

Broad Street Methodist Church

Annual Church Meeting

Sunday 11th June, 2017

following 10 am Worship

ALL WELCOME

VISION²¹
Building for the 21st Century

MINISTER'S REFLECTIONS

Dear Friends,

This year, our General Church Meeting on the 11th June follows on from our celebration of Pentecost. The Acts of the Apostles describes how the first believers 'spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers' (Acts 2: 44) They came from many places, but discovered a mutual understanding. Their fellowship was close, but not closed. They lived out their faith, expressing care for others, and 'every day the Lord added to their number'.

The occasion of our meeting – with which some congregations also mark their Church Anniversary – invites us to reflect upon the kind of Church community God is calling us to be. How can we grow more closely in fellowship whilst finding new and relevant ways of sharing our faith with others?

For me, a special initiative during the past year was our Advent 'Posada'. As simple Nativity figures of Mary and Joseph went from home to home and school to school they spoke of making room for Christ. We recognised the importance of hospitality and welcome. We were also aware of those across the world seeking security and shelter. The Christmas gospel was taken into our communities and celebrated in home life.

Following the refurbishment of our Church I sense that we've now settled into our new surroundings. Pentecost reminds us, however, that we can never become *too* settled. Much renovation work remains to be done, beginning with our hall foyer and toilets. Above all, we know and believe that through his promised gift of the Spirit God constantly seeks to renew the faith and mission of his *people*. It's therefore been a joy to welcome newcomers to our congregation in recent months, including of

course the Rev Frances Ballantyne as co-minister, and her husband, David.

I'm thankful for the Spirit's gifts exercised in the many ways that everyone worships and works together at Broad Street. Thank you for *your* contribution to our shared life.

Soon, Bible Month will provide opportunities to reflect upon the letter of James. He speaks of a way of faith that is both practical and prayerful. 'You must be patient' he says, 'keep your hopes high, for the day of the Lord's coming is near'.

With greetings, Rev Alan Barker

A Message from Rev Frances Ballantyne

From a beginning last September, I was keen to find out how I could support Rev Alan at Broad Street.

It soon became clear that becoming involved with 'Churches Together' and making connection with the local ministers was a good start. I also enjoyed being part of the Women's World day of Prayer and I am finding out about the Methodist Women in Britain.

I enjoy being on the rota for the Shoppers' Service, as well as mingling with the coffee and scone eaters at the Tuesday coffee mornings. This is a useful time to meet and chat and often hear pastoral concerns.

It works well, according to the Circuit Plan, to lead worship at the 9am and then the 10.30 service, which gives me contact with both congregations. David & I do regularly worship together at the 9am before I dash off to another circuit church to preach. I have tried to balance time at Broad Street with 4 Seasons, Midweekers, the prayer chain group meeting, pastoral visitor meetings as well as coming along to Church Council. The Broad Street lunch also has been visited and enjoyed and very willing to offer a devotion for this.

I was invited to do a new service at Christmas, aimed at families and I thoroughly enjoyed telling the Christmas Story via Father Christmas to the younger age group.

A delight that I am being received into Full Connexion within this first year, a time of adjustment, getting to know a new Christian denomination with all its local worship, service and witness. I have also undertaken training with Safeguarding, and enjoy meeting others in the District and Synods. A further delight is that David has transferred his membership to Broad Street.

David & I are appreciative of your patience with us, your help and encouragement, particularly Rev Alan Barker (superintendent), Rev Bob Pritchard (supervisor), those on the Worship support group and the Circuit stewards. I have found the Church stewards particularly helpful in steering me in the right direction and answering my many questions.

I am enjoying using the Manse, as a local base in Spalding, to hold meetings and to offer hospitality. I hope we are all getting to know each other so that we can dream Gods dream for the future of His Church/es in Spalding.

Mission and Worship at Broad Street

THE 9am SERVICE

Our worship team continue to produce interesting informal services which are often interactive. There is an occasional Café worship in the hall where anyone is welcome to drop in from 9a.m. onwards. This is a popular breakfast followed by short worship and praise, music provided by Phil.

