



Kettering & Corby Methodist Church 23/19

Circuit Newsletter August 2020

Part 1 of 2

NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US...

...FROM THE LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.

Dear friends in Christ,

St Paul often commences or ends his epistles with the phrase 'Grace and peace to you'. You have shown such grace and peace to Fiona and I, and it is in the same spirit of grace and peace that I offer the pastoral note and Newsletter.

"We reap what we sow" is another often used phrase. The relationships we maintain will blossom and flourish by combination of shared vision, drive, energy, common values, and great deal of faith and trust. Weakened growth is either supported or set to one side to aid a great harvest. Being kind, loving, caring, compassionate, hopeful, faithful, just and merciful, are the blessing we receive, and called to share. The love that keeps no record of wrongs, is not easily angered. It endures all things. It is by this grace live, and serve God, and each other,

This is not an idealized, rose-tinted, picture. It is the very nature of being a member of the Body of Christ. We are representatives of Jesus. On earth, here and now.

We are truly being tested in our communion with each other at present. The mug is intended to be humorous. For some it has been their reality for months. Yet, faith, hope and love seem to triumph amongst us. The strength of our fellowship has helped us to worship apart yet together, how to pray daily, and use gifts we never imagined we had. A simple phone call, an email, a text, a distanced meeting. All signs

of reassurance that we are not alone or forgotten.

What are the signs of God's abiding presence amongst

us? Gracious giving and receiving. Careful listening.

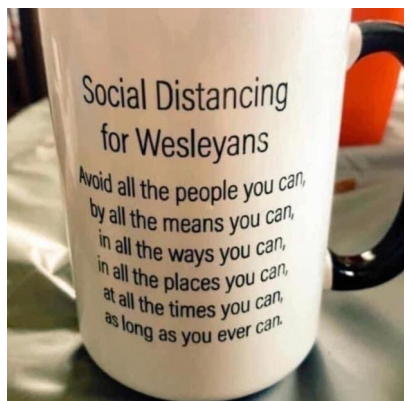
Prayerful pleading. Laughing and crying. Supporting

and lifting. Bearing all things. Believing in the power of resurrection.

We will come through this time and be stronger for it.

We have started to meet again in some places. We will all meet again when the time is right. For now, grace and peace be to you from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Andrew Farrington



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The **Methodist** Church

Rev. NOEL NHARISWA

Welcoming Noel, Rotendu, Isheanesu & Anopaishe



It is with great joy that we look forward to welcoming Rev. Noel Nhariswa to this Circuit. Currently serving in Zimbabwe, Noel and his family are moving to share ministry for the usual five-year appointment. Noel was first stationed in 2004, and has served in several Circuits, as a Superintendent, and Connexional Youth Coordinator. His current appointment is as Principal at Chemhanza School. The school is owned and run by The Methodist Church for pupils between 6 and 18 years, has 2000+ pupils some of whom board, and is one of the most highly rated education establishments in Zimbabwe. You can read more at: <https://www.herald.co.zw/more-to-chemhanza-than-just-high-pass-rates/>

He has a long association with Boys' and Girls' Brigade.

Married to Rutendo, they are blessed with two sons—Isheanesu & Anopaishe.



Manchester United is their favourite team. That should make for some interesting conversations.

Moving countries was never going to be an easy option, nor was it going to be simple to make all of the arrangements to receive this family. Add a global

pandemic into the equation and the task becomes exceptionally complicated. Delayed Visa applications, travel restrictions, and quarantine regulations makes planning with certainty an impossibility. However, with faith, grace, patience, and a lot of goodwill and humour

Noel took this photo recently on a very cold evening (9 degrees) in Chemhanza.



we can, and will, enable the Nhariswa's to travel easily, arrive safely, find a home prepared, and place of welcome.

Noel has joined join us by 'zoom' at Circuit Leadership & Circuit Prayer Meetings. Texting, emailing, and whatsapp-ing has become a regular feature of our days. We managed to purchase a new manse just days before lock-down in March. For sometime it has remained completely empty. The last few weeks has seen a flurry of activity. The whole house has been redecorated and some new carpets purchased. Teams of folk have helped prepare the new Manse at 120 Connolly Drive, Rothwell. I have had a few interesting video calls to Zimbabwe whilst trying to choose furniture, and generally we have made this fun.

If anyone has the skill and finds joy in putting together Ikea furniture please let me know. We have three bedrooms to construct after 14th August.

The latest news (and no doubt it will change) is that they hope to travel very early in September, have two weeks quarantine, and



then some time to explore the area and settle the boys into their schools. I am not expecting Noel to have any duties before October. He is assured that we will simply wait for him with calmness and peace.

