

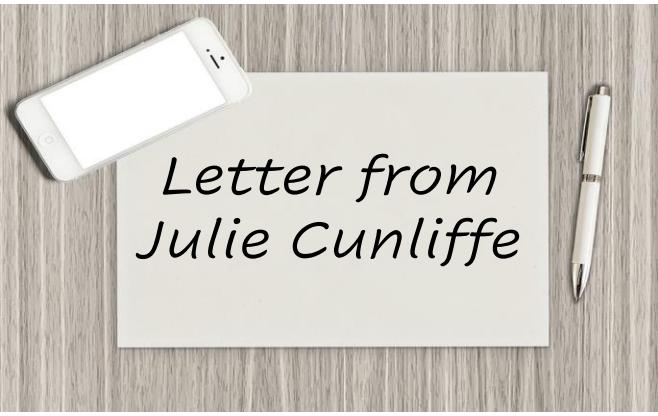


**Kempston East
Methodist
Church
Newsletter
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Aldersgate Sunday (May 22nd)



Letter from Julie Cunliffe

Saw the end of...

17th May 2021 saw the end of “lockdown” in England and I finally exchanged contracts for my new home. So, one year on, how has life changed for us all? The pandemic made us slow down and recognize what is important in our life. There was a great deal of sadness and hardship but I never cease to marvel how resilient and resourceful we all are. We became more aware of our neighbours and their needs. We made masks for the NHS and shopped for the disabled and needy. I pray that now life is “normal” again that the community spirit of loving and caring will carry on. We as a church should be seen to encourage and grow to enable us to truly serve the people of Kempston and the wider world.

For myself, the decision to leave my home after my husband died, was very hard but it was too big for me on my own and I was very unhappy. Where I live now, still here in Kempston, is a gated complex of 30 small bungalows set in beautiful gardens. All the residents are retired and we look after each other although our warden is always on hand for emergencies. There are three of us called Julie so we have nicknames. They call me Church Julie of which I am very proud, They all love me and respect me for my faith, Sunday School days still fresh in their memory!

In our afternoon tea chats they like updates on the activities at Kempston East. I feel God chose my new home I am happy and contented and glad for the opportunity to bear witness of the love of Jesus Christ. Most of the residents have mobility problems or their families visit on Sundays so it's good to talk about the Sunday service or share the videos as few have broadband. We all need our happy memories but we must look forward to using our experiences during the pandemic for the good of our community and I am sure that with God's help we will.

May God bless you all this coming week.

Julie Cunliffe



Since my last report, we started the new year with party nights for all four sections – normally we would hold our party night before Christmas, but this got postponed due to covid, but nevertheless a good time was eventually had by all.

At Company and Seniors, we continued to work on a DIY project renovating a set of bed side cabinets, we have held two sports evenings at Biddenham Upper School, completed football noughts and crosses, a calories and fitness challenge evening, an Escape Room activity and also learnt about the winter Olympics.

In March we were eventually able to go and see MK Lightening play ice hockey. It was an eventful game with MK lightning eventually taking the lead – but plenty of players ended up in the sin bin, in fact I think most ended up there at some point during the match, and sometimes it felt like more players were off than on!

Since the new year we have seen a return to Battalion events and competitions, in Kempston we have hosted the Battalion Frist Aid Competition which we came second in and the Battalion Company and Senior Table Tennis. We won the company table tennis and came second in the senior's competition. Our Anchors and Juniors also entered the Battalion Ten Pin Bowling Competition, our Anchors Boys came 2nd and the Juniors 3rd, and one of our Anchors won the best individual score (although I think the bumper lanes may have been a significant help!) We still have a number of battalion competitions to come, the Anchors and Juniors Art, and the Company and Seniors Ultimate Frisbee, as well as a trip to Life to the Max for all ages – a fun fair style event at BBHQ and the Anchors have a trip to Mead Open Farm.

