

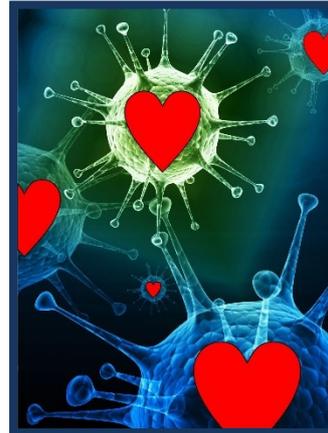
Hilltop

April 2020

Newsletter of The Church at Bents Green

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Let's
work hard
together
to create
a
KINDNESS
pandemic

Jesus said,
"Love one another,
as I have loved you."

Lampstand virtual youth club
quizzes,
games,
challenges
every week
See p 4

Church website

www.bentsgreenmethodist.org.uk



A community church sharing the love of Jesus

Church News

Happy Easter!

The last service held in the church was on Sunday 15th March. During the following week it was announced that churches, and many other meeting places, would have to close to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. We now have a sign on the church door saying,

Our building is closed due to the Coronavirus, but the Bents Green Church congregation is praying and worshipping in our separate homes. You might like to join us in this as we pray for the whole community. We invite you to light a candle on Sunday evenings and place it in a window as a symbol of hope.

If anyone would like to receive emails with the church notices and worship resources to use at home please email Glenn Evans dglennevans@hotmail.co.uk. Worship resources are also on the website under 'Message from Tim'

The poster shown on the front page, 'Let's have a pandemic of Kindness', was designed by Glynis Smith of Millhouses Church and is currently on our noticeboard. The spring photos are taken by Martyn Read on one of his exercise walks. Martyn also took the pantomime photos on p 4 & 5. Thank you to both.

The funeral of **Brian Coates** was held at Bents Green Church on 24th February and that of **Trevor Kirk** was on 28th February. Both were well known to many in the church and we send our thoughts and prayers to their families.

During Lent we planned to support the **Grace Food Bank** through our Lent Lunches. Sadly this was cut short. If anyone would like to make a donation their bank account number is **6559 0979** and the sort code is **08-92-99**.



Congratulations to Robert Lewis and Rebekah Summerman who are to marry on April 25th in Dublin, Virginia. Robert was minister at Bents Green Church. We wish them well!

Select Convenience store at Bents Green have set up a delivery service for people who live within 2 miles of Bents Green. This is accessed by emailing: bents@jamesretail.co.uk The minimum spend is £10

A plan for Hilltop

As regular readers of Hilltop will know, this is my last issue as editor of Hilltop. I have thoroughly enjoyed editing the newsletter and am very grateful to so many who have agreed to write articles or to be interviewed for an article. I took over the editorship from Paul Davis in 2010. At that time Hilltop was a small booklet which carried information and articles for the congregation. However our minister Louise and others had a different vision and suggested we should have a newsletter which we could give out to our neighbours and people in the community and would let the readers know something of the life of the church.

With help from the editorial team of *Alive* at Totle Rise church I developed a new format for Hilltop in 2013. Simon Hall designed the banner heading for the front page which shows clearly how our church is situated in the community of Bents Green. I began a series of articles of interviews with local shop owners and businesses. Russell Sharp at Le Crunch was the brave person in the first of these interviews. Janet Nowell and Nini Brady joined me as a support team and over the years have written many articles, but have also given prayer support, comments and ideas. It has been very good to work with them. Many others in the church have contributed articles and series. Thank you!

The future plan for Hilltop is that Alison Tresize will become editor after she retires in July 2021. She will bring a new vision and interests to Hilltop and it is great that she has offered to take it forward. In the meantime a possible plan is to produce two or three issues of Hilltop during the coming year (Autumn, Christmas and Easter) if anyone would like to be 'Guest Editor' for an issue. It might be that a group within the church would work together to produce a newsletter focusing on a theme or a particular interest. It could be a smaller booklet but would still help the church to share information and find out more about each other.

If you might like to be a Guest Editor do let me know. Thank you for all the support and contributions over the past 10 years!

Tricia North (email: tn-bg@live.co.uk)

Letter from our minister

Greetings, as we begin to live in a new world.

