

Withington Methodist News

February 2022



SUNDAY WORSHIP

Sundays at 10.45am

6th Feb Local Arrangement - Rev. Peter Went

13th Feb Matt Smith

20th Feb Rev. Krystyna Kwarciak, Covenant service, live streamed

27th Feb Deacon Pru Cahil

DEAR FRIENDS,

Nearly 30 years ago, Collin Raye, on an Album “In This Life” sang a song “That Was a River” which I remember listening to as a little girl. Because of its words and melody, it was my Mum’s favourite. The chorus goes as follows:

That was a river
This is an ocean,
That never carried this much emotion,
Nothing compares to this deep devotion,
That was a river,
This is an ocean.

Raye’s song compares a past love to the intensity of a current love but hidden within the romantic intent of the song is a profound theological truth. (I seriously doubt the writers of the song intended that!) While the loves, passionate and otherwise, of this earth are sweet, powerful, and life-altering, they are mere rivers compared to the love God has for us in Jesus Christ.

Did you know the protecting, sustaining love of parents who gave you life and nurtured you in growth? That was a river. God’s love is an ocean.

Did you know the joy of loving brothers and sisters, with whom you shared common life experiences, family history and loyalty? That was a river. God’s love is an ocean.

Do you have the privilege of sharing your life and love with a spouse who loves, treasures and respects you? That is a river. God’s love is an ocean.

Do you have children who mean more to you than life itself?

That is a river. God's love is an ocean.

Do you have friends who are always there for you, to encourage, to support, to help, to laugh or to cry with, as the situation demands?

That is a river. God's love is an ocean.

Whether you like it or not, Valentine's Day is fast approaching and everywhere you go there are cards, hearts and flowers encouraging us to celebrate love and friendship in all its forms. This time of year is also a reminder that we are all 'kept safe in God's love' (Jude 1,21). We don't have to do anything, in fact we can't do anything, to merit or earn it. We don't have to be born into a certain family or faith group to know this love, it's not based on what we do, what we have, or what we achieve. It's God's free gift to us all, and something certainly worth celebrating.

Wishing you a sunny and peaceful February,

Rev. Krystyna

PRAYER LIST

We remember in our prayers:

The family of Elaine,
the family of Harold,
Lizzie,
Muriel,
Jasibe and family,
Peter N.,
John, Marguerite,
Helen Osei,
Linda,
Ora and Stasi,
Henry,
Promilla and family



WORSHIP WITH US

Sunday Morning In Person Worship

We are happy to have our doors fully open again at Withington. The booking system is no longer in place, everyone is welcome to come whenever works for them.

The current Covid-19 safety measures in place at WMC are as follows:

We will continue to wear masks during worship and social distancing will be maintained at 1 m+.

We are allowed to sing quietly with our masks on.

Socialising after the service is permitted, but without refreshments.

Communion is celebrated with bread and wine in individual glasses as usual.

Reflections and written worship resources:

If you are not on email and would like to receive a printed copy of our weekly reflections or written worship resources for Sunday,

please contact Krystyna on 0161 612 2668.

Coffee Morning and Bible Study on Zoom:

We have a virtual coffee morning every Monday from 11:00 am and a weekly Bible Study every Wednesday from 2:00 pm

Joining details for both meetings are the same every week:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84141198605>

Meeting ID: 841 4119 8605

Manchester Circuit Sunday Evening Service

A warm welcome as ever to our worship tomorrow evening.

The Zoom platform will be open from 6pm for those who wish to catch up with others from their church, and as usual worship will begin at 6:30.

