

The Courier

OR

"What We Did Next!"



Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.

Revelations. 3:20 NLT

Hello Everyone

I hope you are all well and keeping safe and hope you have found a secure bubble!! So much has been happening despite LOCKDOWN and we have all been busy in so many different ways.

The hardest thing throughout this is not being able to share important events or say goodbye properly.

Telephone calls, face-time, zoom meetings and conference calls are brilliant ways to communicate but can't replace the real thing.

We say a huge thank you to Pauline Gow as she steps down as senior steward, she has been brilliant throughout her stewardship and it was my pleasure to have worked with her.

Pauline had many challenges during her role, with floods x 2, a 'missing' funeral party, (we won't mention the sound system) and who would have contemplated a pandemic and closure of our church to end her position.

We welcome Di Smart as she takes over as senior steward, I know she will be equally dedicated and we look forward to seeing her in the not too distant future when we welcome our new minister Revd. Andy Chislett-Macdonald in September.

Unfortunately, we were unable to say goodbye to Simon Leigh and Donna as they left us for their new ministry in North Devon. We saw them at our 'Zoom' coffee morning on Sat 20th June and Di Smart arranged various groups of the church to send a few words to be read out at the Virtual Sunday Service on June 21st. Tristan did a brilliant job with the help of his family to bring a virtual and emotional Goodbye from the body of the Church. Thank you so much Tristan.

A copy of this can be seen following Simon's letter on the next page.

Sadly, we have lost some dear members of our church during this time and over the last twelve months. Tributes to these people will be given in our next *Courier* in September, however, a photo and small piece about Margaret Peacock who sadly passed away on 6th July has been included, as she had previously asked for this to be included to thank everyone for cards etc. on her 90th birthday in April.

Liz Coleman

Final Letter from Revd. Simon Leigh

Dear One and All,

12 years ago, I entered the stationing process, that whirligig which is a mystery to most Methodists and which horrifies other denominations. I said I'd consider being a Superintendent and that moving to the South West would be preferable. The rest as they say is history.

The God whom we worship and is made human in Christ Jesus, has a peculiar sense of humour. I often used to travel by train from London to Truro when Donna and the kids lived there and I was still working as a detective in London. As the train passed Marsh Mills and Laira, I used to look at the houses on the hill and the masts at Staddiscombe before arriving at Plymouth station. I used to think 'what a place'. When I was told 'It's Plymouth' by my then Chair of District I laughed. The laughter didn't last long, as when I came to visit, I sat before the Invitation Committee and the first question was 'How's your health Simon, our Supers seem to become very ill!'

I was trying to remember how many churches I have had pastoral charge of in this Circuit; Woodford, Colebrook, Stoke, Mt Gould, St Budeaux, Oreston, Christchurch Estover, a watching brief at Roborough and of course Elburton. Then there was being the Super together with being Deputy Chair of the Plymouth and Exeter District. It all made for a varied and busy time. Plymouth has been enjoyable, challenging and full of surprises; my wife, Donna, came here as a midwife and nurse, became a Local Preacher and leaves as an ordained minister! It has also been a privilege to see Jo Smart become a Local Preacher and she now too is ordained and Marie Poole is en route to becoming a Deacon. I am gratified too that Jon and Tristan have taken up their vocations and let's see where that takes them? They both have great potential and will become one of Mr Wesley's band of preachers.

Elburton Methodist Church has been a good place to be a minister. The congregation is very gracious, by and large. You have endured my sense of humour, my Doc Martinish tendencies, my Cassock alb and somewhat catholic tastes. And before Bob Faulkner says it, my preaching too. We were both flung together because of the needs of the Circuit and I have not forgotten how you kindly welcomed me. Sadly, over the last 7 years we have had to say farewell to a number of people, all of whom played such a vital part in church life; in their passing we remember them.

EMC has had to manage without me on many occasions because of my other roles, but our lay leaders and the membership have always rallied round. I pay tribute to all who have been stewards while I have been your minister and for the encouragement I have been given while at EMC. I have also enjoyed eating a great deal at EMC and I shall miss Rosie's cooking and game soup (roadkill – sorry Rosie) So to all of you my heart-felt thanks and appreciation.