I write to wish you well as we all adjust to coping with the necessary restrictions to reduce the impact of Covid 19. As you are aware we are unable to meet as a church for the foreseeable future. How can we be church without the building? Some places have said the building is closed but the church remains open - scattered, hidden, immersed in the local community, like yeast and salt. Some are pledging to light a candle in a window at 7pm each evening as a sign of hope.

We approach Holy Week as never before. The whole world is in turmoil. It is to such a world that Jesus came and still comes with the focus on bringing hope, salvation and new life through death. A message and reality facing us all. No one can escape, no one is immune either from the Covid 19 virus or from the love of God revealed in Jesus.

Bethlehem was in turmoil when Jesus was born, Jerusalem in turmoil at his crucifixion and through it all, then and now, God's grace and purposes break into the hardships and challenges of life.

When we live with so many unanswerable questions in these days, we desperately need the reassurance of friendship, families, neighbours we know and those we are discovering now. We realise how much the regular routines and places and activities help make our lives tick and also how much we need each other. Everyone has a place and purpose; how we respect, support and acknowledge others is what makes our belonging together as a global village vital.

What will life be like in the future? How will it be different? How will we shape things? Or will we return to the way everything was before? The many stories of generosity, bravery, sacrifice and practical love which we witness in these days are the building blocks for a different future.

So, I trust that you are managing and that some of the caring and contacts with friends from within the church and beyond is sustaining you. I also hope that you are finding ways to offer that encouragement to others. Peace Tim



Holy Habits....Worship (when we can't be together)

Our next Holy Habit, beginning in April, is Worship. What an irony that is, under the present circumstances! As the church community at Bents Green, we are first and foremost a worshipping community. Worship is at the heart of who we are together, and just like so many of the other Holy Habits, it's about who we are and what we do, together. We worship God, Creator, Son and Holy Spirit and we do so with the whole of ourselves and in the whole of our lives.

So even though we are prevented from meeting together in a physical sense to worship God, we can surely remain together spiritually and we can continue to worship God in our lives, even though we are separated. One way of doing that could be that we each decide to spend time consciously in the presence of God at a particular time, say 10.30 and/or 6.30 on a Sunday or at 10.00 on a Wednesday. There are online resources as well, like Methodist.org, and social media connections, but others know far more about that than I do.



Psalm 150 says, "everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord." So, for our individual yet corporate worship, we could be by a window in the house looking out and praising God with all of creation. We could read a Bible verse or passage (one of the psalms would be good) and remember each other in our mind's eye before God, holding people in our prayers. (The Prayer diary in the notices will help us here). We can thank God for the blessings of life and ask for a return to normality as soon as possible.

Another Bible passage comes to mind, Revelation 4:11 where we read about the sheer wonder of the worship of heaven, "You are worthy our Lord and God to receive glory and honour and power for you created all things and by your will they existed and were created."

We aren't in a position yet to join that amazing, humbling crescendo of worship in heaven, nor are we able, for the time being, to join together for worship at Bents Green. We are in between, but we can be linked together with all the saints in heaven and all the saints and sinners of Bents Green as we worship in our front room, back room, bedroom or garden.

"To the One who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever."
And all the people said, "AMEN."

Graham Wassell

Toy Story – the Pantomime

Let me take you back to the distant past, way back to February 2020 BC (Before Coronavirus), when about 400 people went on a journey from Bents Green all the way to Hollywood. We were accompanied by Woody, Buzz Lightyear and all your favourite characters from the Toy Story films. On the way we met Moana who joined the gang, Gerard Hoffnung, Elvis Presley, the Tardis and Walt Disney himself. We saw Buzz flying into space then reappearing via the church, and we watched Slinky Dog stretch up to the ceiling. We sang two quite different songs at once, and we witnessed one of our talented actors having a conversation with herself playing two different roles at the same time. We were amazed at the outstanding costumes, we enjoyed the singing and the dancing, and we laughed or groaned at the old and new jokes. Finally we arrived at Walt Disney's personal office, to be assured by the man himself that the Toys were to be treated as important created personalities in their own right. We also learned how we could be the people God created us to be.

A big thank you to the 100+ children and adults who worked so hard to bring this amazing and entertaining journey to life before our enraptured eyes.



