

Wesley Memorial *news*

The magazine from Wesley Memorial Church, Oxford Christmas 2018



*The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom;
and the favour of God was upon him. Luke 2:40*

Joy to the World!

Dear Friends,

There's a note of celebration about the theme for this issue of *Wesley Memorial News*: 'Joy to the world!' That phrase, taken from one of Isaac Watts' most upbeat hymns, conjures for me a picture of carol singing and festive cheer, helped along by the tune 'Antioch', with its repeating refrain. It's the musical and lyrical equivalent to those Christmas cards depicting a traditional winter's scene of snowy roofs and brightly-lit windows, with children throwing snowballs or skating on a pond. Maybe a stagecoach in the foreground. Echoes of Mr Pickwick and Christmas at Dingley Dell.

Now, there's an important and valuable message in all of this. It wasn't a coincidence that the Church chose to celebrate the birth of Jesus at the darkest and coldest time of year (in the Northern hemisphere, at least!). The Gospels are silent on Jesus' date of birth, and it took several centuries before the Christmas season was fixed in the Christian calendar. Surely it was a good idea to place a festival, especially one focussing on light and joy, at midwinter, when everyone needs cheering up. Seasonal decorations, special meals, roaring fires and the exchange of gifts and greetings are good for all of us in these chilly December days. People of all faiths, and of none, can feel their spirits lifted at this time.

But the joy of Christmas, as the Church understands it and as Christians celebrate it, is about much more than festive good cheer as an antidote to scraping ice off the car on frosty mornings. Joy is a settled state of mind, rather than a mood: it's deeper and more permanent than happiness or cheerfulness. All kinds of things may make us feel happy or cheerful; all kinds of things may rob us of those feelings or provoke their opposites - and rightly so. But joy is an outlook grounded in a present relationship with God and a confidence in God's future. More than that, joy brings a sense of God's loving and renewing purpose for the world and for all people into the present, so that we begin to live and to experience here and now the life of the world to come. Joy, therefore, can co-exist with feelings of sadness, dismay and regret — with very human distress and sorrow — because these feelings are our proper response to immediate circumstances, whereas joy is our underlying state of mind. To say that Christians are joyful isn't to say that they are never sad; it is to say that even in deep sorrow, we hold on to our experience of God's love and our confidence in the ultimate consummation of God's purpose.

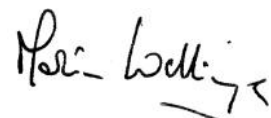
Christmas, as the Bible tells the story, isn't really about the festive trappings, welcome as they are. It's about God coming into the world in a new way. In Jesus God is born among us, to share our life, to experience from the inside what it means to be human, to bear our sins and our griefs, to die our death on the Cross, and to rise to new life on the third day, as the pioneer of the new creation. In Jesus God's purpose is born into the world, and future hope becomes present reality. Thus joy takes flesh in the cry of the Christmas Child.

Although Isaac Watts' hymn 'Joy to the world' has strong Christmas associations, it's actually based on Psalm 98, a psalm looking forward to the reign of Israel's God:

'Let the floods clap their hands;
Let the hills sing together for joy
At the presence of the Lord, for he is coming ...' (Psalm 98:8-9).

Watts is bold to claim that what the Psalmist anticipated — 'the Lord is coming' — has now happened — 'the Lord is come!' May we receive our King, and, this Christmas, repeat the sounding joy.

Yours in Christ,



Editorial

Unlike the shepherds in the fields 2000 years ago, we no longer need choirs of heavenly angels to tell us of the baby born to us in Bethlehem. Shops, adverts and magazines have been reminding us that Christmas is on the way since October, at the very least.

The messengers may have changed, but the message still resonates on down through the years. However busy our Christmases become, however many things

there are to arrange and whatever the hardships in the world, somehow the sheer joy of God's gift to us all always comes through and raises us up.

So let's bring gifts and thanks, and rejoice at the marvel of the Nativity. Let's join in the festivities, have our hearts lifted in music and song and be warmed in the middle of midwinter. For this issue focuses on the joy brought to the world. Wishing you a joyful Christmas from the *Wesley Memorial News* team.

In this issue...

<i>Joy to the world</i>	2-10
<i>Updates</i>	11-15
<i>Obituaries</i>	16-17
<i>Reviews</i>	17-18
<i>Finance report</i>	19
<i>Diary dates</i>	20
<i>Wesley Membrain</i>	20

A carol and a hymn

There is no rose

There is no rose of such virtue
As is the rose that bare Jesu;
Alleluia.

For in this rose containèd was
Heaven and earth in little space;
Res miranda.

By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three,
Pares forma.

The angels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis deo:
Gaudeamus.

Leave we all this worldly mirth,
And follow we this joyful birth;
Transeamus.

Alleluia, res miranda,
Pares forma, gaudeamus,
Transeamus.

English traditional c.1420

(Beautifully set to music by Benjamin Britten in
A Ceremony of Carols, composed in 1942).

All my heart this night rejoices

All my heart this night rejoices
As I hear,
Far and near,
Sweetest angel voices.
"Christ is born", their choirs are singing,
Till the air,
Everywhere,
Now with joy is ringing.

Hark! a voice from yonder manger,
Soft and sweet,
Doth entreat,
"Flee from woe and danger!
Brethren, come! from all doth grieve you,
You are freed;
All you need
I will surely give you."

Come, then, let us hasten yonder!
Here let all,
Great and small,
Kneel in awe and wonder!
Love him who with love is yearning!
Hail the star
That from far
Bright with hope is burning!

(vv. 1-3)

Paul Gerhardt (1607 - 70)

tr. Catherine Winkworth (1827 - 78)



Joy to the world?

I have long loved Rowan Williams' great poem for Advent (*Advent Calendar*) published in his first poetry collection, *After Silent Centuries* (Oxford, 1994), which speaks not of a joyful arrival of a child well expected and anticipated but rather of something inexorable, disturbing and fractious:

*He will come, will come,
will come like crying in the night,
like blood, like breaking,
as the earth writhes to toss him free.
He will come like child.*

My appreciation of the poem is partly because it is an effective antidote to the froth and schmaltz we are sometimes offered within the Advent and Christmas narratives both within and outside the Church. The connection made in the poem to the changes occurring in the natural landscape as winter sets in and the year advances to its close are linked with the changes to Mary's body as her pregnancy comes to an end and the effort of her labour to bring forth new life begins. There is a profound acknowledgement that new life brings disturbance, requires effort, and causes pain.

