

Window on the Moor



Heaton Moor United Church

January/February 2020



HEATON MOOR UNITED CHURCH

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

January 27th at 8.00pm
Then every other Monday evening

INVITED SPEAKERS TALK ABOUT A
WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS



Welcome

Happy New Year to you all. A new decade is upon us, 2020 has a nice ring to it let's hope that it continues in that vein. The last year ended with a flurry of fundraising, read about how much you raised for several different charities in the Charity News.

There are more events planned in the New Year for you all to attend and enjoy the benefit of good company and food whilst helping others.

If you have any short stories to share please let the editorial team know , thank you.

Enjoy! The Editorial team, Garry and Sharon

Contents

Thoughts from the minister	2
Charity News	8
Features	
Our Journey Jean and George James	6

Contacts

Office: Sharon Heginbotham

0161 431 0262

Email: office@heatonmoorunitedchurch.org.uk

Minister: Rev Dr Raj Patta

Email: Raj.Patta@methodist.org.uk

Pastoral Worker: Linda Fleming

07564 839 380

Email: Linflem1960@hotmail.com

Editor: Garry Evans

0161 442 8460 07901 674 297

Email: evansgarry1956@gmail.com



The Priority of Prayer: Prayer in Action

I Timothy 2:1-7

As we step into 2020, let me wish you all a very happy new year and pray that God will use us collectively as a Church to engage in the mission of God in transforming our communities as just and inclusive places and spaces for all. I would want us to spend time on prayer this year and wait on God to listen to God's direction the life of our Church. Allow me to share four different occasions I have had during the past year to sense the priority of prayer and to reflect on prayer.

Firstly, I was at an interfaith meeting last year and the theme of that gathering was 'the power of prayer' – where each faith representative explained the understanding of prayer from their own religious faith experience. I gathered at that meeting that God doesn't need our prayers, but we humans need prayers to encounter God. There I also recognised, **the kind of God we believe determines the kind of prayer we say, and the kind of prayer we say defines the kind of God we believe.**

Secondly, I was at the climate strike last year at St. Peter's square in Manchester joining the global wave of strikes demanding justice for climate emergencies organised by the Youth strike 4 climate, where tens and thousands of people gathered in solidarity for climate justice. We as faith communities, as Methodists were part of this strike. I have heard the speeches of anger by young people. At the stroke of 1pm – all alarms went off – to symbolise that time's up – act now for climate – a wakeup call for climate emergency. As I reflect on it, I realised that protest as a prayer, which stemmed out of anger against the unjust systems and policies – to save the planet. I also realised that prayer is a wake-up call to attend the climate emergency. And prayer is action – for the youth demand "action now." Yet another interesting experience.

Thirdly, I attended the Heatons Prayer breakfast – a time of prayer early in the morning at 8am. The leader, who led it divided the time into four slots – asking people to pray in praise of God for the good things, - pray for other churches and the community in Heatons – pray for the government, council and for those in power and authority – and pray for the Christian initiatives in and around Stockport. It was a corporate prayer – a time joining with other Christian believers in prayer – praying for common concerns – praying as a time of fellowship – prayer expressing our Christian commitment. A good experience to join in prayer early in the morning with tea and breakfast.

Finally, I heard a friend of mine preach at our Indian Christian fellowship – his testimonial – his story – his faith in God – how God listens to his prayers and answered him at every step of his life. For him, if prayer is speaking to God, reading the Word is God speaking to him – and he emphasised that both those are very key for our discipleship. For him in any situation and in every situation – prayer is the priority – and his faith is God answers. What I learnt from his sharing was if you pray you need to act – demonstrate love in action. It allowed me to reflect on the strength of prayer.

All of these incidents find a resonance with the text from 1 Timothy 2: 1-7, which again was a passage read at the Prayer breakfast is a call for us reminding the priority of prayer for us as a church at a time like this.

1 Timothy 2 is a very contentious chapter in the Bible, which was received by people across the theological spectrum – specially with the leadership of women – but the Church moved on believing in the Spirit of God for God created and called both men and women equally, for which we rejoice and celebrate about.

Paul was writing to young Timothy a pastoral letter with certain guidelines for the life of the church and for his personal spiritual growth. He mentions the priority of prayer: for he begins this second chapter – “first of all” – it is not committee meetings, it is not community work, it is not even preparing a sermon – but urging about the priority of prayer. Many a times we are too busy with the work of church and work at church or busy with our own life issues – work – family – holiday etc. I think this morning it is important to set right the priority which is prayer.

But what is prayer? – According to Rowan Williams – Prayer is connecting to God, a time of pause like in holiday, and body responds differently

From 1 Timothy 2: 1-7 I want to share four things about prayer.

