

Sept - Nov 2019

TMC Quarterly

Tonbridge Methodist Church Newsletter



INTENTIONAL MISSION

We have certainly missed Brenda producing the newsletter the past few months- thanks to Dean for producing this new-style quarterly edition and to Katherine for keeping us informed of upcoming dates and events via the weekly news sheet (this will continue).

We have welcomed friends from Southborough and Offham these past few months- to these friends- we are blessed that you are now an integrated part of the life of Tonbridge Methodist Church.

As we move on in to this new Methodist year we revisit our priorities and the vision for this Church. The Leadership team meet regularly and this is a fundamental part of our conversations. We have been considering Intentional Mission through our prayers and dialogue with three questions in mind.

1) Which areas of the life of the church are about sowing? This includes those groups and events that build relationships and invite others to consider questions of faith. This includes jigsaw sales, toddler group, toast club, senior friendship group and much more.

2) Which areas of the life of the church are about reaping? This includes groups which provide opportunities for commitment such as Friends @ 4, the Christianity Explored course, homegroups and more.

3) Which areas are about keeping? These groups and events give opportunity for discipleship, growth and service as Christians. Worship comes

in here, as do homegroups, opportunities for service, prayer ministry and more. There is often a crossover between the three areas.

There is a need for us to engage in all these areas to provide the opportunity for church growth. By this I mean growth in terms of our Christian discipleship individually and also collectively. At times we may prioritise one area over the other, yet all are important. There is an urgent need for us to consider what the Church may look like in five or ten years time.

Churches up and down the country are re-shaping and consolidating what they do with this in mind. We have identified gaps this past twelve months and sought to fill them intentionally- here is one example of how this works: a men's group has begun. One of the men involved with men's group occasionally comes to church and is curious about the Christian faith.

During May and June we ran Christianity Explored at which this man was a participant (along with others known through church and community links). This man would now value continuing in a group to explore what it means to be a disciple and to ask questions of faith.

Another example is this one: a lady who comes along to the Babes toddler group also wants to explore questions of faith and wants to come along to a course to explore. We must continue to provide these opportunities as a church. Sometimes this means



sacrifice- of time; of what we prefer; of trying different things; of looking at how people are encountering God today in new ways as well as through traditional models of church life.

We hope to arrange an away day and also a Church weekend away over the next 18 months- please look out for the dates of these as it would be good for us to explore our vision and to pray for the future together.

May God continue to bless you, the whole church and community,

Sharon

CHRISTIANITY|EXPLORED

Back in May and June of this year a group met to discuss the Christian faith through this challenging course presented on screen by evangelist Rico Tice from All Souls, Langham Place, London. The set text for discussion, with the aid of a useful handbook, was St. Mark's Gospel in the modern NIV translation.

It was an informal gathering, with drinks and nibbles, sensitively led by Rev. Sharon. The group comprised a roughly equal number of committed Christians and interested seekers. This made for a stimulating series of discussions on such topics as sin, suffering, the cross, resurrection and grace. I personally was struck by the honest, friendly and respect-

ful atmosphere which prevailed, not always the case in some church councils I have attended in the past ...

Sharon rightly stressed from the outset that not all Christians think alike on some controversial issues of faith and conduct but that the Christian gospel is to be found in the pages of God's written word, the Bible, and above all in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

One significant part of every session was the brief testimony shared by some members of the group based on their personal experience of life and faith. These testimonies were very moving and powerful at times. They served to remind us all that Christians do not

enjoy an immunity to life's adversities which non believers struggle with. Far from it, in fact, as we discovered together. Testimony is such an effective medium for Christian witness!

There were no dramatic conversions but a great deal of heart searching by everyone present. Several of our " visitors " expressed a wish to follow up with a subsequent course or by joining an existing study group.

An additional session, open to anyone, was devoted to watching the film of St. Mark's gospel, using only the words of Scripture.

Peter Swan

" A message to all our friends at Higham Lane from the Southborough insurgents -"

We just want to say how much we have appreciated the warmth of the reception we have all felt from the fellowship here since our arrival.

To have had to abandon a place which held such a wealth of happy memories for so many of us has certainly been a rather bitter pill to swallow but we could hardly have wished to find a more welcoming new family in Christ to join.

Some of us may still be in the preliminary stages of getting all the right names in the necessary right order (!) but bear with us and I trust we shall soon be able to contribute all we can to the whole life of the church. Our blessings to you all.

Many thanks,
Brian Gregory

Can You Help?

The Senior Friendship Club is going to miss Margaret Swan when she and Peter move to Norfolk.

Margaret has arranged the programme and been our faithful secretary for the last nine years and her departure will be a great loss to us all. I wonder if there is someone who feels they could give an hour or two a week to help with some of the administration for the club? It would not be necessary to attend every week, some of the tasks could be undertaken at home, but it would be helpful if there was a willing soul to be around when I am not.

The Friendship Club will be celebrating its 50th birthday in February 2020 and we currently have around 35-40 members, the majority of whom come along regularly every week. It is a happy group which is enjoyed by friends from our local community and the church.