Children do not come easily in reality, in contrast to the moment in the Nativity Play when a small doll wrapped in a very clean cloth is placed magically in the manger in front of Mary and Joseph, with no effort on anyone's part. Christmastide as a season can be a painful season for all those who are bereaved but also for those who have longed to produce life, or lost a child, or struggled with infertility treatment, but we rarely remember this as a Church in our public worship.

I continue to reflect on what it means to "come like child" and indeed, what it means to "become like a child in order to enter the Kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16). I, like you, may have been told in myriad sermons that to become like a child and enter the Kingdom of God is to be joyful, innocent, curious, or future-orientated. I am not entirely convinced that these are necessarily childlike qualities. I know that some children, at some points in time, will experience these emotions and states, but am not entirely convinced that this is what Jesus

meant when he said that being like a child was our means to become Kingdom people.

William Countryman (*Dirt, Greed and Sex: Sexual Ethics in the New Testament*, 2007, Fortress Press) has suggested that in the New Testament



period children were regarded as chattels or possessions of adults, voiceless and powerless. It is interesting that Jesus might have suggested that it was the very willingness to relinquish control, autonomy and independence which meant that, as human persons, we might become part of the rule of God, as we acknowledge our need of God, and our utter dependence on God as creator of all life, including ourselves.

Karl Rahner, a Catholic theologian, wrote interestingly about our tendency to see children and childhood as provisional and subordinate – children as little adults in the making, and childhood as that which shapes and prepares one for the rest of life. Using the analogy of a field which bears fair flowers and ripe fruits, Rahner speaks rather of childhood experiences as "those that can only grow in this field and no other, and which will themselves be carried into the storehouses of eternity" (*Theological Investigations*, vol 8, DLT, 1971). Childhood then, for Rahner, is something we don't leave behind and shed as an experience, but rather an experience we carry with us, infused with the presence of God. We are then, as children, not learning to be human persons but already fully alive in God, already persons and those who bear the image of God.

So where is the joy to be found in God coming among us as a child? The good and joyful news is that God is born in poverty, among the powerless and is dependent on others for care and nurture. God sets aside power to become powerless, God who is infinite embraces finitude and limitedness for our sake. God comes to be like us, so that we might become like God.

He will come like child.

*The Revd Canon Helen D. Cameron,
Chair of the Northampton Methodist District*

Upside-down Christmas

Shirley Murray is a loved and respected prolific writer of hymns, expressing Christian faith out of the contemporary context and landscape of Aotearoa-New Zealand. She was born in Invercargill and raised in a Methodist family. Her lyrics have been translated into many different languages and are often set to music by composer and hymn writer Colin Gibson who lives in the South Island of New Zealand.

This Christmas Carol, *Upside Down Christmas*, sings of the ‘gold and the green and the sparkle’ to ‘carol the summer and welcome the Christ Child’ in the experience of Christmas in the southern hemisphere: ‘warm in our sunshine and sweetness of air’.

While the “upside down” imagery alludes to our place on the other side of the world ‘down-under’, Christmas can also be thought of as a time when God began turning things upside down.

When the young Mary was visited by the angel Gabriel, her own life was turned upside down with the news that she would birth Immanuel, the Messiah, to bless the world, and she sings of a world turning upside down - of rulers brought down from their thrones and the humble lifted up; the proud being scattered in the thoughts of their heart; of the hungry being filled with good things and the rich sent away empty (Luke 1:46-53). The child in her womb would come to ‘dislodge, disrupt, disturb’.

As happened to other people in the Biblical narratives, this reminds us that our own world-view, our perspective of being aright, is turned upside down and inside out in coming face-to-face with God – indeed with God in the infant Christ ‘everywhere, anywhere, here on the earth’.

May this time of Advent gestate a joyful longing for the Kingdom of God, and birth an upside-down Christmas that is much blessed.

Merita Holder



Koru (New life)

Carol our Christmas, an upside down Christmas;
The snow is not falling and trees are not bare.
Carol the summer, and welcome the Christ Child,
Warm in our sunshine and sweetness of air.

Sing of the gold and the green and the sparkle,
Water and river and lure of the beach.
Sing in the happiness of open spaces,
Sing a nativity summer can reach!

Shepherds and musterers move over hillsides.
Finding not angels but sheep to be shorn;
Wise ones make journeys whatever the season,
Searching for signs of the truth to be born.

Right-side-up Christmas belongs to the universe,
Made in the moment a woman gives birth;
Hope is the Jesus gift, love is the offering,
Everywhere, anywhere, here on the earth.

Carol our Christmas, an upside down Christmas;
Snow is not falling and trees are not bare.
Carol the summer, and welcome the Christ Child,
Warm in our sunshine and sweetness of air.

Shirley Erena Murray. (Music Colin Gibson)

Joy to the (whole) world!



I got very emotional last time I was at Wesley Memorial (ask Ann Lemmon – she witnessed my blubbing!). It was Summer this year – the first time I’d been back for a while, though 36 years since I first wandered in to see what it was like. I sobbed because Peter Storey had just preached an astonishing sermon drawing on

decades of tough but profound experiences in South Africa. It brought up lots of powerful memories and emotions.

It had been 34 years since I’d been helped by a donor from Wesley Memorial Church to make a trip to Chicago during my doctoral research to study at the Lutheran School of Theology. I’d got a partial scholarship but had no spare cash to make up the shortfall. Someone, quietly, anonymously, made it possible. It was a life-shaping experience because I was so materially poor while I was there. I lived in a glitzy big city without being able to enjoy much of what it offered so I was experiencing the city in the way a great many of its citizens do. At the same time, I was a White privileged academic, able to live cheaply in the ‘protected’ safe haven on the South Side of the city. I didn’t have confidence to own up to how poor I was. Nor did the students or staff have much sense of my own Merseyside working-class roots. When it was known I was ‘from Oxford’ and as soon as people heard my ‘British English’ accent, all sorts of assumptions were made.

Alongside all this, I was introduced in a hands-on way to Black Theology, Latin American Liberation Theology and Hispanic Theology. I eavesdropped on Jesse Jackson’s local community organisation, and heard him speak at a large-scale Saturday event. I attended a lecture given by Professor James Cone, a founding figure of African American Black Theology. I mulled with Professor Karen Bloomquist about the challenges brought by feminist theology to (so-called) mainstream Christian systematic theology. I am still processing all of this 34 years later.

In the meantime I’ve been trying to work out how such life-shaping experiences have had an impact on my higher education teaching, on my being a church-member and local preacher (in

East London, Sheffield, Rotherham and Leicester) and my life as a parent. I have three observations.