1. **The methods of prayer:** there are a variety of prayers – Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions and thanksgiving (SPIT) – there is no one size fit for all kinds of prayer – These are the terms which were part of the local community who were living under an empire. – a blend of legal and temple terms.
2. **The members of prayer :** for everyone – for all – no distinction in prayer – but a special mention of kings and those in power – for in that context they were ungodly and oppressive – whose oppression was unbearable – no peace in that context – persecutions – so by calling on their memory – Paul was trying to express his Christian love by praying for them. He explains the purpose of praying where people can live in peace and harmony.
3. **The mediator in prayer:** Jesus Christ – who died as a ransom for all – so that the knowledge and truth may we learn – As an intercessor – Jesus again demonstrates love in action – prayer demands an action – Jesus was an answer to the groans and cries of all those who were in oppression and in chains as a messiah – who gave himself as a ransom for all. Prayer demands sacrifice – Prayer demands action.
4. **The ministry of prayer:** Paul calls himself who is a testimony to the truth of Christ – as a herald, as an apostle and as a truth bearer – those who are in the ministry of prayer – Prayer is a herald – a public proclamation – Prayer as apostolic – as one who was sent – including our story – Prayer as truth bearing – speaking truth to powers

So, what is the relevance of prayer for us as a Church.

Firstly, Prayer is a call to action – Put that priority on – demonstrating love – for our prayers have become too wordy with quite a rhetoric. Prayer demands us to act and participate with God in transforming our community. I earnestly urge our church to wait on God in prayer and

act of God as a response to prayer. In the context of climate change, we are called to put our prayers to practice striving for a just world by becoming responsible steward of God's creation.

Secondly, we are called to seek the spark of divine in each of us, for each of us may be an answer to someone's prayer. It is time to listen to the voice of God which comes to us in various ways and may we in this new year open our hearts, eyes and ears to the voice of God and start responding to it.

Thirdly, as church we are called to be a herald of prayer, an apostle of prayer and a truth bearer of prayer – Time to act now.

Let me want conclude with a prayer written by Paul Coelho – the author of the book “The Alchemist” and may we join with him in this prayer. Wishing you all a prayerful new year.

Lord, protect our doubts, because Doubt is a way of praying. It is Doubt that makes us grow because it forces us to look fearlessly at the many answers that exist to one question. And in order for this to be possible...

Lord, protect our decisions, because making Decisions is a way of praying. Give us the courage, after our doubts, to be able to choose between one road and another. May our YES always be a YES and our NO always be a NO. Once we have chosen our road, may we never look back nor allow our soul to be eaten away by remorse. And in order for this to be possible...

Lord, protect our actions, because Action is a way of praying. May our daily bread be the result of the very best that we carry within us. May we, through work and Action, share a little of the love we receive. And in order for this to be possible...

Lord, protect our dreams, because to Dream is a way of praying. Make sure that, regardless of our age or our circumstances, we are capable of keeping alight in our heart the sacred flame of hope and perseverance. And in order for this to be possible...

Lord, give us enthusiasm, because Enthusiasm is a way of praying. It is what binds us to the Heavens and to Earth, to grown-ups and to children, it is what tells us that our desires are important and deserve our best efforts. It is Enthusiasm that reaffirms to us that everything is possible, as long as we are totally committed to what we are doing. And in order for this to be possible...

Lord, protect us, because Life is the only way we have of making manifest Your miracle. May the earth continue to transform seeds into wheat, may we continue to transmute wheat into bread. And this is only possible if we have Love; therefore, do not leave us in solitude. Always give us Your company, and the company of men and women who have doubts, who act and dream and feel enthusiasm, and who live each day as if it were totally dedicated to Your glory. Amen (<https://paulocoelhoblog.com/2015/01/01/the-prayer-that-i-forgot-2/>)



Saturday Coffee
Morning 25th January
.....Fundraising for

Maggie's programme of support has been shown to strengthen the physical and emotional wellbeing of people with cancer and their families and friends.

Come along to buy cakes and have a brew !!!

MAGGIE'S

Everyone's home of cancer care

Heaton

Moor

United

Church

SK4 4HL



Our Journey

(From Pits, Pots and Mission Bands)

Jean and George James

Jean was born in 1943 in Talke Pits, a small village at the northern end of the Potteries, and George in 1938, in Hanley, one of Arnold Bennett's Five Towns. Perhaps the most apt of Bennett's novels was "The Grim Smile of the Five Towns", for it certainly was grim in our childhood, with the smoke from the numerous bottle ovens and the open cast and deep pit mines with their slag tips and winding gear.

