

THE MESSENGER

The magazine of Petts Wood Methodist Church



JESUS IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

Vol 65. No.2, December 2021 to March 2022

The Church in Queensway

Minister: Revd. Duncan MacBean

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THE MESSENGER

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QUOTE

But the defining event of human history is the coming of the light. As much as we may currently be tempted to imagine this virus as the pivot of our lives – ‘Before Covid and After Covid’ – the pivot for every life, for human history is in fact the coming of the light of Christ

Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury

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OUR MINISTER'S LETTER:

by Revd. Duncan MacBean



God In Love Unites Us (GILUU)

The title above is the title of the resolution on same-sex marriage and relationships that went before Conference 2021 and was accepted. It is now possible for Ministers to legally marry same-sex couples in Methodist churches, where the Church Councils of that Church has agreed to allow this to take place. The decision is for the Church. It is not for the minister, Circuit or District Chair to dictate, but for the Church Council to reflect the will of the majority of the congregation in taking a decision. It will be decided by a simple majority vote and, in the case of Petts Wood Methodist, that vote is to happen at the next Church Council (21st February 2022).

The purpose of this article is to foster some conversation amongst members, so that the Church stewards and other representatives at the next Church Council have a clear idea of the stance of the majority of the Church members on this issue. Any Church member is welcome to attend the Church Council and they will be invited to have a voice but will not be able to vote.

GILUU makes 4 statements which seek to examine the issue. What follows is intended to be used as material for a discussion rather than a written article, but here is a summary of the statements and some short reflections on them:

1. God has made us to be in relationships and made us to be sexual

- a. what does it mean to be human, to be made in the image of God?
- b. God is relational, and we are meant to be too
- c. sex, gender and sexuality are vital to our humanity

2. God guides us in all our relating

- a. we are made to relate well to all that God has made
- b. what are the qualities of good, or 'Christ-like' relating, and sexual relating?
- c. implications for cohabitation and marriage

3. God's guidance for marriage: developing our vision

- a. marriage is a special kind of relationship: "Marriage is given by God as a particular channel of grace."
- b. but what about our human experience of marriage?

4. Widening the practices of marriage

- a. what makes a marriage a 'Christian marriage'?
- b. what is the purpose of marriage?
- c. marriage changes over time
- d. how does it relate to 'non-Christian marriage'?

Conclusions:

We should ...

- be open and positive about sexuality and relationship
- value all relationships of grace
- widen the understanding of marriage as being between two persons

There is a great deal of space in the report given to the exploration of the scriptural references relating to marriage. If you are interested in this, I suggest going to the following link and reading that part of the report (from point 3) as it is too long to summarize here.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/conf-2019-10-amended-marriage-and-relationships-report.pdf>.

You could also just use the search function on the Methodist.org website for the report from 2019.

This is an issue which requires us to be willing to talk with one another, even if we disagree vehemently with one another. It is only by sharing our hearts and our understandings of God, love, relationships and marriage.

I realise that what is reflected above is really inadequate when it comes to doing justice to a broad issue, but I am more than willing to speak to house groups or individuals about this. If you'd rather not discuss it with me, then please speak with one another. Let's make a decision at the next Church Council that reflects the mind of the congregation as a whole, rather than just one or two of the loudest voices.

Love and peace,

Duncan

MESSENGER PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Vol.	No.	Deadline for submitting items: Thurs	Publish: Sunday	Covering
65	3	03-Mar-22	20-Mar-22	Apr-June
65	4	02-Jun-22	19-Jun-22	Jul/Aug
66	1	04-Aug-22	21-Aug-22	Sep-Nov
66	2	03-Nov-22	20-Nov-22	Dec-Mar

WE GATHER TO OFFER WORSHIP TO THE GLORY & PRAISE OF GOD

For the moment we will still have to observe any regulations regarding social distancing, mask wearing and will provide hand sanitiser.