First, I have wrestled with and written about the importance of popular culture for theology over the past three decades. This is simply because if some of us don’t, then Christianity too easily allies itself with the culture/s of only certain sections of society. To put it simply in UK terms: Christianity is assumed to be best served by Bach, Handel and Holman Hunt, though not *Rev*, *The Big Bang Theory* (TV version), hip-hop or the soaps. We have to work out how to engage with popular culture because everyone – Christian and not – swims within it.

Second, both the clashes of my working-class roots with many forms of middle-class Christianity and the necessary wrestling with my own Whiteness reminds me that all our expressions and understandings of faith are deeply contextual. Our roots, our situations, our identities all shape our faith, and the forms of Christianity we embody are often quite different from other people’s. Sometimes they may seem so different that we may have to work hard to understand what it is that makes the different forms (and us as diverse people) all ‘in Christ’.

Third, my life in education – inside and outside the church – has kept on reminding me just how important and exhilarating it is to be exploring all of this. To ‘lay ourselves on the line’ as we explore our faith and how it shapes us, and how we pass it on to others is scary at times. It is also utterly life-enhancing.

As we pass through Advent and prepare for Christmas, and think about the Magi (what ethnicities?) and enjoy all those nativity plays, I invite us to be excited about just how rich Christianity is, and what it is that God wants to do with the world (sometimes even in and through us). And as Barbara Glasson and I prepare for our Presidential and Vice-Presidential years respectively – with a joint theme of ‘So What’s the Story?’ – I invite you to think about the multiple ways in the which ‘the Story’ is inhabited, by all sorts of people, in all sorts of ways ... not just ‘ours’ (whoever the ‘we’ may be).

*Clive Marsh (Wesley Memorial & JWS 1982-5),
Methodist Vice-president elect, 2019-20*

Paul's new venture!

Allow me to introduce myself: I'm Paul Carter and I'm the new(-ish) probationer minister based at the northern end of the circuit. I live in the manse at Kidlington and have responsibilities there and at Woodstock, Bladon and Tackley. I started in the circuit and in this kind of ministry at the beginning of September. So far it's been a whirlwind of new places and new faces, as well as the shock of a new way of life and a partly new identity. There's been the busyness of the start of a Methodist year and all of a sudden we are hurtling towards Christmas. It's been quite a lot for me to take in so if you see me looking dazed, that might be why.

Christmas is the one Christian season which is truly embedded in a culture we find outside the church. Christmas provides more frantic activity – but also a pause. There are all the usual preparations for the festival: planning and shopping and travelling. And then it happens: bank holidays and a general lull. When I was a teenager, I lived on a busy crossroads which was full of traffic at seemingly all hours. But Christmas morning was different. Christmas morning was quiet. By lunchtime a trickle of cars had begun to appear, with people gathering together to celebrate; but the morning was quiet.

Let's not neglect those moments of quiet. I am slowly finding my way into the role of minister. There have been several people who have been keen to say to me that I should be careful with my time. As a probationer I have a weekly (or equivalent) study day in addition to the weekly rest day which all ministers have. So far, I've found it difficult to take the suggested time on a single day, but I'm getting better at it.

Many of my rest days have had to be negotiated since Saturdays have been busy with important activities. I've also not got myself out of my previous routine of finishing off service preparation on a Saturday night. I'm not quite like a minister who once told me he was amazed at how the Good Lord always led him to finish writing his sermon just in time for *Match of the Day*. But I take the point. Slowly, I'm getting into a more appropriate rhythm.

It's not easy, because creative activity doesn't come timetabled, even if the preparatory work for creative activity can be more structured. For some of us, that creative activity might include preparing worship but for most of us it will be other things. They could be obviously creative activities such as music or art or writing, but they could also be simply (or perhaps not simply) working out how we live our lives as followers of Jesus. Over the years, I have never quite learned the lesson that I work better in short bursts with breaks in between. I suspect I am far from being alone in that.

We Methodists can be a wordy people. Methodist tradition has always given great weight to preaching and singing – and singing and preaching are frequently a highlight of worship for me – but the words we use don't sound clearly unless they are surrounded with silence. We run the risk of sounding like a piano with the sustaining pedal held down: an interesting effect but the notes are blurred. So as we journey towards Christmas, let's listen to the words and the Word, let's enjoy the singing and the bustle, but let's try to pause too. That way, I suspect that we might be more creative. After all, we bear the image of the Creator who valued the Sabbath.

This photograph might give you a hint at one kind of place I like to spend my pauses.



Paul Carter, Kidlington

Prayer as a revolutionary act

George Orwell wrote that “In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act.” Those words ring truer today than when Orwell imagined a dystopian future, as he wrote *1984* in the last months of the Second World War.

I think we could explore together what that might mean today but I want to consider a different idea. I wonder if we might say that ‘in a time of universal cynicism, prayer becomes a revolutionary act’?

Christians have at times been criticized for praying for a better world whilst doing little to bring about transformation. And sometimes we have despaired of knowing what to do other than pray in the face of complex systems that oppress the poor – systems of which we are a part and from which we find it impossible to extricate ourselves.

Prayer seems like a last resort, all that is left to us, what else can we do? Like the disciples on the lake in a storm, we wait until the water is threatening to sink us before we turn to Christ in our fear and frustration.

Yet I want to argue that prayer is not such a small thing, it is not to be approached lightly and it should be the first port of call, not the last thing we try when all else has failed.

We might take inspiration from Susanna Wesley, mother of John and Charles Wesley, the founders of Methodism. She knew that prayer was not a trivial matter:

Enable me, O God, to collect and compose my thoughts before an immediate approach to Thee in prayer. May I be careful to have my mind in order when I take upon myself the honour to speak to the sovereign Lord of the universe.

Prayer is, of course, not just intercession and even intercession should not be a list of demands from some sort of Father Christmas who will grant our wishes if we behave well enough. To pray is to be intentionally present to God, as God is always present to us. It is to be open to the

prompting of God’s Spirit in our hearts and minds, to be at one with the divine love at the heart of all creation – if that’s not revolutionary, I don’t know what is!

Being in this Quaker meeting house, we are also reminded that prayer need not involve words – rather a stilling of oneself, a mutual communication between creator and created; between beloved and lover; between the human and the divine.