The joining details follow-

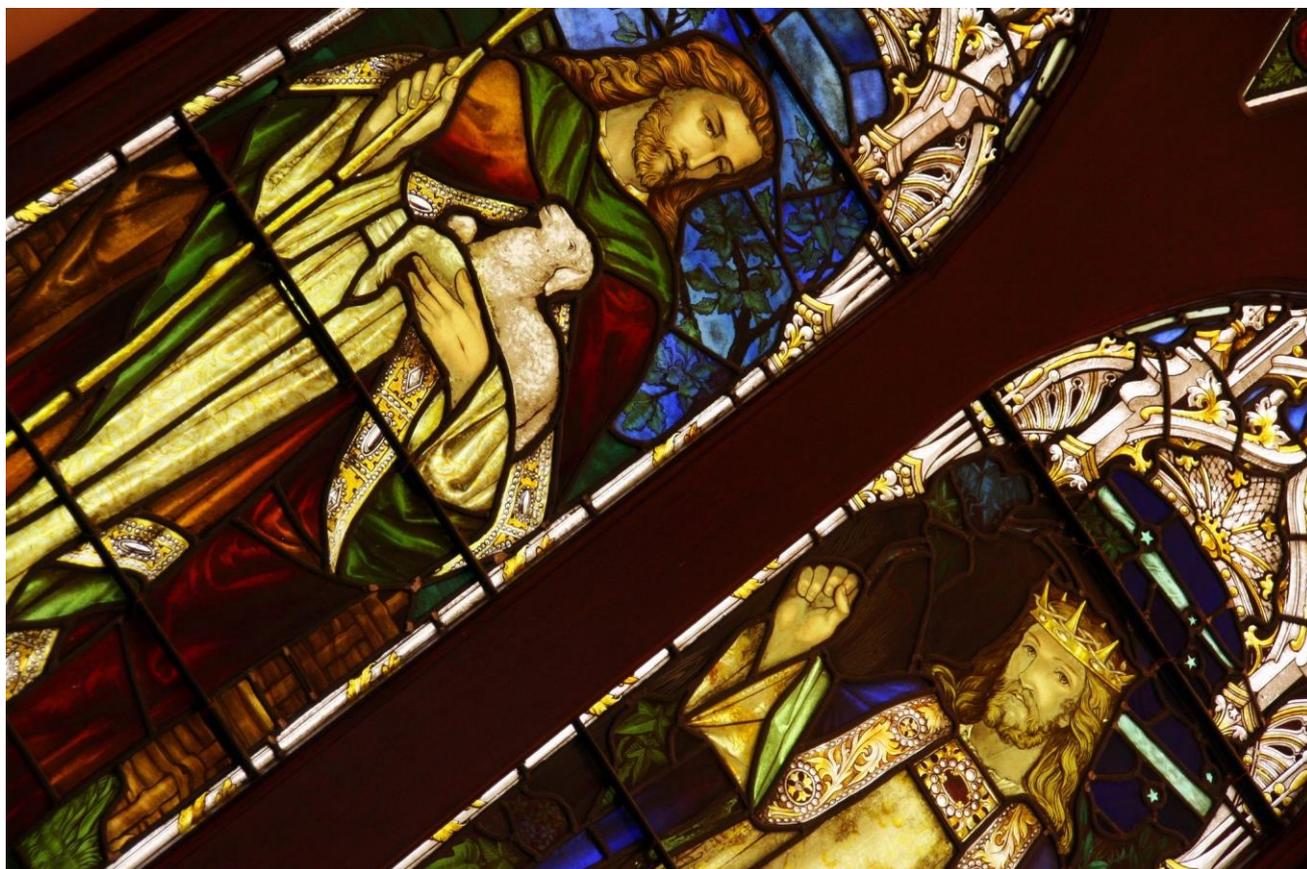
Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92204599032?pwd=Tzg0SU9xcVZEZFNQK0FnYnNKWjlUQT09>

Meeting ID: 922 0459 9032

Passcode: 1901

One tap mobile + 12532158782, 92204599032 #, 1901#



THANK YOU FROM ALL WE CAN

We have received the below letter of thanks from All We Can for our Harvest donation. To clarify, there have been delays on both ends due to Covid complications and although the letter states £85 as the donation, our actual total was £105, as there was a cheque which was sent and accounted for separately.

So thanks to all who included 'All We Can ' in their giving last Harvest time enabling a generous gift of £105 to be forwarded.



Dear Ms Jenny Went,

Thank you for your generous gift of £85 which you sent to All We Can's Next Steps appeal on behalf of Withington Methodist Church. We are so grateful to have received your donation and thanks to your generosity, All We Can's local partner, HEFO, will be able to support livestock farmer like Vaiter to take their next steps towards overcoming the challenges of Covid-19, climate change, and poverty. Thank you!

Vaiter is 73, and lives in a small village in rural Nkayi – a dry, arid part of southern Zimbabwe. The region is prone to erratic rainfall, and climate change is making drought an increasing threat. The lack of rainfall makes it difficult to grow most crop varieties, and it can be extremely difficult for families to grow enough to eat. Vaiter's children have sadly passed away, and so she and her husband have an enormous burden of care for their young grandchildren.

Whilst it can be difficult to grow crops in Nkayi, there is enough rainfall to produce grass for livestock to graze. Through our local partner in the region, All We Can are supporting families like Vaite's by training them in livestock production which provides a vital source of food and income. In Vaite's own words, 'I attended their farming workshops and from there I learnt how to look after cattle and goats. I now have my own goats and when I wake up in the morning the first thing I do is to check on them.' In the coming year, thanks to your ongoing kindness, All We Can's local partner hope to support 462 farmers like Vaite.

Because of your generous support, All We Can's vital work continues – we remain committed to the vulnerable communities we serve as well as t you and Withington Methodist Church. If you have any questions, concerns or just want a chat please do get in touch with the All We Can team on 020 7467 5132 or by emailing info@allwecan.org.uk.

With heartfelt thanks,

Tim Baker

Head of Public Engagement



Vaite, pictured near her home in Nkayi. Image: Tendai Marima/All We Can

RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY

13th February

The Methodist Church has celebrated Racial Justice Sunday (RJS) since 1989, on the second Sunday in September. Since September 1995 RJS has become an ecumenical event celebrated in Britain and Ireland. RJS moved to the second Sunday in February, with effect from 2017. This Sunday is an opportunity for all Christians to join together in:

- Reflecting on the importance of racial justice
- Thanksgiving for human diversity
- Prayer for an end to misunderstanding, racism and injustice
- Action that truly makes a difference
- Fundraising for national and local racial justice initiatives

WHY CELEBRATE RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY?