Do please give this some prayerful thought and if you think you could help in any way, have a word with me.

Yours, optimistically,
Jill Gray



Rotary Club of Tonbridge Christmas Festival 2019

The evenings may be drawing in but there is much to look forward to as this year's Tonbridge Christmas Festival is set to thrill local residents and visitors and get them in the festive mood. The Big Bridge on the High Street will again be the focal point for four hours of musical entertainment on Sunday 24th November all culminating in a spectacular fireworks display over Tonbridge Castle.

The High Street will be closed from 10.30am to 8.30pm on the day

enabling a selection of stalls and shops exhibiting festive products to be viewed in safety with drinks and hot food also available.

The Festival is being organised by the Rotary Club of Tonbridge and will include the High Street Christmas lights switch-on as well as a fun fair starting on the Friday evening. The festival is in support of charities providing services for the local community.

Festivities start at 1.50pm with a marching band and the day includes

a welcome from the Mayor of Tonbridge and Malling, Cllr Jill Anderson, local bands, groups and choirs, appearances from cast members of two local Pantomimes and the switching on of this year's Christmas lights on stage at the Big Bridge at 5pm and fireworks at 6.55pm The event closes at 7.30pm Thank you.

Chris P



FOODBANK

A reminder that items for the Tonbridge Foodbank can be left in the corner of the Roselands Room at any time. The following list provides a great idea of what they need at the moment:

Squash
Tin hot dogs, macaroni cheese, ravioli, beans with sausages
Pasta bake (not cook in sauces)
Sugar
Jam
Biscuits e.g. Penguins, Twix, etc.
Tinned sweetcorn, carrots, peas

Tinned ham
Tinned fruit
Tinned custard
Pots of jelly
Tinned meals e.g. bolognaise, stewed steak
Coffee
Tomato ketchup

SUPERMARKET HARVEST

a poem submitted by Roi Arden

What does the Harvest mean to me?
I neither sow nor reap.

But glean through supermarket shelves to pluck what's going cheap.
No mellow fruitfulness is here, but sterile tidy tins.

And crops all smart in cardboard coat and glossy plastic skins.

No harmony of autumn leaves, but glaring lies entice,

And labels scream 'There's ten pence off, it's cheap at half the price!' No sound of tractors in the fields, but cram-full trolleys clash.

And jingling tills bind sheaves of notes and gather in the cash.

No need to plough and scatter now the good seed on the ground,
With canned convenient frozen food it's harvest all year round.

So through these claustrophobic fields robot-like I roam –
And long for fragrant country air and joys of harvest home.

And churches heaped with fruit and flowers arranged with homely art,
Where grateful mortals yield to God the harvest of the heart.

So through that soulless check –out point bring all you can afford
And check in here at TMC and come and praise the Lord!



ACTION FOR CHILDREN CHARITY WALK
In memory of David Hansell.



Saturday 7th September
Meet - At The Kentish Rifleman, Dunks Green, TN11 9RU
Time - 10.30am start.
Walk - Gentle, circular, of approximately 1.5. hours long.

Fund-raising by donation.

A table has been booked at the Rifleman.
For those who wish to stay for lunch, please reserve a place through Margaret Pool by 4th September.
Telephone 07979461477
Or email margaretpool45@gmail.com
All are welcome.

Action for Children Coffee Morning
Saturday 2nd November
10.00am - 12.00pm
Christmas cards and diaries

This is being run in conjunction with the jigsaw and book sale run by John Chapman.

Margaret Pool.

In aid of
WE ARE MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

27th September
53 Salisbury Road
10:00am - 12:30pm

Please come and support this vital work. In addition to the usual supply of cakes, there will be healthy options of fruit, veg and dips, plus gluten free cakes.

Please bring a chair if the weather is fine.

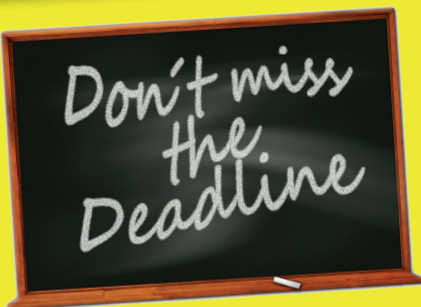
Brenda Foster

TMC
Men's Group

The next TMC Men's Group Breakfast will be held on Sat 21st Sept 8:30am - 9:30am

On 2nd Nov the group will be going along to support the Tonbridge Angels at home playing against Oxford City 3pm KO

For further details contact Dean (dean49ers@sky.com)



The deadline date for submitting articles for the next edition of the newsletter will be Sunday 17th November

If you would like to submit an article or advertise an event please email to dean49ers@sky.com

Harvest event

Please keep an eye out in the Weekly News Sheets over the coming weeks with details of an event.

FOLLOWING FATHER'S EXAMPLE

A Joyful Toon by Mike Waters



Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
EPHESIANS 5:1-2 NIV