Prayer is a revolutionary act because it is a declaration that we believe change is possible. I remember all those years when we prayed for the end of apartheid, for peace in Northern Ireland and for Nelson Mandela’s release. Who can say how many opinions were changed because of public prayer, year after year, reminding worshippers of the bigger context in which we practise our faith? How much did prayer contribute to the success of those campaigns? It’s not easy to measure but our prayers were part of the picture, a statement of belief about the kind of world we want to live in and our faith that God can work through us to make it possible.

Prayer is a revolutionary act because it declares that we are not merely individuals with our own views and needs but that we join in with a world-wide body, connected to each other and connected through God. I remember being in Russia some years ago. On the Sunday I went to a Methodist Church and felt very at home – not just because the notices were longer than the sermon! As I walked in someone was playing the tune of *One more step along the world I go* on an out-of-tune piano and the flowers were in a vase made from an old plastic soft drink bottle. In the midst of the mundane and largely uninspiring, I found myself praying with people who spoke no English, as I spoke no Russian; and in that space we were connected. God heard all our prayers regardless of the words used. The following day I visited an Orthodox church, entering the building just as the choir sang *Holy, holy, holy*, and suddenly I was in the temple with Isaiah and the glory of God’s train filled the place and tears poured down my non-conformist cheeks as I was

transported into the divine presence. The liturgy in that place had remained unchanged for hundreds of years and somehow managed to speak to my modern heart and connected me not just with Christians of this century, but also with the people of God all the way back to the day the prophet received his call in God's temple.

Prayer is a revolutionary act because it is an act of empathy. When the assumption of many world leaders and most of the media is that the spirit of the age is 'everyone for themselves and let the devil take the hindmost' – empathy is the opposite. It recognises the other, values the other's needs and recognises that God's heart is not with those who exploit the poor and vulnerable but that it is with those spoken of by Jesus in Luke 4. God longs to draw to our attention the poor, the captive, the blind and the oppressed. To pray is the starting point of proclaiming the year of the Lord's favour – prayer leads to jubilee. Prayer can be an act of solidarity, holding before God those who need support and in doing so reminding ourselves of our own need for prayer.

When we pray we really do need to listen more than we speak. As it says in the Epistle of James, be quick to listen and slow to speak – that is as meaningful in the context of prayer as it is in our human communications. When we listen to God, when we come close to God's heart, we cannot fail to hear God's longing for the wellbeing of the orphan, the widow, the refugee. If our hearts beat with the passion of God, then prayer can only lead to action. When drawn into the heart of God we cannot fail to join in with God's agenda of radical grace and transforming hope.

True prayer leads not to a sense of having done our bit, but to a profound longing to transform the world, restoring it to the good creation which is God's gift to the created.

Finally, I want to say that prayer is a revolutionary act because it is poetry. As a poet and a liturgist, I might be seen as a bit biased about this! Prayer is poetry in the face of a world where words are used as weapons or only have value if they help you pass exams in an education system of

narrow curricula aimed at feeding more human material into a broken system. Poetry can be a decanting of human experience, capturing that which is too big or complex for us to understand or fully express in a few words.

Prayer is a cry in the dark,
a child's longing for home,
and a hollowed soul's seeking of fulfilment.

Prayer is a two-fingered salute
to the hope-less cynicism of endless false promises
and a bunting-waving celebration of love in action.

Prayer is a sacred space,
found in the midst of the unholy of battlegrounds
and in the desolation of loss.

Prayer is a memory
of long lost conversations with wise elders
and an exuberance of youthful anticipation.

Prayer is a shared longing,
a whispered dream
and an open conversation.

Prayer is a revolutionary act
It is hope in despair
And a grace-filled weaving of love's intent.

May God bless us with the
desire to pray, that we
might better act, for the
sake of all. Amen.

Michaela Youngson



President of the Methodist Conference 2018-19
Address given at the Labour Party Conference, reproduced
with permission, from <https://sacredwells.blogspot.com/2018/09/prayer-as-revolutionary-act.html>

Time and Again

Friday 22 and Saturday 23 February 2019 at 7.30pm

Songs and scenes from the Wesley Memorial shows: don't miss it!

In the run-up to Christmas 1983, it was suggested that the musically-talented members of our church youth group, EGG, needed some occupation to liven up the rather blank period after the seasonal festivities and before the return to school. So the show *Alternativity* was devised to fill this very specific gap – a Christmas musical just too late for Christmas – and was put together from first rehearsal to public performance in the space of a week. It turned out to be addictive! – and became the first of six full-scale, home-grown musicals to be staged at Wesley Memorial, all written and performed by members of our own congregation. Three of them have been Matthews / Eddy collaborations (*Alternativity*, *Francis!*, *Barleytime*), two have been produced by a co-operative of the church's musicians and wordsmiths (*Mark My Words*, *Moses*) and the most recent has been Jack



Godfrey's tour de force, *Amazing Love*. Several of them have been produced more than once, and, in particular, *Alternativity* has enjoyed many revivals – so *Time and Again* is an appropriate description for this medley of songs and scenes from the Wesley Memorial shows!

The idea for *Time and Again* grew from the planning around the church's bicentenary earlier this year. So as well as celebrating three decades of our own musical tradition, we are also celebrating two centuries of Methodist worship on the site of our current church building. (And yes, we know that by next February it will be 201 years – a whole extra year to celebrate!) Time and again, in different ways for different generations, the congregation in New Inn Hall Street has borne witness to the loving grace of God freely offered to all.

But our six musicals, together, celebrate a tradition that goes back very much further than two centuries – several thousand years and more, to the point where history and legend merge. Time and again, from the stories of *Genesis* onwards, the same

cry has gone up from the earth: "Where are you, God?" Time and again, God has chosen particular and unexpected people to give his reply: "I am here! Just look! Just listen!"

We have woven together songs and snippets from our six musicals to reflect this theme and to show how a collection of very different people, widely separated in time and space –

from Moses to John Wesley – have all found themselves caught up by God into his never-ending plan of salvation. The items have been selected to reflect a wide variety of mood and music, from the sublime to the ridiculous, from lyrical solos to all-singing-all-dancing choruses. You are guaranteed to go home – and possibly be kept awake

– humming your favourite tunes.

Amazing Love – the finale.

From that first production of *Alternativity* onwards, it has been clear that the greatest benefit of putting on these shows is the wonderful sense of team spirit which emerges, a camaraderie which embraces everybody involved whatever their contribution, whatever their talents and whatever their age. (If the audience has a good time too, that's an added bonus!) If you would like to experience this for yourself by joining in our latest escapade, then do please speak to one of the team to find out more. All offers of help in any capacity – on stage, back stage, front of house or at the kitchen sink – will be most gratefully received.