We have shared in a pilgrimage of faith. Now we part company and a new and exciting part of the journey begins with the Revd Andy Chislett-Macdonald, whom I am sure you will come to love and his preaching is far better than mine!

Every blessing, Simon

As we cannot say a personal “farewell” to Simon, a number of comments have been received from various members of the congregation asked as they represent different activities in the church. Tristan and his family read them from different parts of the church on Sunday, 21st June, which was Simon’s last Sunday with us.

Jean Davies says *“Thank you, Simon for all the help and guidance you have given during your time with us. I would also like to thank you on behalf of our little steering group for your help and most importantly, support, in the concept and organising of "Courier" as a replacement for the Link. Best wishes to you and Donna”.*

Tricia *“EMC was truly blessed when Simon arrived in September 2013 as our Minister (and Superintendent of the Plymouth and Devonport Circuit). He brought with him not only a warm and engaging personality, but also the stability, experience and purpose we needed after a short but significant period of uncertainty. We owe a great deal to him for encouraging outreach and his ministry to **all** throughout his seven years as our Minister. He will be missed”.*

John Northcott *“I was the Circuit Steward who conducted the exercise to bring Simon to Plymouth. I was intrigued as to what an ex detective of the Met would bring. I was not disappointed, a wealth of tales of the vagaries of people but above all a profound knowledge of, and ability to impart the Word. It is as well you are moving on Simon as we are running out of space to add letters to your name on the notice board. Go well in deepest Devon..”*

A few words from **Sheila** to describe Simon 'friendship, professional, forgetful, challenging, approachable'. I liked his preaching.

Following that: **NEVER** ask more than one question in an email – you’ll only get a reply to one!

Barbara, Rose and Jennifer- *“we’ll miss you and wish you well in North Devon, thank you for your support. May the Lord bless you always”*

Pauline Raine - *“I would like to say thank-you for the preaching. I have so enjoyed and have so gained, from listening to you preach. It has been such a pleasure to sit down and listen to what you have to say, including enjoying your sense of humour. I would like to thank-you for having a reflective and open-minded theology. I am grateful for your generous and thoughtful approach to issues of the day such as gender and equality, and for avoiding narrow mindedness and judgementalism. On a really personal note, I have to thank-you for the special time you gave to dear Tony in his last weeks, visiting and supporting him in Derriford and St Luke’s. I know he appreciated this so much, as did I. I am sure you will be much missed by the church at Elburton, but this is Methodism! God Bless you and Donna as you move on in your ministry... With love to you both “*

June *“I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Simon for his challenging ministry and vision whilst at Elburton and for his great sense of humour. Simon introduced me to a skydiving challenge to undertake a 1,500ft Tandem Skydive which I undertook for my 80th birthday, an experience I will never forget. Wishing Simon every blessing as he continues his faithful witness in pastures new”*

Carol *“On behalf of Elburton MWiB, I would like to wish you and Donna all the very best for your future in North Devon. I would also like to thank you very much for your support to MWiB during the time you were with us. I’m particularly grateful to you for organising replacement speakers for us if you found you were unable to come as arranged.*

With my Circuit MWiB hat on, I’d like to let you know that none of us will ever be able to erase the picture you painted when you spoke at one of our lunches. This was about when you were on duty as a young policeman in London, and trousers that fell down at an inappropriate moment. We are also grateful to Donna when she kindly spoke to us for sharing some photos and stories of a much younger Mr and Mrs Leigh!”

Pauline Gow *“I would like to thank Simon for his years of Service to the Church and God. May the next chapter in your life bring Gods Blessings. I shall miss your sense of humour and your sermons. It was a pleasure to be your Senior Steward and I wish both you and Donna well as you move on to pastures new.”*

*And last but by no means least from **Bob**:. “All will remember a good sermon and a good preacher, who did you say was leaving?”*

The Late Margaret Peacock who sadly passed away on July 6th



"I would like to thank everybody for their cards and good wishes on my 90th birthday. I didn't realise so many people knew! I had a lovely day filled with nice surprises and thanks to technology was still able to share it with all of the family.

Let's hope the lockdown will end before too long and we can meet again soon."