We both lived in "two up and down terraces" with one cold tap and a toilet "up the yard". All our friends lived within a hundred yards in similar houses. Jean's Dad was a coal miner and her Mum worked in the pottery factories. As a result they both suffered serious chest diseases, asbestosis, silicosis and the miners' pneumoconiosis. Her Dad also lost various parts of fingers and his hearing. George's Dad was a slaughterman at Hanley Abattoir, having previously worked with his father and brother at their own slaughterhouse and shop, which his Dad and Brother "drank away"! His mother was a seamstress until getting married. Both George's parents had mental health issues- his Mum had agoraphobia for a number of years and his Dad had depression which could lead to unpredictable violent outbursts.

George passed his 11+ and went to Hanley High School (Boys' Grammar) and consequently "lost" all his neighbourhood friends, being the only one who passed. He was somewhat relieved to leave at 16, after being compelled to stay in the Lower Sixth; having taken his O levels at 15. Most of the time it was not particularly enjoyable, as everyone regardless of achievements, was frequently subjected to verbal and physical abuse by the staff. Having obtained 8 O Levels and played football and cricket for his house and school, he still wonders what it was like for those who struggled!

Jean went to a Secondary Modern School where she became Head Girl. She was denied the opportunity to attend a Grammar School because her parents made it clear that she had to start work as soon as possible. She therefore made sure she failed her 11+ exams! She and her sister had been sent to Sunday School at the "Primitive" Methodist Chapel and came to know a number of people who were to shape the rest of their lives. By the age of 15 she was a member of a Mission Band – a group of young people leading worship around the Circuit, and on a collision course with her parents, especially her Dad. At home, weekends were especially unpleasant for Jean, younger sister and brother, due to excessive drinking and violent rows. We first met when we worked in the laboratory of a tile factory. Jean was by then the sole survivor of the Mission Band, the others had left for university. Whilst George, although confirmed in the Anglican Church at 14, had not attended since. Apart from studying the Ceramic Diploma Course at night school his only interests were playing football in the local Saturday leagues, and drinking. So something had to give!

Over time, much to his amazement, George was assisting Jean to lead worship (She was now a Local Preacher on Trial) and although still playing football, was no longer drinking!

By the time Jean was 18 the home situation was so bad that she went to live with her Minister's family until we were married in March 1963. In 1962 I happened to bump into an ex drinking partner who was a contract bricklayer. He was "well oiled" at the time and said, "if I laboured for him, he would build a house if I bought a plot of land". So, in September 1963 we moved into our "Self Build" in a tiny hamlet, deep in the countryside, three miles from Eccleshall – we only had a Lambretta at the time!



We became members of Eccleshall Methodist Church and Jean became a Local Preacher. The Stafford Circuit was wide spread and we often travelled thirty mile round trips. By now Stephanie was born in July '64 and Helen March '67. Jean pointed out to the Superintendent, when requesting less morning services, that she was aware that John Wesley rose at 5am, but did he have two young children to get ready !!

You can read the final part of Jean and George's article in the next edition of 'Window on the Moor'

**Heaton Moor United Church
Lent Study Group**

Join us to discuss:

Say Yes To Life by Ruth Valeria

**After the service on Sundays in Lent. Soup
and a roll will be provided for lunch .**

1st March

8th March

15th March

29th march

5th April



**Sign up on the sheet
in the hall or call**

0161 431 0262 or

Email Sharon at :

office@heatonmoorunitedchurch.org

Charity News

Please read the lovely letter we received from Lebone for the money that was sent over to them.

Other news on the fundraising that has taken place during October, November and December.



Deborah, Stephanie and helpers achieved a grand total of £850.93 for Action for Children during the weekend of 12th and 13th October having arranged a Saturday Coffee Morning at Heaton Moor United Church (£317.85) and a Retiring Collection at the Sunday Service (£256.50). In addition, a Tesco store collection achieved £276.58



The annual Stockport Schools Brass Band concert at Heaton Moor United Church took place on Saturday 12th October. The amount taken was £468.00.



A Leprosy Coffee morning took place at Heaton Moor United Church on Saturday 26th October. £351.00 was raised, bringing the total for the year to £641.50. A big thank you from Betty to all who helped and those generously gave to the cause.



Christmas was a great period for raising funds for charities sponsored by the church . Boasting the Church charities for a total of £1978.80

The Christmas Fair :	£1300.00
The Christmas card :	£195.80
Curry and Carols:	£232.00
Christmas day service:	£232.00

The Christingle service also raised £149.28 for The Children's Society



P O Box 28360 DANHOF 9310
177 Springbok Street, Bloemspruit 9364
tel: 27 51 5261442
e-mail: info@lebonevillage.com
www.lebonevillage.com
AIDSMO Trust | IT2340/99 | NPO 008-761 trading as Lebone



10 September 2019

Dear Janice, Stephanie and Friends at Heaton Moor

Re: Donation to Lebone Village

My hand is writing this message because the bottom of my heart cannot hold a pen. We are very grateful, from the bottom of our hearts for your incredible donation received. We're so humbled and grateful our hearts are still smiling 😊. What an amazing faithful and awesome God we have, He knows all our needs and always goes ahead of us and provides as only He can through His faithful servants.