Most of all, of course, we need your help in providing an audience! – so do get these dates firmly inked into your new 2019 diaries *now*, and spread the word to family and friends. You can assure them that, time and again, our Wesley Memorial shows have proved a thoroughly enjoyable (and a little bit thought-provoking) evening's entertainment.

Clare Matthews

Team: Esther Ibbotson, David Matthews, Kirstie Vreede et al.

The Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies

The Oxford Institute began with a friendship and an idea. The friendship was between an American Methodist minister, Dow Kirkpatrick, and a British Methodist minister, Reginald Kissack; the idea was for a Study Centre in Oxford, providing a base for research for Methodist scholars and students from around the world. During Rex Kissack's time as minister at Wesley Memorial (1946-52) the idea was pursued, but the costs and complexities of buying a property and creating a Study Centre were formidable. Eventually it was decided to try instead for a residential conference of Methodist scholars, and the first gathering of what became the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies took place at Lincoln College, Oxford, in July 1958. Since then the Institute has continued to meet, initially every four years and now every five.

Having begun at John Wesley's old college in 1958, sixty years later, in August 2018, the Fourteenth Oxford Institute met at George Whitefield's old college, Pembroke. Whereas the first Institute was a largely Anglo-American enterprise, the fourteenth gathered scholars from Methodist and Wesleyan churches from all corners of the globe, including Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, India, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Argentina, and many parts of Europe and North America. For eight days the 170 participants heard lectures, presented research papers, shared meals and prayed together. The rhythm of daily prayer was an important part of the whole experience: this was not just an academic conference, but also a meeting of

people with a shared tradition of faith. High points of the Institute, therefore, were the Covenant Service in Christ Church Cathedral midway through the programme and Sunday worship at Wesley Memorial on the last day. Each Institute has a theme, which is explored in plenary lectures and small subject-specific working groups. The theme for 2018 was 'Revival, Reform and Revolution in Global Methodism', and this was broad and hospitable enough to incorporate presentations on subjects as diverse as Methodist involvement in the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in Germany, lessons from the nineteenth century deaconess movement and reflections on this summer's elections in Zimbabwe. Most of the papers presented will be available on the Institute's website for anyone who wishes to explore further.

(see <https://oxford-institute.org/>)

As British Co-chair of the Institute since 2013, it was a great joy and a huge relief to me that the Fourteenth Institute went so well! It was a delight too that we were able to welcome participants to Wesley Memorial for Sunday worship, to host a public lecture in association with the Institute, and to hear the Revd Professor Dion Forster speak movingly about the life of the church in South Africa, and the contribution of Methodist faith, theology and spirituality to the task of reconciliation and reform. My term of office extends until 2023, so I shall be looking forward to the Fifteenth Oxford Institute. The planning has begun!

Martin Wellings

The Methodist covenant prayer

I am no longer my own but yours.
Put me to what you will,
rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing, put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you or laid aside for you,
exalted for you or brought low for you;
let me be full, let me be empty,
let me have all things, let me have nothing;

I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your
pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.
And the covenant made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven.
Amen.

Riding and striding 2018

The forecast had predicted torrential rain so it was a relief to find that Ride and Stride day 2018 was only gloomy and damp. We had decided that a tour around the city centre would provide the most opportunities for church visits, so starting in Wolvercote we wound our way down to Summertown, along to Marston, up to Headington, a little detour into Headington Quarry, and then back along the Cowley Road and into the city centre proper, finishing at Wesley Memorial.

I think we managed a total of around 22 churches, enjoying many different flavours of church life along the way. This was literally the case at Summertown URC where we were 'welcomed' by a jar of boiled sweets on a chair in front of the church door! Holy Trinity Headington Quarry was busy hosting a wedding so we had to sneak behind the group photograph to glimpse this church where C. S. Lewis worshipped for many years. All Saints in Headington was peaceful and cool, and we were able to admire their newly built facilities, although the welcomers were sorry not to have had more visitors and were aware of quiet Sunday mornings too. St Mary and St John on the Cowley Road was bursting with an amazingly colourful exhibition of Nigerian art, and then at Cowley Road Methodist Church we were met by Dorothy Stepney and her bewilderingly large number of (perfectly) crocheted poppies. St Cross has now ceased to function as a church but was heaving with the general public admiring the Balliol College manuscript collection. So many glimpses of congregations variously in touch with their communities, discerning different kinds of identity and future!

Ride & Stride

Set up in 1964, the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust (Registered Charity 1168567) encourages a wider interest in our historic religious buildings and provides financial help for their repair and practical enhancement.

See <https://ohct.org.uk/ride-stride/>



I knew I would find a day out and about in the fresh air uplifting, but I was surprised to be so warmed by the friendship we experienced everywhere and by the witness embodied in these buildings and their faithful communities. I felt more held 'in the vine', more aware of and connected to Christian life throughout the city and more supported in my faith. A step into a place made in some sense holy by worshipping people over many years is not like any other threshold. It may take only a moment and there may be no words for what happens in that crossing, but it does have the power to shift things inside you, to re-orient, to clear, to nourish. It was great to reach Wesley Memorial at the end of the day to find the tea flowing and the cake abundant, but given my own experience as a visitor elsewhere, it was even better that we ended up welcoming 89 riders and striders and no less than 377 Oxford Open Doors visitors into our church. I hope their crossings too were helpful, and that they went on their way encouraged and sustained.

Fiona Macdonald

They organise the annual Ride and Stride event, all over the county, to raise funds. Everyone is welcome to take part – as an individual, as a family or a group of friends. Please register through our own Church Coordinator, Simon Blainey.

Make a date for 2019 - Saturday 14 September!

Mission & heritage

An update and reflection from Alison, our Mission and Heritage Officer

Advent, being a time of preparation, is a good metaphor for much of the work that has gone into our mission and heritage project to date. The idea was conceived some time ago and has grown in strength and visibility. However, much of the work has been preparatory: listening, planning, gathering, organising, thinking and praying as well as active: putting on events, setting up an oral history project and producing new Open Church literature.



As anyone who is a parent will know, the period leading up to the birth of a baby can bend time in mysterious ways. Some days drag with a combination of discomfort and anticipation. On others the feeling of time slipping away before everything has to be ready threatens to induce panic. Fortunately when there has been more than enough to do and time has not felt on my side, I have been hugely supported by the Mission and Heritage group and the wider church, not to mention my dog walking, food shopping and meal-preparing husband!

