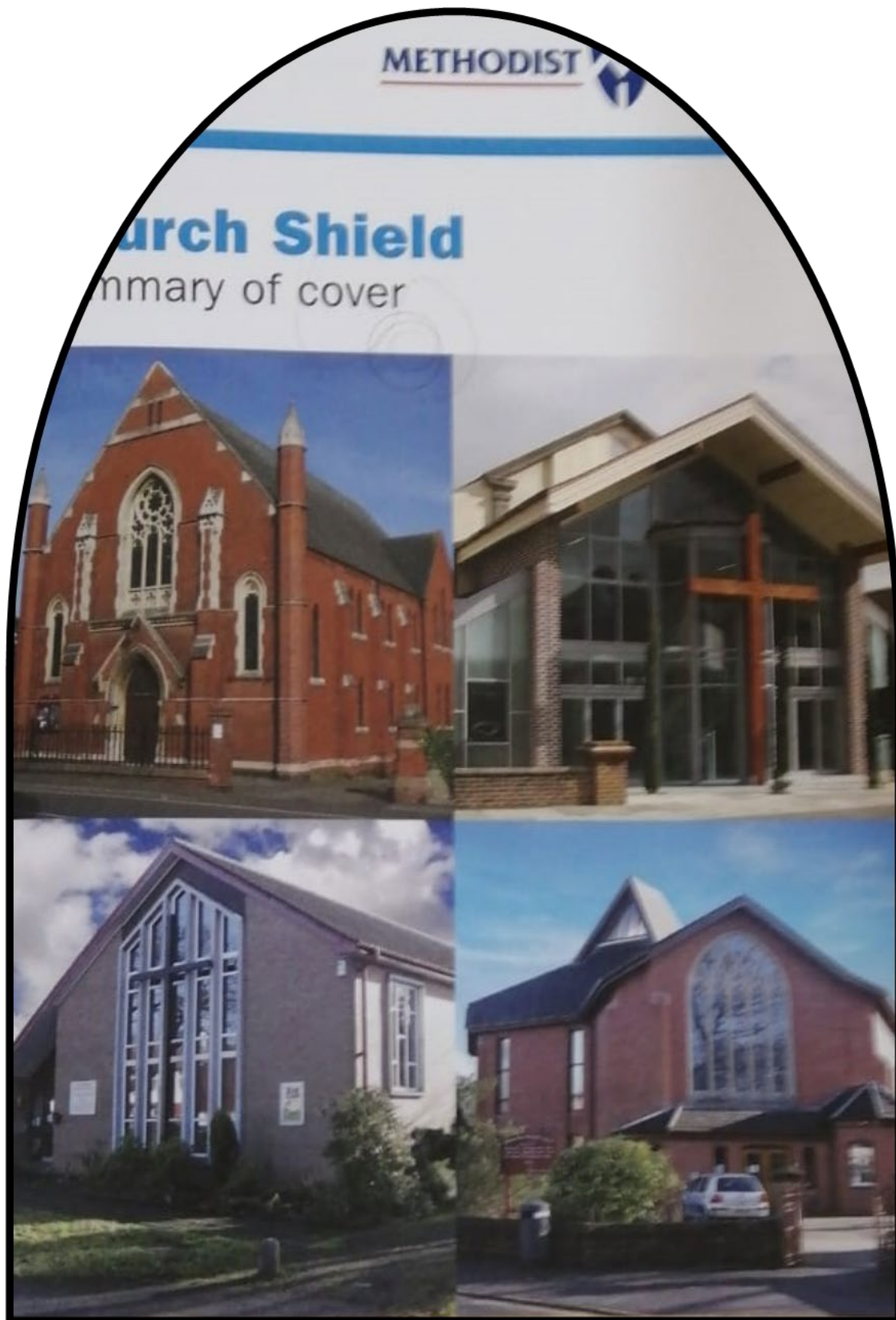


Window on the Moor



November 2020

Welcome

Hello,

Here I am still sat in the Conservatory, it is really nice watching the garden change through seasons. Here we are now in winter and the Christmas season is approaching quickly. Because we can't do Christmas as we would normally do, we have decided to split the magazine in to two parts, a November addition and a December addition. It seems we aren't the only people that enjoy our window, we made the front cover of the Methodist Insurance summary of insurance booklet ! This is shown on this months front cover.

Enjoy! The Editorial team, Garry and Sharon

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Contacts

Office: Sharon Heginbotham

07471 065729

Please leave a message if no answer.

Email: office@heatonmoorunitedchurch.org.uk

Minister: Rev Dr Raj Patta

Email: Raj.Patta@methodist.org.uk

Pastoral Worker: Linda Fleming

07564 839 380

Email: lindawfleming625@gmail.com

Community Worker: JoAnne Roy

07340 269354

Email: community@heatonmoorunitedchurch.org.uk

Editor: Garry Evans

0161 442 8460 07901 674 297

Email: evansgarry1956@gmail.com

In these times of Family Isolation by Jim Lowe



Difficult times, when one's family are not close by and in isolation and unable to visit.

We hear about some family members and friends moving in together, however, for those in need of care and support and unable to cope these are very difficult times.

Our Church family have looked after one another even when you are limited to just giving friends a phone call to check all is ok and exchange a *cheery* word.

Here at Tatton Court where several Church members live, the 80 flats are a community. Some have shopped, cooked meals for those in need and kept an eye out for those not seen, especially when the lounge was closed and no manager on hand for a spell. With the early lockdown good weather we were able to sit, walk and chat at distance around the bowling green.

Due to the early shortage of supermarket food we took to the internet and ordered from *Lancashire farms* wholesale market who turned up at 6.45am! One of the residents' families' is a baker, so they brought bread and dairy products supplying us well and enabling Barbara to return to cooking and baking. We ended up eating too well!!

Medication, a daily newspaper, post, articles ordered online like sweets, chocolate etc, all to our door thanks to all our delivery people.

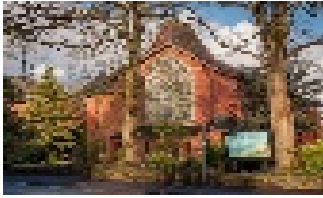
A daily routine of walking 10 laps of the bowling green and if nice, sit out with tea and cake and if raining, a game indoors. Daily ritual of cryptic crossword, codeword and a jigsaw as well as Classic FM, television and daily communication in all its ways with family and friends.

Of course we are missing Church, being used to attending every Sunday. Not going has seemed very strange, however, we have been led to different directions with much material. As well as our daily reading bible notes and prayer manuals we have daily facebook word from Rev Steve Wild and 'A thought for the day' from Rev Paul Brewerton. We have our weekly Church news notices with a service and message from Revs Raj, Cathy and Graham. On Radio 4, the 8.10am service has been so different in its approach and challenging. We have also made use of 'You Tube' with a weekly service from Wilmslow Methodist Church and also Westminster central hall. These services have been viewed by thousands.

Is this the way forward? Especially for those who find Church difficult to attend?

Of course, we are missing face to face contact and fellowship very much but with video links such as 'Zoom', anything is now possible. I still look forward to returning to Sunday worship as normal '*when everything is safe!!*'

However, I have found with God's help, 'I manage'.



30 Years Celebration

This year marks 30 years since the opening of our present Heaton Moor United Church building.

I thought we should celebrate somehow at this difficult time. It led me to remembering the tremendous efforts that were made to achieve this wonderful building, so admired not only by us who meet regularly for worship and Church life but also by our *local community*.

In the late 1980's the original Church was found to be full of dry rot. We fought it for many months but eventually it was decided to demolish and build a new Church. To enable this, plans were submitted for a Church the same height and with proof of funds.

The original Church had 2 buildings with a Sunday school. That land was sold (which is now 'Church Manor'). At the time land was not easy to sell and the only offer we had was from a builder willing to build the Church on their condition they built the flats.

This ended up a bad choice unfortunately as the builders were not up to the task of building the design needed to meet the conditions of height etc needed by the architects we had appointed.

This led to a year's overrun and a legal battle with the then bankrupt builder costing us £300k on top of £700k required for the new Church.

Our resolve was strong as we set out to raise funds and apart from litigation

costs the Church was built without debt.

This happened due to the generosity and sacrifice of the congregation, some grants and nonstop funding organised and led by the project team under our Minister Rev Neil Dixon and project treasurer Raymond Fitton and a team of experts. One of the ideas for funding came by a *shop* within the grounds run by the Amans family and volunteers. The shop was in the beginners extension of the Sunday school which became legendary 'on the Moor' and the model of charity shops today. It raised enormous amounts of money. Whilst the Church was being built we worshipped in Peel Moat School where our fellowship blossomed. I remember a local teacher saying, 'Being so near to the congregation he found so challenging, his knees shook'. Our new Church finally opened in December 1990. It was so full some people had to view from the extension on the landing.

So much has happened in the 30 years since. So many people have moved on either geographically or to meet up again in glory. We have a 7 day building very much a part of the community to enable our mission.

I am particularly proud that through all this we did not stop our charitable fund raising for those less fortunate at home and abroad which continues to be a large part of our mission today.

Jim Lowe



(In previous 'Window on the Moor' editions we have article'd the Churches within our 'Cluster'. Finally, we have St John's Church)

History of St John's Methodist Church

By Barry and Sue Shillito

At 6.00pm on 12th November 1871 a "new preaching house" was opened at the bottom of School Street, Cheadle Heath, known locally as "Walkers Room".