Buzz Lightyear, Moana and Woody



The Humans: Mrs Davis, Sid Phillips, Andy and Molly



Bo Peep and Jessie

Lampstand Virtual Youth Club

We find ourselves in uncharted territory and daily life has changed. Although we may not be able to meet as a youth club in the conventional way, there is still a way for us remain an active community. Every week there will be a virtual youth club taking place where the young people of the youth club can meet up. I will host quizzes, games, challenges and share resources to help maintain good mental health. It will also offer the young people the chance to share ideas of how to keep boredom at bay and encourage each other.

I have also given all the young people a list of some useful resources and this quote from John Wesley which hopefully reminds us that even in these uncertain times, that is something we can all do to help daily life run smoothly and make the days a little brighter.

Cherry 07853278612 email: cherry_ade86@hotmail.co.uk

Do all the good YOU CAN.
BY all the means  you can.
 IN ALL THE WAYS YOU CAN.
IN ALL THE PLACES
 YOU CAN.
 At all the times YOU CAN.
 To **ALL THE PEOPLE**
AS LONG  you can.
 as you ever can.



The Cuddly Animals



The Younger Toys, including Barbies, Dinosaurs and their Friends



The Older Toys, including your favourite characters from the films



Walt Disney with all the cast

Philosophy!

As we are living in such uncertain times I thought the following was a really Good Idea.

All the things that we have so far taken for granted are now out of reach for many of us . The things that come to mind for me are fairly simple and hopefully possible in the not too distant future. I want to see my family, go to the shops, walk to Bents Green, go to church, see my friends, visit the Theatre and cinema, go to my Book clubs, go to my French and Italian classes, meet all the lovely people and speakers who come to Friendship club on a Tuesday afternoon. We had such a lovely programme planned, but like everything else it is on hold. We all look forward with hope for brighter days.

This is what I found on the Internet and I think it is a lovely idea:-

We've started a new thing in our house today and sharing it in case anyone else wants to try. Every time we wish we could do something, go somewhere, treat ourselves, see someone we love, visit a new place, invite people to visit us, we're going to write it down on a post it note and put it in a jar. When all this is over, this will be our bucket list and we'll work our way through the jar and be more grateful than ever for the little and lovely things in our lives. Until then we'll enjoy watching the jar fill up with magical things to look forward to.



Pat Hutchinson

Pat Hutchinson has also sent the following article about urgent work being done by Professor Andrew Farmery, a former pupil at Silverdale school whose family is known to many in the church. Andrew Farmery, son of Peter and Joyce Farmery, has helped to develop an easy to make ventilator to add to the scarce resources in the NHS. You may have seen him on Newsnight and other news programmes.

Oxford and King's developing prototype for rapidly deployable ventilator

An interdisciplinary team of engineers and medics is addressing ways to increase the UK's capacity for ventilator manufacture.

Engineers, anaesthetists and surgeons from the University of Oxford and King's College London are building and testing prototypes that can be manufactured using techniques and tools available in well-equipped university and small and medium enterprise (SME) workshops.

The team, led by Oxford Professors Andrew Farmery, Mark Thompson and Alfonso Castrejon-Pita and King's College London's Dr Federico Formenti, have been working to define novel mechanisms of operation that will meet the required specifications for safe and reliable function. The design aims to exploit off-the-shelf components and equipment...

... Professor Farmery, Oxford's Nuffield Department of Clinical Neurosciences, says: 'Ordinarily, to develop a medical device such as this would be a huge task, and would take years. We have designed a simple and robust ventilator which will serve the specific task of managing the very sickest patients during this crisis.

'By pooling available expertise from inside and outside the University, and making the design freely available to local manufacturers, we are pleased to be able to respond to this challenge so quickly.'

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2020-03-20-oxford-and-king-s-developing-prototype-rapidly-deployable-ventilator>

Prayer

A little child kneels by his bed at prayer
In simple faith he talks with God
His mind accepts the fact
That God is there.

A young man wrestles, seeking God in prayer.
His mind in turmoil - doubts abound
Still earnestly he seeks
And God is there

A man in life's full flood , in constant prayer
Lives every moment with his God
He knows that, every day,
His God is there.

