. More farmers could secure a fair price for their crops, and more loving parents like her could make their children's dreams come true.

**Christian Aid Week is 14th to 20th May 2023.**



# John & Charles Wesley, evangelists & hymn-writers



John and Charles Wesley were the founders of Methodism. Two of 19 children born to Samuel and Susannah Wesley of Epworth Rectory in Lincolnshire in 1703 and 1707, their father was the local rector, while their mother was a spiritual inspiration to her many children.

Both John and Charles went to Christ Church, Oxford (1720 and 1726). John was ordained, and Charles and some friends formed a 'Holy Club' while still at college. It consisted of men who dedicated themselves to Bible study, prayer, fasting and good works. Such regular disciplines soon earned Charles the nickname 'Methodist'. The name stuck.

Both Charles and John felt called to the mission field, and so in 1735 they sailed to Georgia. Their time among Indians in America

was not a success – they struggled for any real spiritual authority in their ministries. Feeling failures, they returned to England in some depression. John summed it up: “I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?”

Then the Wesleys made friends with some Moravians. They stressed that salvation cannot be earned, but must be received by grace through faith in Christ. Charles was the first to experience this ‘true’ conversion, when on Pentecost Sunday, 21st May 1738, he wrote that the Spirit of God ‘chased away the darkness of my unbelief.’

Only three days later, on 24th May, 1738, it was John’s turn. As he wrote in his journal: “In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed.”

John and Charles Wesley then devoted the rest of their lives to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. In doing so, they turned England upside-down. When the established Church threw John out, he took to the fields, preaching to coal miners and commoners. His itinerant evangelism took him 250,000 miles on horseback and to preach over 40,000 sermons. His small ‘societies’ attracted some 120,000 followers by the time of his death.

Charles became the most prolific and skilled hymn-writer in English history, writing hymns that are sung widely today, such as ‘Love Divine, All Loves Excelling.’ In all, he wrote more than 6,000 hymns.

The legacy of the two brothers lives on. As well as Methodism, their teaching has widely impacted the holiness movement, the Pentecostal movement, and the charismatic movement.

*An article from Parish Pump*

## **Life abundant**

Two students from a theological training college decided to spend part of their holiday in the countryside doing outreach.

They stopped at an old farm house and proceeded up the path through a group of screaming children and a washing line heavy with wet clothes. When they got near the door, the woman of the house stopped scrubbing the steps, brushed her hair and perspiration from her brow, and asked them what they wanted.

*"We'd like to tell you how you can live forever," they answered.*

The exhausted woman hesitated for a moment, and then replied,

*"Thank you, but I don't think I could stand it!"*

# The Fire of Pentecost – 28th May 2023

*“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth” Acts 1:8*

We all get tired and battle weary sometimes. The disciples of Jesus had just been through a three-year long roller coaster adventure with Jesus that had culminated in His death, resurrection and ascension into heaven.

The range of emotions would have been hugely taxing in the days leading up to Pentecost, as they remembered Jesus weeping in the garden of Gethsemane, betrayed by Judas, brutally beaten and crucified, and then dead and buried. Then there had been the shock and awe of finding out that He was alive again! But then He had left them again, to return to His Father. By the time the day of Pentecost arrived, the disciples would indeed have welcomed some fresh spiritual fire!

For us today, many of us have felt emotionally drained with the uncertainties caused by Covid 19, the worry of prices rising at an alarming rate, and now the pain and uncertainty of what will happen in the war in Ukraine.

So, what better day to pray for fresh spiritual fire for each of us? As we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and birth of the Church, let us thank God that He will never leave us or forsake us.

# A Pentecost Prayer

Heavenly Father,

In these troubled times we need your help, just like those first disciples did when Jesus came back to you after his resurrection. They must have wanted him to stay with them. They must have felt puzzled and bereft – and wondered how to go on.

But you, Lord, knew a better way. You sent them a helper, the Holy Spirit to fill them with your life. We thank you so much that the same Spirit will be our helper too, if we are willing to ask you for him. We will be able to face each day, each challenge, with your Spirit living in us to guide and empower us, to enable us to carry on even when we don't understand.

So, we pray, come Holy Spirit, fill us, encourage us to carry on sharing your love and life and truth, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

*By Daphne Kitching*

## Fire

There was a fire at the main Inland Revenue office in London, but it was put out before any serious good was done.

*Ronnie Corbett*

# Amnesty International Day 28th May 2023



As we are celebrating the birth of the church at Pentecost it is also Amnesty International Day.

