



# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025

No. 283

Brighton & Hove Methodist



Circuit of Sanctuary

Dorset Gardens Methodist Church, Brighton



Used with permission, Shawna Wright Art, visit [www.shawnawrightart.com](http://www.shawnawrightart.com)

## A Letter from the Manse

Dear Friends

Some of you may be aware of a pack of pictures published a few years ago called 'The Christ We Share'. It contains 32 pictures from around the world, by contemporary artists, who were reinterpreting images of Christ within their own contexts.

There is a picture of a painting by a Filipino artist who depicted the Last Supper as a group of poor farmers in the Philippines whose life is a struggle with feudal land policies, corrupt political systems and the injustices of globalization, Christ is seen as the one who shares God's banquet with those who feel devalued.

Another one from Latin America shows a wanted poster; Christ portrayed as a rebel who fights for the poor and voiceless and who is therefore a danger, a threat to the rich and powerful.

There is one from Sri Lanka where Tamils and Sinhalese are unable to drink from the same well so the image of Christ receiving the water from the well from a woman of a different culture challenges the way we treat one another.

And yet another comes from Korea and portrays Christ carrying the cross of a fractured map of Korea, North and South divided. Through it we're reminded of the broken world we live in, nation against nation, community against community, faith against faith, individual against individuals, ourselves against others.

All these pictures speak not just to the situation that is the context of the picture, but also to many of the situations we find ourselves in in our own lives. And they portray Christ as the one who has been, and is in, all situations and who is with us in whatever

situation we find ourselves today if only we would recognise it. And the artists see that it is his presence that can in some way transform situations and bring healing, peace, dignity, justice and joy.

The Easter story brings that into sharp focus as it goes through highs and lows. As the story unfolds we see joyous celebration followed by betrayal and abandonment, punishment and death for an innocent man. We see strained and broken relationships, false accusations and bullying, the greed of the powerful, the intolerance of the religious, the selfish apathy of a few and the paralysed fear of many. We see the end of hope....

But then we see a new beginning, the stirring of New Life. For death is not the end of the story, indeed it is the signal for a new beginning, a transformation that has resulted in many millions of transformations and as a result much that is good and life giving. And the possibility for that new beginning is for each and everyone of us and for all who live if we would just allow ourselves to be transformed by the presence of the eternal Christ in our hearts because if we are transformed then we will transform our situation.

We have just passed the third anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This picture is by a Ukrainian painter, Alla Kysliakova.

It is not part of the collection, but one found on the internet. It speaks to me of the life Jesus lived, his pursuit of justice and peace that challenges the ways of power and ultimately leads to his death on a cross.

In these last few weeks we have seen the betrayal of the principle of justice and the



bullying of a nation by the Trump administration. And this bullying isn't just confined to the situation in Ukraine. It feels like we are living in a time when justice for the weak will be neglected and replaced by the amassing of fortunes for bullies in power.

But the Easter story doesn't end in a place of despair, it ends with hope. The ongoing presence of the Christ means countless people have found healing and hope. They have had their lives transformed with new life.

As we pray for the situation in Ukraine and in the world we pray that they, and all of us, may know the peace of Christ, the joy of new life and find justice and hope.

May this Easter be a time of renewal for us all,

*Andy*



## Pastoral Care

Please pray for our friends who need our support at this time:-

### Deaths:-

Bob Gunstone, Stephen White (Joyce Badcock's grandson)

### In Nursing, Care & Rehabilitation Homes:-

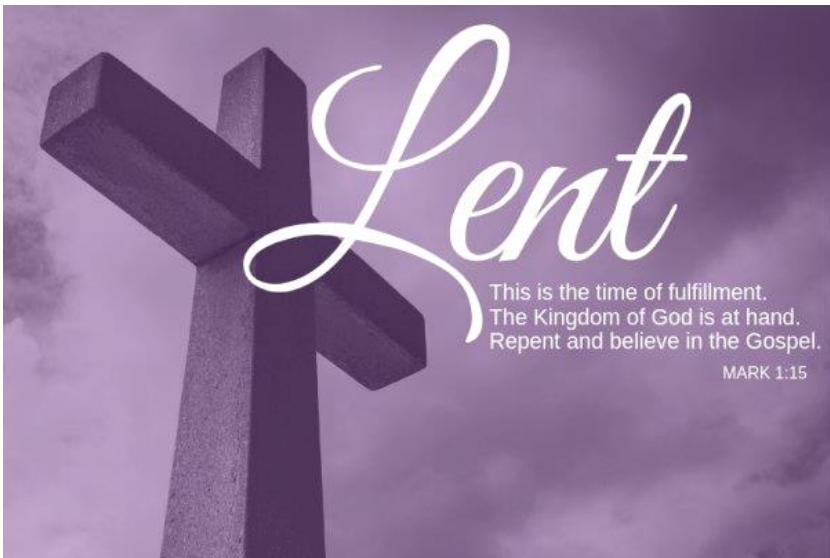
Val Boyd-Pain, Marian Jackson, Pat Knight, Ian Parker.