These important achievements to date should not be underestimated but they are not the ultimate 'offspring' we are praying for. Our plan has always been to show something of the love of Christ to all whom we meet through our project, not just within the congregation and in Open Church, but through all that we do as a church – including our role as host of a vast range of activities taking place on our premises.

Very sadly, as we know, not all births go according to plan. As a Mission and Heritage Group, we greatly appreciated the experience, wisdom and kindness that Martin Slade brought to our work, as well as his diligent and skillful care for our archives. With the whole church, we deeply mourn Martin and thank God for his unique contribution to our project.

As a Connexionally funded initiative, we have recently had to report back to the Grants Team of the Methodist Church, setting out what we have achieved and what further work is still to be done. It is in the area of engaging with our premises users where we feel there is most to be done as we move through the second year of our work – hence the poppy displays and story scrolls used during the Season of Remembrance and more such projects in the pipeline.

This autumn both our sons left home. Eventually all children must be allowed to go their own way and we cannot know what the future holds for them. So too with our project – we may never know the full effect that our initiative will have on others. The wide ranging organisations that use our premises all help others to lead happy and hope-filled lives. Maybe, like our own children, we have as much to learn from them as they have from us.

Alison Butler

Our light party

Friday 16 November

At the time of writing I am preparing Wesley Memorial's open house involvement in the Oxford Christmas Light Festival this year. As well as drawing our own Junior Church children, I'm hoping our event will appeal to the families of children taking part in the light parade, the route of which this year will go past Wesley Memorial, meaning our porch and steps will be a prime position!

The theme of the whole festival is 'Undiscovered Oxford' and so we will be hosting a Messy Church/Light Party style event exploring the 'undiscovered' gifts and talents of the

children coming, and will dwell on all our potential to be 'lights'. We'll be offering crafts, games, refreshments and most importantly a very warm welcome.

Mel McCulloch



(The evening was a great success! Ed.)

Children and young people

From Rainbow House

In October we said a grateful farewell to Bryony Thomas who, for almost two years, had managed the project with great care and expertise, and had brought us a five-star rating from Oxford City Council's food safety inspector. Under her management, customer numbers had flourished so that, even in the enlarged Hall, we had to say on numerous occasions that we were FULL UP! It is hard to disappoint the little ones who look forward to their visits, and don't understand why they can't come straight in and get on the climbing frame!

We were very pleased to be able to welcome Christine Strahan as our new co-ordinator / manager, and considered ourselves most fortunate to have brought a former volunteer helper to the post. Customers have poured in during Christine's first three weeks, but she has faced it all with confidence and equanimity.

Since we came fully under the wing of Wesley Memorial, we have been glad to have some gentle Bible stories at Christmas and Easter, thanks to Mel. Her song sessions have

been popular too, and Gwyneth has provided an excellent story-telling time on Thursdays.

The many customers express their appreciation in various ways, so we know we provide a service which is valued. If you have a spare hour or two in the week, why not come and give us a hand? Or drop in for a quick visit, and see the joy that is shared with little ones and carers.

Rainbow House runs in the large Hall, every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 10.30am to 2.00pm, with lots of toys, tea and coffee, healthy refreshments, and a relaxed welcome.

Kate Dobson



Christine, in the kitchen

The Summer holiday club

We gathered a lovely group of children and a wonderful team of volunteers at the end of the Summer holidays for our Joseph holiday club. As the name suggests we spent the 3 days looking at the Genesis story of Joseph and his brothers. We explored themes of jealousy, forgiveness and never giving up.

We also got messy with silly challenges and a variety of crafts and activities. The church was transformed with 'technicolour' bunting, pyramids, palm trees and thrones, and a space was made for activities and games.

The children also enjoyed learning two songs from Andrew Lloyd Webber's famous musical which we shared with the congregation at the Sunday Morning All-Age service.

Thank you so much to all our fabulous helpers - you know who you are! Thank you to the children for being so much fun for us to work with. Hopefully happy (and colourful) memories were made for us all!

Mel McCulloch



Children and young people



Last September Wesley Memorial, New Road Baptist Church and St Columba's URC joined together to form two youth groups for young people aged 9–13 or 14–18, which means, amazingly, they have now been running for over a year. In that time, we have, amongst other things, had trips to Thirsty Meeples Board Game café and the Bowling Alley; we've played indoor hockey, built newspaper shelters and made 'Palm' Ice-cream Sundaes; we've led worship at a United Service and have started our own monthly Café Church style evening service which includes input from the young people and cake—obviously! We've discussed deep topics and we've chatted about silly things. We've eaten pizza and we've prayed. And in our own way we have been Church together.

Compared to other youth projects in the city ours is small, but I think it does offer something different. We are travelling together and the young people and 'leaders' can share their questions and their answers as we learn from each other. The joy is that God is travelling with us too and so we look forward to seeing where God takes us!

Mel McCulloch, Nicola Dinsdale & Hank Jenkins

PHAB Weekend Retreat 2018

There was much to celebrate during the annual PHAB weekend retreat, which was held Aug. 31-Sept. 2 in Avon Tyrrell, an activity center in the New Forest National Park. The retreat is a chance for PHAB members to take some time away, enjoy some new experiences, and get to know one another better.

After a two-hour trip on Friday, we arrived at our lodges and enjoyed a pasta dinner and time to chat, relax, and prepare for the weekend ahead. The next morning, we had breakfast together and drove to Poole, a lovely coastal town in Dorset. There, we were treated to a boat ride around the quay, courtesy of the Dolphin III. During the ride, we saw beautiful views of the harbor, came across dozens of small sailboats, and waved *Hello* to other seafarers. We also enjoyed tea and biscuits and plenty of laughs, conversation, and photo ops.

The rest of the afternoon included shopping, visits to the Poole Museum, an ice-cream break and a fish-and-chips dinner where we debated the merits of cod versus haddock, among other

conversation topics. That evening, we gathered around a glowing bonfire to roast marshmallows (and veggies!) and share our favorite moments from the day. On Sunday morning, we woke up early to enjoy a full English breakfast together, prepared by Mary Lines. Full and happy, we spent the afternoon talking at the lodge and facing our fears on the fully accessible ropes course, including the balance beam, cable traverse, trapeze jump, and double-incline log, all 9 meters from the ground, as well as the climbing wall. That afternoon, we boarded the bus and hopped in our cars and headed back to Oxford, feeling relaxed, well-fed, brave, and ultimately closer as a group. As I learned on my high-ropes experience, and my slow scoot across the balance beam, the journey isn't defined by the way we face our obstacles, or how long it takes us, but by the community who joins and encourages us along the way.

