

Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

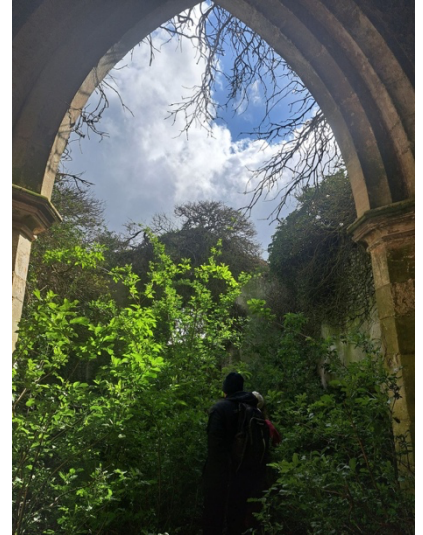
Facebook Posts May 2024

A thought from Aileen Fox:

A beautiful morning out walking with the local Ramblers group. To our right a small gap in the hedge. We were informed that through it was the remains of the medieval Church of St Andrew, Bircham Tofts. All that is left is the archway and some gravestones overgrown but there is a peace about it.

The Church was in regular use but in World War II it was deemed too near to Bircham airfield. It was therefore abandoned in the 1940s and never restored, the roof was removed in 1952. Beauty from brokenness, closed because of war, never again used for worship.

Isn't that a reminder to us that things change and not always of our choosing? Our lives go on but suddenly a simple act or decision can have a huge effect. Life is changed and we have to pick ourselves up however hard. Are we ready to do this? We are not alone; we have God's love if we only let him into our hearts and put him at the centre of all we try to do.



Please pray for the congregation and community in Stibbard



A Thought for the Day from Rev Jacqui:

The other day, on Classic FM (my channel of choice in the car), the presenter talked about 'moments of joy' and asked listeners to text him their examples. Some of the ones that resulted were quite moving and others less sensible. I remembered this on Friday when I looked out of the kitchen window and saw the dappled afternoon sunlight coming through the geums, forget me nots, and London pride, in our garden bed and casting patterns on the patio. I felt a heart-warming moment of pure pleasure and joy and rushed to get my camera. These moments in nature go so quickly but, once given as a gift on a photographic image, they can stay for ever. Sunday's reading in church talked about the joy that can stay for ever - the joy offered by Jesus as we receive his love, remain in his love, and share his love (John 15 v 9 - 16). Jesus says that his joy will be in us and will be 'complete'. I am giving thanks today for the glimpses of joy that come and go, and for the joy of friendship with Jesus that can be received for ever.



Pray with us today

O God we come to you

God of the displaced, who created space for all,

God of the refugee, who carved a place for all,

God of the poverty-stricken strangled by the cost of living,

God of the marginalised and the ignored,

You are God of the moon and the sun,

the stars and all of creation.

We come to you.

When our world loses meaning, O God we come to you.

When our faith becomes institutionalised and we lose our direction, O God we come to you.

When our service through the Church is repetitive and draining, O God we come to depend on you.

When our hope is stifled by our fear of the world's wars and greed, O God we come and we trust you.

When our vision becomes blurred by the tears of pain, anxiety, lack and loss, Lord God we come to you.

Turn our eyes to see in your ways.

Open our ears to hear your understanding of life.

Breathe your hopefulness into our hearts, so that our hands and feet and heads may think and act only for you, as you help us to come to you. Amen.

A thought from Rev Anne:

Oh dear! I'm late! I forgot it was my turn to post something on Facebook today!



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I'm often rushing at the last minute. I've always been the same. I think I like to pack as much into my time as I can, and then suddenly, while I've been writing that last email or calling that last person, time has gone, and I'm running late!

Are you like this?

It can't just be me surely?

I am relieved and encouraged to know that God loves me as I am, and has created me to be me! (But I know it can be difficult for those of you who like to be really early!! Sorry!)

And I'm also relieved that God is never late and never in a rush when listening to me. Neither does he forget me - or you!

Be blessed this lovely Friday!