Since last year we have welcomed Frances and David, Keith and Christine as well as Claire and Archie, who likes to help on the door with Dave! Worship leaders are Sarah, Trish, Nicky, Emma and Jane. Our ministers and local preachers lead us and other members of the Circuit share something of their faith and work with us. We occasionally have speakers

from other local Churches. Average numbers this year have increased to 18.

The children enjoy their own sessions in the lounge and are always welcome to bring friends. Thanks to all who make the worship enjoyable and relevant and not forgetting the help with technology!

JUNIOR CHURCH

This has been a year of change and growth for Junior Church not only among its members but also in regard to its leaders.

The Nativity Play was a particular highlight of the year with members of both the Junior Church and the 9.00 am service presenting the birth of Jesus from the perspective of three very special and sparkly angels. The Nativity play also highlighted the fact that some of our members have now become young people, whose role within the group has changed.

The children continue to remain an integral part of the 10.30 Service, reading the Bible, praying and showing their items of craft. (Once again sorry for the glitter and wet paint!) The topics we have covered this year include the life of Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Ezra and Nehemiah a study on the life and death of Jesus and parts of the book of Revelation.

The fact that we are able to use the hall has made a huge difference to how we plan our time and the activities we are able to undertake. With more space we have been able to do more active games linked to Biblical themes. Each Sunday morning we are able to set up a number of craft tables so that every child is able to find an activity that is age appropriate. In this way the leaders are free to talk to their children about the topics we have studied or interest them.

It has been a real privilege and pleasure to welcome Lynn Roberts and Christine Rowbottom to the team of leaders. Both come with a wealth of gifts and experience in dealing with children.

As I have mentioned we now have a need to provide for our young people. We are in the process of discovering how to integrate them into aspects of Church Life such as stewarding and preparing a more discussion based format.

Our Crafts at Christmas proved especially popular with over 25 children attending, many of whom have no Church background but with whom we have regular contact on our Craft Mornings.

Linked with our Biblical theme in Nehemiah to caring for those in need the children made cakes and sold them after the Service. In this way we raised £50 for Cancer Research.

Once again may I say what a privilege it is to work with our inspiring children and young people. I would also like to thank all the leaders of Junior Church who are always faithful and willing to help with all aspects of Junior Church life. Finally, may I thank all Church Members and Friends who encourage, listen to, support and most importantly pray for our Junior Church.

Many thanks and every blessing in God. Jackie Wood

PRAYER GROUP

We continue to meet on the 1st of the month, or the 2nd if the 1st is a Sunday. The meeting is open to folk from Churches Together as well as Broad Street and St. Thomas Road. "God shapes the world through prayer". Our churches, town, country and world need our prayers. Join us in "shaping the world". Folk can and do join us for part or all of the meetings. You can pray silently, read a prayer or pray out loud.

Feel free to join us anytime, bookmarks are available with dates and venues. Patricia Gooding

PRAYER CHAIN

Prayer is important and we have again received a lot of requests from different sources, including Churches together in Spalding & District and worldwide. Appropriate cards have been sent and visits made. It has

been encouraging when we receive cards, letters or messages of appreciation. We also Praise the Lord for joyful news. Confidentiality is respected when required.

We continue to meet on the last Tuesday of each month, approx. 11.15am. It is good to have Evelyn now as a link and we invite anyone willing to join us.

Pat Barnett

HOUSE FELLOWSHIP

We have had some new folk join us in the last year, but there is always room for more. We continue to have two to three sessions a year where we meet fortnightly, enjoying sharing together, laughing together and occasionally having a meal out together. It is an opportunity to explore our faith together in a relaxed atmosphere.

We meet in various members homes, and there is always transport available.

You are welcome to join us. Patricia Gooding

MISSION/OUTREACH GROUP

Since last year Rev Frances has joined the group which meets occasionally to plan events during the year.

A Summer Praise was held at Broad Street (no worries about the weather!) last July which included a light lunch, followed by a celebration of our senses in the form of craft activities and worship, using resources provided by ROOTS for Churches as well as input from members of the team.

There was a service of Light led by Rev Alan Barker which reminded us of the need for continued bereavement care.