Joy Jenkins

Photos at <https://www.facebook.com/oxfordphab/>

Martin Alan Slade 1946 – 2018

Martin Slade was born on 6 January 1946, in Oxford, the second son of Dennis and Rose Slade.

From St Ebbe's School and South Oxford Secondary Modern, Martin became an apprentice bookbinder at Oxford University Press, working there until the Printing House closed in April 1989, by which time he had risen to be bindery manager. At OUP and then at Oxuniprint, Martin was a loyal colleague and a kind, fair and approachable boss.



Outside of work, Martin was involved in many voluntary organisations, including Balliol Boys' Club, Pegasus Youth Theatre, the Amelia Trust, the Stanton Ballard Trust, and the Oxford Rotary Club. Having benefited from the Boys' Club and the Youth Theatre, Martin sought to share these gifts with others. Through his work with St John's Ambulance Martin met Jenny, and they were married at Wesley Memorial in 1976. Martin was a devoted husband, and a loving father to Mark and Adam, their wives, Briony and Susie, and his grandsons Lucas, Zach, Ezra and Alex. Martin first came to Wesley Memorial at the age of five, brought to Sunday School by his older brother Dennis. Over the next 67

years he was a faithful member of our congregation, serving in many capacities, including Church Council Secretary and Circuit Steward.

When the Oxford Winter Night Shelter was launched in January, Martin was an early volunteer, and his ability to relate naturally to people of all kinds made him the ideal person to take responsibility for welcoming the guests.

Beyond his official duties and formal roles, Martin was always ready to give practical help and to do the unobtrusive and unglamorous jobs which are essential to any church. Most recently he put his

bookbinding skills to work in restoring our lectern Bible, and devoted much time to repairing the historic model of the church, made in the early twentieth century.

Martin will be remembered for his good company, his cheery grin, his thoughtful listening, and his unfailing kindness: qualities celebrated by the congregation which filled the church to give thanks for his life and character.

Martin Wellings

James Cornelius Joseph 1940 – 2018

James Joseph was born on the island of St Vincent, in the Grenadines, on 13 July 1940. Raised by his grandmother, he travelled from the West Indies to Great Britain in April 1960, and it was 25 years before he had the opportunity to return to his birthplace.

James came to Oxford, where he worked as a welder at Pressed Steel for 30 years and then for 10 years for the University, at the Bodleian Library and at the Examination Schools.

James was a very sociable man, an enthusiast for jazz and for classical music, and, especially in his younger days, a snappy dresser and keen dancer. He maintained a productive allotment, sharing the fruits of his labours with



neighbours and friends. Married first to Sue and then to Chris, James rejoiced in his children, Julian, Becky, Jacob and Joshua, and in his grandchildren.

For more than 50 years James was a member and regular worshipper at Wesley Memorial, often acting as sidesman in the gallery. His kindness and gentle courtesy were much appreciated and will be long remembered.

The last two years of his life were clouded by the onset of dementia, eventually necessitating a move to the Isis Care Home, where he died peacefully on 13 October 2018.

Martin Wellings

Betty Denny 1927 – 2018

Betty was a person who cared for everyone, giving time and support, seeing the best in people and wanting to encourage them in it.

She was an only child and knew Len from childhood on. They spent most of their married life in London, moving to Oxford on retirement, and Oxford became Betty's special place. She had always shown her caring nature. She was a Sunday School teacher in Kenton Methodist Church and then, here at Wesley Memorial, she was a pastoral visitor. Quiet and gracious, she was very talented, but didn't blow her own trumpet. After leaving school she was an art student; she had some of her paintings on the wall at home – others she published as greetings cards. She was also an accomplished dressmaker and entertained beautifully. Betty had a deep love of literature, music, the outdoors and ecology which she shared with her daughters and sons-in-law. And there was a great sense of fun, as when she rode pillion on her son-in-law's motorbike on her 80th birthday. She was described by her granddaughter as a broad-minded and forward-thinking

person, which is quite a compliment from a teenager. In her 60s she decided to take an Open University degree in English. She gained her degree, sandwiching the course around two weddings and the births of two granddaughters.



Though failing sight made her visual pleasures a problem, she still had music and her witty dry sense of humour. She stayed independently mobile for a long time too, declining offers of lifts to church from members who came past. As that independence became harder, the family were grateful for the support Betty received from friends, from Pegasus Grange and Wesley Memorial. We thank God for the time we had Betty with us.

David Bull

Aladdin at Bladon!

It's become a bit of a family tradition now! Every October half term we wrap up warm, grab our torches and drive out to Bladon knowing we're going to be in for a treat! We've been to see their productions of the Broadway hits: *Cats*, *Annie*, *Matilda* and, this year, *Aladdin*. I was a little confused by some of my parents' comments as we parked the car and I realised they thought we were going to see a pantomime. "Oh no we weren't!" This was the Disney musical version of *Aladdin*, complete with flying carpet!

As we settled down into our seats, a voice boomed over the loudspeakers, welcoming us all to Bladon Methodist Church. I had to smile. Bladon Methodist Church is just not prepared to conform to what you'd expect in a small village chapel and what a joy their Junior Church productions are! From the opening number to the final bow the dance routines, chorus numbers, solos and acting feel far from amateur. And of course, there are the stunts ... zip wires, flying carpets swinging over the stage, somersaults and back flips and memorably a small boy jumping off the 'palace' roof to

be caught by two reliable cast members with a glorious grin spread over his face!

Aladdin's gymnastic skills

were particularly impressive, the princess sang like an angel, Aladdin's friends and the sorcerer's sidekick were hilarious, and the genie was larger than life – as genies are!

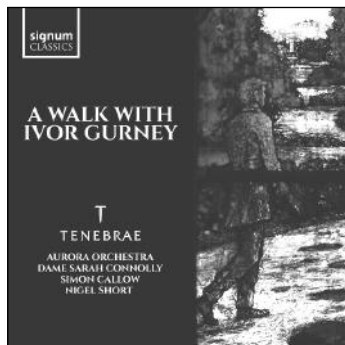


Bladon Junior Church has around 30 young people who regularly attend on Sunday mornings and take part in the annual shows. They are a talented and enthusiastic group of young people led by a marvellous team. If you haven't yet seen a show of theirs, you should note in your diaries that October half-term next year needs to feature a visit to Bladon! I don't think you'd regret it.