Best wishes from

Margaret Peacock

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All these "Teddy Puppets" were knitted by Margaret during lockdown as she didn't want to be idle. Despite having a cataract operation just before and no new glasses, she managed to make 23 in total for the shoe box appeal, an inspiration to us all, God bless you Margaret.

What We Did Next.....a resume of what we have all been up to.

Firstly, a huge thank you to Jon Carhart for keeping us so well informed each week with his 'Keep in touch' emails, along with all the technical information on Facebook, Zoom Jam sessions, etc. and of course the virtual Sunday morning services.

Jon and Tristan have done a sterling job with these uplifting weekly services, their spiritual messages and words of encouragement have been a delight in these difficult times. Not forgetting Helen's playing and singing, and of course Josh and Beth. We are so blessed to have their all their talents and dedication. Thank you.

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We have an EMC Community WhatsApp group and a Zoom coffee morning each Saturday morning, both instigated and set up by Denise Avent, thank you Denise.

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How many fathers, mothers, grandparents and teachers are showing our children, in small everyday gestures, how to face up to and navigate a crisis by adjusting their routines, lifting their gaze and fostering prayer? How many are praying, offering and interceding for the good of all? Prayer and quiet service: these are our victorious weapons.'

Pope Francis (supplied by Pam Kingsland)



This is a list of the suburbs, landmarks and selected other places located within the city of Plymouth.

1. Tip of a new flower.
2. A moggy in duck feathers.
3. Crustacean bush.
4. Tiara tor.
5. County wine.
6. Armada.
7. Milkman's farmhouse seat.
8. Tasty pig.
9. Nice jam.
10. Not what.
11. Sheltered porker.
12. A male professor.
13. The last supper.
14. Lengthy abode.
15. Pepper grinder crossing.
16. Mouth wash.
17. Row locks.
18. Fast money.
19. Pile of riches.
20. Angry coinage.
21. Keep the fires burning.
22. Pebble home.
23. Cowboy flour house.
24. Knitted hole.
25. That one water.
26. Sailors fun place.
27. Doll's tin.

As well as keeping us all entertained and amused with his daily LDD emails, (we are up to **LockDownDay** 117 as I write this!!) Tony Sleep has been busy keeping our Church up to scratch.

Property Matters

Several people have enquired who is looking after the church buildings during lockdown.

Methodist Property has issued helpful instructions on the tasks to be undertaken during the lockdown and preparations to be made before the buildings are re-opened.

During the lockdown no one should enter the buildings apart from those appointed to undertake the weekly security checks (and they are required to wear the appropriate PPE) in accordance with the requirements of Methodist Insurance. John (N) and Tony (S) are each undertaking security checks on an alternate weekly basis. This weekly inspection includes a full exterior check for damage to gutters, downpipes, windows and doors, clearance of litter and any signs of attempted ingress, etc. The internal inspection includes flushing of all water systems for a prescribed length of time, checking for leaks, ensuring windows are secure and internal doors locked, dealing with any post received and the monthly readings of gas, electric and water meters.

Best Wishes

Tony

**The adult version of
“Heads, shoulders, knees and toes” is
“Wallet, glasses, keys and phone”**

Property maintenance of a different kind!



Pauline Gow putting the finishing touches to her shed.

Looking good Pauline, a fitting advert for Ronseal and definitely no connection to the following piece

A reflection to broaden the mind by Joan Marsh

The allotment was rife with twilight rumours as just one very shabby, simple shed vibrated with inexcusable passion with very late nightly visits (the norm since the self-inflicted dishy blond took possession of a plot). Applications redoubled and attendance trebled. Standards rose, flowers and veg thrived as many more wives became gardening widows. The Mayor, clad in ceremonial robes, made a visit, intrigued by rumours in a deprived area and the rising enthusiasm as fruit and vegetables excelled. Folk could only speculate that so many visits could not eradicate the most, very satisfied grin across His Worship's so very ceremonial face.
JM



I expect all those keen gardeners (and those not so keen!) have been making the most of the wonderful weather we have been having. At least we can now show off as we entertain our socially distant friends in our neater than usual gardens. We have been busy on our allotments and in the garden and now beginning to enjoy the fruits of our labour. We have all been sharing our experiences, ideas and our produce. Many among us have been busy making jam, ice-cream, cakes etc. Images on the EMC Community WhatsApp group have been amazing