We believe that the universe was created by a loving God who chose to become a human being in Jesus Christ, who has redeemed the world and sent the Holy Spirit to enable us to love one another with God's love. All human beings are equally children of God and loved by God. Since none is outside the love of God, none should be outside our love either.

We believe that the diversity of the human race was no mistake on God's part. God deliberately created variety within the human family and wants us to take as much delight in that variety as God does.

But racism persists in Britain and Ireland. At its most obvious and brutal, it takes the form of physical attacks, which sometimes end in murder. But it takes many other forms as well, like discrimination within the police force, popular prejudice against Travellers or people seeking asylum, or reluctance to accept people of a different ethnic or cultural group as neighbours. Even within churches, people can face discrimination and unkindness because they are different from the majority in a particular community.

As long as this continues, we believe that it is important to make time to give thanks for our diversity and to pray for God's help in overcoming our prejudices and the injustices that reflect and reinforce them.

WE ARE ALL ONE IN CHRIST, OR ARE WE?

(EPHESIANS 2 :19-22)

A Sermon by Revd Mandy Ralph, Minister, Church Of Scotland

In life, if we are honest with ourselves, we know all too well, that there are insiders and outsiders. The welcome mat is dusted off and laid out for some and not for others. Some people are accepted, others are rejected. If you know and experience acceptance, it is a nice and secure feeling. On the other hand, maybe you have experienced rejection and exclusion, and it's not so nice, it's frustrating, disheartening, disillusioning and hurtful. In some of the rural villages I have ministered in even after 30, 40 years unless you were born there you are still referred to as an incomer, – 'Aye see these interlopers!'

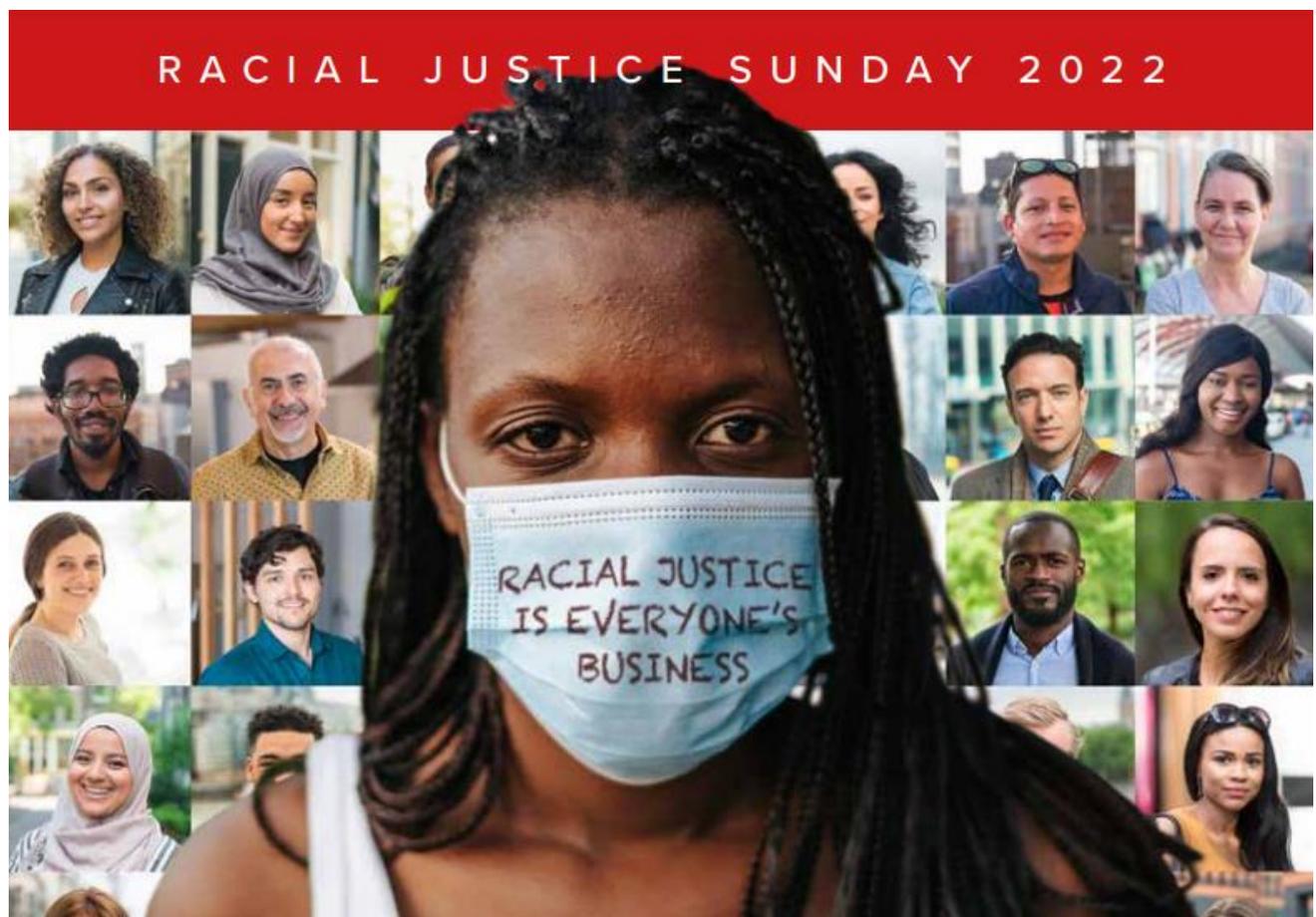
But how does that feel when you are excluded, an outsider because of the colour of your skin, because you look different? We read in Ephesians of how we are all one in Christ. Interesting concept or a reality, or non-existent when it comes to our church communities? As you reflect on the passage from Ephesians and how God's word speaks to you, maybe you are thinking what significance does it have on Racial Justice Sunday? You may also be thinking what does Racial Justice Sunday have to do with me? The answer is everything. For it is about acceptance before God and acceptance of one another.

