



Llangollen Methodist Church

Worshipping by the River Dee

13th January 2019

Number – 999

Riverside Weekly

*A warm welcome to everyone joining us for our worship this
Covenant Sunday*

Covenant Sunday

11:00 Covenant Service including Pastoral Visitors
Dedication – Rev Phil Poole

Let's remember to give to the *Benevolent Fund* this
Communion Sunday

1:00 Llangollen Methodist Church Carvery Lunch at the
White Waters Country Hotel

Bible Reading

Luke 3:15–22 page 56 in the New Testament read by Elizabeth
Roberts

Music by Ted Blackman

Fiona Owens welcomed you at the door

Marion Blackman gave out the books

Joan & Alan are providing refreshments

Paul Smith is today's steward

Happy Birthday to:

Eleanor — Monday

Dan — Friday

*Do join us for tea or coffee after
the service this morning*



Church Diary

Sunday 13th January

11:00 Covenant Service & Communion — Rev Phil Poole

1:00 Llangollen Methodist Church Carvery Lunch at the White Waters Country Hotel

Monday 14th January

7:30 Book of the month — Exodus — at the Memorial Hall

Tuesday 15th January

10:00 Coffee at the Hall — join us at the Memorial Hall for tea, coffee and biscuits

Wednesday 16th January

10:00 Prayer Group meet in the vestry — you are very welcome to join us

7:30 Bible Study at Paul & Anna's

Thursday 17th January

3:00 After-school Drop-In at the Memorial Hall

Saturday 19th January

9:00 Circuit Prayer Breakfast — breakfast in the Buttered Crust followed by Prayer in the Memorial Hall

Sunday 20th January

11:00 'United Service for the week of prayer for Christian Unity' at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Oak Street (*prayer booklets for the whole week, 18th to 25th, available from Elisabeth or Yvonne*)

Monday 21st January

9:30 Open the Book rehearsal at the Memorial Hall

10:30 Stewards Meeting at the Buttered Crust

2:00 Home Group at 5 Gerddi y Bache

6:00 to 8:00 Games and Activity evening

Tuesday 22nd January

10:00 Coffee at the Hall — join us at the Memorial Hall for tea, coffee and biscuits

“Book of the Month” club

A book reading group reading the Bible

Led by Richard Parkes, around the circuit, the group will read a book from the bible each month and then meet to learn more about and discuss the book. **(Each months session will be repeated four times, in different places, so everyone can attend when and where it is convenient)**

Review Exodus — prepare Leviticus & Numbers

Monday 14th January 7:30 at Llangollen

Tuesday 22nd January 2:00 at Gresford and 7:30 at Wrexham

Friday 25th January 2:00 at Caergwrle.

More Information from Richard 01978 852742

revrparkes@btconnect.com

Teams4U

On Sunday 27th January Dave Cooke, from Teams 4U, will be joining us in our Morning Praise and Worship service, to give a short video presentation of some of the children receiving their shoeboxes, a thing lots of you have requested to see. Please try and come to this service and see some of the children’s reactions.

There will be a retiring collection on this occasion for the ongoing work of Teams 4U

Home Group

Our fortnightly Home Group meetings start afresh at 5, Gerddi y Bache. Gather from 2pm for refreshments, Bible Study and prayer start 2.30pm.and finish by 4pm. The next meeting is on 21st January.

If you would like to join us, just come along or ring Yvonne 860557. New members always welcome.

The Covenant Prayer

I am no longer my own but yours.

Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;

put me to doing, put me to suffering;

let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,

exalted for you, or brought low for you;

let me be full, let me be empty,

let me have all things, let me have nothing:

I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things

to your pleasure and disposal.

And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

you are mine and I am yours.

And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Methodist Worship Book, page 290.

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Make connections

What God offers through the Covenant is a loving relationship. It is not a business contract set up between God and humanity for the provision of certain goods and services. Rather, it is the means of grace by which we accept the relationship God offers and then seek to sustain it:

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant ... I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Jeremiah 31.31, 33 (NRSV)

These words are read out as part of the Covenant Service. The focal point of the service is the Covenant Prayer (above). It embraces the whole of life, in all its parts. Most people find it quite tough to say this and really mean it. It is uncomfortable and challenging. It asks questions of our faith and demands that we examine our relationship with God.

The Covenant Prayer has been compared by some to a set of New Year resolutions, but ones that emphasise the importance of doing and being as much as believing. But more than that, the prayer represents a commitment to being a disciple and putting God first in our lives and in everything about our lives: what we do, what we say and who we are. It is both a surrender to, and a trust in, God.

The final few words are a gracious reminder: 'You are mine and I am yours'. We don't pray and live just in our own strength – but in God's.

Explore

Read through the prayer slowly, a line at a time.

- What jumps out at you?
 - What would you find easy to say?
 - What would you find difficult to say?
- Think how it might apply to your life – the whole of your life.
- What things might God be asking you to stop?
 - What might God be asking you to continue?
 - And what new things may God place in your life?