### Please continue to pray for:-

The future of our church and circuit, its vision and mission. We also pray for those who are in bereavement, those who are frail, housebound or experiencing long-term health conditions.

### Prayers for the World:-

We pray for our worldwide family thinking of those troubled by conflict, persecution, hatred and natural disasters. We ask that God works through us to bring peace and compassion into this broken and suffering world. Amen



## Ray's 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday



On 5<sup>th</sup> December at Open House we celebrated Ray's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. We had cake and we all sang happy birthday.

Ray is one of the helpers at Open House. He mixes with everyone and enjoys playing some of the board games on offer.

We hope you enjoyed your day Ray and wish you many more happy birthdays to come!

From all your friends at Open House and DG xx



Peter being received into membership on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025



## Thoughts on Pastoral Care

Remember we are all growing older. Our need for affection, for personal dignity and for acceptance by others increases rather than diminishes with the passing of the years.

Try always to be sensitive to this in your visiting, verbal and non-verbal communication. Look out for ways to show care and concern, particularly to those who are getting increasingly confused, have mental health issues and might be silently battling an emotional, financial or physical challenge.

***Extracted from the Pastoral Visitor's Notes, The Methodist Church***

### Is Spring Sprung?



In Autumn 2023 I planted three 8-inch pots of bulbs. In Spring 2024 there was nothing but three pots of overturned earth. Why? Probably, I was told, food for squirrels (the grey sort) particularly



as my son Simon was having trouble in his garden. During Summer 2024 Simon set a squirrel trap and caught seventeen on separate occasions. He took each one up to a small wood on Ditchling Beacon and released it.

In Autumn 2024, with Paul Stone's help, we planted a large pot of daffodils and crocuses in layers with Paul putting a network of protruding sticks and my planting pansies and placing an iron grid on the top. Guess what? Only one leaf is showing. The crocuses should be in bud. Did my son's squirrels find their way home each time? Anyway, do squirrels eat flower bulbs? Food for thought!

***Jean Morley***

## Getting To Know Will Mason

Thank you for the warm welcome that you have given me. I am enjoying playing the keyboard for the services and thought that you might like to know more about me.

I became a Christian 38 years ago and played in the worship team of my Pentecostal church. Sixteen years ago, it became clear that I was no longer welcome as a transgender man so I looked for an inclusive church. When I found the Metropolitan Community Church, I became a member and soon became the Worship Leader of The Village where I was recently appointed as a Deacon.



Piano is not the only instrument I play. I also play the cello in an orchestra and clarinet and tenor sax in a jazz band. Last year I started learning bell ringing which is much more difficult than I ever expected.

During the week, I work at Woodvale Crematorium which I love. My job involves coordinating the burials and memorials across the City and one of my responsibilities is to handwrite every burial into the 170 year old registers. What a privilege!

Now that my children are adults with children of their own, I live on my own with my very loving cat, Grace, where I spend much of the time knitting my own socks.

***Will Mason***



## A Few Words About the Finances

At Dorset Gardens Methodist Church we are lucky to have a large and airy building, which is modern and easy to keep clean, but there's a lot of it to clean and heat. The building is now 20+ years old and many ordinary things, like window and door handles are wearing out due to the strains of continual public use.

As well as maintaining our building we need to fund our staff and contribute to the costs of the Brighton & Hove Circuit, this is a large proportion of our expenses which increases with inflation each year. Our income comes in three parts: rent from a property, room hire fees and our giving. This April we will increase the room hire fees, but we also need to increase our giving and develop our fundraising. Many of our members are very generous and thanks are due to those who give regularly. Regular giving (time or money) is the most useful way to help, if you are in the position to give regularly, or to increase your giving that would be a real help. In the current financial crisis, we know many of those who would like to contribute financially are simply not able to.