Within Christian communities you often hear the phrase: 'We are all one in Christ'. By faith we are assured of this as we are all part of the body of Christ. Jesus walked among us and knows us only too well, our complexities and our frailties. Therefore, let's not kid ourselves that we can use the phrase to our own ends; when we use it to paper over uncomfortable discussions or to prove we are right in our stance or as a line of defence. Sometimes when we use that phrase what we are actually

doing is closing down the conversation, especially when it comes to inequality and racial injustice. 'We are all one in Christ – so we don't need to address this.' But the person on the receiving end is still excluded, for their voice has not been heard, in fact it has been silenced.

Jesus walked and shared by example, we are tasked to do the same, to follow in Jesus' footsteps, to go in faith in what unites not what divides. So, when we say, 'What does Racial Justice Sunday have to do with us?' – Everything! It's up to us as Christian communities to set a good example, to walk the talk, putting our faith into action in fighting racial injustice, and God wants that from all of us, not just as select few. For we are all made in the image of God, yet we are all also unique.

In Scotland we have a great saying – 'Wur aw Jock Tamson's Bairns'. In faith 'Wur aw God's bairns' – children of God. For loved the same by God. So, let's treat each other equally and respectfully, understanding that as Christians we all have a role to play regardless of the colour of our skin in addressing racial injustice, both in our congregations and communities.



NEWS FROM THE CONNEXION

26 DECEMBER 2021

Reflecting on the life of Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Church leaders have reacted to the news of the death of Archbishop Desmond Tutu:

The Revd Sonia Hicks, President of the Methodist Conference, said:

"As a Black Christian, I grew up aware that the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu did not allow the presuppositions of other people to define his own self-identity and self-worth, even under apartheid. That awareness fuelled my desire for a more just and inclusive world for all. I pray for those mourning his loss today and hope that his work for justice in South Africa and the world over continues to burn bright.

"As the late Archbishop said: 'There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.'"

Barbara Easton, Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, said:

"It is with huge sadness that we learn of the death of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Tutu was a man whose deep Christian devotion enabled him to see each and every human being as the expression of the image of God in all its beloved and beautiful diversity. This fired a passion for justice, truth and healing which brought him to the forefront of the leadership of national life in South Africa and on the world stage. His faith gave him the strength to do, to dare and to defy.

"Those of us who only knew him through his writings take heart from his wisdom and insight, which was both accessible and deeply challenging; people who had the good fortune of knowing him speak also of his joyful exuberance, pastoral grace and irrepressible, infectious laugh!

"My thoughts are particularly with his family at this time. He will be much missed."



The Revd Michaela Youngson, Assistant Secretary of the Methodist Conference, said:

"Today I give thanks for the life of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. He was a beacon of hope and persistence in the midst of the horror of apartheid. He took a stance on LGBTQ+ rights that put him at odds with many in his church, yet he remained committed to sharing God's inclusive love."

"Our prayers are with the people of South Africa and in particular with our partners, the Church of Southern Africa, as they continue to bear witness to the transformational power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

12 JANUARY 2022

Safeguarding Webinars

Trigger warning: this post contains content about childhood abuse

The Methodist Survivors' Advisory Group and the Safeguarding Team at the Methodist Church have arranged two webinars, Speaking Truth – Voices of Survivors of Childhood Abuse which will focus on the issues around abuse and will take place in January and February 2022.

It is likely that we all know someone who has survived childhood abuse, whether at work, at church or amongst our families and friends and the Safeguarding Team hope that these factual and wide-ranging webinars will enable participants to understand the impact abuse can have, in some cases,

for years after it happened. Survivors will share their experiences, for which the Team is very grateful.

The first webinar, *Hearing Reality: Voices Crying in The Wilderness* will explore the history and prevalence of childhood abuse in this country, the impact of abuse upon survivors throughout their lives, and the history of the Methodist Church's response to survivors of abuse and our ongoing work to improve and learn from the voices of people who have experienced abuse

The second webinar, *The Church's Response to Survivors: From Stumbling Block to Stepping Stone*, will teach us about the theology of safeguarding and how erroneous interpretations of scripture have been used to justify suffering or to force survivors to forgive. Participants will hear how childhood abuse affects future faith and the survivor's understanding of God and church. We will learn how aspects of traditional church life, including language, can be harmful to survivors and consider alternative modes of church which survivors have found helpful. This second webinar will conclude by looking at the Methodist Church's positive work, both to make our churches safer spaces and to respond better to survivors of abuse within our congregations.