Very impressed with the Agapanthus Jon and hope you bought Helen a circuit breaker for her birthday

O Lord of every lovely thing,
The Maker of them all.
Who from the winter's gloomy wing,
Dost shed the splendours of the spring,
On Thy great name we call

With flowers that through the valleys teach,
Thy love and truth divine,
With streams that sing, and hills that preach,
With waves that laugh on every beach!
We praise Thee we are Thine

Not Thine alone because from Thee
Our life and breath we hold;
But Thine because in Christ we see
The grace that sets our spirits free,
And for the truth makes bold.

Count us amongst the radiant choir
That sounds Thy name abroad,
Set in our hands the heavenly lyre,
With songs of love our hearts inspire,
The mighty love of God.

Until with those who toiled and dreamed
To build Thy kingdom here,
With those the world hath ne'er esteemed,
With all the hosts of Thy redeemed,
We in Thy home appear.

Craft Activities

It's amazing what talent we have at Elburton; along with all the culinary skills, gardening experts and technical knowledge that has been shared, we have been dusting off our sewing machines (Michelle has a new one!) sorting out the knitting needles and untangling all those odd bits of wool.



Message from Julia

Hello everyone, some fantastic news that I'd like to share with you.

As a Messy Church project, during which we sold bracelets made by Dawn, other bracelets and bookmarks made by Caitlin and I (for the cake Tony never made), along with further generosity from Bob F, who kindly rounded up the final sum, we made a grand total of £240. This is being divided equally between 'COVID 19 Trust' and the 'COVID Neonatal ICU' chosen by Dawn and Tristan.

I'd like to thank our church members for their kind support and generosity. Especially Tristan, Dawn, Rupert and Jenny. Also, to Caitlin, my lovely daughter, for her kindness and inspiration. My husband for taking the bracelets to his work, hence Plymouth Co-op Funeral Care were very supportive.

Love to all Julia and Tony Washbrook.

Bracelet made by Dawn Merrifield



Although we are unable to meet, we are very fortunate in still being able to keep in contact and 'get together' each Tuesday afternoon with Di Smart's excellent **At Home with Jesus** emails, with hymns, prayers, bible readings and reflections. We are very grateful to Di for producing these for us. Printed copies are delivered to the homes of those without email each Tuesday. We normally have a summer break, but Di has kindly said she will continue to produce them throughout August.

Despite only being able to meet normally until early March, which is 6 months into our year, I'm delighted to say Hilary, our treasurer, has been able to action all the financial charity commitments agreed at our AGM last July. These include donations to Elburton Methodist Church, the Plymouth Foodbank, Action for Children, Home Missions, World Missions and sponsorship of a child in a Kindergarten in Puri, India.

We haven't been idle, and much sewing and knitting for various NHS needs has taken place. Jean Davies and Liz Coleman have been busy making face masks, with all donations/proceeds going to the Air Ambulance, our District MWiB Project, via Elburton MWiB. If anyone would like a mask, please contact Jean on 404239.

Normally, we would have had a fundraising Cream Tea afternoon for the Air Ambulance, which wasn't possible this year. Lots of ladies had donated for masks, but they were also invited to donate what they would normally have put into our weekly collection had we been meeting. We had to cancel our Circuit MWiB lunch/fellowship day, the proceeds of which would have gone to Air Ambulance, and some people have donated their ticket money. I have been overwhelmed with everyone's generosity. Donations from anyone at Elburton are still welcome; I will let you know the grand total in the next issue of the Courier.

Rather than my usual task of asking people to come to speak to us, at the relevant time I contacted each of the 16 people I had booked to come between early March and mid-July to ask them NOT to come (but to also say that we'd love to see them when things are back to normal please!)

Carol Batchelor

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank both Carol and Di for keeping us all so well informed and in touch during Lock down.

As Carol mentioned Di has been giving us some excellent 'Services' and Carol has been sending them by email, or printing and delivering them by hand to those who don't have internet connection. I'm also grateful to Carol for printing and delivering even more copies of this Courier magazine.