November

Sunday	21st	10:30 am	Revd. Duncan MacBean - Holy Comm.
Sunday	28th	10:30 am	Songs of Praise

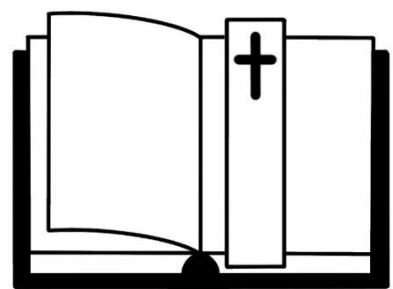
December

Sunday	5th	10:30 am	Tony Windsor
Sunday	12th	10:30 am	Joan Mayes
Sunday	19th	10:30 am	Revd. Duncan MacBean - Holy Comm.
Sunday	26th	10:30 am	No service

January

Sunday	2nd	10:30 am	Julie Gardner
Sunday	9th	10:30 am	Tony Windsor - Holy Comm.
Sunday	16th	10:30 am	Maureen Spinks – Parade & Family Service
Sunday	23rd	10:30 am	Revd. Duncan MacBean
Sunday	30th	10:30 am	Deborah Spinks

The church is open for private prayer on Saturdays from 10-12 noon.
Please enter through the front glass doors.



FAMILY NEWS:

- **Hello from Oakham, Rutland**

It's now eight months since we packed all our belongings and moved to Oakham.

We are getting established here now - beginning to remember names and our calendar looks as busy as it used to look! We miss all our friends of 60 years and wish everyone at Petts Wood a very Happy Christmas and send every blessing for 2022. If anyone is travelling to our part of the world, please call in and have a cup of coffee or tea (01572 368256).

- **Condolences to:**

- **The Manning family**

On the passing of David Manning. David was also a leading figure in the Petts Wood Royal British Legion.

- **The Evans family**

On the passing of Averil Evans. Averil was also for many years manager of a local mission care home.

- **The Gill family**

On the passing of Mark Gill's father Gill (Mark runs the Traidcraft stand at Petts Wood Methodist Church)

Our thoughts and prayers are with them during these difficult times.



THANK YOU – DONATIONS

Thanks to Bridget Wiseman and the flower arrangers

Thanks to Bridget Wiseman and the flower arrangers for the amazing flower arrangements for the Harvest Festival on the 10th October 2021

Harvest Festival Flower Arrangements



The Lamb of God
By Donna Hendrix

In the stillness of a winter night
The earth received God's Holy Light
An infant born to a young virgin girl
One tiny baby who would change the world
Birthed in a lowly barnyard stable
The King of kings who would enable
Born amid the cattle and sheep
The Lamb of God lay fast asleep
Wise men and kings travelled from afar
Led to this baby by the beautiful star
Shepherds were alerted by angels on high
The Saviour is come; time to draw nigh
Angels filled the skies in glorious songs
Singing praises to Him all night long
Peace on earth and mercy mild
Came down to us in the form of a child
What a miracle for the world to see
Yet, many don't believe He is our Saviour to be
Many think the infant born in the stable
Is someone's version of a long ago fable
Even those who walked with Him on earth
Doubted this man of the virgin birth
His wondrous miracles, compassion, and endless love
Were not proof enough for them that He came from above
This precious Christmas story is your saving grace
God's gift of love to take sin's place
He sent to this world His only begotten Son
This tiny Lamb of God; the Father's will be done



You are invited to join Happy Child International for its Exclusive 2021 Fundraising Dinner



This year's event is in the illustrious setting
of the House of Commons
on Thursday, 9th December 2021,
7.15 pm to 10.30 pm.

The programme includes a reception drink in the Strangers Dining Room, followed by
a sumptuous 3 course meal in the historical Members Dining Room.

Sir Paul Beresford MP will host the evening and entertainment will be a Live Auction
and Raffle. Funds raised will go towards vital work that we are delivering to some of
Brazil's most vulnerable children and young people.

Tickets : £150.00 per person or £1,500 for a table of ten.