Both of the webinars will be aimed at a broad Methodist audience from Safeguarding Officers and those in leadership roles within churches to anyone wishing to learn how to be more welcoming and inclusive towards survivors of abuse within our churches or workplaces.

You can register in advance for the *Speaking Truth – Voices of Survivors of Childhood Abuse* webinars below:

Webinar 1 – *Hearing Reality: Voices Crying in the Wilderness*

Wed 19 January 11am – 12:30pm

Webinar 2 – *The Church's Response to Survivors: From Stumbling Block to Stepping Stone*

Wed 23 February 11am – 12:30pm

Register in advance for this webinar here -

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7X-fjjUqSjqKoOC5Mo6YRg

If you are not able to join the live event, you can register to watch the recording by emailing: littlek@methodistchurch.org.uk

4 FEBRUARY 2022

The Methodist Council 26-27 January 2022

After worship, the Chair of the Methodist Council, Mrs Jill Baker paid tribute to Mr Peter Pay, moderator of the United Reformed Church General Assembly, who had attended the Council as an ecumenical observer who died in December. She described him as a 'much valued participant in our Council meetings who we shall miss and we remain grateful for all he contributed.' Mrs Baker welcomed the Revd Philip Brooks, Secretary for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations for the URC, who attended the meeting.

Mrs Baker updated the Council with the news that a building at 25 Tavistock Place has been purchased which will house the Connexional Team. The Connexional Secretary Doug Swanney gave more details about the move out of 25 Marylebone Road and how plans for a service to mark the closure of the current MCH are in progress.

The Council received reports from the Strategy and Resources Committee and the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

Accounts

The Director of Finance and Resources, Matt Tattersall, introduced the consolidated accounts which in addition to Connexional Funds, include among others, All We Can, Cliff College, the London Mission Fund and The Wesley Hotel. He reported that while there had been a drop in income during 2020-21 there had also been a drop in expenditure and our fund balances at the end of last year compared with the year before were significantly better. The Connexional Treasurer, the Revd Tim Swindell presented a financial 'state of health' for the Methodist Church in Britain and reminded Council members of the commitment to a reduction in the assessment which will have an impact on amount of work that can be taken on. Mr Swindell said that despite a long term reduction in its income, the Church is wealthy, although the funds are not always in a place where they can be easily accessed. The Council received the reports and adopted the consolidated accounts.

Forces Board

The Connexional Secretary, Doug Swanney presented the Forces Board paper to the Council, which agreed to recommend to the Conference that changes be made including for the Board to be chaired by the Ex-President of the Conference, and for the Secretary of the Board to report to the Assistant Secretary of the Conference.

Impact Assessment

The Connexional Secretary Doug Swanney presented a paper on the work around Impact Assessment which was discussed at the last Council meeting. Members took part in small group discussions on how better decisions can be made about what work the Church does in the future.

Model Trust 14(2A)

The Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice, Mrs Joanne Anderton, presented the paper to the Council proposing changes to the conditions around sharing premises with other denominations by bringing in lease arrangements. Mrs Anderton told the Council that this is the first time we have considered offering leases and also there is still work to be done on 'doctrinal differences'. The Council received the report, and adopted the policy recommendations, directing the Conference Officer for Legal and Constitutional Practice to work with the ecumenical officers and the Faith and Order committee in order to produce guidance.

Budget

The principles to be used in setting the 2022/23 budget were agreed by the Council. This included using the Mission in Britain Fund to support the Justice, Dignity and Solidarity strategy.

MMPS

To date there have been 758 individual donations to the Pension Reserve Fund totalling £5.7m. However, some of these were on behalf of all the churches in a circuit so the number of churches, circuits and districts that have responded to the appeal is greater. Whilst this amount is significantly below the target set, the Pension Reserve Fund has benefitted from a recovery in investment values and additional income from property sales. A more detailed paper will go to the Council in April.

Justice, Dignity and Solidarity

The Council received an update on the progress of the Justice, Dignity and Solidarity (JDS) strategy from the co-chairs of the Shadow JDS Committee, the Revds Charity Nzegwu and Sam McBratney. The Council heard that good progress has been made with the work of the group with many pilot programmes taking place and that the group will be as transparent and open in its processes as possible. Draft Terms of Reference for the new JDS committee and future recruitment are being worked on. The Council received the report.

Oversight and Trusteeship

The Secretary of the Conference, Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler presented this update which he described as “multi-layered and complicated work”. He said significant progress has been made in a number of areas, the lynchpin is the introduction of the Connexional Council, which will replace both the Methodist Council and the SRC, and a considerable amount of work has been done to bring into being a smaller Trustee body with a clear and defined relationship with the Conference. Dr Hustler said the Strategy and Resources Committee and the Law and Polity Committee will be bringing proposed changes to the Deed of Union to this year’s Conference along with a review of the Committee structure of the Church.