If you would like to make a one-off transfer or a regular payment (Dorset Gardens Methodist Church sort code 40-14-03 account 20292648) this would be appreciated. This reduces our bank charges and is easy to amend or cancel if you bank online. If you are a taxpayer we can increase the contribution by claiming back the tax paid on your giving, just ask for a Gift Aid declaration form. You can also give electronically on the sumup card reader which is next to the collection plate at the back of the church each Sunday or via **Justgiving** or on the QR code at the bottom of the next page.

***Jennie Lamb***



 sumup®



## Open House News

The Open House team is delighted to report that it continues on very successfully. The idea of a drop-in afternoon was hatched by Graham Wall after he had been to a talk on holding mental health cafés to help promote good mental health and alleviate loneliness.

That concept had been formalised through the NHS and social services and to officially sign up as a mental health café was complicated, bureaucratic and expensive, so Graham put the idea on the back burner. But when the Covid lockdowns eased, he suggested we launch a simplified, informal event with the same intention – and so Thursday afternoon Open House was born.

Sadly Graham has had to withdraw from the regular gatherings due to ill-health, as has Alan Cutting, but the rest of the team continues on: Nick Firrell, Pauline Payne, Beth Whittaker, Shirley Veater, Nancy Pollard, Mark Brogan, Ray Waller, Vikki Kennedy and myself.

The guests have varied enormously and at the moment they include church members and adherents, some folk who are homeless or poorly housed, a couple of musicians who entertain us, and lots of others who like playing board games, having a laugh, putting the world to rights, drinking tea and coffee and eating a wide variety of donated cakes, quiches, biscuits, sausage rolls, and other nibbles.

There is no charge and everybody is warmly welcomed (including dogs). So if you are free on a Thursday afternoon, from 2 to 4 pm, do drop in to say hello. And if you have a spare cake or other nibbles in your larder to bring along, they will be gratefully received.

***Cynthia Park***

How many signs of Spring have you seen or heard?

Keep looking!



Daffodils

Snowdrops



Buds on trees

Crocuses

Woodpeckers



Bluebell shoots

First butterflies

Wren

Rooks

Buzzing bumblebees

Primrose



Hedgehogs

Robins

Cherry blossom

Cuckoo call

Birds building nests

Elder budburst

Frogspawn



## News from the 14<sup>th</sup> Brighton Scout Group

**Scouting Transformation:** Over the years there have been many changes in Scouting from uniform, programme, badges, technology, new sections and age ranges. Over the last few months Scouting in the UK has been going through what it has called a “Transformation”. This has mainly looked at the governance and leadership in Scout Groups with an emphasis on recruitment and retention of adults. So how has this affected us here in the 14<sup>th</sup>?

Firstly, we have had to set up a Trustee Board and we are now in the early stages of implementing this. We have been fortunate in recruiting one of our ex-Scouts as Chairman - Matthew Chidley who some of you will know as his family have been connected to Dorset Gardens for some years. We have also recruited three parents onto the Board along with our long time Treasurer, Maria Helsby, myself and John Cripps. We have recently held our first two meetings.

A new Membership Database has also been set-up which now means that much more of the administration is carried out by us rather than Scout HQ. This includes Leader Training and it is up to us to make sure that each of our volunteers keeps up-to-date with their training. Some of the training requirements have also changed but Safety, Safeguarding and First Aid are compulsory for all volunteers and all have to complete a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. I am indebted to John Cripps who keeps on top of all this for the Group.

The titles of our leaders have also changed to reflect that we are all volunteers. My title has changed from Group Scout Leader (GSL) to Group Lead Volunteer (GLV) and all the other leaders are having to get used to their new titles.

You will know that we were in need of some new volunteers to help run our Beaver Colony. I am pleased to say that three people came forward and all started to work with the Beavers under Nick Phillips' guidance in September last year. When the Colony restarted in January, one of those new volunteers, Anthony Alabaster, became the new leader. He is supported by Ben Turner and April Lake with Nick still working alongside them.

The Scout Troop also has a group of new volunteers helping to run it. Our Scout Leader, (Lead Volunteer Scouts), Helen Angel, felt she needed to be able not to be in attendance every week due to work and family pressures so we have set up a rota to make sure at least three adults are in attendance each week. Our two most recent parent volunteers are Ben Simmonds and Tony Anderson joining Annabet Wyndham, a parent who has been volunteering for some time. We have also been fortunate to have Hollie Heading, a university student, join us while she is studying here in Brighton.

The Cub Section still have Paul Stone, Rob Gentles and Hannah Steadman leading and they have recently been joined by Jack Riley as a Young Leader. Jack was a Cub and Scout with us.

