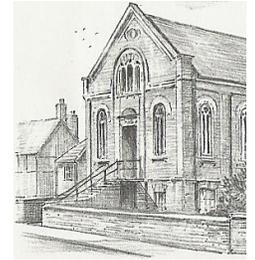


STOTFOLD METHODISTS the church on the crossroads



150th ANNIVERSARY YEAR

JUNE 2019 NEWSLETTER

Paul writes: Be imitators of God, as beloved children, and follow Christ by loving as he loved you, giving himself up for us. Ephesians 5 1-4, 8-11

“It is God who matters, because he makes the plant grow”.

The neatly clipped shrubs outside my window are suddenly looking very different. Messy? Untidy? Or maybe just full of new growth.

In 2017, the then new President of the Methodist Conference urged churches to plan for growth, or plan to finish. This harsh binary choice troubled many a church council, faced with falling numbers and ageing congregations and complex buildings to manage.

St Paul, whose words I’ve quoted at the top of this article, was challenging a divided group of believers, arguing about who was the best leader and teacher. Paul wrote to them saying, yes, he and others had, metaphorically speaking, prepared the ground, sowed seeds and watered etc, **but** “It is God who matters, because he makes the plant grow”.

Farmers and gardeners don’t have any choice about whether their crops grow, because it’s the plants themselves that actually do the growing. People can only cooperate with the growing process: protecting from pests, providing water, soil, nutrients, shelter or heating if necessary, for the seeds, cuttings or young plants to flourish.

So, it must be for church: committing ourselves to work together to prepare, plant, tend and feed; to allow growth in directions we might not agree about; to nurture the growth God gives, however messy it might appear. What might this mean for us? The neatly run services or events suddenly looking very different, perhaps messy or untidy? Or maybe just full of new growth. Are we ready for that? If we want to plan to grow, then I think we have to be.



Graham

Sunday Services

Time	Date	Preacher
10.00am	2 June	Rev Nicholas Young
10.00am	9 June	Rev Graham Claydon-Knights United Holy Communion Service with Arlesey & Baldock
10.00am	16 June	Hazel Beadle
10.30am	23 June	Rev Graham Claydon-Knights (United Communion Service at Arlesey)
10.00am	30 June	Barbara Cook

What's On

Time and Date	Event
10.00 to 11.30am Saturday 1.6.19	Coffee Morning & Bring & Buy
5.00pm Sunday 23.6.19	Churches Together "Songs of Praise" at the Memorial Hall
2.00pm Mondays	Monday Club
2.00pm Thursdays (third in month)	Carers Group
9.30am Friday (term time only)	Toddlers Group

Minister Church Secretary & Hall Hire Senior Steward	Rev Graham Claydon-Knights 07340 857386 Julie Longhurst 01462-731167 Maggie Turner 01462-731030
---	---

Christian Aid

Sunday 16 June – 5.00pm Film Night at the Salvation Army Hall donations to Christian Aid



If anyone can help by joining either the coffee or flower rota, please let Hannah and Francis know before the next rota is completed for September.

www.stotfoldmethodists.org.uk