Dress code: Lounge Suit

Contact: caroline.taylor@happychild.org

Charity website: www.happychild.org



LET'S TALK MENTAL HEALTH

QUESTION: WHAT COMES INTO YOUR MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE TWO WORDS- MENTAL HEALTH?

Many people envisage mental health as being seen by a Psychiatrist or a Counsellor for counselling sessions or being admitted to a mental hospital. Far from it.

In this series I will endeavour to talk about Positive Mental Health when everything is expected to go right with the individual and how to maintain one's good /positive mental health and when to seek help when all else fails. At a later time I will also describe the most common types of mental disorders, including their early signs and how to seek help and treatment for them.

SO WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

DEFINITION OF MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health refers to cognitive, behavioural, and emotional well-being. It is all about how people think, feel, and behave. People sometimes use the term "mental health" to mean the absence of a mental disorder.

Mental health can affect

- daily living,
- relationships, and
- physical health.

TO BE mentally healthy ONE NEEDS TO have:

- A sense of contentment.
- A zest for living and the ability to laugh and have fun.
- The ability to deal with stress and bounce back from adversity.
- A sense of meaning and purpose, in both their activities and their relationships.
- The flexibility to learn new skills and adapt to change.
- A balance between work and play, rest and activity, etc.
- The ability to build and maintain fulfilling relationships.
- Self-confidence and high self-esteem.

[World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#)Trusted Source:

- "Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community."

Factors in people's lives, interpersonal connections, and physical factors can all contribute to mental health disruptions. Looking after one's mental health can preserve a person's ability to enjoy life and Doing this involves reaching a balance between life activities, responsibilities, and efforts to achieve psychological resilience.

Although the term mental health is in common use, many conditions that doctors recognize as psychological disorders have physical roots.

6 KEYS TO GOOD MENTAL HEALTH How to boost your mental health :

1] Make Social Connection a Priority—Especially Face-to-Face

Why is face-to-face connection so important?

- No matter how much time you devote to improving your mental and emotional health,

you will still need the company of others to feel and function at your best.

Humans are social creatures with emotional needs for relationships and positive connections to others.

- We're not meant to survive, let alone thrive, in isolation. Our social brains crave companionship—even when experience has made us shy and distrustful of others.
- Phone calls and social networks have their place, but nothing can beat the stress-busting, mood-boosting power of quality face-to-face time with other people.
- The key is to interact with someone who is a “good listener”—someone you can regularly talk to in person, who will listen to you without their own conceptions of how you should think or feel.
- A good listener will listen to the feelings behind your words, and won't interrupt, judge, or criticize you.
- Reaching out is not a sign of weakness and it won't make you a burden to others.
- There are good ways to build new friendships and improve your support network.
- There is also a great benefit to interacting face-to-face with acquaintances or people you encounter during the day, such as neighbours, people in the checkout line or on the bus, or the person serving you your morning coffee. Make eye contact and exchange a smile, a friendly greeting, or small talk.

2] Staying Active is As Good For the Brain As it Is For The Body

- Exercise more
- Walk more
- Read more
- Jog if you can

3] Learn How to Keep Your Stress Levels in Check

- Learn to remain cool and calm under any circumstance.
- Do not be quick to anger
- Learn to forgive and forget
- Practice breathing in and breathing out when under pressure
- Smile and laugh often
- Don't try to analyse other peoples' behaviours towards you.

Dr Emma Maddy PhD
Practitioner of Mental Health
Retired; Author

To be CONTINUED Next Month {WITH KEY No 4 to Good Mental Health}

Shaping our Future



Let's do it
together!

A great second session was held on 10 October where we heard from our own Petts Wood resident who has a zero-carbon house!!! We would love for you to Join us once again for the next and final session on Climate Change.

Hear about and discuss COP26
– what does it mean for us,
what do we need to know and
how can we learn from it?