Invitation cards have been produced for various events which this last year included a Travelling Nativity or Posada, a Mexican Christmas

tradition to encourage the welcoming of the Holy Family into our lives. Local schools were invited to take part and links were made along the way. Frances led a service for families on Christmas Eve which was well-attended.

An event for young children is planned for the summer.

Professional posters were purchased to highlight the range of services and activities during Advent and Christmas. The Christingle celebration continues to attract good numbers.

A Super Soup lunch for Christian Aid was enjoyed in March, built on a Lent tradition. Thanks to the home-made soup makers, Diana, Tony, Rose, Judith and Norma Clark and for all the helpers on the day.

The Methodist Church Bible Month study of the Letter of James, which was discussed at the last meeting, will take place on Sundays in June along with House group participation, led by Pat Gooding and Keith Rowbottom.

Alan, Frances, Deirdre, Trish, Helen, Emma and Jane

PASTORAL REPORT

We are very grateful for all the care given to us over the past year by our tremendous Pastoral team.

As within any family, we have experienced our share of ailments, worries and sorrows during that time. Our very dedicated team of Pastoral Visitors has continued to help and support folk in their care.

Thanks are expressed to our Pastoral Worker, Pat Gooding and to Jane, Pat, Dorothy, Norma, Jennifer, Diana, Deirdre, Rose and Dot for their concern and friendship throughout the year.

Heather Howman, Pastoral Secretary

WORLD MISSION

As Methodists' we are committed to sharing our faith. And we can reach out to others by giving to mission and by praying for mission. Thank you to all of you who gave to mission last year (2015-2016), we raised £42.78 through our Mission boxes and £91.32 for JMA.

If any of you would like a collection box for World Mission or JMA just ask me, I have plenty!

Patricia Gooding

TUESDAY MORNINGS

It is almost 30 years since we began holding Coffee Mornings each Tuesday to raise funds and provide a service to the community. We continue to provide folk with a welcome respite from shopping, offering drinks, home-made cakes and preserves plus a large selection of second hand books and jigsaws. The short Shoppers' Service at 10.45 am, introduced during this period (anyone remember when?) is well attended each week. We have recently been joined by members of the local Pop In group and the Ecumenical Bible Study group continues to meet during the morning. The Circuit Office is always busy with Jacqui helping members with their administrative needs and the Church is open for all to visit.

The new Heritage Collection offers a chance to look at our past, so please take the opportunity on a Tuesday morning to browse the collection. After viewing the old posters and artefacts found during the Church renovations, feel free to take a folder or two about the individual churches/chapels into the warmth of the Church Lounge and enjoy delving into the past. Our Circuit has an interesting history.

Many thanks to all who volunteer to help with the many tasks undertaken during the second busiest morning of the week at Broad Street. More volunteers VERY welcome.

Lu Chappell

LUNCHEON CLUB

We are a happy group of people serving a good three course meal every second Wednesday of the month. Why don't you join us - as a diner I mean?

We try to accommodate dietary needs but we don't have cupboards full of ingredients so we need to know in advance, otherwise it's a 'no worries' hour plus.

Judith Dodd

FOUR SEASONS

Four Seasons is a lovely group of people made up of members from Broad Street, St Thomas Road and people who support in other ways. We play dominoes and scrabble, and there is always laughter and chatter.

This year we have tried something a bit different.

Instead of having our 'lunch outings' on a Four Seasons day, we decided to have them at another time to include any other church members who would like to join us, and some took up the offer. We will be visiting Gill & Chris in June and December and enjoying their hospitality. Our membership is around 25, all very regular.

Sadly, John White died at the beginning of this year, both he and his domino skills are missed! We miss Win too, she would sit knitting and chatting as we played, we hope that she will soon be feeling better, we do keep in touch.

We are indebted to Maureen Henson for her secretarial work, and Linda Yarnell who keeps our 'books' in order and tells us what we can spend! Subs have gone up to £1.50, the first rise in 10 years!

It is good to be able to report that we are still going strong. Dee Moden

MIDWEEKERS

As a result of prayer and publicity, numbers have grown and we now have 20+ at each meeting.