Dr Hustler introduced proposals to reduce the number of districts in the Connexion by saying the current number shapes the oversight and governance bodies and has budgetary implications and an impact on the

amount of work that needs to be done. He reminded Council members that much work has taken place to listen to each district and said the work needs to be 'consensual, contextual and connexional'. Council members were invited to discuss the proposals in small groups. After an opportunity for feedback to the wider group, members voted in favour of beginning detailed work to work towards reducing the number of districts.

Youth President

Former Youth President Michael Pryke presented a review of the Youth President's role. Council members agreed recommendations that the role of the Youth President should be refocused on advocacy and involvement in decision making.

Complaints and Discipline

The Secretary of the Conference, the Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler presented an update on the review of Part II of Standing Orders, which set out the Complaints and Discipline processes. He explained that while considerable progress had been made with the work, it was not complete and there was still work to be done on the opportunities for reconciliation and reducing the numbers of complaints. Dr Hustler told Council members that the group needs to wait for the final report of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse which may have a bearing on how the review is completed. The Council agreed that the review should now be brought to the Conference of 2023.

Action for Hope

The Head of Mission, Ms Jude Levermore presented a progress report on Action for Hope, the work to develop a Methodist Faith Plan to work towards net zero carbon emissions for the Methodist Church in Britain. Ms Levermore reported that several consultations have started with the plan's three key areas in mind: assets, wisdom and lifestyles. The Council received the report.

Walking with Micah

Rachel Lampard joined the Council meeting to give an outline of the justice project, Walking with Micah, which she is leading. Walking with Micah aims to review our understanding of social justice to enable the Methodist Church better to speak and act on issues of justice in the future. After a presentation, members took part in group work examining the issues and fed back to the wider Council.

Audit of Safeguarding Practice

Safeguarding Policy Manager, Nicola Sylvester presented this paper to the Council which proposed an audit framework for safeguarding practice across the Connexion. This framework is designed to assess independently the effectiveness of safeguarding structures and processes across the Connexion. The Council received the report, and requested that there be full consultation and further work on the framework with District Safeguarding Officers and others. The Council will consider the framework at its next meeting.

WITHINGTON FAMILY NEWS

In Memory of Elaine Champion

It is with great sadness that we felt the loss of another of our church family last month: Elaine Champion. Elaine passed away peacefully on the 24rd January surrounded by family. Her funeral was held at Withington on the 9th February and was well attended by friends and family. Elaine was a member of Withington Methodist church since a young age and in October 2020 wrote a piece about her life in the church for the magazine entitled 'My 80 Years at Withington Methodist'. In her words – “the church has been a central part of my life for as long as I can remember.” Equally for us, Elaine was a central part of our church and will be very much missed.

The Methodist Church

 **Methodist Women
in Britain** 2011-2021
for women, for justice, for Christ

Manchester & Stockport District

MWiB Spring Gathering

Saturday, 19th March



11.00 a.m. - 3.00 p.m.

(Coffee served from 10.30 a.m.)

Davenport Methodist Church

Garners Lane, Stockport SK3 8QS

(Contact chrisg7684@gmail.com for directions)

Speaker: Ruth Parrott

(Connexional President of MWiB)

Please bring your own lunch - drinks provided



All Welcome



A TRIBUTE TO KATHLEEN MCMORRAN

Provided by her son, Robin

Kathleen Beggs was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on 3 January, 1934, into a loving Presbyterian family, the daughter of James and Lena Beggs. Kathleen's sister Audrey was born 2 years later.

When World War II broke out, the family evacuated to the County Down countryside, to live on a farm. There, Kathleen enjoyed years in a beautiful rural setting. After the war, the family returned to Belfast and Kathleen's younger sisters Betty and Hazel were born. Kathleen was educated at the Methodist College Belfast, a school known locally as "Methody". Northern Ireland held a special place in Kathleen's heart for her whole life, and she always spoke fondly of cherished childhood places – Scrabbo Tower, the Cave Hill, Portrush, Donaghadee, the Giant's Causeway, the green rolling County Down hills that looked like a "basket of eggs". Kathleen travelled widely, but always missed Ulster.

Kathleen's life was shaped by her faith and her love of Christ. The family worshipped in Megain Memorial Presbyterian Church in Belfast, where James Beggs was an Elder. Kathleen taught Bible Classes, and was elected President of the Girls' Auxiliary (GA), a youth organisation which supported missionary work around the world.

Kathleen's became devoted to educational and caring professions. In the 1950s she trained as a teacher at Stranmillis College, and her first teaching job was Nettlefield Primary School in Belfast, where she taught children from disadvantaged backgrounds for 10 years.