Recap on Session 2 and discuss
how we can support those in our
community who are less
fortunate and have greater needs

Come and join our Petts Wood Interest Group to “Shape our Future”
This is the third session to share ideas on how we can help as
individuals and as a community. No registration required.

2:30 – 4pm (with refreshments), Sunday 21 November 2021
United Reformed Church, Tudor Way, Petts Wood, BR5 1LH

A Year of Time

Though even thinking on the subject of time may prove discomforting, it is not a bad idea- especially at the beginning of a new year.

As we look into the new year, we look at a block of time. We see 12 months, 52 weeks, 365 days, 8,760 hours, 525,600 minutes, 31,536,000 seconds. And all is a gift from God. We have done nothing to deserve it, earn it, or purchased it. Like the air we breathe, time comes to us as a part of life.

The gift of time is not ours alone. It is given equally to each person. Rich and poor, educated and ignorant, strong and weak- every man, woman and child has the same twenty-four hours every day.

Another important thing about time is that you cannot stop it. There is no way to slow it down, turn it off, or adjust it. Time marches on.

And you cannot bring back time. Once it is gone, it is gone. Yesterday is lost forever. If yesterday is lost, tomorrow is uncertain. We may look ahead at a full year's block of time, but we really have no guarantee that we will experience any of it.

Obviously, time is one of our most precious possessions. We can waste it. We can worry over it. We can spend it on ourselves. Or, as good stewards, we can invest it in the kingdom of God.

The New Year is full of time. As the seconds tick away, will you be tossing time out the window, or will you make every minute count?

Steven B. Cloud

Metal Methodists

by James Morley

Last time I wrote for Theology Everywhere I reflected on my sabbatical trip to Whitby during the summer of 2020 and learning about the Abbess Hild (c. 614-680 CE). What I didn't write about was Hild's encouragement of the goatherd Caedmon.

The community at Whitby Abbey would gather round the fire in the evening to share stories and song. Caedmon was asked to contribute but left because he didn't have anything to contribute. That night a song came to him in a dream. Hild discerned that maybe this was a gift from God and encouraged Caedmon to continue composing. Caedmon went on to become the first English poet whose name was known and is regarded as the father of English sacred song.[\[i\]](#)

I also didn't write about Whitby as a place of pilgrimage for Goths[\[ii\]](#) as well as Christians (and Christian Goths). Engaging with the story of Hild, Caedmon and Whitby helped me remember what makes me a key part of who I am and the confidence to also see this as a key part of who I am in God. I am a metalhead. I love heavy metal music. It makes my soul sing. I love many of the aspects of the associated subculture – people looking how they want to and not how the latest trends say they should look. One can never wear too much black in my opinion. But my experience on occasions (as well as the experiences of other Christian metalheads I've listened to) has been that, for some Christians, all this metal and darkness is all something that is either 'of the devil' or certainly should not be let anywhere near an act of worship. Yet, if we believe that darkness and light are as one with God (Psalm 139:12) then maybe there is a place where metal and Methodism meet – even if, like Caedmon some may feel who we are in our music; identity; and way of life, has nothing to bring to the party.

Out of these reflections emerged Metal Methodist and Metal Compline.[\[iii\]](#) A place where people who like heavy music; people interested in spirituality; people looking for mutual support (or maybe all three) could gather regularly as part of seeking to live out The Methodist Way of Life[\[iv\]](#). It's been really encouraging to join with people in the UK, Europe, the USA and South America; to construct heavy metal liturgy; to share testimony; and to know we're praying with and for each other in the reality of the ups and downs of life. It's also been a journey of discovering other metal ministries such as the Metal Bible[\[v\]](#) (a copy of the New Testament in various languages with testimony from secular and Christian musicians) and Nordic Mission[\[vi\]](#) (a record label, festival and online store in Norway which began as a response to the church burnings linked to the Norwegian Black Metal scene in the 1990's[\[vii\]](#)).