We are a happy, lively band of ladies (and occasionally men!) who enjoy members' evenings e.g. sharing memories of Christmas/holiday blunders or making corn dollies and Christmas crafts with invited tutors (!) along with speakers, demonstrations and outings.

We were delighted to welcome Rev Frances who joins us when commitments allow. It was much appreciated when she stepped in at short notice and shared her faith stories connected to her huge collection of teddy bears. Also, her 'Claim to Fame' evening gave us the opportunity to interact with our own stories.

John & Julie and Rita Rowe took us on their respective pilgrimages to Iona and the Holy Land. We also enjoyed Diana's visit to Vietnam and Cambodia and Christine Pritchard's interesting and informative talk about her experiences as a magistrate.

Great excitement (and planning!) when we hosted for the first time in decades the Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB) Lincolnshire District Day. The President and ladies' groups from far and wide enjoyed a spiritual and friendly day. Rev Frances led the morning worship and a guest speaker told us about Jacob's Well Charity in the afternoon.

Rev Alan Barker led out Christmas meeting with words and song, followed by our buffet supper.

Ann Smith, a member of Disabled Ramblers inspired us with her fantastic talk of their travels all over the country via scooters and chairs. Almost standing room only when Bryn shared his trip to Augusta for the U S Masters Golf. He also made sure we had good seats at SADOS production of 'The Wizard of Oz' which was brilliant. Just a few things we

get up to and we now look forward to Heather's 'Music Hall' and our Final Fling.

We love our friendly, fellowship and fun but are always aware of pastoral care for each other, our Church family and community and aim to meet their needs.

Financially we have raised money for MWiB, Cancer Research etc. and donated to several speakers' charities.

It was a nice gesture when David Ballantyne kindly entertained our Midweeker men at the Manse on a few occasions. We would warmly welcome more ladies to join us!

The Autumn programme will soon be available.

Pat Barnett

SANTA'S SLEIGH

I wonder how many people are aware that, for many years, some of our members have helped the Rotary Club of South Holland with their collection around the town in the run up to Christmas?

As our town has grown, the Club has welcomed more volunteer help in order to cover as many estates as possible in that early evening time slot before the children are in bed. It never feels like 'cold calling' (despite the wintry weather!) as Christmas music from the Sleigh heralds our coming and the children rush to see Santa and dip into the baskets of sweets we carry.

Some of our members have been helping for at least 15 years, collecting in different areas of the town. Over the past ten years our Church has supplied a full team (including Santa!) to collect on one of the routes in early December. Other charity groups do likewise and we receive a donation (usually between £250 and £300) at a Club presentation evening in February.

It is a three hour walk with only a few rides on the sleigh between estates but worthwhile for the look on the children's excited faces as we approach. During those years we have collected approx. £400 each evening we have been 'on duty' - a considerable contribution to the tremendous £202,619. 54 raised over the 31 years the Rotary Sleigh has been in operation - all proceeds going to local charities.

Lu Chappell & Emma Bennett

SPACE4U

The Spalding Listening and Counselling Centre is based at our Church and is open to all (from 13 years up) particularly those who would otherwise not access counselling. It is a professional counselling service and supported by Churches Together in Spalding & District who help with funding. Their tenth anniversary celebration will be held on 20th June.

We offer our premises for hire at a reduced rate as we wish to support those who are having problems in their life and need professional help, the cost of which can be prohibitive to many people. There is a cost, agreed with clients on their ability to pay.

Church Council has agreed that proceeds from our Sunday morning coffee donations this year will be given to this worthwhile service.

Pat Gooding

GATEWAY

Gateway Club continues to meet at Broad Street as it has each Friday evening for over 40 years. There is a continuing need for this provision in our town as it offers a chance for people with learning disabilities to meet socially on a regular basis.

This would not be possible without the willing band of volunteers who help each week and we are very grateful to them all. We also thank Church members who have always been a huge support to our Club over the years and continue to be so.

Maurice Chappell

FUNDRAISING GROUP

This last year we have organised a variety of events to raise funds, not all of which were for Church or Vision21. The Count your Blessings challenge during Lent was our Easter Offering in aid of Methodist Women in Britain and was a welcome opportunity for us to be thankful for all that we have and enjoy in our lives.

