

Dear Friends

While there are a few Christian denominations that do not celebrate the sacraments (e.g. The Salvation Army) the vast majority of Christians have a service with bread and wine, variously called Holy Communion, Eucharist, Mass, Breaking of Bread or, what is really my own preference, the Lord's Supper – though I think that Holy Communion is the name most commonly used in the Methodist Church. Despite the difference in the names and the different emphases that are associated with the names, in practice, the services often look very similar.

While some Methodist Churches in the big cities used to have Holy Communion services every Sunday morning and some of the rural churches had Holy Communion services only once a quarter, in my experience, the majority of Methodist Churches in Great Britain have Holy Communion services about once a month – that's certainly what we try to do at the Methodist Church in Palace Avenue.

I remember, as a child, going to Sunday evening services with my parents. On the way to the service, my Mother would sometimes say to me, in hushed and solemn tones, that my parents were 'staying on for sacrament'. My heart would sink at the thought of the service being extended by about half an hour which would include my being left seated in the row on my own while the adults shuffled along the pews knocking hymn-books off the ledge as they squeezed by. In those minutes, I would entertain myself reading 'The Order of Service for the Burial of a Child' from the *Book of Offices*, reading that was entirely apt as, at that moment, the transition from life to death would have been scarcely noticeable!

It must have been about 30 years ago that an army family joined my congregation at Mitcham, Surrey. The young couple were about our age and the husband was in one of the regiments of guards and had complementary tickets for the Trooping of the Colour at Horse Guards Parade. In those days, The Queen, who was a very proficient horse-woman, would take part in the Trooping of the Colour on horseback, riding her favourite horse, 'Burmese', who had been given to Her Majesty by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The day in question, the first Saturday in June, was a magnificent occasion, blessed with glorious summer sunshine. I was delighted to have been invited. The eagle-eyed reader will have noticed something significant, however. The Trooping of the Colour takes place on the second Sunday in June – I had only been invited to the rehearsal the previous week, The Queen was not there.

Charles Wesley, Methodism's prolific hymn-writer, wrote a great number of hymns for Holy Communion, including 'Jesus, we thus obey, thy last and kindest word' (HP 614), which includes the line, 'His presence makes the feast'. There is no space here to consider the many views that Christians have (and profoundly disagree) about how the Lord Jesus Christ is present at Holy Communion. However, I found an article by Revd Dr Brett Cane, now Chaplain at Trinity College, Bristol, but at one time minister at St George's Church, Montreal. He writes:

A few years ago, I was visiting one of the great Gothic English cathedrals and was standing looking at the nave altar when a Japanese tourist approached me and said, 'What is this for?' I then proceeded to explain the communion service as simply as I could: 'Here, as the family of God, we eat a morsel of bread and taste a sip of wine to proclaim the death of the Lord Jesus Christ until he comes again and feed upon him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.' I realized how strange it must sound to one who had never experienced it. A handshake or a hug is a physical action; it is a sign of friendship - but it is more than a sign; it actually conveys the friendship it represents; the physical action conveys the emotional truth of friendship and affection. In the same way, in the action of eating the bread and drinking the wine, God conveys his love and his very self to us. It is like God's hug to us. It is not the properties of the elements themselves, but God using the action of eating and drinking.

Yes, the bread and the wine are set apart for this holy purpose; they are consecrated, just as a church building is, but they do not change their nature. But neither are they just symbols; God uses them to make a true and living encounter with us and further convey the benefits of Jesus' death for us. This is what is meant by the phrase describing a sacrament as a 'means of grace.'

<http://montreal.anglican.org/resources/insteuch.shtml> (accessed 27/07/18)

(It's a very good article – if you have a computer take time to read it all, if you don't perhaps someone would print it for you – it's about nine pages)

But to return to the hymn. The last two lines of the first verse say,

'Here, in thine own appointed way,  
We come to meet thee Lord.'

What an awesome claim! That as we eat a morsel of bread and taste a sip of wine, by faith we meet the risen Jesus. Whether that feast is simple or magnificent, there is something missing if, by faith, we do not meet the King of Kings.