Noel will have pastoral charge of Burton Latimer, Central—Kettering, and Cottingham. He will be their minister, Chair Church Councils, and be the principle minster leading their worship and Holy Communion. He will take full part in Circuit leadership and will be my deputy when I take holiday, etc.

We are now at the 3rd and 4th possible dates for a Welcome Service, being Sunday 20th September or 18th October. This will be at Central, Kettering at 10.30 a.m. and will be led by Rev. Helen Cameron, Chair of the Northampton District. Two new minsters, two years running. Quite a change from farewells, reductions in staffing, and building closures?

There seems little doubt that the Holy Spirit is at work.

Noel and his family will be a great blessing to this Circuit and area.



Noel is very proud of the school and his part in its new buildings and development of an outstanding educational experience.

This is the new 6th Form block, and Noel next to memorial plaque. We is wearing a mask bearing the logo 'Celebrating 40 years of autonomous mission' and 'Warmed Hearts'. You can see Rutendo wearing trousers with the same logo. It refers to the independence of the Zimbabwean Methodist Church and, of course, to John Wesley's Aldersgate experience of having his heart 'strangely warmed' - as did the travellers on the road to Emmaus. All testimony to the transformation that can take place when we welcome Christ into our lives.



In March we asked Fiona Farrington to temporarily work as Circuit Administrator and Lay Pastoral Worker. Fiona has done an brilliant job phoning the church family to bring cheer and care to peoples' homes. We would have been lost without you. Thank you.

THANK YOU'S

MEMORIES, HOPES AND DREAMS

Wendy Curtis & Don Spooner have ended their term as Circuits Stewards. Circuit Stewards provide listening ears to both the Ministry team and local congregations. They bring their knowledge, wisdom, and grace to enhance the collaboration of the people of God, lay and ordained, so that Circuit policy and vision is enacted and God's will is done. Wendy and Don have been so ready to listen, advise, & pray for me, and previous Ministers. They have always shown a great sense of humor & optimism. A 'can do' response has enabled much to be achieved. Pouring hours of love, and energy they have helped unite this Circuit. Confidentiality is also a key mark of a good Steward. Thank you both, I have benefitted so much by your ministry.

Rev. Andrew.

In 'normal' times we would have made a presentation and a few speeches within a Circuit Service. This is not currently possible. We have offered words of thanks at the Virtual Circuit Meeting and Leadership Team meeting. Here are some of things they wish to share with you....

The joys and challenges of Circuit Stewarding. Wendy Curtis.

My first 6 years began in 2003 when I stepped down from teaching. I picked up the baton again in 2014. What changes we have seen- reduced number of premises and Ministers and now Services/Thoughts for the day via the internet!!

It has been a privilege to work with 5 Superintendent Ministers and Lay Colleagues alike. Maybe Don and I should write up the many and varied tasks and challenges we have faced? I note here a few: taking up the wooden floor at Stanion Church before sale, extension to upstairs and complete decoration of Hall Close, emptying and appropriately disposing of contents of 3 Churches before sale and selling the churches; to say nothing of Stationing!

I could never have imagined that we could



receive such spiritual nourishment via wi fi. I am sure this style of worship must be part of the future tapestry ; enabling us to reach so many folk we don't normally engage with as well as those unable to get to Church.

I hope and pray that the team of Andrew, Noel, Caroline and Fiona receive the support they deserve as they develop 'new ways of being church' and broaden outreach in our communities.

Many of you will remember my 'jig-saw' at a Circuit Meeting- The picture is not complete without all the pieces. Which piece are you?

Thanks to all who have given support over both tenures.

Every blessing. Wendy.

From Don Spooner:

Reflections on being a circuit steward

I must admit that when Andrew asked me to share a few thoughts on my time as a circuit steward now that I am stepping down after my second six year stint, I didn't immediately know what to say, but after some time to think about it, I offer them to you now.

Firstly it seems I have spent an awfully large part of those 12 years thinking about stationing, mainly because I have been part of the stationing group for quite a few years.

Stationing involves reading through potential presbyters (ministers) profiles and trying to make some sort of short list of people who would possibly feel they have something to bring to our circuit, though the final list is produced by the district chairs. But it's surprising how many times our lists and theirs have the same names on them.

The other part of being on stationing is producing with the other members of the team a profile of our circuit, this has been a very positive process for me, sharing and learning much more about the other churches in our circuit.

It can be quite a wrench when ministers

move on, being part of the circuit leadership teams brings a close relationship with them. But the other side of the coin is the excitement of meeting and working with new ministers. Nothing is better than seeing an idea become reality that you remember reading about on that person's profile.

The other side of the role is working alongside your other circuit stewards and building a real bond with them. I will miss being part of that, the mucking in together,



cleaning and decorating a manse or sharing attendance at various district events, and working through all the business of being church and circuit in the 21st century.