In 1961, Kathleen's life was profoundly influenced when she made her first trip to India, as a delegate to the Assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi. She represented the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, and joined Christians from all over the world – German Lutherans, Anglicans, Russian Orthodox, African Methodist Episcopalians, Polish Evangelicals. Famous faces of the 1960s put in an appearance - evangelist Billy Graham, the Archbishop of Canterbury Michael Ramsey, Pastor Martin Niemöller – even the Indian Prime Minister Nehru. In an uncertain postwar era, this ecumenical Assembly was an important voice in the world, and spoke out

clearly against violence and war, racism and religious division. During her visit, Kathleen also saw the Soviet Cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin who was on a visit to India!

In 1963, Kathleen Beggs went to a Church of Scotland convention at St Ninian's Training Centre in Crieff, Perthshire. There, she met a handsome young South African Methodist called Alan McMorran. They struck up a lasting friendship, and romance blossomed. He became known among the Beggs sisters as "the Swignet".

It was perhaps because of their backgrounds that they bonded – Kathleen was from Northern Ireland, where religious division had brought violence, and Alan was from South Africa, a country divided by Apartheid. Their shared ideals of ecumenism, racial equality and Christian love gave them common ground.

Kathleen's New Delhi trip clearly made an impression on her, and in 1964 she returned to India to work as a missionary teacher at the IP Mission School in Rajkot, Gujarat. There, she formed a long friendship with her senior colleague and housemate, Rosie O'Neill. For 3 years, Kathleen taught English classes to young Indian girls, equipping them with vital skills to succeed in the optimistic, post-colonial India. Kathleen lived and worked with Christians, Hindus and Muslims. She discovered Indian food and learned to speak Gujarati. For all her life, Kathleen spoke of her wonderful experiences there – the insufferable heat, the monsoon rains, the cry of the peacocks, the spectacular religious festivals, the glory of the Taj Mahal. Kathleen and Alan kept in touch by Air Mail; she kept all their love letters.

Kathleen returned to the UK in 1967. On 9 March 1968, she and Alan were married at Megain church in Belfast. They moved to England, and came to live in Manchester. Kathleen worked as a teacher at the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic School in Gorton and St Chrysostom's Primary School in Victoria Park.

In 1969 their son Robin was born. Kathleen and Alan were very proud of him and built a loving family home. It was Kathleen who taught Robin the words of the Lord's Prayer, and read Bible stories to him. Alan instilled in Robin a love of music, art and architecture. The McMorran home was filled with art from India, Africa and Ireland, and Robin grew up surrounded by beautiful images of Indian villages, Zulu sculpture, and scenes of Belfast. Robin

could not have wished for a more loving and supportive family.

Like Kathleen, Alan's working life was inspired by his faith, and he worked for many years in child care. Kathleen and Alan started working together: at the National Children's Home on Wilbraham Road; then at the NCH Danesford School in Congleton, Cheshire; and then together they ran Lynwood Children's home in West Didsbury. Wherever they worked, they showed care and compassion to children who had often experienced very little love in their lives.

Kathleen and Alan became active members of Withington Methodist Church – Alan was a local preacher and Kathleen became a church steward. They often gave practical and prayer support to those who were in need, and encouraged many people. They were both an important and unforgettable part of our shared church life. So many people here today miss Alan and Kathleen terribly.

Kathleen brought her life experiences with her. She sometimes raised eyebrows when she turned up at Rotary Club dinners wearing an Indian sari. Once, she amazed an Indian lady in Manchester by giving her directions in Gujarati! Kathleen was a highly organised, very caring lady, hard-working and dedicated to looking after Alan and Robin. When Alan fell ill, Kathleen became a full-time carer. She sometimes felt exhausted, but when Alan died, she said "I would have looked after him forever". Kathleen and Alan were in love, to the end.

Kathleen was also very particular. She liked everything to be done properly and she hated untidiness – no towel could be left unfolded; no shirt left untucked; and woe betide you if you ate toast without a plate and dropped crumbs! But all of this was all borne out of love.

Kathleen loved things of beauty. Delicate Ulster Lace, sparkling Waterford Crystal, Indian tapestry, Celtic ornamentation. Music like the Star of the County Down, the golden flute of James Galway. Landscapes like the Mourne Mountains outside Belfast, the Kyles of Bute, the Howe Sound at Vancouver, Table Mountain in Cape Town – all these things all filled her heart with joy. Some of her last days out with Robin were gentle walks in the beauty of Alderley Edge. She loved animals, was fascinated by wild birds, befriended squirrels, and loved Houdini, the family cat.

Kathleen and her 3 sisters were a close family, even when they found themselves thousands of miles apart. In the 1970s, Betty went to work as a nurse in Malaŵi. Kathleen would never interfere, but would listen carefully & offer encouragement and wise advice if it were sought. It was always a treat, to hear each other's voices on the phone! The sisters and their families also really appreciated her hospitality and enjoyed spending time together in Manchester and Northern Ireland, and on memorable holidays in Jersey & on The Rhine. Kathleen was also loved by Alan's side of the family, his sisters Mavis in South Africa and Nola in Canada, and they maintained a fond friendship across the globe after Alan had died.