This year's display marked my last as our Company Captain. I am very pleased to confirm, as you should all be aware, that Church Council has appointed Mr Alistair Marriot, to take over as the Company Captain, and I have appointed Mr Dominic Simms to take over as Officer-In-Charge of the Company Section. Having worked closely with them and all of our leaders over the past number of years – I know that our company is in very safe hands and has a bright future to look forward to as it continues to serve the young people of Kempston.

Philip Timms, Company Captain



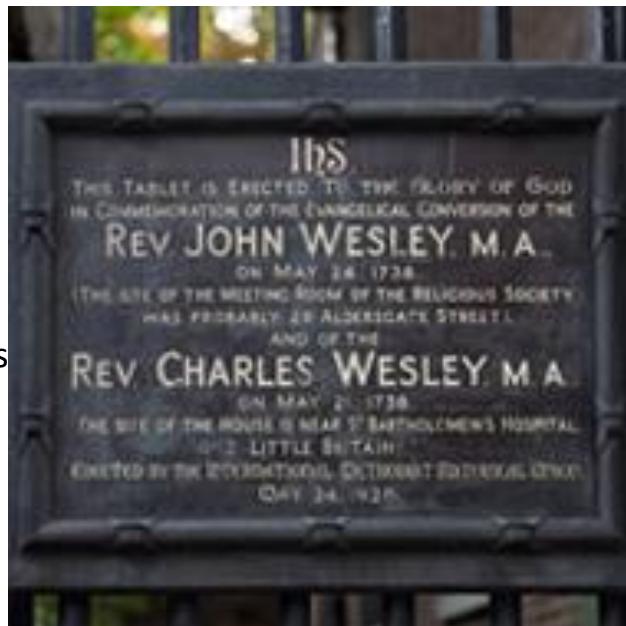
Aldersgate Sunday

The front cover has this picture of John Wesley with the information that today (May 22nd) is Aldersgate Sunday. But what is Aldersgate Sunday? And what is it not? We're so used to words ending in 'gate' as denoting some kind of scandal – 'partygate', 'beergate' and, of course, the first of these, 'Watergate'. Aldersgate is not a scandal in that sense; it's a street in London.

On May 24th 1738, John Wesley unwillingly attended worship at a Moravian 'Religious Society' meeting on Aldersgate Street in London. It was during this service that he felt his "heart strangely warmed", as he experienced God's love in a most personal and life-giving way. Until then he had known God in his mind, but not in his heart. Now he understood the value of a personal experience of God that would bring assurance of salvation to the believer. A plaque in Aldersgate Street commemorates that event.

May 24th is now celebrated in the Methodist Church as 'Wesley Day', with the Sunday closest to May 24th being called Aldersgate Sunday. This is today, May 22nd, this year. It commemorates a life-changing moment in the Christian journey of John Wesley, the most prominent of the founders of Methodism.

Aldersgate Sunday is a great opportunity to celebrate the work of God in our lives, and to reflect on how we should respond to everything that God has given us.



If you would like to hear more about Aldersgate Sunday and the conversion of the Wesleys, Rev Barbara Glasson, who was President of the Methodist Conference recorded a short video reflection for Aldersgate Sunday in 2020 (a time which, I'm sure, you remember as being the first of the Covid lockdowns).

You can [download an mp4 file of Barbara Glasson's Reflection for Aldersgate Sunday here](#)

You can also read a prayer for Aldersgate Sunday written by Rev Dr Martyn Atkins by clicking [here](#).

General Church Meeting Needs YOU



General Church Meeting

'The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church' is the main governing document for Methodism in this country. It requires us to have a General Church Meeting at least once a year for:

"fellowship, for mutual counsel respecting the condition of the Local Church, including its financial affairs, for the election of church stewards and representatives and for any other purpose which the Conference may direct."

In practice, it's an opportunity for everyone to hear from the Stewards, from the Finance team and from others about 'what's going on' and to elect Stewards (we have names to put forward) and representatives from the Membership to sit on Church Council (ditto).