His race well run, a man breathes out his prayer
He soon will pass from this world's scene ;
And where he goes, he knows
His God is there.

With thanks to Eric Sinclair

Opening doors

Do you ever try to push a door when it clearly says “pull”? Sometimes there is no indication about which way it will open or close. Whatever their nature, doors play an important role for us all, especially at this time when we are coping with all the difficulties associated with the Coronavirus.

Jesus used the imagery of a door in some of His teaching. In Matthew 6:5-8 he advises us not to show off when we pray but “to go into your room and pray to your Father who sees in secret and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” I doubt if many people in Jesus’ culture had a private space in which to pray; perhaps He was suggesting a withdrawing from the bustle of life either to a quiet spot or within ourselves. That can be a challenge in our society where few places are quiet and technology demands our attention.

In the last book of the Bible, Revelation, the writer has a vision in which Jesus dictates letters to seven of the early churches. At the end it is written:

“Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent (turn from your sin). Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he (she) with me.”

The letter is to the church in Laodicea, yet His promise is to an individual. The letter is a rebuke for spiritual complacency and lukewarm faith.

When the door is open to Jesus, then we will find, in our private place, His companionship and food for our souls.

Janet Nowell



The doors to the church at Bents Green, currently closed due to Coronavirus, but with an invitation to pray and light a candle in our homes

Sightings

An email conversation as our lives changed. On 24-03-20 many of us received a text from the uk.gov telling us to ‘Stay at home’ and the focus of these nature notes changes...

19-03-20 DN

Today we saw 6 rabbits (we had taken our binoculars). We also clearly heard a woodpecker whilst watching the rabbits from the gate.

The highlight however was that the newborn lambs had been let loose with their mothers in the field on the right just after Common Lane. They had not been there the day before. The contrast between the new life and hope usually associated with spring and the news of Covid 19 was very striking.

22-03-20 DT

We didn't see any rabbits when we were out yesterday - we did a circular walk from Hope through Edale - but we did hear a curlew and a skylark. We saw some very odd sheep (looked like an old breed - they were small and had brown wool) but no lambs until we were coming down Ringinglow Road. There were lots in the fields to the left opposite the farm and entrance to the sports field. Today we are going local so we will see how the rabbit count goes.

25-03-20 DN

Our wildlife spotting has been restricted to the garden: peacocks (butterfly variety), a couple of tortoiseshells and a lovely vivid orange comma. Also a wren, a male bullfinch and a goldfinch have been less regular visitors spotted in recent days.

25-03-20 DT

Your spotting seems much better than mine! You are probably better at keeping quiet and watching. I did notice a butterfly - think it may have been a tortoiseshell. A delight was the robin that came and sang while I was gardening and then hopped close to search the recently turned earth to look for grubs or worms. We haven't seen any rabbits today but yesterday I did see a thrush near the playing field.



A prayer for anxious times

When we are frightened O God, bring us some comfort.

When we are lonely, send a message of hope.

When we doubt and lose trust, bring us reassurance.

When all seems to be dark and gloomy, penetrate our lives with your piercing and gentle light.

Show us your way in the anxiety and uncertainty, for you are the God who is with us always, for ever.

Amen.

Where are we going, Pooh?

Home, Piglet.
We're going home.
Because that's the best thing to do right now.



In the beginning - God

This physical world
of sea and sod
is both the
hiding place
and revelation
of God
Only those who see
Take off their shoes

James Ogden

My God

I have been found
found by you
found out by you
found wanting
found wanting you
for all reasons
all seasons

James Ogden

My brother

Everything
presupposes
everything else
presupposes self
I am
because you were
it takes two
to be
an individual
and you made me
a better one.

James Ogden

Bents Green Church Contact Details

For pastoral matters: Rev Graham Wassell

Tel. 0114 2350393

Minister: Rev Tim Crome

Tel. 0114 4389012

Email: Tim47Crome@msn.com

Youth Minister: Cherry 07853278612

Bents Green Church building

Our building is closed due to the Coronavirus, but the Bents Green Church congregation is praying and worshipping in our separate homes.

You might like to join us in this as we pray for the whole community. We invite you to light a candle on Sunday evenings and place it in a window as a symbol of hope