A huge thank you again to both of you

Pauline Gow talks to Pauline Raine

Being positive is Pauline's firmly held belief. We have known her as a valued member of Elburton Methodist church for a considerable time but what else has she done?

Well, for many years she did a job close to her heart caring for other people in their homes, getting to know them and their families. Always happy to carry out some of the more unusual requests for her clients, one time she found herself on a very hot summer's day scrubbing a gravestone at Wembury church whilst imagining herself tipping over to lie spread-eagled on the grave complete with scrubbing brush, bucket of bleach and rubber gloves.

Pauline won a Business of the Year Award for her section of a cleaning company which she ran for seven years, organising and working out the finances and so on.

But that was work, so what about other things?

Surprisingly it had never occurred to Pauline that she might enjoy being on the stage. It wasn't until her early forties that it was suggested to her that it would be a good thing for her to try.

She did indeed give it a try and as she says, 'It totally opened up my life'. But she came to it in a rather unusual way.

Having seen the pantomime, 'Snow White' at Elburton Village Hall she arranged to meet a friend there one Monday night, thinking she was joining a Drama Group.

They seemed a little surprised at her walking in on them but agreed that she could get involved provided she came to their monthly meetings as well. She discovered that she had actually joined The Townswomen's Guild! She is still a member to this day.

Her first show was, 'That was a War that was', followed by Pantomimes such as 'The Princess and the Pedlar. As she says she often landed up as the male lead such as Prince Charming and it took her a little while to feel comfortable playing opposite other women – all that singing love songs to them and so on!

One day she saw a notice in a shop at Brixton advertising singing lessons. She decided to give it a go and went along to Jenny George for them. This led to a meeting with Janice Pope and also Denise Avent who invited her to Elburton Methodist church in 1993.

A new group formed with Jenny as their leader to do a fund raiser for Brixton Methodist Church. This was called, 'The Village Aires'. So, Pauline joined in with this as well, right at its earliest beginnings. Thirty years later she is still involved!

Pauline recalls how Jenny, wanting to develop confidence once got her to sing, 'I've got Confidence in Me', from the Sound of Music.

This confidence led her to join Plymstock Operatics now Sounds Musical, auditioned by Brian Gerry. Yet again she got herself involved in many shows, (her first being 'Viva Mexico'), and in all sorts of ways, front and back of stage, including being their treasurer for ten years.

Music of the Night was a much acclaimed Community Production which took place at the Citadel on the Hoe and attracted thousands of people to it in July every other year for quite some time and Pauline got herself involved in that, once being in a My Fair Lady piece and once playing a cameo role as Elizabeth I. She certainly had the right colour hair for it!

Her list of experiences simply goes on and on –she is still an honorary member of Touchwood having played roles such as Gracie Fields and Oliver with them, she has been in a Scottish group – Touch of the Tartan, a group called, The Fourtunes, has entertained at afternoon clubs and Care Homes, and has performed at the Athenaeum, the Globe, Devonport Playhouse and The Theatre Royal.

And, of course, she has been involved in Pantomime here at Elburton Methodist Church and musical and theatre productions with Sounds Alive Singers.

She has now just completed her latest role as Senior Steward, for which she deserves a well-earned round of applause.



Hope in God always. *Written by Denise Avent*

Have you ever wondered, as you start your day,

On why the Son of God

Paid for our sins that way?

Eternally forgiven, grace streams from above,

In the perfect gift of Jesus, God sent us his Love.

Nazareth the beginning,

Golgotha was the end.

Our hearts are filled with Spirit,

Dear Lord, we will depend

And trust in your true promise.

Like a child you tend our needs.

We often trip and stumble

And commit some sinful deeds.

Yet you are caring 'til the end,

Saviour Jesus, Father, Friend.

Lectio Divina

Letters and a language is all I see, an ancient code of mysterious wisdom.

Excitement elevates my curiosity as I begin decoding logos.

Calm and at peace I feel in the stillness of silent solitude, as my body relaxes my mind races with anticipation.

Tracing each word with my finger and thought I slowly digest bread crumbs of truth.

Intellect serves me no assurance as I lose myself, entwined in words of divinity.

Obsession grips me, holds my eyes to each word. I close my eyes and take a deep breath while raising my head, I exhale.

