



The **Methodist Church**
Falmouth & Gwennap Circuit (12/3)
January 2021 Pastoral Letter

Gifts, Promises and a Happy New Year!

Dear Friends,

December 28th, 2020

I pray this letter finds you well and that you have been able to enjoy Christmas, albeit separated from those you love. Overleaf you will find a poem acknowledging the pain of the year behind us and seeking strength and hope for the future, I hope it makes you smile!

As I write I am accompanied by the wind gusting in the chimneys as Cornwall is, once again, battered by the tail end of an Atlantic storm. In some ways it feels like the whole of 2020 has been a storm, it is such a long time since we have been able to meet friends and family and life as we knew it has changed. Yet, just as calm follows a storm, the new year brings the hope of a new start, that we may be able to meet together again once the vaccination programme unfolds.

In many ways the Christmas season is about gifts - from God's ultimate gift to us of the Christ child to the 'Wise Men' bringing gifts fit for a King at Epiphany. New Year, on the other hand is a time of promises. The 'secular' world sets resolutions, new year being an opportunity to change something about our lives, and the 'sacred' world has practices such as the renewal of Baptismal vows and Covenant promises. Whilst we make promises with the best intentions, we often fall short of our own expectations, our annual Covenant service recognises that God has the grace to accept our limitations and welcome us into his embrace whenever we turn to him.

This year the Methodist Church is asking us to consider what it is to live the 'Methodist Way of Life', something that will be shared more widely as part of our covenant services. We are each asked to live a pattern of daily prayer, seeking God in Scripture and the world, care for ourselves, those around us and God's creation and to live in such a way that draws others to Jesus. Whilst this may seem challenging, doing this can also help us recognise the value in the good we already do. So much of 'church life' is built on a foundation of little gifts and tasks. Together these 'small gifts' create congregations that help people explore life and faith, similar to the way individual rocks build a cairn that can guide those who are unsure of the way they should go. Some of us have obvious gifts of words, art, music, administration etc. which enhance the life of our communities, yet it is the, often unnoticed, gifts of care and prayerfulness that really make the Church what it is – and without which we would fail.

I encourage you to grasp this opportunity to put behind you the hurt and loss of 2020, to recognise and value the good you do, and shine as the person God created you to be. I end with words from 'The Methodist Way of Life':

May we be a blessing within and beyond God's Church, for the transformation of the world. AMEN!

God bless and stay safe,

Jane (Deacon Jane Mills)

Information and resources

- **Falmouth and Gwennap Circuit Wednesday Worship and Worship at Home**
We intend to carry on with these for the foreseeable future, past services are available on DVD or CD for those without internet; please contact Chris Trewern for information. All of the services remain available to watch on the **Circuit YouTube Channel** - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSZkv-Db2MFXsQEzhra0azw>
- **News about life and worship throughout our Circuit.**
In addition to the monthly pastoral letters, you can both find and share news and information via the **Circuit Facebook page** <https://www.facebook.com/Falmouth-and-Gwennap-Methodist-Circuit-126416989738/> and the **Circuit website** - <https://www.fandgmc.org.uk>
- **The Methodist Way of Life** - <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/life-and-faith/a-methodist-way-of-life/>

Looking forward, 2021!

New Year is a good time to make a new start,
Resolutions and promises, each made from the heart.
Intentions are good, but often we fail
when we launch in head-first, unprepared for the gale.

The year now behind us may be one to forget
There's been pain, there's been loss, many things to regret
But even in darkness there has always been light,
So let's hold on to that, as we bid 20-20 'good night'!

We've lost people close to us, been parted from friends,
Been 'shielded' and in 'lock downs' that never seemed to end.
But we reached out and rallied, shopping done by strangers,
Our communities triumphed, putting people before dangers.

As keyworkers, selflessly, took on the stress,
we gathered on doorsteps to clap the NHS,
Yes, there was panic buying, and shelves that were empty,
Yet there were also those who shared quietly and gently.

Care, once taken for granted, came into its own,
As we made the effort to visit, or speak on the phone,
We've prayed and we've shared, holding folk together,
As we all kept in touch, whatever the weather!

Our 'worship at home' has helped us reach out,
Included more people, of that there is no doubt.
We've watched it on You tube, read along on the sheets
Shared it on face-book, and fed back in 'Tweets'.

We've all learned new skills we never thought we could
Discovered new ways to do things we, otherwise, never would.
We've 'skyped' with our families, held meetings over zoom
Faces, broadband allowing, beamed right to our room!

So, a new year is coming, to make it better than the last,
As a 'new normal' unfolds, we must learn from the past.
Lifted by hope, may God help us be courageous,
To reach out and share love, no opportunities wasted.

Let's not dwell on the pain of the year just gone by
but look to the future, it's in us to try.
With God, and each other, great things we'll achieve,
with the lessons of 20-20 tucked up our sleeves.

If we take this next year just one day at a time,
Each small step we take can help everyone feel 'fine'.
If we treasure each moment, every day's a new start,
We can grasp what's before us, and live life from the heart!