We continued our popular monthly Coffee & Snack Lunches, Beetle Drive and £ Sale and held concerts and fayres which are always well attended. All these events take a great deal of planning and hard work and we are grateful to all who help us on a regular basis and in particular those who volunteer to organise an event without our input! Thanks also members and friends who support us in all that we do.

Jean, Rose, Sarah, Judith & Lu

STEWARDS' REPORT

It is with hope and anticipation that after the formalities of the A.G.M. we will have two new Church Stewards.

It is always a challenge finding new recruits to the team, and it will be really good to have two new Stewards join our excellent team, as the present Stewards have all served Broad Street and our Lord for a long, and in one case, a very long time! We said goodbye, reluctantly, in March to Jean as she begins the joy of retirement with her husband.

We continue helping each other, preparing for the 10.30am service each week and sharing the responsibilities. What one of us forgets another will remember!

In addition to being visible on a Sunday, preparing for and supporting the preacher, all Stewards continue to sit on other committees to keep in touch with what is going on in our Church family and to offer support and ideas where appropriate.

Thanks and appreciation must also go to the Communion Stewards, the welcome and door Stewards, members of our Congregation who willingly read lessons and those who serve coffee after the morning Service, our loyal Organists, Brian for the sound and all the many other jobs he does in our Church, and all others who contribute in some way, however small, to ensure all are made welcome at Broad Street.

The Team comprises Stewards with different skills and strengths, but working together and supporting each other we are able to further God's work and show that Broad Street is a welcoming, friendly Church.

Being a Steward is a rewarding task and we all enjoy our job, we feel it is a privilege to serve God in this way.

Please tell us of any issues or any suggestions you may have. If you would like to know more about being a Steward please have a chat with any one of us.

Dorothy, Alan, Heather, Jackie, Bryn and Jess

TREASURER'S REPORT

We have had a relatively quiet and uneventful time finance wise for the past year. Renovation of the main church building has been completed and we are now moving on to improving the porch, toilet area and the church hall including the kitchen. The preliminary plans for this work are in-hand and will involve obtaining the necessary planning permissions as well as seeking financial grants for this work. If we secure the funds – probably around £100,000 - we hope to be able to start the renovations in the late autumn or by early in January 2018.

To date there is just over £67,000 in the Vision21 account. This sum includes a very generous gift of £10,000 which was given to the project by an anonymous donor and the £30,000 loan from the Circuit to assist with our cashflow until the Vision21 work has been completed.

We are glad to say that fundraising has also continued! Last year over £7,800 was raised through the regular monthly Saturday Coffee & Light

Lunches together with several 'special events' that have been organised by our members such as the £1 Sale, 'Tea on the Terrace' - all proving to be very popular (and lucrative) in helping to fund our ambitions for the building.

The government's Gift Aid Scheme (GA) enables us to claim an extra 25% on all voluntary donations from a UK taxpayer. The great news is that this is now bolstered by the Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme (GASDS) which allows us to claim a 'top-up' payment on gifts and donations of cash that are £20 or under. By keeping a watchful eye on all gifts, donations and collections at the end of the 2016/17 Tax Year we have been able to make a Gift Aid claim on a total of £32,197 (GA = £24,273 with a further £7,924 on GASDS). After deduction of the Methodist Church House fees this should result in a boost to our income of around £7,500 so a huge thank you to all those who have generously given financial support across the year.

On a day by day basis we are holding our own with income still exceeding expenditure. However, our existing contracts for gas and electricity are about to come to end and we have been researching and negotiating a new deal. This has now been finalised but they are at a higher cost but we have managed again to secure another 3-year deal which helps. Our biggest expense is the contribution towards the running costs of the Circuit and this is also set to increase in September 2018. So, with the setting of a realistic budget and careful monitoring of expenditure we are at present covering all our bills but there is not a lot to spare!