Please pray for the congregation and community in Swaffham

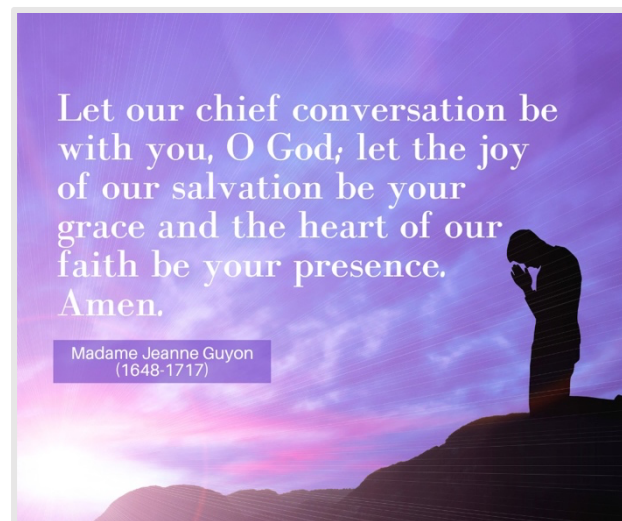


A Thought for the Day from Deacon Jen:

Last week I attended Convocation. This is the Methodist Deacons' annual gathering and conference. The picture shown here is of part of the display at the front of the hall. This includes three elements that are important to Methodist Deacons. The diaconal cross to symbolise that we are part of a religious order. The words of Jesus as a servant to emphasise our calling to servant ministry. The candles at the bottom that are used as part of our worship in our area groups. These are brought at the beginning of the week and placed in the display. Then on the final day they are taken by someone from a different area group. In this way our links with one another are continually spread wide in ways that we cannot always know.

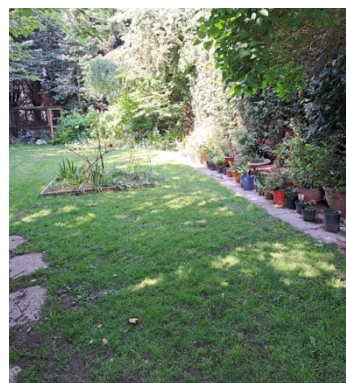


As this is my final Convocation before retirement (though I hope to continue to attend in the future) it struck me that we too have links with many people. Often those links can be very stable and unchanging. But then our circumstances change, or those of others, and we can have new links, new chains to build. We don't know what the future will bring but, hopefully, for all of us, it will include cherishing old friendships and developing new ones.



A thought from Aileen Fox:

The disciples had watched as Jesus ascended into heaven. Now there was a waiting period for the Holy Spirit, the helper that Jesus had promised them. They had been tasked with being witnesses in Judea, Samaria and all the ends of the world. When the Holy Spirit came upon them it was like the sound of rushing wind filling the entire house and tongues of fire appeared with a tongue resting on each disciple enabling them to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them the ability. Power and gift to enable them to serve.



In the photos you will see a mowed lawn. To get it to this state it needed a lawn mower of some description. Years of struggling with extension leads and avoiding cutting the cable, I looked at alternative methods to cut my grass. Eventually I purchased a cordless mower. Freed from the constraints of leads I rushed out to mow the lawn. I put the safety key in, the grass box on and pressed the button and lever, but nothing happened! Eventually I realised I needed the little black box in the other picture, the power battery, the energy. Once installed I could quickly mow my lawn.



Unless we ask the Holy Spirit into our lives, we are not going to be very effective. God wants us to be out and about serving him, being witnesses but we need power and energy from the Holy Spirit. This is what we celebrate at Pentecost when the disciples received this gift; we can ask God to send his Holy Spirit on us at any time. We need to ask.