The room was crowded to excess and about 200 people were present and the preacher's text was "Worship God". The rent was 2/6 (12½p) per week.

On Sunday 4th July 1874 a Sunday School was started in this room with 23 scholars and 3 teachers in the morning and 51 scholars and 5 teachers in the afternoon.

The first Anniversary was held August 29th 1875 starting with a procession round the district. Walkers room soon proved too small and a larger building "Grove House" at the top of School Street (now Bonar Park) was purchased for £340.00 and opened in 1876.

The congregations were reported to be large and collections amounted to £77-10-07p.

This, with the list of subscriptions was increased to £100.00.

Before long, Grove Chapel had become too small for the congregation. So, in 1882 a site on Stockport Road was secured at a cost of £750.00. An Iron Church was built and was named St John's. (We do not know which St John)

The foundation stones were laid in November 1882 and the Church opened on Wednesday February 7th 1883. The Church was commonly known as the 'Tin Bucket'.

It could seat 200 adults and had schoolrooms for a further 150.

From 1884 the Church was also used as a Day school and became "The British Day School", but the building soon became inadequate. So, it was decided to build a new school.

Land adjoining the Church was taken, a new school was built. The foundation stones were

laid in October 1886 and opened in the Queen's Jubilee year 1887 costing £2000.00.

The Day school and Sunday school were a great success having 600 pupils in the Day School and 428 children in the Sunday school, each paying fees of 1p and 2p a week.

In 1900 St John's applied to have their own resident Minister and in 1901 the Conference sent the Rev C A Davies and following his appointment the Church prospered.

During his ministry there were reported to be many converts.

Thoughts were now being turned towards a more permanent building, and money was put aside for this purpose. It was noted that £350.00 had been raised towards the new Church and that 150 people had been brought into the kingdom.



A stone laying ceremony of the new St John's took place on Saturday March 19th 1904.

This raised £294.00 when people paid a guinea for laying a brick and received a trowel which is still

held by the Church (see left).

People subscribed to the children's Stone and the child received a Souvenir Card.

The new St John's was opened on Thursday 12th January 1905, and cost £3838.00.

The building was capable of seating about 450 people and was described as 'a complete and handsome one', well situated and admirably equipped, a fitting Crown to the years of hard work and devotion.

During the next few years, the Church continued to prosper with 197 members and 360 scholars and the numbers were increasing rapidly.

In 1907 the Methodists had joined together and so the Rev H Pritchard became the first minister of St John's United Methodist Church. Also, as he was their first married minister

a manse had to be obtained and furnished. (I wonder where the other ministers lived)

Records show that a new Organ was purchased that year. This replaced the instrument bought in 1884 for the sum of £24.10.00p.

Wednesday evening, April 8th 1914, a fire broke out in the School, destroying a large portion of the

upper rear of the building. This apparent calamity proved to be a blessing in disguise.

It was decided when rebuilding to enlarge the premises, thus providing the continuous use of the Day School for many more years.

The "Tin Bucket" which had been used as an extension to the day school was sold to the education authorities for £65.00 and erected somewhere in Stockport.

The First World War was difficult for St John's owing to the call-up for many of the Church's young men. Attendance had become occasional rather than a regular practice.

1920 saw the installation of electricity in the Church and the Day School, both having previously been lit by gas. (The fittings in Church are still there)

'The Optimist', the Church magazine was first published in 1924 and carried on

for about 50 years. A new manse was purchased in 1926 in Bloom Street for £750.00

Following the Uniting conference of 1932 the Methodist Church was officially constituted we became St John's Methodist Church.

Bazaars and sales of work were a regular occurrence and a good way of raising funds.

They usually lasted three or four days and often made more than £500.00.

The last recorded one was in October 1937 and was on a Thursday Friday and Saturday.

You could buy a season ticket for 1/- or 6 pence each day. Under 14s were half price.

The Second World War proved to be a fruitful time of ministry. Owing to wartime conditions exceptional difficulties had to be overcome.

Afternoon services took the place of evening worship and in due course had to be "blacked out".

The dangers of "alerts," deterred many members from regular attendance. In addition the Church was used as a "Rest Centre" and was kept open daily from 8.00am for prayer.

St John's became part of the new Stockport South Circuit in 1951, after being in the Mount Tabor circuit for 80 years.

In the 1960s a new school (Lark Hill) was built and so the Day School was closed but still used for Sunday school, Guides, Brownies, Youth Club, and even staged plays.

By 1980 the building had become somewhat worse for wear and was getting dangerous. Another problem was that it was the only building with a toilet (none in the church!).



The decision was then taken to sell the building and some of the adjoining land and use the money to redevelop the church. For some months we

worshipped with St. Augustines.