Lyn Kite

STEERING GROUP /PROPERTY & FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The last year has seen some changes in the way the buildings aspect of Vision21 is to be carried forward. It was recognised that, at present, there were insufficient funds to proceed with much of the building work that was in our Vision21 programme. This meant that any work now undertaken would have to be on a smaller scale. Since the Property and

Finance Committee were also looking at small projects to be carried out on the premises, it was felt that it would be more efficient to incorporate the buildings/premises aspects of Vision21 into the remit of the Property and Finance Committee. This meant that the Steering Group, having overseen the completion of the refurbishment of the Church, was no longer necessary. The Mission aspect of Vision21 would continue to be undertaken by the Mission Group, with the Fundraising group continuing its work, arranging events to raise funds for Vision21 and for the general church funds. Vision21 carries on, and hopefully continues to inspire and guide our church life as we seek to carry out God's mission here.

With the combining of the Steering Group and the Property and Finance Committee, there were changes in the membership of the latter group. D. Hicken, T. Hicken, D. Moden and L. Chappell stood down. More recently, E. Howard has also had to leave the group. We need to say a big thank you to all that they did in looking after our premises. We are very grateful for the time, effort and skills brought to the work that they did. The Property and Finance Committee is now made up of D. Baldwin (Chairman), D. Jefferson (Note-taker), B. Pearson, D. Hull, J. Pollard, P. Callow, A. Fuller, D. Ballantyne, B. Chappell, K. Ekins, L. Kite also attending the meetings as observers are A. Moden and D. Basford. Again, we need to express our thanks to them as they seek to serve.

The Property and Finance Committee will now oversee the general maintenance and safety of our premises as well as seek to take forward further improvements in line with our Vision21 project.

To this end, the last year has seen general maintenance carried out as well as some bigger projects including redecoration of some of our rooms, most recently the Office and the laying of new slabs at the front of the Church. We do need to maintain our premises to the highest standard we can and to this end, everyone can help, by being observant and bringing to the attention of the committee anything that they feel needs addressing. We want our premises to be welcoming and accessible to all and to be a pleasant and comfortable space for all who use it. The

premises are a tool that we need to use in our mission and in our work to spread God's Word to as many people as possible.

The Committee has consulted with the Church Council and is hoping to make progress in improving the buildings in a number of ways:

- ✓ To carry out major improvements to the lobby area between the Church and the Hall. Our architect has been consulted and has drawn up plans to improve the area. He is applying for consents to carry out this work and has estimated that it will cost in the region of £100,000. (If anyone wants more details on what is planned then please ask a member of the committee).
- ✓ To rationalise the storage area known as the Blue Room to try and make better use of the space. Two members of the committee are drawing up plans for this and when they have done that, costings will be determined.
- ✓ To sand and reseal the hall floor so that it becomes more attractive for uses and hirers. This will cost in the region of £1,800.
- ✓ To place a 'heat curtain' above the main entrance to the Church Lounge to make the Lounge warmer and more welcoming as people enter. The estimated cost for this in the region of £970. The Church Council will be making a decision on this at its next meeting.
- ✓ To refurbish the kitchen. Our kitchen plays a vital part in the life and mission of our Church so it is important that we maintain it to a high standard. There is a need for the kitchen to be updated and refurbished. A small group have looked carefully at the kitchen facilities and made suggestions about ways, including a new cooker, to upgrade what we have now. The Committee will now seek to have some plans drawn up and costed so that a decision about what can be done can be taken.

All of these things are desirable but will cost money. We do have some funds available and we will endeavour to raise more through the hard work of the Fundraising Group and Grant applications. At a guess, we might need to raise another £60,000 to £70,000 depending on the costs

of the Blue Room and Kitchen refurbishments. However, if you feel that you could help by donating to the overall funds or to one of the particular projects mentioned above, then please speak to one of the Church Stewards or the Treasurer. All gifts will be gratefully received! We will proceed with the various projects as and when the funds become available.

I finish this report with similar words to those that ended the last report from the Steering Group but which are still relevant. We have to look for ways to use our premises to the glory of God and as a way to serve our community and enhance our own faith and fellowship. Vision21 has never been just about the building work but also our worship, fellowship and mission. We must, as God's people, spend as much time and effort on our relationships with God, each other and the wider community as we do on our buildings – so in the days ahead we need to think about how we move forward as the people of God in terms of our discipleship and fulfilling our mission.

Thanks to everyone for their support over the past years and, in advance, for the future support that will be given. *David Baldwin*