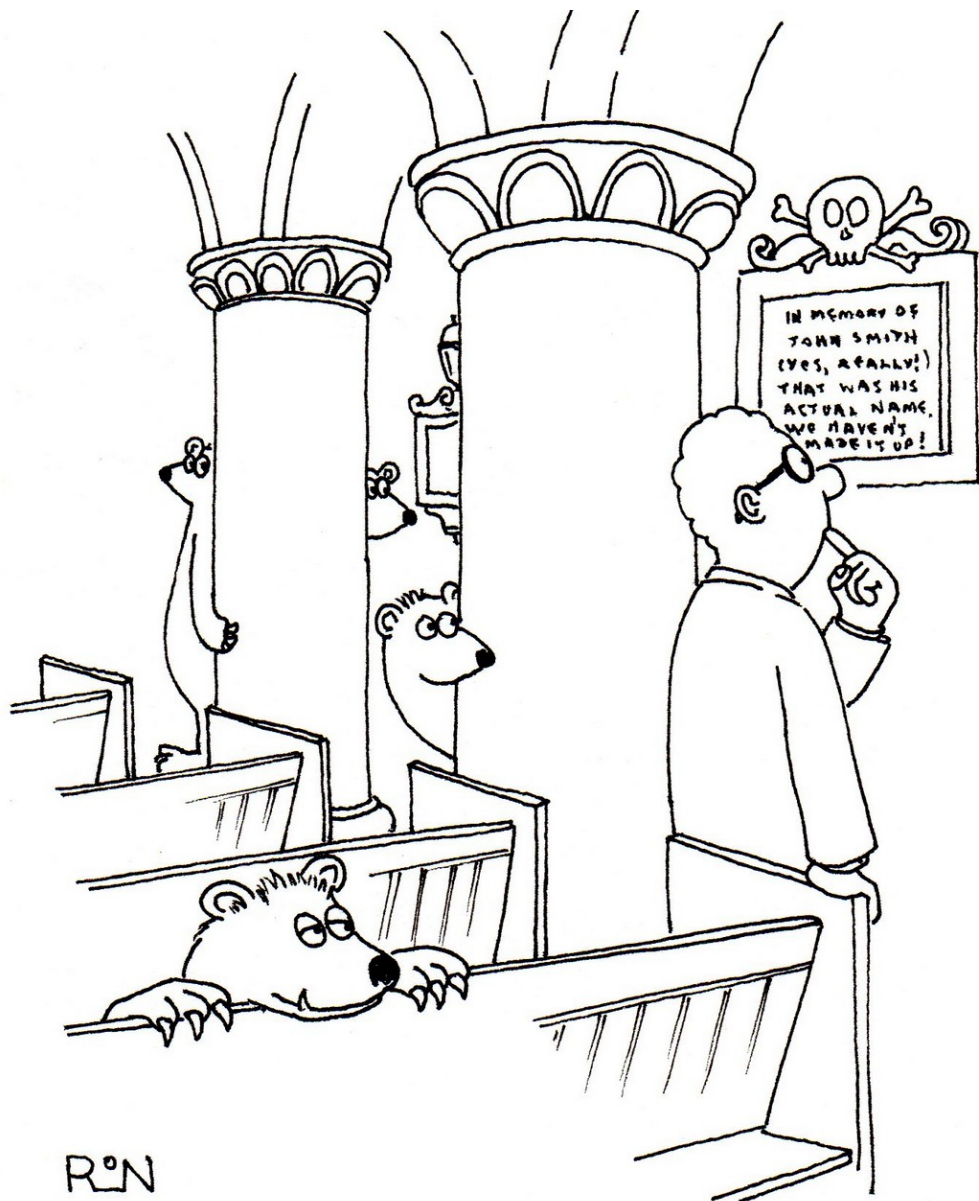
Amnesty International was founded in London in 1961, following the publication of the article "The Forgotten Prisoners" in The Observer 28th May 1961, by the lawyer Peter Benenson. Citing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights articles 18 and 19, it announced a campaign on "Appeal for Amnesty, 1961" and called for "common action".

Amnesty International is a non-governmental organisation focused on human rights with over 3 million members and supporters around the world. The objective of the organisation is "to conduct research and generate action to prevent and end grave abuses of human rights, and to demand justice for those whose rights have been violated."



Amnesty International works to mobilise public opinion to put pressure on governments that let abuse take place.

The organisation was awarded the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize for its "campaign against torture," and the United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights in 1978.



*Dennis spent a long time in church  
looking for his forbears*

# Worship – May 2023

All worship at 10.30 am unless indicated otherwise

7th - LOCAL ARRANGEMENT

14th - Pauline Hall

21st - HOLY COMMUNION - Rev David Hulme

28th - PENTECOST - Jack McGinnigle



*Please hand any items for the June CONTACT to me - Nick Riley by 21st May 2022 at the latest please, or alternatively email me: [spligosh@icloud.com](mailto:spligosh@icloud.com) with the words 'CONTACT MAG' in the title.*