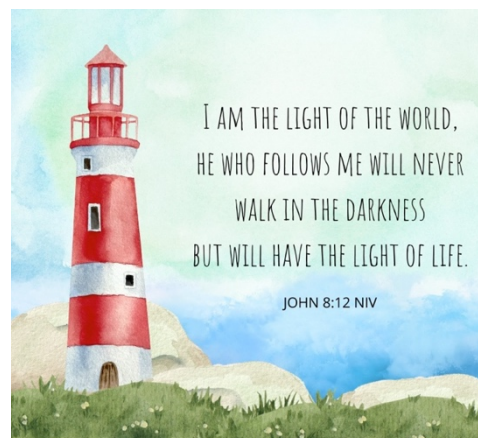
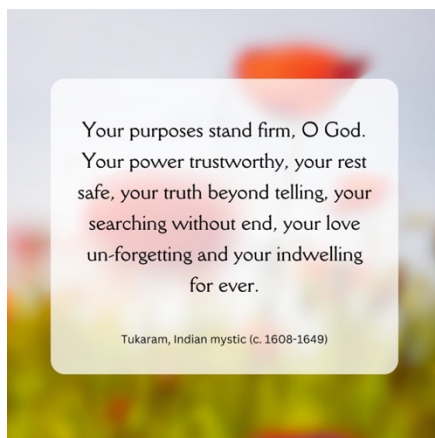
Please pray for the congregation and community in Tittleshall



A Thought for the Day from Rev Jacqui:

I have always been moved emotionally by stories of people from the past. When I give my (signature!) talk on Jane Austen, I always feel emotional when I talk about her death - which seems silly when it was over 200 years ago and I have talked about it for years. I found myself with a catch in my throat as I talked about the untimely death of Sidney Dye MP (in 1958) towards the end of a historical talk in Swaffham on Saturday. And, again, when I said that we had his daughter with us in the room (Helen is a Methodist member in Sporle).

Also, in that talk I mentioned William Henry Cory who gave a splendid teapot to the Wesleyan Methodists in Swaffham in 1876. See the photo of it with pride of place in Swaffham Heritage Museum. William's great-great-niece was also with us on Saturday and her great-great-grandfather (William's father) is buried in the churchyard. I went looking for his grave recently but couldn't find it. I know that if I do find it, or William Henry's in Derby, I will be emotional because I feel that I have got to know these people - even though they lived in the nineteenth century. One more thing about what makes me want to cry - I definitely was a bit emotional when I said at the end of the talk that I had been proud to be the minister of Swaffham Methodist Church for the last 5 years (as I am of all the churches for which I have had pastoral charge). We continue to create history with stories of people and churches continuing to arouse deep feelings. Food for thought.



**Rev'd Jonny's
Testimony Service**

**Join with us to celebrate the journey of Rev'd
Jonny Bell from their calling to ordination,
followed by light refreshments and cake!**

Gluten-free and dairy-free options

**Holt Methodist Church
15 June - 3pm**

Guest preacher: **Maggy Garton**

A thought from Rev Anne:

Doing a rare bit of gardening last week, I planted a small buddleia (butterfly bush) I'd bought at the Church stall, then tried to encourage some climbing plants to grow up the trellis, then I pulled up some long grass that was covering over the Aquilegia. Moving from place to place, I was distracted by the next weed I could see, or the ivy trying to take over the Laburnam (golden chain) tree. Then I looked to find my trowel. I went back to the buddleia, searched around the trellis, looked all over the ground where I'd been pulling up the grass. And yes, you've guessed it - especially if you've seen the photos - it was in the bin!

It gave me a moment of reflection! I threw away something I needed, that was useful, because I wasn't paying attention. Then I wasted 20 minutes trying to find it, retracing my steps! How often do we throw something away that we need and value due to a moment of carelessness? Surely it's possible to do this with more important things - even relationships or our faith?

Perhaps a more mind-ful approach to my gardening would be helpful - indeed to life in general! R



Please pray for the congregation and community in Toftwood



A thought from Aileen Fox:

I have just had the opportunity to go to Chelsea Flower show and enjoy the beautiful displays, the colour the designs. I love going to this on my own, I can wander as I wish, rest when I need to, go back and look again at something and play spot the celebrity/presenter. This year Mary Berry, Adam Frost, Jo Swift to name just a few. And of course the show gardens with natural planting, large structures with some purely as a design feature, others to hold a seat or split the garden into zones.

At one large garden I spotted an inscription on a wall. "The church exists primarily for the benefit of those who do not belong to it." Words from William Temple who was rector of St James Piccadilly in the heart of London. Think about that comment for a minute. It's made me think really hard, about us as the Church, the body of Christ. Are we really sharing the Good News? Are we really helping people discover Jesus?

This garden will eventually be situated alongside St James Piccadilly providing a quiet reflective area for people to find sanctuary from the business of life.