Kathleen's last few months reminded us of her resilience. In September, she fell at home and broke her hip. She had a hip replacement at Wythenshawe Hospital and then spent many weeks undergoing physiotherapy, fighting valiantly to get back on her feet. She was irrepressible in her conviction that all her challenges were only temporary, and that she would recover and come back home. She never gave up.

She was about to return home when pneumonia struck. Sadly, within a few short, unexpected days it was too much. Robin sat with her day and night in Manchester Royal Infirmary, holding her hand and stroking her hair.

Kathleen passed away in the early hours of Saturday 27 November.

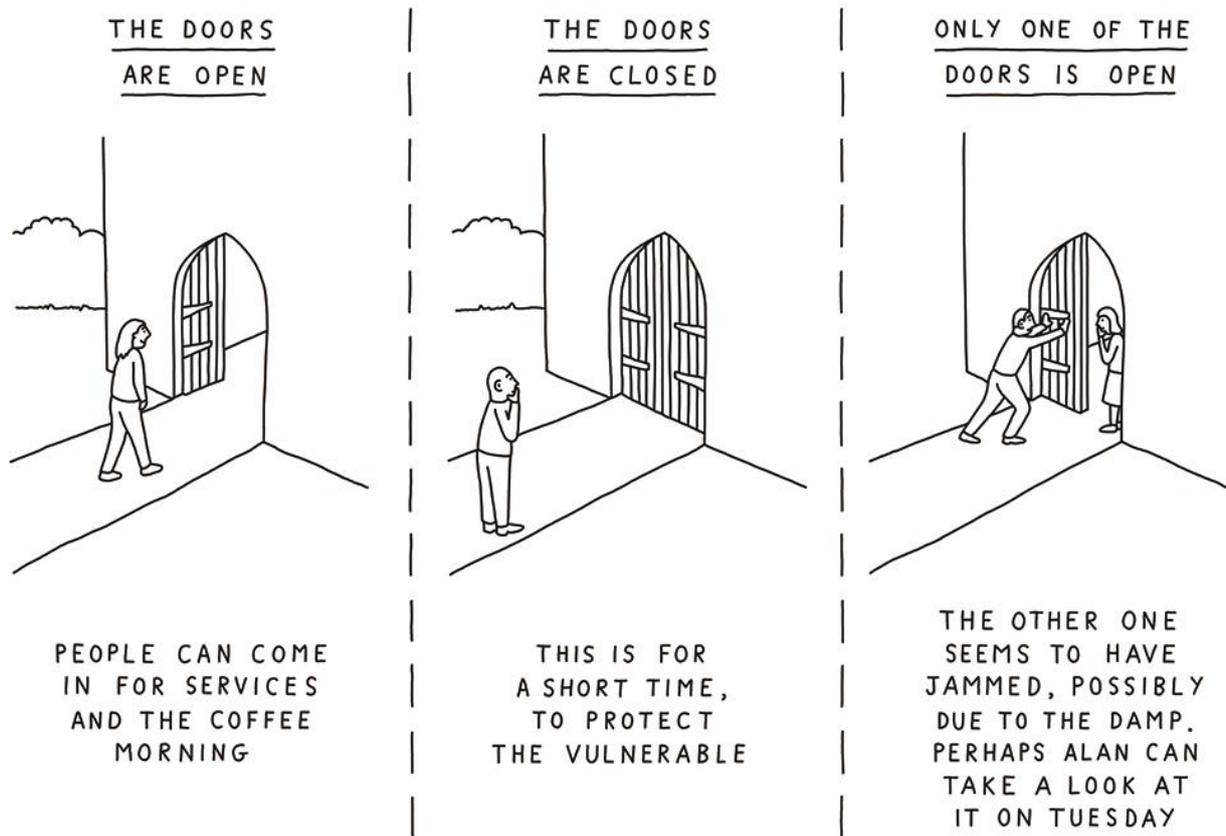
To the end Kathleen was strong, determined, and the most loving mother, sister and friend anyone could hope for. Her sisters are all very proud of how loving and thoughtful Robin was to his Mum.

She sailed gently to the Other Shore, to be with her Lord for ever. Thankfully, The Lord understands our grief and carries us through it. Our prayers are for Robin, Audrey, Betty, Hazel, Teddy, Peter and Phillip as they cope with their sad loss.

A slideshow of photos showing Kathleen's rich life can be found here - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHZRiq_0uJs

THANK YOU FOR READING!

THE CHURCH DOORS



The next magazine will be out on the 6th March on the Withington Methodist Church Facebook Group and via email.

If you have anything you would like to contribute to next month's magazine please pass it on to Caroline Fielding - withingtonmethodistnews@gmail.com

If you would like to receive an emailed copy of the magazine please email - withingtonmethodistnews@gmail.com

Withington Methodist Church

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Minister: Rev Krystyna Kwarciak

Sunday Services

Morning Worship : 10:45 am taking place in the ground floor hall. Holy Communion once a month.

Regular Activities

Monday Monkeys (Mondays 10:00 - 11:30am)

Kundalini Yoga (7:00 - 8:30pm)

Brownies (Wednesdays from Oct. 6:45 - 8:15pm)

Snooker Group (Fridays 1:00 - 3:00pm)