Before Covid, we had got into the habit of holding the General Church Meeting in the New School Hall after the Sunday morning Service. People would bring along a contribution to a 'bring and share' lunch and we'd have the meeting at about 1.30 when everyone was ready. The meeting itself would usually last less than an hour.

Of course, during the pandemic we couldn't do that: Zoom was (of course) our friend.

This year, we're reverting to the Service – lunch – General Church Meeting approach. The General Church Meeting will take place on Sunday 17 July.

So this is all a long-winded way of saying: "Can you write General Church Meeting" into your diaries, please?

Richard



Our Church Family



Please remember in your prayers:

- Joyce and Peter
 - Margaret and Martin
 - Jean B
 - Chris, Olga, David and Ruth
 - Julie, Sarah and Philippa
 - Vivienne, Graham and Alice
 - Shamun M (son of Francis)
 - All those taking exams at present
 - Graham (brother of Pauline Elson)
-
- All refugees arriving and arrived in the UK, especially for Ukrainian families, that they will find peace and a good life here

This Week at Kempston East

Tuesday May 24 th	2.00pm	Tibbs Dementia in the New School Hall
Friday May 27 th	9.30am	Parents and Toddlers meet in the Halls
Saturday May 28 th	4.00pm	Soup Kitchen in the Church Garden

The latest Circuit Magazine is now available on the Circuit website, and also our website.

www.kempstoneastmethodist.org/media.html

WORSHIP AT EAST

This week, our morning service at 10.30am will be led by Glynne Rowlands, one of our circuit local preachers. We will also be live streaming the service this week so those of you who connect in by YouTube can watch the service online here - <https://www.kempstoneastmethodist.org/live.html>

An audio recording on CD will be available to those who normally receive these.

Forthcoming Services at Kempston East

Sunday May 29th

Brian Addington

Sunday June 5th

Rev Michael Giles – Holy Communion and Songs of Praise

Sunday June 12th

Rev Michael Giles - Baptism

Summary of Guidelines for Covid-safe Services at Kempston East

Although you are no longer legally required to wear a face covering while in the church and halls, you may decide to still carry on doing this to protect both yourself and others. That is a personal choice and we should respect people's personal decisions in this.

With this in mind, we will still be reserving the back three rows of the church for people who do not wish to sit with those without a face covering so, **please do not sit in those rows if you have an uncovered face!**

Other than that, you can sit anywhere but, from a courtesy point of view, please ask if it's Ok to sit next to or close to someone already in the row you're heading for.

The Circuit Methodist Women in Britain will be holding the Easter Offering Dedication Service at Priory Methodist Church at 4pm on Sunday June 12th. Each lady in the Methodist Church is automatically a member of MWIB and it would be great if you are able to be at that service - men are also very welcome.

If you would like any other information please see Pauline Ayres.



Pentecost and Queen's Platinum Jubilee

Sunday June 5th



To celebrate both of these occasions we hope to have a Bring and Share picnic lunch in the Church garden after the morning service on Sunday 5th June. We need to know, however, if enough people are interested to make the occasion viable. There is a list at the back of the Church so please add your name if you would like to come.



What a busy but very enjoyable time we had last weekend at East. The Boys Brigade put on an excellent display on Friday evening, the Fair on Saturday was a most successful occasion with superb weather and raising over £1,000 for Christian Aid and then the Sunday Club gave us an excellent presentation about Moses leading his people out of Egypt. Thanks must go to everyone involved in all of these events, the officers and boys of the Boys Brigade, the organisers and stall holders on Saturday and the children and staff of the Sunday Club. It was an excellent weekend for the Church, thank you all very much.



If you have any prayer requests, thanks and, indeed, any other items and news that you would like to go into next week's newsletter then please email these to Dominic Simms (dominic.simms@hotmail.co.uk), ideally by Wednesday.

If you know of someone who would like to receive this emailed newsletter could you please send their email address to richard.ward4@btinternet.com. Equally, if you would like to be removed from the distribution list, please let Richard Ward know.