Live in faith

Write down your thoughts in a letter to yourself. You may want to end the letter with a reminder of these words of Jeremiah:

‘I will be their God,’ says the Lord, ‘and they shall be my people.’

Now put the letter in an envelope, seal it and address it to yourself (with a stamp).

Give it to a trusted friend and ask them to post it to you in six months time. It will be an encouragement and a reminder of your commitment, the prayer you pray and your journey of discipleship with God.

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The editor's jottings!

Coffee at the Memorial Hall — during January and February we will keep the hall open on Tuesday mornings. We will serve tea, coffee and biscuits. Some bric-a-brac will be got out for sale. If you can help your assistance will be appreciated, you don't have to do the whole morning or every week, just when you are able to help.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity — there will be a United Service on Sunday 20th January, this will be at Holy Cross, Oak Street. There will not be a service at the Methodist Church that morning (*prayer booklets for the whole week, 18th to 25th, available from Elisabeth or Yvonne*)

Norman



Readings

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 Jesus also had been baptised and was praying. (v. 21)

Background

Today is celebrated in many churches as the festival of the Baptism of Jesus, which explains why this reading is chosen. Luke's account of the baptism is brief – he simply tells us that it happened at the same time as large numbers of others ('all the people' – v. 21) were baptised. What seems to be of more interest to Luke is what occurred (immediately?) afterwards when Jesus was praying – the Spirit descended and a voice affirmed Jesus as God's son. The voice addressed Jesus and it is not clear whether or not it was heard by anyone else; the dove, however, was in physical form and it seems likely that Luke intends us to understand that it was visible to those around. In the context of Luke's narrative, this is the moment when Jesus' ministry began – he was already 30 years old (v. 23) when, in Fred Pratt Green's words, 'the hidden years had ended' (Singing the Faith 233 v. 2). He goes into the wilderness to be tempted 'full of the Holy Spirit' (4:1) and begins his preaching ministry 'filled with the power of the Spirit' (4:14). It is not surprising that the first words that we hear from him in the synagogue in Nazareth are 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me' (4:18).

If Luke's account of Jesus' baptism points us to his spirit-filled ministry, it also points us to a much broader understanding of baptism and the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist rejected the idea that he was the Messiah but promised that one more powerful would come. Luke clearly identifies Jesus as that more powerful person. The one to come would baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire (v. 16); the Greek word for Spirit can also be translated as 'blowing' or 'wind' so Luke seems to be pointing us forward not only to Jesus' own ministry but to the experience of the disciples at Pentecost after Jesus had ascended into heaven (see Acts 2).

Luke alerts us to the expectation of the Messiah that was evident at the time. That expectation seems to have been derived from Nathan's prophecy to David (in 2 Samuel 7); the words 'you are my son' could be a quotation from Psalm 2, a psalm that speaks of God's judgment enacted through the chosen king. Set in that context, the work of the Holy Spirit is not just to be understood as empowering Jesus or empowering the Church, but through Christ and his Church enacting the reign of God.

To Ponder

There are many visual representations of this scene. Look at a few online.

Which speaks to you and why?

John is keen not to promote himself but to point the crowd to the one who will come after him. Can you think of a time when it has been your responsibility to make way for someone else?

Luke records at many points in the Gospel that Jesus spent time praying. It was in prayer that he was affirmed by the Father and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Can you find time just to be in God's presence so that you also might know God's affirmation and empowering?

Bible notes author: The Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler



Memorial Hall Open For tea, coffee and biscuits Every Tuesday 10:00 till 12:00



Be Patient

'When the way is rough, your patience has a chance to grow. So let it.'

James 1:2-4 TLB

YOU'RE CLOSER than you know to becoming the person God wants you to be. By His enabling grace, you'll make it through this trial and come out stronger and wiser. Paul says, 'If God is for us, who can be against us?' (Romans 8:31 NKJV). God is for you! That means you can do the thing you are afraid you can't do. The prison bars you're beating against are in your mind. And since you put them up, with God's help you can take them down. God wants to set you free from the fearful attitudes that have held you back for so long; to release you to live up to your full potential. The right attitude can overcome almost any barrier. For example, the Bible says, 'Love never fails' (1 Corinthians 13:8 NIV 2011 Edition). Why? Because love isn't dependent on your emotions or circumstances, it's a servant of your will. Love is a decision! Jesus said, 'This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you' (John 15:12 KJV). And if Jesus commands it, He will enable you to do it! Beginning is usually the hard



part. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step; after that it gets easier. But look out; old attitudes will try to resurface and come back stronger than ever. Don't let them. Radio commentator Paul Harvey says, 'You can always tell when you're on the road to success; it's uphill all the way.' So be patient; it will take time to get there. But anything worthwhile is worth working for!

Pray that you would be patient with the process and journey God's taking you on.

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For free daily readings see
Elisabeth or Norman