**John Haley**  
**Minister**

### **Water, Water, Everywhere**

Have we been besieged by huge moles?  
Everywhere there are soil heaps and holes.  
Can't bath, though we oughta,  
They've turned off the water,  
But we saved some in buckets and bowls.

They are lining the pipes to stop leaks  
And the roads have been cratered for weeks.  
They have finished our street,  
Is it really complete?  
The tap gurgles and gushes and squeaks.

We are sure to keep moaning until  
The day the last crater they fill.  
Three cheers we will give,  
We will even forgive  
If only they'd lower the bill.

*Brenda Kirkham (used with her permission)*

## **Gift Day**

Many thanks to the people who contributed to this year's Gift Day. The total sum raised to date is £2,300.

## **Community Harvest Supper**

Palace Avenue will be holding a Community Harvest Supper on Saturday, 15th September, at 6.00 pm. The aim is to further our engagement with the community of people and groups who use our premises on a regular basis. This is part of our planned outreach and follows on from our successful Community Day last year. We are limiting the attendance to ticket only, so that we can make sure there are adequate places for our local community. We will also make sure, through our seating arrangements that church members and community mix on tables so that we can get to know them better. The meal will be free, but we hope that people who attend might make a donation towards the overall cost. Tickets for church members will be on a first come first served basis and details on how to get them will be given nearer the time.

Roger Gibb,  
Treasurer

## **Zimbabwe Victims' Support Fund Report**

As the rising sun burns off the early morning mist, so the passage of six months since the bloodless coup of November reveals that, for most Zimbabweans, nothing much has changed.

Six months on, the pervasive poverty and hunger have not changed. The banks still have no money for their customers and over 90% of Zimbabweans remain unemployed.

At the same time, the forthcoming elections are already casting a long shadow over the country, inspiring little hope of significant change and considerable fear of a repeat of the violence that has characterised all recent elections.

May 2018

## **Feeding the Hungry**

Dear Friends

Godfrey Mhlanga has recently joined the Board of Trustees of our sister organisation, Zimbabwe Support Fund (ZSF), in Bulawayo. He has a fulltime workload at the Ebenezer Agricultural College in the Matopos some way south of Bulawayo. At the end of January, he and Pastor Albert Chatindo visited three of the settlements close to Bulawayo where mealie meal is regularly provided to residents.

The first settlement that they visited was Killarney Squatter Camp, where around 200 families with 250 children live in squalid conditions. Their homes are made of scrap materials. Most parents can't afford to pay school fees but some women have started a creche. The conversations between the women of Killarney and Pastor Albert brought

home to Godfrey for the first time how much their lives depended upon the ZSF food scheme.

A member of the community, a lady called Shirley, supports the community by cooking mealie meat porridge for 85 children of ages between six months and six years. She also takes care of those who are ill . All this food comes from ZSF.

The next destination was Robert Sinyoka Village which was about nine miles further away from the centre of Bulawayo, close to Khami ruins. This community, of some 300 families, lives in pole and dagga huts and has neither a clinic nor electricity. It relies on water from just ten taps. One mother testified to Godfrey that she praised God for his love, which had transformed her life and her outlook.

The third community Godfrey visited with Pastor Albert was Mazwi, which is twenty miles from the City Centre. In 2012 the Bulawayo City Council and the International Organisation of Migration constructed basic homes and toilet facilities there, and then in 2013 moved 200 families from Killarney, where they had lived in shacks and survived by small scale bartering and trading. The community's survival still depends on Pastor Albert's mealie meal deliveries.

Godfrey, Pastor Albert and the residents of Killarney, Robert Sinyoka Village and Mazwi join me in thanking you for your support in the past and in begging you to continue with your good work in the future.