Drenched in peace when mind victors over the battle cries of the world.

I pray to my creator to be filled with the spirit, as navigator and comforter.

Vanity disappears, humility replaces all expectations. The mind is willing but the body withers.

Inspired and lifted I open my eyes and smile.

Now I know the beauty, the peace and love of God through Christ alone. I am burdened yet overjoyed in receiving my mission.

Amen.

Peace be with you

By Tristan Merrifield

Lord, we give you thanks for your Love, the love that is so abundant that it overflows from ourselves into the hearts of others. We pray, Lord, at this difficult time that that love will continue to pour from us to others in need of love, care and compassion.

We thank you that we have water and soap to keep ourselves clean, and we pray for those whose access to water is difficult. We pray for those who have no access to health care and we give thanks and pray for all those aid workers – from Water Aid, All We Can and others who are trying so hard to help those in trouble.

We pray, Lord, for all in self-isolation, for those whose jobs are threatened, for students who are concerned about the effect of exam cancellations will have on their future, for those who've recently set up businesses and cannot open at present. We pray for all those involved in caring for those who are ill, and those who health is frail. We pray your healing hand will rest on them. We pray for their family and friends. We give you thanks for all their commitment.

We pray for our emergency services – the police, ambulance and fire services. For Lifeguards, Lifeboats and Coastguards. We pray for St John's ambulance volunteers providing vital help.

We pray for the Armed Forces many of whom are serving in many different ways. We pray for those serving at sea, on submarines, in close quarters and unable to go ashore.

We pray for our fishermen, for farmers and all growers and give thanks that they are providing food for us, and those who have volunteered to help harvest crops.

We pray for all ministers and deacons who are trying to give support and comfort. For all those using technology to keep in touch and give us comfort and support.

Lord there are so many folk to thank at this time – those who are staffing shops, buses and trains, the delivery drivers, the cleaners, the posties and cooks and everyone who is doing their very best to help those in need.

Lord God, we thank You for all the wonderful people who have responded to help all those in need at this time – the 1,000s of volunteers “making a difference”; the doctors, nurses, and all carers; all those who have worked to bring us the essential things of life. We thank you for the broadcasters who have helped many pass the time; we thank you for the programmes and schemes designed to help children and parents with schooling.

Lord God, we give you thanks for the scientists, the politicians and others who are trying so hard to see us safely through this time.

Lord God, we lift them to you, ask Your blessings on them and Your help for them to make wise decisions.

Lord God, we pray for ourselves; help us through the doubt and fear; the loneliness and aloneness; the sadness and sorrow to joy and peace and when we can meet once more. In Jesus' name we pray.

Lord You know what is on our hearts; You hear our prayers, spoken, whispered, shouted and thought. In Jesus name we pray, Amen

Di Smart



NEXT ISSUE

We are hoping that when the next copy of the Courier is available we shall be able to meet in the Church in some form or another. What a great day that will be!!

It will mean having to put certain measures in place according to government guidelines. The property group are working towards this and how to achieve the best way to keep us all safe.

We will be welcoming our new minister Revd. Andy Chislett-Macdonald in September, so all things new as we hopefully start our Church Year together.

Contributions to the September issue can be sent to Liz Coleman or Jean Davies

liz.mikecoleman@yahoo.co.uk 01752 335662

messinajmd@gmail.com 01752 404239

VE Day

AH YES, I REMEMBER IT WELL! A message from Jean Davies

Hello, everyone, hope you are all well and coping fairly well with the present situation. We are looking to having a regular issue when things get more normal. Before `lockdown` we were looking to have a feature for VE Day, but events overtook us. We did though, have an interview with our two veterans, Ivor and Bill which were in the last publication. We cannot let such an important anniversary pass without some sort of recognition. It is therefore intended to go ahead with our original plan and we need your help. Please think about letting us know these three things. On the day it was announced that the war was over 1) where you were 2) what you were doing there 3) how you were told the news. There may not be many of you who remember, but we would all love to hear your experiences of that special day. If you need help with writing it, we can arrange that. Please send, or contact Liz or myself with your contributions. Keep safe, keep healthy, keep smiling and look forward to when we can be together again.

Jean



Strength For Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow

