



**Kempston East
Methodist
Church
Newsletter
Issue 160
May 21st
2023**

Ministers:

Rev Michael Giles (Michaelgiles2017@gmail.com)

Rev Chris Sandy (christopher.sandy@methodist.org.uk; 01234 860484)



Wesley Day (May 24th)



Ascension Day (May 18th) 40 Days with the Risen Christ

40 days after Easter comes last Thursday, Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection. (*Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.*)

The Gospels give us little of Christ's teachings and deeds during those 40 days. Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc. He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah. Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them - to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving 'farewell' in history took place on Ascension Day. Luke records the story with great poignancy: 'When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands - and blessed them.'

As Christmas began the story of Jesus' life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven. Jesus' last act on earth was to bless His disciples. He and they had a bond as close as could be: they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection! Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus: 'While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.' (Luke 24:50-1) He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day: 'I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God...' (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history. Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and to have Him look on you with love. No wonder then that Luke goes on: 'they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.' (Luke 24:52,53)

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day! 'I am going to prepare a place for you... I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.' (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

Wesley Day - May 24th

John and Charles Wesley were the founders of Methodism. Two of 19 children born to Samuel and Susannah Wesley of Epworth Rectory in Lincolnshire in 1703 and 1707, their father was the local rector, while their mother was a spiritual inspiration to her many children.



Photo: Pollinator CC-BY-3.0

Both John and Charles went to Christ Church, Oxford (1720 and 1726). John was ordained, and Charles and some friends formed a 'Holy Club' while still at college. It consisted of men who dedicated themselves to Bible study, prayer, fasting and good works. Such regular disciplines soon earned Charles the nickname 'Methodist'. The name stuck.

Both Charles and John felt called to the mission field, and so in 1735 they sailed to Georgia, now part of the USA. Their time among Indians in America was not a success – they struggled for any real spiritual authority in their ministries. Feeling failures, they returned to England in some depression. John summed it up: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?"

Then the Wesleys made friends with some Moravians. They stressed that salvation cannot be earned, but must be received by grace through faith in Christ. Charles was the first to experience this 'true' conversion, when on Pentecost Sunday, 21st May 1738, he wrote that the Spirit of God 'chased away the darkness of my unbelief.'

Only three days later, on 24th May, 1738, it was John's turn. As he wrote in his journal: "In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed."

John and Charles Wesley then devoted the rest of their lives to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. In doing so, they turned England upside-down. When the established Church threw John out, he took to the fields, preaching to coal miners and commoners. His itinerant evangelism took him 250,000 miles on horseback and to preach over 40,000 sermons. His small 'societies' attracted some 120,000 followers by the time of his death.

Charles became the most prolific and skilled hymn-writer in English history, writing hymns that are sung widely today, such as 'Love Divine, All Loves Excelling.' In all, he wrote more than 6,000 hymns.

The legacy of the two brothers lives on. As well as Methodism, their teaching has widely impacted the holiness movement, the Pentecostal movement, and the charismatic movement.



Christian Aid Fair

Saturday May 20th

10.30am – 2.00pm

As part of our celebration and contribution to Christian Aid Week we will be holding our usual Christian Aid Fair this Saturday (May 20th).

Book stall, Cake stall, Card stall
Lots and lots of plants for you to buy
Lucky Dip
Food and drink including a barbecue
Plus all the other usual attractions
Please come along and join us

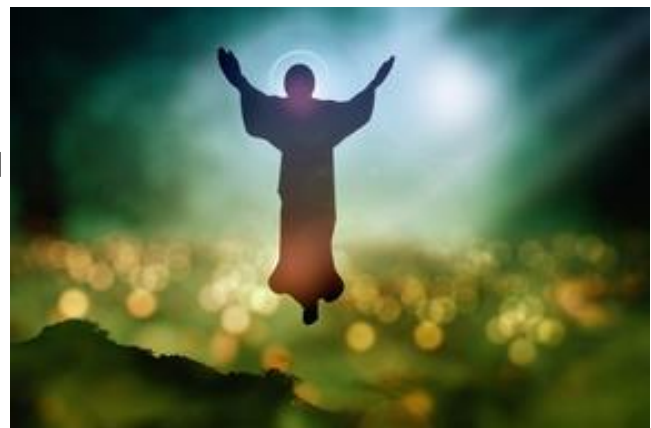
After the Ascension, what?

The New Testament tells us that Jesus ascended into heaven, and now intercedes for us at His Father's right hand. Have you ever wondered what this means?

Some have thought that the Lord is somehow constantly 're-offering' the sacrifice of His death before the Father in heaven, and in so doing is 'pleading' on our behalf. But the New Testament is clear in its insistence that Christ's death was historically once and for all achieved.

Hebrews 7:25,27 tells us "...He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them....He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily.... Since He did this once for all when He offered up Himself...."

Instead, Jesus is now in heaven to 'represent us before the Father' (1 John 2:1). He is there to escort you into the Father's presence every time you turn to God in prayer. That is why Christian prayer always ends with 'In Jesus Christ's Name'. He is our only way through.



Some popular health myths debunked

The best ways of staying fit and healthy may be different from what you thought. Here are some fitness dictats which were originally based more on marketing than on science.