The number of children in each section is mostly at capacity. We have 25 Scouts, 23 Cubs and 9 Beavers with some new Beaver recruits due to join after half term. We are also in discussion with District about the possibility of starting a new section, Squirrels, for 4–6-year-olds, but this will require us finding another group of volunteers to run this. So, if you or any one you know might be interested in joining us as a volunteer, please speak to me.

***Ian Lamb***



## Describing My Paintings

### The blue panel at the foot of the stairs.



For this painting I meditated on the Prologue to St John's Gospel.

Starting at the top: "In the beginning was the Word, The Word was with God and The Word was God".

How does one paint God? After much prayerful thought I decided to represent God as Light and Energy, in the form of a circle, as a circle, like God, has no beginning and no end. (It reminded me too of the Holy Spirit passing over 'the face of the water')

Jesus, The Incarnate Word, is "The Light of the World". Here we see the Light shining in darkness. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us"

The egg shape represents His Incarnation. We see too shapes reminding us of His Baptism by John, where the Holy Trinity was revealed.

Then the agony of the Crucifixion, followed by the rejoicing of His Resurrection.

At the bottom, a reminder that today we meet the risen Lord Jesus in the bread and wine of Holy Communion.

**What do you think this abstract painting is about?**



Here are some clues! It's about sounds. Those zig-zag lines are the crack of a whip. Imagine the sound as it cuts through the air!

The window shape suggests we are in a temple. See the crash as tables are turned over. Hear the rumble of coins falling and rolling over the stone floor. Hear the flurry of Dove wings as they fly to freedom.

And all that bright red? That represents the righteous anger Jesus felt, when he found His Father's House had been turned into a market place of dishonest trading.

You've guessed it... The cleansing of the Temple.

***Shirley Veater***

## Prayer for the World

Let the rain come and wash away  
the ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds  
held and nurtured over generations.

Let the rain wash away the memory  
of the hurt, the neglect.

Then let the sun come out and  
fill the sky with rainbows.

Let the warmth of the sun heal us  
wherever we are broken.

Let it burn away the fog so that  
we can see each other clearly.

So that we can see beyond labels,  
beyond accents, gender or skin colour.

Let the warmth and brightness  
of the sun melt our selfishness.

So that we can share the joys and  
feel the sorrows of our neighbours.

And let the light of the sun  
be so strong that we will see all  
people as our neighbours.

Let the earth, nourished by rain,  
bring forth flowers  
to surround us with beauty.