Mel McCulloch

A Walk with Ivor Gurney

This recently released CD by conductor Nigel Short's popular chamber choir *Tenebrae* emerges from a project they set up, with the aim of completing it in 2018, in time for the centenary of the World War 1 Armistice.



Ivor Gurney (1890-1937), a fascinating if tragic figure, poet and composer, survived the war, unlike George Butterworth and Wilfred Owen, and was for a while after 1918 a thriving composer and music student briefly under Vaughan Williams. However, his life was blighted all along by mental illness, and by 1922 his family had committed him to psychiatric care. He spent the last 15 years of his life in hospitals, dying in 1937.

Despite all this misery, Gurney wrote hundreds of poems and more than 300 songs. He is much less well known than contemporaries Howells, Ireland, Bliss, Bridge, but his songs are delightful and his recognition is growing. Alongside four pieces of Gurney's own music are works by his contemporaries, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Herbert Howells. The recording features a new piece by Judith Bingham commissioned by *Tenebrae* in 2013 for the choir with Dame Sarah Connolly.

A real treat for lovers of 20th century English music, the CD is available from Signum records: www.signumrecords.com
 Kate Dobson

A Star is Born

A Star is Born has had a lot of press and media attention and is one of the most talked about films this year. It stars Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper and is directed by actor Bradley Cooper himself.

It starts off with a young girl Ally, living with her father in a dead-end job and singing in a club at nights. She has tried to get her singing, song writing career off the ground but

has been knocked back by all the studios she has tried. So, singing in a club by night, she hopes to get discovered but nothing has happened yet and she carries on with her oppressive, boring day job, writing her own songs and just hoping.

One evening an ageing rock star, Jackson Maine, at the end of his career, does a gig in her town. He meets her and takes her under his wing and helps her with her career. After a while they fall in love. She has given up on her career but Jackson has high hopes for her and pushes her in the right direction.

A dramatic ending and a few good songs and some good acting. Definitely a film you should go and see. I loved it, and the cinema was full, so it is pulling in the crowds!
 Tania Little

Asterix and the Chariot Race



A fun-filled stocking-filler, by the successors of Goscinny and Uderzo, complete with the well-loved characters and their quirks, and spiced with old and topical jokes! Published by *Orion children's books*, 2017.
 Kate Dobson

*Heard it on the
grapevine...*

Birth

Jesse Christian Kwesi Darko



Malcolm Dodds, our new treasurer

Financial report for 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018

At the time of writing, we are completing the financial statements for the year ending 31 August 2018. Here are the highlights of the year:

Total income for 2018: £576,396, (2017: £511,663), and expenditure for 2018: £405,434 (2017: £350,541).

This included the full Rainbow House income and expenditure for the first time, as Rainbow House formally became part of the Church from 1 September 2017. The balance at the year-end is a result of some successful fundraising this year by the Rainbow House committee. This should make the services provided more sustainable for the future. These figures also include income for the *Open Doors* refurbishment project for the year up to the end of August 2018 of £107,713, and total expenditure and transfers of £65,228.

General funds: deficit of £1,646

Our general fund has not quite broken even this year. Funds have remained stable, but a number of unexpected items of expenditure occurred. This small deficit will be funded from previous years' surpluses.

Church 'reserves' or savings

Our church reserves for general funds represent about 25% of one year's expenditure, and for the property reserve is 20%. This is a normal proportion for a charity of the size, complexity, and activities of Wesley Memorial. Our property reserves fund has remained stable at just over £60,000. This is held for future (non-*Open Doors*) expenditure on our buildings, and to offset the loss of income when we start the final phase of the *Open Doors* building work.

Open Doors

The first part of phase 4 has been completed during the year. This is the refurbishment of the ladies' toilets and the

replacement of the windows in the John Wesley Room and the first floor offices. The funds held and promised for the final part of Phase 4 are about £230,000 at the end of August 2018. In addition the Circuit has allocated, in September 2018, a £50,000 grant plus a loan of £50,000 if we were to need it, for *Open Doors*. A couple of smaller grants totalling £8,000 have also been received in September 2018. Fundraising is continuing so that we can start the final part of the building work as soon as possible.

Mission and Heritage

We have had external (Methodist Connexional) funding to support our Mission and Heritage post, as appointed from September 2017. About half of the first tranche of the grant was spent in 2017/18, with a balance of about £27,200 left. A second tranche of £44,000 will be received when needed.

The annual accounts will be independently examined by Peter Stevenson. A copy of the trustees' report and financial statements will be available on the church website at: <http://www.wesleymem.org.uk/annualreports.htm>

Finally a big 'thank you' to you all for your continued financial support of the work of Wesley Memorial, both for our general funds and through the *Open Doors* project. Your gifts are very much appreciated.

The Finance team now

We are delighted to welcome Malcolm Dodds as the new Church Treasurer from November 2018. I will be continuing as *Open Doors* Treasurer for the remainder of the project. I am most grateful for the support of all the Finance team over my time as Church Treasurer and particularly to David Eddy for his work as bookkeeper, and Frank Vreede for his work as Gift Aid and salaries administrator.

John Cammack



Wesley Memorial Church

New Inn Hall Street, Oxford OX1 2DH

Minister: *The Revd Dr Martin Wellings*

Children's, families' & outreach worker:

Mel McCulloch

Mission & Heritage Officer: *Alison Butler*

Church manager: *Nikos Paplomatas*

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Wednesdays 12.30pm

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Contributions, letters, questions, pictures, book reviews and any other suitable items for publication are always welcome. Please pass them to the editorial team by email, stating if you are unwilling for them to appear on the church website. Articles may be edited. Articles express the views of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Wesley Memorial Church or the Methodist Church as a whole.

Deadline for the next issue:

15 February 2019

Dates for the diary

Sunday 16 December, 6.30 pm	Carol Service
Thursday 20 December, 5.30 pm	Carols for the City
Tuesday 25 December, 10.30 am	Christmas Day Service
Sunday 6 January, 10.30 am	Covenant Service
Saturday 26 January	Church New Year Party
Sunday 17 February, 10.30 am	City Centre Pulpit Exchange
Friday 22 February & Saturday 23 February 7.30 pm	<i>Time and Again: the 2019 Show</i>
Thursday 18 April, 7.30 pm	Maundy Thursday Service at St Columba's
Friday 19 April, 10.30 am	Good Friday Service at Wesley Memorial
Sunday 21 April, 10.30 am	Easter Sunday Service
Saturday 11 May 10.30 am	Christian Aid Street Market

WESLEY MEMBRAIN



Jim 11/18