Over the last year I have learnt that this isn't about Christian alternatives to heavy music and subcultures or constructing Christianised versions of these things. Rather, for me, it's been about a deeper discovery of the Divine who is within us and ahead of us; out there; in others. It's been about discovering the God of the margins in people who are asking serious spiritual questions and offering critiques of mainstream faith; church history; and what was Christendom.

At a conference I attended recently, Reverend Dr Pete Phillips^[viii] helped me see all this is linked. Whitby as a place of Goth and Christian pilgrimage; Caedmon as the ancestor of sacred song; Charles Wesley and the importance of music within Methodist spirituality. Maybe all of this is also a challenge to me and to the Church about how our language and culture reinforces the notion of light as good and dark as of bad.

Source: www.theologyeverywhere.org

[i] [Who Was Caedmon? What Are His Connections To Whitby? \(thewhitbyguide.co.uk\)](http://thewhitbyguide.co.uk)

[ii] [GOTH | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary](#)

[iii] www.facebook.com/metalmethodist

[iv] [A Methodist Way of Life](#)

[v] [Metal Bible International – Distributing the Bible for us who love Metal](#)

[vi] [NORDIC MISSION](#)

[vii] [The Story of Norwegian Black Metal – Life in Norway](#)

[viii] [Centre for Digital Theology : Rev Dr Pete Phillips, Director, CODEC Research Centre for Digital Theology – Durham University](#)

THE UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

General Liaison: Liz Sewell 020 8467 2568

Rainbow Guides	5-7 Years	Tues 4.30pm	Geraldine Avis	870321
6th PW Brownies	7-10 Years	Fri 6pm	Vicki Kennedy	874723
1st PW Brownies	7-10 Years	Fri 5.30pm	Karen Jordan	829067
6th PW West Guides	10-14 Years	Mon 7pm	Sue Colligan	817974

5th Petts Wood (Methodist) Scout Group- Group Scout Leader (GSL) – Liz Sewell
Assistant GSL – Sue Steadman

Beavers	6-8 Years	Tues 6.15pm	Sue Steadman	860446
Cub Scouts	8-10 1/2 Years	Tues 6.30pm	Ben Steadman	07941345504
Scouts	10.5 -14 Years	Fri 7pm	Andy Steadman	860446
Explorer Scouts	14-18 Years	Thurs 7.45pm	Jim Roffey	896193

COFFEE, BISCUITS AND CAKE MORNINGS:

Saturdays 10 am -12pm

More information from Liz Sewell:

Tel: 020 8467 2568/ 07881 954 090

Email: lizsewell56@btinternet.com

Drop in any time before or after shopping etc. and meet your friends and those hosting the day.

November

27th November #: Bromley Relief In Need (BRIN) - Mark Gill

December

4th December: Karen Jordan
11th December: Liz Sewell – Jigsaw Sale
18th December: Elizabeth Gloin
25th December: No coffee morning

January

1st January: No coffee morning

Dates for January - March TBA.