Words cannot really convey how much your support for this work we have been called to do with these little ones entrusted to us, means to us but I pray you understand when we say this comes from our hearts and we are in awe of how our prayers have been answered in these tough financial times to make ends meet

It is truly encouraging for us to continue, especially in the difficult economic climate, when we can rely on involvement from others, please convey our gratitude to all involved for their generosity to our children, on their behalf I echo over & over "ke a lebua"; (thank you in Sesotho). What a blessing to us when people respond to our needs as you have done.

Thank you, thank you, thank you ALL

With our love

In His Service

Avril Snyman
Trust Administrator

Striving to put God's love into action by giving vulnerable children, youth, our community HOPE



Light Lunches

Many thanks to everyone who helped set tables, serve, wash and clear away...
Thanks too for the friendship shared and the donations received.

Lunches over the last 3 months raised: September £220.50

October £297.00

November £251.00



A grand total of £768.50

Which is more than we raised for the House to House collection in May. Who knew that sharing fellowship could be so enjoyable.

On Sunday 23rd February 2020, the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, we are arranging a "Lentern Lunch". Peter (Williams) thinks we should serve '*empty plates*'!! (comments directly to him please!!)

An additional £60 was raised at the coffee morning at our home in July and also £30 when I cooked a meal for friends.

Thanks for your wonderful help and friendship.....Jean James

Charity isn't just about fundraising events

The Good Samaritan

The story of The Good Samaritan is well known to most of us. However, this is a very recent account.

A couple and their daughter were shopping in Stockport, rushing to get things finished and get off home. There were folk selling the 'Big Issue' and some with placards asking for money. However, the aim was to get off home. The daughter, Charlotte, noticed a man without shoes and in particular became very concerned about the state of his feet. She spoke to him and said he should go to A&E.... He dismissed this and said he couldn't get there. Charlotte went to a nearby shop, bought antiseptic cream, bandages etc and some socks. She wrapped his feet and spoke to him kindly and gently. This may have been the only person to talk to him that day. Then Charlotte went on her way.... A Good Samaritan, most definitely. You may recognise her, our beloved Charlotte (a final year medical student), Eddie Hickman's (and Betty's) granddaughter.

Eddie's son, Paul, and wife Rosie, must be very proud of her.

Love Jean James

**Christian Aid and Fairtrade
Coffee Morning @
Heaton Moor United Church**



**christian
aid**

Saturday 7th March 2020

10.30—12.00

United Stockport Circuit

Invites you to discuss : God in Love Unites Us—The Methodist Church's report on Marriage and Relationships

Three Dates

Three Locations

28/1/20 1.30-4.00 Hazel Grove

27/2/20 7.00-9.00 TBC

15/3/20 1.30-4.00 Heaton Mersey

What to do next : Please register with admin@stockportcircuit.org.uk or call 0300 0110 015 (Option 1) stating your date preference.

The  Methodist Church

Once registered a copy of the report will be posted out to you, for you to read prior to the meeting.

A video about the task group that wrote the report can be found at : www.methodist.org.uk

Click : About Us

Click : Marriage and Relationships 2019

Click : Film— The work of the Marriage and Relationship Task Group.



**GOD IN LOVE
UNITES US**

The aim of these sessions is for the Circuit to have meaningful, grace-filled conversations about the Marriage and Relationships Report, God in love unites us. This report was discussed at this years Conference and we have been invited to hold discussions to support and/ or inform a decision-making process that will take place at district synods. It is an opportunity for people to hear and understand one another, deepen their relationships and enable us all to move forward together as Church in communion.

This report has been produced by a task force to look at differing relationships around today.

This is how they described their task :

“ At the heart of Christianity is the power of God’s grace to transform us and our relationships, so that we might enjoy life in all its fullness. As Methodist Christians, we have engaged seriously in working out what this means for our relationship with God and with each other as disciples of Christ, and for our wider communities in terms of sharing the good news of salvation and social justice. We have said and done much less about application of the insights of faith to our intimate and sexual relationships. This report continues the work of developing, and more wholly applying, our understanding of God’s grace to all our relationships and our sexual relationships in particular. By so doing, we learn more of how God calls us to be human in the modern world. As part of our Pilgrimage of Faith, and even before that, the Methodist Church has reflected on these matters of human relating and produced several reports, including a Statement of our theology in 1992. As a Church, we have continued to work out what it means to treat one another as persons equally made in the image of God. We have focused chiefly on matters of divorce, gender equality and same-sex sexuality. We, the current Task Group, are building on all that work and expanding it.



Heaton Moor United Church

Ladies Fellowship

**SECOND AND FORTH TUESDAY @
2.00PM**

Come along for fellowship and discussion