Graham Shaw

March 2018

Dear friends and prayer partners,

The elections in Zimbabwe are just days away. They are due to take place on 30 July. Yesterday I was able to speak to Pastor Albert. He confirms what others have said, namely that to date there has been remarkably little of the violence that has been a feature of all recent elections – and for this we can be profoundly grateful. At the same time however none of the twisted and corrupt practices that have characterised elections over very many years have been changed, and it is still the same partisan officials who are in charge of the process. Moreover we cannot overlook the fact that Emmerson Mnangagwa – now President and going head-to-head with the MDC's main challenger, Nelson Chamisa – was Robert Mugabe's chief enforcer in the blatantly rigged elections of the past. So there is an eerie calm among the people while the nation awaits the outcome of these elections. While scarcely believing a free and fair contest is possible, the peace loving and long abused people of Zimbabwe are still hoping against hope for a good outcome. Which makes our prayers all the more vital .

Meanwhile Albert reports that the ruling party is dispensing election bribes on a massive scale. The economy may be on the verge of collapse and extreme poverty and hunger the lot of most Zimbabweans but still somehow there is huge largesse to win hearts and minds ranging, according to the status of the recipient, from chickens to cattle and from maize seed and fertilizer to new vehicles. (The distribution of seed and fertilizer when it is too late to remedy a poor harvest is particularly bizarre and prompts one to ask where they came from anyway).

Please pray for Pastor Albert and Church leaders across the nation as they seek to maintain a prophetic ministry of hope and courage, with integrity. And please pray for a good outcome to bless the long suffering people of Zimbabwe.

Yours in that partnership of grace,  
Graham Shaw

## Church Family News

### Baptism

On Sunday, 3rd June, we welcomed into our church by baptism the baby son of Ashley and Sarah and the younger brother of Erik. Dexter is the great grandson of Stan and Viv Westmoreland.

### Birth

Les and Frances Kirkpatrick are pleased to announce the arrival of twin grandsons, Dexter and Theo, born on 13th July to Matthew and Emma Kirkpatrick, little brothers for Nia. Both babies are doing well.

**Please remember in prayers** all those of our congregation who are going through a difficult time at the moment.

### I'm fine, Thank you

There's nothing the matter with me,  
I am as healthy as can be.  
I have arthritis in both my knees  
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.  
My pulse is weak, and my blood is thin,  
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

Arch supports I have for my feet,  
Or I wouldn't be able to walk down the street.  
Sleep is denied me night after night,  
But every morning I find I'm all right.  
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin,  
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

The moral of this tale I unfold,  
That for you and for me who are getting old,  
It's better to say "I'm fine" with a grin  
Than to let folks know the shape we are in.

How do I know that my youth is all spent?  
Well, my "get up and go" has "got up and went".  
But I really don't mind when I think with a grin  
Of all the fine places my "get up" has been.

Old age is golden I've heard it said,  
But sometimes I wonder as I climb into bed,  
With my ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup,  
My eyes on the table until I get up,  
E'er sleep overcomes me, I say to myself  
"Is there anything else I can lay on the shelf?"

When I was young, my slippers were red;  
I could kick my heels high over my head.  
When I grew older my slippers were blue  
And still I could dance the whole night through.  
Now that I'm old, my slippers are black,  
I walk to the shops and puff my way back.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits,  
Pick up the paper and read the "Obits".  
If my name is still missing, I know I'm not dead,  
So I have a good breakfast and go back to bed.

*This was composed by a lady of 90. Some girl, eh?*

## **Africa**

Try to imagine for one moment in time  
The clothes that you're wearing are all that you own;  
No house, no car, no bike, no books,  
No food to feed you, you have nothing at all.

Try to imagine how days are spent,  
Begging for food or stealing what you can.  
No work to go to, can't read or write.  
Never been to school throughout your life.

Try to imagine the heat of the sun,  
Sharing a tin shelter by the side of the road,  
The dust when the traffic passes by,  
And the smells, for toilets don't exist.

Try to imagine the country you're in,  
You walk for hours to find a stream.  
Water we all need to keep us alive  
But it's polluted so badly, it could kill you soon.