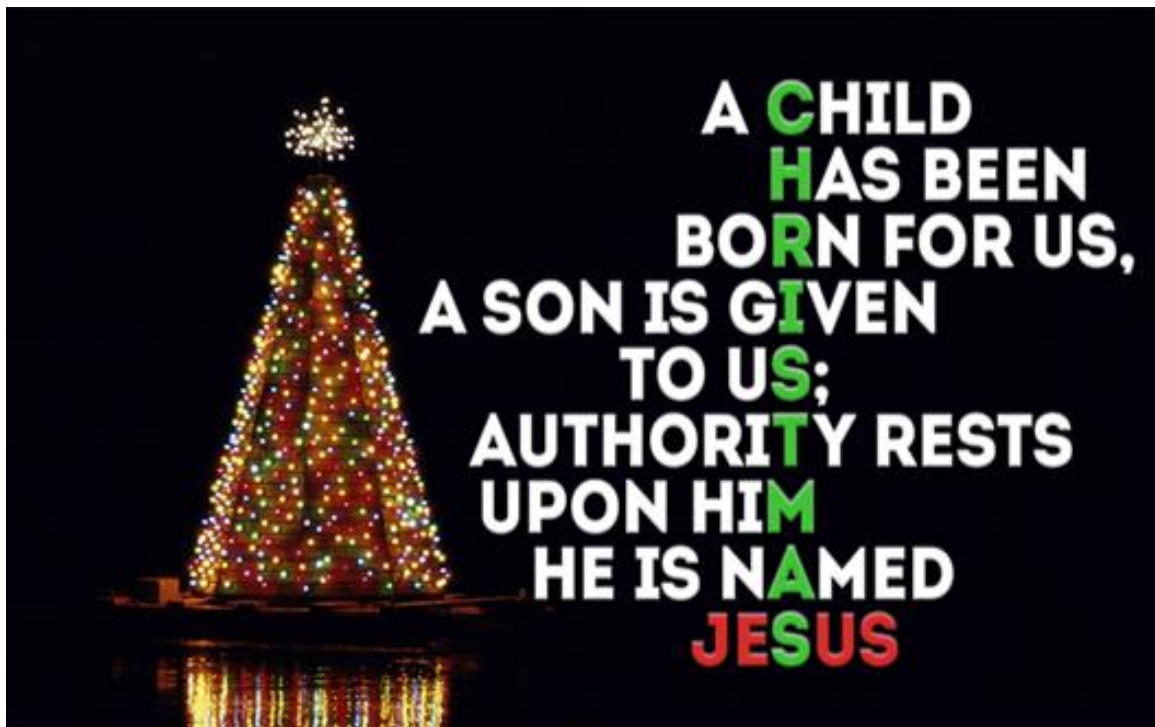
#Traidcraft goods are normally available on the last weekend of each month.

More information, contact Mark Gill 020 8467 1260

FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART:



Downloaded from azcoloring.com



A New Year's Prayer

Dear Lord,

Please give me:

Friends who understand me and remain my friends;

Work to do without which the world would be poorer;

A mind unafraid of travel, even though the trail be not blazed;

An understanding heart;

A sense of humour;

Time for quiet, silent meditation;

A feeling of the presence of God;

The patience to wait for the coming of things, with the wisdom to recognise them
when they come.

Amen

MISCELLANEOUS

- Coffee Mornings:

Thank you to everyone who has hosted a coffee morning since we started them back up. We are seeing them slowly getting busier, so please come along and support the groups hosting them.

I will soon be sorting out the rota for 2022, so if you would like to host a coffee morning then please let me know.

Thanks,

Liz Sewell - lizsewell56@btinternet.com 07881 954090

- Methodist Global Declaration calls for Climate Justice

Over 20 senior leaders from Methodist Churches around the world have signed a joint statement calling on world leaders to act at COP26 to achieve climate justice.

Leaders from the Methodist Churches in Italy, the Pacific Islands, Zambia, Britain and Uruguay join leaders from six other countries and regions, and leaders from the European Methodist Council, World Methodist Council and United Methodist Church to release the statement at the start of the second week of COP26.

In the statement, the church leaders identify their Methodist and Uniting Church heritage as a quality which brings them together. They also highlight their identity as climate activists, saying that “the climate crisis is the greatest threat to life on earth and must be tackled”.

They also recognise the leadership on climate issues offered to their churches by young people, before they turn to call on world leaders at COP26 to take action for Climate Justice.

The statement reads:

“We believe that COP26 must be a turning point in the movement towards climate justice.

We believe that the nations of the world should work together at COP26 to meaningfully and urgently reduce their emissions, and to strive for fair agreements, where the highest emitters take the most action.

We believe that COP26 should agree and commit to resources for vulnerable nations to be equipped with the financial support they need to adapt to the challenges posed by climate change, to mitigate their own emissions, and to rebuild from climate related loss and damage.”