Walk 10,000 steps a day:

This goal has been a popular mantra for years, and it has even been adopted by the World Health Organisation. But the number was chosen arbitrarily in a Japanese boardroom in the 1960s. The company, Yamasa, simply dreamt up the figure in its effort to promote the world's first step counter, ahead of the Tokyo 1964 Olympics.

Instead, recent studies, including one at the University of Alabama, have found that taking between just 6,000 to 8,000 steps a day may be fine. And even if you take far less than that, then just adding an extra 500 steps a day will bring you significant health benefits. Research does suggest that it is not a great idea to take less than 5,000 steps a day.



Five a day:

This encouragement to eat daily fruit and veg came from the UK government in the late 1980s, and it is probably the best-known piece of public health advice that we have.

But recent studies suggest that five a day is unlikely to be enough. Scientists at Imperial College London suggest it is more like seven or ten helpings a day, if you are to get all the nutrients and fibre that you need. One scientist at the University of Leeds says there needs to be a push for people to make dietary fibre the majority of their daily diet, rather than processed foods.

You need eight hours sleep:

This notion goes back to Victorian times! During the industrial revolution, it was thought that the best daily regime was eight hours labour, eight hours recreation, and eight hours rest.



But in fact, modern studies have found that the amount of sleep you need is highly individualised. Some people get along fine on less than six hours, while others need ten hours.



Our Church Family



Please remember in your prayers:

- Martin and Margaret T
- Paul C
- Michael and Jill G
- Marian F
- Bob B now home after a fall
- All those taking A-level and GCSE Exams

This Week at Kempston East

Saturday May 20 th	10.30am	Christian Aid Fair in the Church Garden (or indoors, if wet)
	4.00pm	Soup Kitchen in the Church Garden
Tuesday May 23 rd	2.00pm	Tibbs Dementia meets in the New School Hall
Wednesday May 24 th	11.30am	'Open House' in the Beginners Room
Friday May 26 th	9.30am	Parents and Toddlers meet in the Halls
Saturday May 27 th	4.00pm	Soup Kitchen in the Church Garden

Bob and Pam would like to thank you all for your prayers, cards, and goodwill messages.

Bob is still using a walking frame around the house, and is making progress, but we're thankful for good neighbours.



WORSHIP AT EAST

Our service this morning, at 10.30am, will be our Sunday Club Anniversary. The service will be led by Claire Peck together with the members and leaders of Sunday Club.

Our live-streaming team will also, of course, be in action for those of you who normally join in this way and details of how to join will be in Richard's email. An audio recording will be available for those who normally receive this and will also be loaded on to the church website.

Future Services at Kempston East

Sunday May 28 th	10.30am	Ros Salisbury
Sunday June 4 th	10.30am	Rev Michael Giles (Holy Communion)
Sunday June 11 th	10.30am	Local Worship

New House Group Planned

Following the success of the Lent study groups, a request has been made for a regular Bible study. Barbara T has kindly offered to host a group at her home on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday morning of each month from 10.30am until noon.

Terry and Marjorie Stevens are happy to lead and propose to look at the Gospels. If you would like to join us, please contact Terry: terrystv32@gmail.com mobile: 07904437201 or speak to one of us after the service.



Do good, be blessed

When we do good, even when others are doing wrong – God will bless us. That does not mean God will always bless us in material ways, although at times this is the case. But God will always bless you spiritually for your faithfulness.

If you have committed your life to God, let your life reflect His love for those around you. “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16). By your daily actions and your daily words to friends, colleagues and family, you can be a witness to those you meet every day, and God will honour your witness for Him.

Measure your carbon footprint

One of the things we need to do to move from bronze to silver in the Lifestyle section of the Eco Church Awards is to measure our personal carbon footprints. But how do we do this? The website 'Just Energy' (<https://justenergy.com/>) has a number of calculators that you can use including one devised by Alexandra Shimo-Barry, author of "The Environment Equation". You can find it [here](#).

This does look easy to do and it is quoted on a number of websites, all with identical questions to answer. I do, though, have a number of doubts about its validity. It dwells on energy usage asking you to multiply your monthly electricity and gas bills by certain numbers but doesn't tell you whether the numbers you use for the bills are costs (in which case, what currency are they in?) or actual usage (in which case, what are the units?).

You can, though, go through online questionnaires that will then calculate your carbon footprint. For example, I tried the one at www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx. It is easy to put most of the information in until you get to the 'secondary' screen which covers most of the things we pay for other than fuel, travel, cars etc. In this you have to estimate annual food costs, non-fuel utility costs, insurance, recreation, hotels and restaurants. Unless you keep meticulous accounts these are very much guesses. It's good for an estimate of where you are in comparison to other households in the UK.

More on recycling

Judging by the speed with which the basket of used blister packs at the back of the church fills up many of you are finding this useful. If you're wondering what happens to them, I take fairly big bags of these to Superdrug in the Harpur Centre. They send them on for recycling and proceeds go to Marie Curie.

I have recently found out that Brown and White, the opticians next to Sainsbury's in Kempston will also accept used blister packs, as well as used contact lenses and redundant spectacles. These are then recycled in aid of Vision Aid.

If you have any prayer requests, thanks and, indeed, any other items and news that you would like to go into the weekly newsletter then please email these to Geoff Talbot (geofftal@btinternet.com) as soon as possible and ideally by the previous 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.