Try to imagine if you could sit by a fire.  
It's teatime soon, what shall I have?  
Fridge and freezer both full of food?  
Pantry stocked up, can't get more in?

Try to imagine if you could watch a TV,  
Or put a radio on, or play on a PC,  
To switch on a lightbulb, not sit in the dark.  
What's it like to have nothing at all?

*Ken Fisher, January 23 2017*

2	Thu	2.00-4.00	Cream Teas served in foyer	
6	Mon	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
7	Tue	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
9	Thu	2.00-4.00	Cream Teas served in foyer	
13	Mon	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
14	Tue	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
14	Tue	2.00 pm	Cabbage Patch Crafters	
16	Thu	2.00-4.00	Cream Teas served in foyer	
20	Mon	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
21	Tue	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
23	Thu	2.00-4.00	Cream Teas served in foyer	
28	Tue	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
28	Tue	2.00 pm	Cabbage Patch Crafters	
31	Fri	10.00 am	Women's World Day of Prayer Coffee	Morning
<b>September</b>				
1	Sat	9.00 am	Men's Breakfast	
3	Mon	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
4	Tue	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
5	Wed	2.30 pm	Wednesday Fellowship	
10	Mon	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
11	Tue	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
11	Tue	2.00 pm	Cabbage Patch Crafters	
12	Wed	2.30 pm	Wednesday Fellowship	
15	Sat	Evening	Community Harvest Supper	
17	Mon	10.00 am	Coffee Morning	
17	Mon	10.30 am	Prayer Meeting followed by coffee	
18	Tue	10.00 am	Church Open/Coffee Morning	
19	Wed	2.30 pm	Wednesday Fellowship	
24	Mon	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
25	Tue	10.00 am	Coffee Morning/Church Open	
25	Tue	2.00 pm	Cabbage Patch Crafters	
26	Wed	2.30 pm	Wednesday Fellowship	

### Palace Avenue Preaching Plan

#### August

5	10.30 am	Mrs. H. Barrett
12	10.30 am	Mr. D. Welsh
19	10.30 am	Rev. P. Williamson
26	10.30 am	Mason

#### September

To be announced

### Southfield Preaching Plan

## August

- 5 10.30 am Rev. G. Morris  
Flowers donated by Miss Roberts
- 12 10.30 am Mr. W. Matthews  
Flowers donated by Mrs. Dale
- 19 10.30 am Dr. D. Anglesea  
Flowers donated by Mrs. White
- 26 10.30 am Rev. J. Haley (S)  
Flowers donated by Miss Fletcher

## September

- 2 10.30 am To be announced  
Flowers donated by Mrs. Coombe
- 9 10.30 am Harvest Festival  
Flowers donated by Mrs. Turton
- 16 10.30 am TBA  
Flowers donated by Mrs. Kavanagh
- 23 10.30 am TBA  
Flowers donated by Mrs. Williamson
- 30 10.30 am TBA  
Flowers donated by Mrs. Sutherland
- 30 6.30 pm CTiP United Service

## Southfield Diary

### August

- 7 Tue 10.00 am Outing to Clarks Village
- 31 Fri 10.00 am Morning Service
- 31 Fri 10.30 am Coffee Morning

### September

- 4 Tue 11.00 am Service at Little Oldway
- 4 Tue 2.00pm Line Dancing
- 10 Mon 12.30 pm Harvest Lunch and Sale of Produce  
In aid of Paignton Community Larder
- 11 Tue 9.00 am Outing to Widecombe Fair  
approx.
- 14 Fri 10.00 am Prayer Circle
- 14 Fri 10.30 am Coffee Morning

18	Tue	11.00 am	Service at Cornerways
18	Tue	2.00 pm	Line Dancing
19	Wed	7.30 pm	Circuit Meeting at Palace Avenue
25	Tue	11.00 am	Service at Tudor Court
25	Tue	2.00 pm	Line Dancing
26	Wed	11.00 am	Service at Burnside Court
28	Fri	10.00 am	Coffee Morning in aid of Rowcroft