The Methodist leaders go on to call on world leaders at COP26 to “*ensure that everyone’s voice is heard, and that brave and committed action is taken.*”

The statement was coordinated by Climate Justice For All, a joint initiative supported by the Methodist Church in Britain which has brought together six young leaders from five countries to lead Methodist Churches worldwide in climate action ahead of COP26. The group have been represented as official delegates at COP26 in Glasgow, as well as hosting events in the city whilst the conference took place.

Camilla Ferreira, the Climate Justice For All team member from Uruguay, said:

“COP26 is our last best hope for genuine commitments to be made to tackle the climate crisis. We cannot let this moment pass us by without doing everything within our power to ensure climate justice can be achieved. As young people, we are deeply aware of the impact the climate crisis will have on our lives, and on future generations.

We’re pleased to see Methodist leaders from around the world using their position to influence action at COP26. As people of faith, we know that we have a moral and spiritual duty to use our resources and influence to seek the good of all creation. In this second week of COP26, the time has really come to focus on achieving all we can before time is up. We pray that COP26 may be an historical moment where we see real change for climate justice.”

Source: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/>

- **Building confidence and self-worth for people living with dementia**

A collaboration between community partners and a Methodist church in Cheltenham has resulted in a creative arts project aimed at boosting the well-being of people living with dementia and their carers.

Creative Age is an arts-based, social community project for people living with dementia and their carers who still live independently.

It has been running since May 2018, hosted by Bethesda Methodist Church in Cheltenham. Participants take part in focused creative group sessions facilitated by experienced artists, exploring imaginatively with collective story-making, seated

movement, dance, music, visual stimuli and poetry, with content driven by the participants' interests.

Creative sessions are followed by socialising over tea and cake, hosted and coordinated by Bethesda Methodist Church and committed volunteers (who also support the artist-led sessions). Creative Age was set up to enrich peoples' lives, reduce isolation, enable participants to engage imaginatively and socially, build their confidence and improve their wellbeing. Supporters/carers can choose to join in with creative sessions, or enjoy the hospitality and friendship offered by Bethesda volunteers, or simply take the time and space to do what they wish.

Creative Age is an open and inclusive group. We receive referrals via Managing Memory Together, Alzheimer's Society Memory Cafés, Age UK and word of mouth but anyone is free to contact us and self-refer. We want to reach out to people who are living with dementia and their carers in Cheltenham.

Lindsay Williams, Senior Dementia Assessor, writes:

"Dementia destroys people's confidence and self-worth. Creative Age makes people realise that they have a significant part in the community, enabling them to go away and function better due to their increased confidence and well-being."

"Creative Age is a unique initiative that enables people with dementia to engage in activities that provide both cognitive stimulation and the opportunity to socialise with others. This helps reduce social isolation and can help improve day-to-day functioning. Being involved in therapeutic activities also improves people's confidence and self-worth which is often reduced for people with dementia."

The Revd Naomi Cooke writes:

"The desire to work alongside those living with dementia and those who care for them had been in the church's thinking for some time, as we were very conscious of the potential social exclusion and isolation that can sadly accompany living with this condition."

"In 2017 something wonderful began to unfold. Open Arms Artists' Collective approached Bethesda with the proposal that we collaborate in delivering a participant led creative programme. Our newly arrived lay worker brought with her experience of working alongside people living with dementia. And within the congregation there was a key link to the local NHS Managing Memory Together Trust. The jigsaw pieces came together in a powerful way and once funding was in place, Creative Age was born."

"We have discovered the strength in collaborating with partners and hope to further develop this model of working across other areas of community engagement."

Source: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/>



DIARY DATES SELECTION:

November

Sunday 21st 2.30pm Shaping our future 3rd session (Venue: URC Petts Wood)

March

Thursday 3rd Deadline for contributions for Apr-June Messenger

TAILPIECE

Glory to God in highest heaven, Who unto man His
Son hath given; While angels sing with tender mirth,
A glad new year to all the earth.

Martin Luther

Happy New Year !