And let the mountains teach our hearts  
to reach upward to heaven. Amen

Rabbi Harold Kushner



**Holy Week  
and Easter**

**At Dorset  
Gardens**



**Palm Sunday - 13<sup>th</sup> April**

10.30 am, Morning Worship  
Led by Revd Cynthia Park

**Maundy Thursday - 17<sup>th</sup> April**

1 pm, Service of Prayer & Praise with Communion  
Led by Revd Andy Lowe

**Good Friday - 18<sup>th</sup> April**

4 pm, A Service for Good Friday  
Led by Revd Andy Lowe

**Easter Sunday - 20<sup>th</sup> April**

10 am, Easter Celebration with Communion  
Led by Revd Andy Lowe



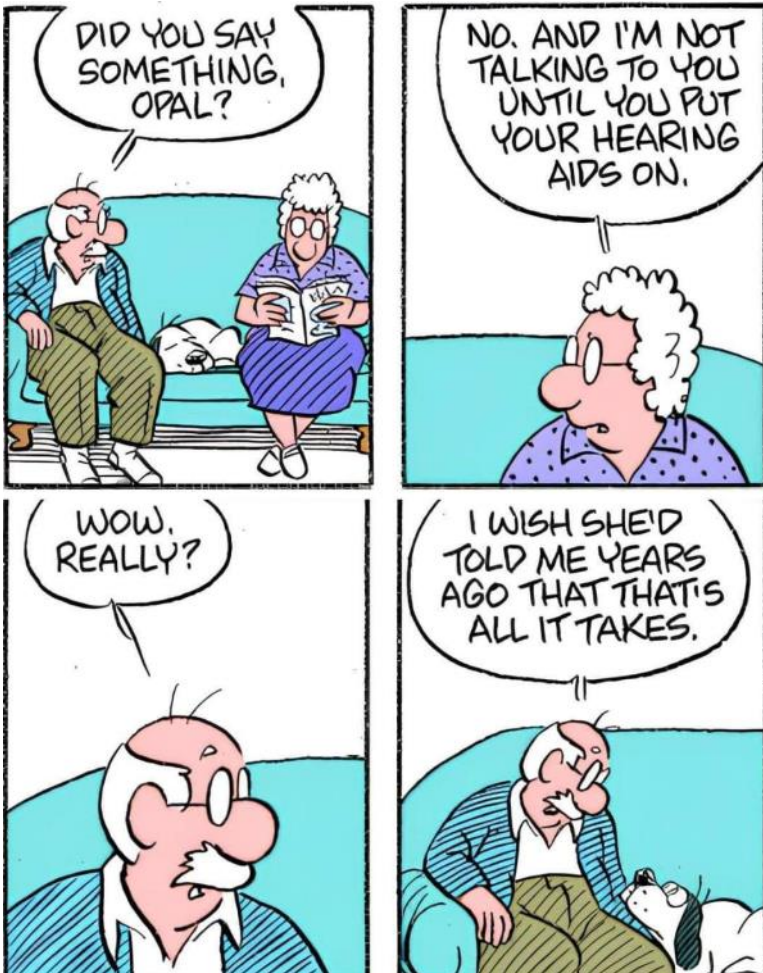
There are gifts to be found everywhere:  
Lots of moments to cherish, with love and with care,  
A grandchild's hand, held soft and warm,  
The fresh beauty of a pink sky at dawn,  
A magical rainbow, the joy after rain,  
A day of sunshine we'll remember again;  
Two swans greeting to make a heart shape,  
The smell of the house after baking a cake;  
A smile from a stranger as you nod and walk past.  
Enjoy these small gifts, as years fly very fast!

Tina Cathleen MacNaughton, *The Friendship Book*, 2025



## Thoughts for Quiet Reflection

- † In my anguish, I will trust in God's quiet strength.
- † God's word nourishes my soul.
- † How am I using my gifts to serve my neighbour?





We are made for goodness. We are made for love. We are made for friendliness. We are made for togetherness. We are made for all of the beautiful things that you and I know. We are made to tell the world that there are no outsiders. All are welcome: black, white, red, yellow, rich, poor, educated, not educated, male, female, gay, straight, all, all, all. We all belong to this family, this human family, God's family.

The Late Archbishop Desmond Tutu



The Summer 2025 edition of Newsletter will be published on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025. Any items for inclusion must reach the Editor, Deeptima Massey, by **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025**. Email: [office@dgmc.org.uk](mailto:office@dgmc.org.uk)

## **Worship Programme at Dorset Gardens**

### **Sunday 9 March ~ First Sunday of Lent**

10.30 am, Morning Worship

Led by Jonathan Gravestock

### **Sunday 16 March ~ Second Sunday of Lent**

10.30 am, Morning Worship

Led by Andy Lowe

### **Sunday 23 March ~ Third Sunday of Lent**

10.30 am, Morning Worship

Led by Bob Winton

6.30 pm, Service of Healing and Communion

Led by Cynthia Park

### **Sunday 30 March ~ Mothering Sunday**

9 am, Morning Communion

Led by Cynthia Park

10.30 am, All Age Worship

Led by Kathleen Richardson

### **Sunday 6 April ~ Fifth Sunday of Lent**

No service at Dorset Gardens today (Brighton Marathon)

**Sunday 13 April ~ Palm Sunday**

10.30 am, Morning Worship

Led by Cynthia Park

**Maundy Thursday ~ 17 April**

1 pm, Service of Prayer & Praise with Communion

Led by Andy Lowe

**Good Friday ~ 18 April**

4 pm, A Service for Good Friday

Led by Andy Lowe

**Sunday 20 April ~ Easter Sunday**

10 am, Easter Celebration with Communion

Led by Andy Lowe

**Sunday 27 April**

10.30 am, Morning Worship

Led by Martin Knight

6.30 pm, Service of Healing and Communion

Led by Cynthia Park

**Sunday 4 May**

10.30 am, Morning Worship with Communion

Led by Heather Leake Date

## **Sunday 11 May ~ Church Anniversary**

10.30 am, Anniversary Service

Led by Will Fletcher

## **Sunday 18 May ~ Aldersgate Sunday**

3 pm, Circuit Together Service - At DG

Led by Stella Goddard & Karen Bell

*(No morning service today)*

## **Sunday 25 May ~ Ascension Sunday**

10.30 am, Morning Worship

Led by John Jennings

6.30 pm, Service of Healing and Communion

Led by Cynthia Park



*Disclaimer: "The items contained within this newsletter are personal views and not necessarily the views of The Methodist Church".*