By October 1982 the Church was ready. The Worship area was halved and separated by glass panels and the other half was made into a Coffee Lounge, Kitchen, and Toilets.

The gallery upstairs was made into a large area for Sunday School and other activities.

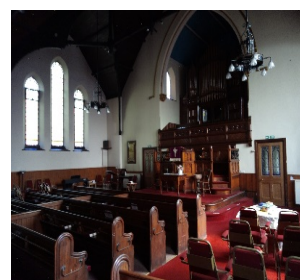
There was also extensive decorating and Banners were made to hang in the worship area.

In 1998 a discussion was held to decide if we should remove some of the pews to make the Church more adaptable. The decision was taken out of our hands when after an inspection dry rot and wet rot was found. So, all the side pews and some others were removed and a new heating system installed plus a new carpet.

During all these changes, worship, and all the groups were able to continue.

About six years ago someone broke into Church but could not get out so they forced open one of the front doors. The door was too expensive to replace. It was cheaper to have two new double-glazed doors.

A year later we had new side doors after an attempted break-in.



Such is the story of the past, what is the future to be?

It is not possible to see the future.

There are grave problems to solve, new situations to face.

We cannot live on our traditions and past but must build and plan for the future.

Ruth Morgan
10 March 1937 – 13 September 2020

Ruth was born at 47 Marcliff Grove, Heaton Moor, where she lived for many years with her parents Constance & Edward Morgan both from Brecon. She was baptised at Heaton Moor Methodist Church and continued to be a devoted and active member of the church. She was also proud of her Welsh heritage.

From Marcliff Grove the family then moved to Stanley Road and after the death of their parents Ruth and my mother Dorothy moved to St Andrews Road. After my mother's death Ruth eventually moved to Tatton Court managing the flat on her own for as long as she could.

Ruth first of all attended Heaton Moor Junior school and on passing the 11+ moved on to Fylde Lodge. She passed her A Levels in 1955 and went to Edgehill Teacher Training College from which she graduated in 1958.

Her first teaching post was at Didsbury Primary School but she eventually moved to Peel Moat Secondary School where she taught English. After some time she was appointed to the post of Head of Humanities which she held for many years.

As a member of Heaton Moor Methodist Church Ruth was very active. She was a Sunday School teacher, a member of the Venturers, which involved many hiking and biking trips and holidays. She was a member of the dramatic society. As a gifted actor she took many roles, very often playing the lead, as she also did in school productions. She was also a very well-respected director of many plays. She had a lovely alto voice and sang in the church choir for many years.

Ruth's involvement with the church was lifelong. She was a steward and as such played a very prominent role in the building of the new church and then the discussions on the merger with the Reform Church. She was a member of the Ladies Fellowship, arranging meetings and organising the popular words & music events especially at Christmas. She had folders full of poems! She organised the Prayer Chain and helped to edit the Church Newsletter.

In her thirties Ruth was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. For many years she was in remission and was able to function normally. In her fifties the disease gradually took hold forcing her to take early retirement from the job she loved. Ruth never allowed her MS to get in the way of her life and would force herself to continue as normally as possible even when she was confined to a wheelchair. She was never idle, playing scrabble at Tatton Court, enjoying going out to lunch, keeping in contact with the church and her friends. Many people will remember the beautiful cross-stitch with which she filled the time between meetings and phone calls. Before she became very disabled she was also a keen gardener.

She did as much as she could of her activities until the very hot summer of 2015 caused her MS to worsen to a point where she was hospitalised. After a spell in the rehabilitation unit it was clear that she could no longer live alone and needed substantial care and so she moved to Southerndown Care Home in Chipping Norton where I was able to visit her on a daily basis. Although bed-bound for the last 3 years

she still loved to hear from her many friends, listen to the radio and watch Wales playing rugby on TV.

Ruth was only nine years older than me and therefore more like my big sister than my aunt. I could not have asked for a better, more loyal, more devoted sister. Her death at the age of 83 from MS has left a big hole in my life and, I am sure, in the hearts of her many friends of whom she was so fond.

Ruth was commended into the hands of her maker at a simple service at Banbury Crematorium on 29 September. This was the order of service for Ruth's cremation

Order of Service

Guide Me Oh Thou Great Redeemer
Organist David Upton

Introductory Sentences
The Rev Hilary Campbell

Hills of the North Rejoice
Organ

Psalm 26
Read by Gillian Parratt

Words of Reflection on the Psalm

Prayers

Hallelujah Chorus
The Huddersfield Choral Society

The Commendation and Committal

The Nunc Dimittis

The Hallelujah Chorus
Organ

I am hoping to be able to organise a celebration of her life in the church which she loved in the Spring.

Liz Atkins