I give special mention to Wendy Curtis who has been senior circuit steward during my time, who is also standing down, thank you Wendy for your wise knowledge of doing things in the Methodist way" and your willingness to always go the extra mile, and of course your friendship and support.

How do I see the future of our Methodist circuit at this time? Putting pandemics to one side, I do believe and have hope for the future as we trust in Jesus to guide

us. I think one thing that has been made plain to me lately is that the church is not the building, it is the people! During my time as a circuit steward I have been involved in some difficult decisions, regrading closure of some of our buildings; I know there are more to come. But I also know that as long as we hold fast to where Jesus is leading us we will succeed.

I became a Christian through my children being involved in Boys' and Girls' Brigade and I passionately believe that our future is very much tied up with our young people, they are such an important part of our church, this linked alongside being a real integral part of the communities surrounding our buildings.

I am excited about Rev Noel and his wife Rutendo and his two boys coming to us in September and all that that will add to our journey.

I thank Andrew who has really had a baptism of fire during the short and difficult time he has been here. Andrew, you so far have shown a drive and determination to move things forward as we seek (sometimes dragged!!) to become the circuit God intends us to be here in 2020.

Lastly all the ministers I have had the honour of working alongside, Tony and Fiona de-Boltz, Martin Swan, Margaret Eales, David Bosworth, Jen Smith and Bill Anderson.

Thanks for the Memories.

Don Spooner (Ex Circuit Steward).

*After years of service, **Michael Curtis** has stepped down from being Circuit Property Steward.*

His sound wisdom and judgment is matched by his skills and good humour.

Michael, thank you, for the energy and grace you have given to this role. Thank you.

*After several decades of dusting and mopping, **Jenny Spooner** will retire as Cleaner at Central.*

Your help over the years, and especially during this pandemic has been gratefully received.

We wish you, and Don a Happy Retirement.

***Alan Window** has been a representative to District Synod for many years. Changes in the numbers attending Synod has led Alan to step back from this important role. Alan, attending Synod is not for everyone, nor being a rep to the Conference. Thank you for your time and commitment.*

THE CORONAVIRUS BEATITUDES

Inspired by Matthew 5

Blessed are all selfless carers, whose commitment is 100%;
for theirs is the gratitude of every community.

Blessed are those who mourn loved-ones, stolen away in Covid wards;
for they will be comforted in times to come.

Blessed are the volunteers and organisers of local food distribution
and providers of daily meals;
for they deserve all our praise and thanks,

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness and justice;
for they will be filled with the Power of the Spirit to challenge inequalities.

Blessed are those who devote their gifts of scientific research and
analysis to the common good;
for they will be richly rewarded when victory is won.

Blessed are the dedicated fundraisers (arise, Sir Tom) who walk gardens,
run marathons and bake cakes;
for they will benefit way more than financially.

Blessed are the charities in receipt of monies raised;
for theirs is the responsibility to use it wisely for the good of all.

Blessed are the essential workers, key workers and care workers
who give of themselves each day;
for they will be honoured and thanked.

Blessed are all who put their faith
in God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- in the sure and certain knowledge
of better times to come;

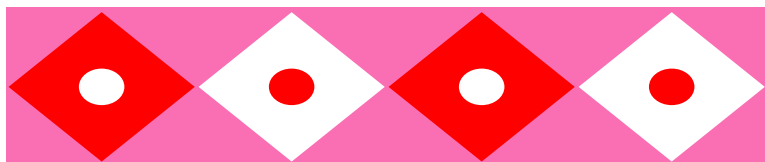
for we are the children of God,
loved and cared for
throughout this pandemic
and beyond.



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..and mother of Andrew Stenson





Life continues during 'lock-down':

Cottingham has a face lift repointing. Broken brickwork has been replaced.

Mia is born...and Julie Johnson becomes a grandmother.

Lots of new signage at Burton Latimer, and the wall gets a new coat of paint. Thanks to Andrew, Caroline, Oliver & Bethany Stenson.

Rothwell set the ball rolling by opening for private prayer. For the first time we start to limit and fix seating and put warning tape on the floor.

Central has new video projection system, and opens for worship.

Cornerstone has remained very calm and still.

St Giles successfully holds a virtual 'Baskets and Barrows Festival'.

Clare and Evie played trains and raised funds for Wicksteed Park.

e learned how to zoom.. for coffee, meetings, breakfast, lunch and tea.

And socially distanced conversations.





Watch out for Part 2 ... coming very soon:
including The Plan for September & October;

thoughts and responses regarding
Black Lives Matter,

Conference Roundup, and ...
a vision for the Circuit for 2020/21.

Spot the
differences

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