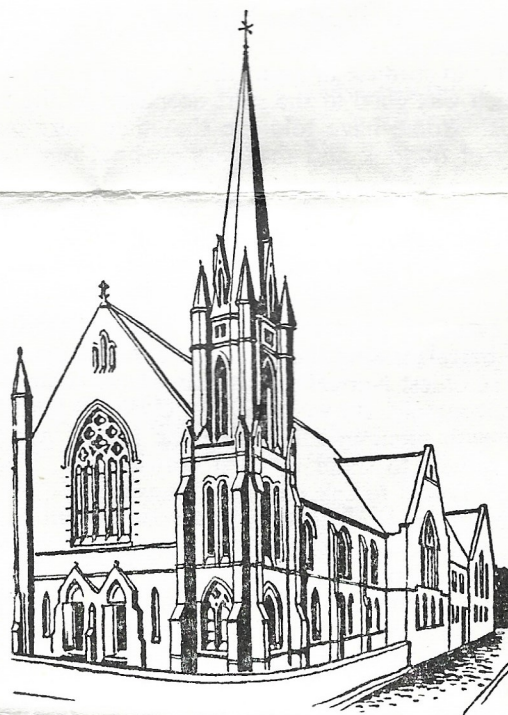


CLIFTONVILLE 1962

MILTON ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

GRAVESEND



No. 19

NEWSLETTER

March, 1962

Minister: Rev. J. Leonard Waddy, 9 The Avenue, Gravesend

PUBLIC WORSHIP: Sundays at 11.0 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Morning at 11.0 o'clock, Afternoon at 3.0 o'clock
(Graded)

WEEK-DAY ACTIVITIES

MONDAY

3 p.m. Women's Meeting.
7 p.m. Badminton.

4-30 (alternate weeks).

5.30—7p.m. Brownies.

7 p.m. Boy's Brigade.

7.30 p.m. Choir Practice.

TUESDAY

6.30—8.30 p.m. Guides.

FRIDAY

6p.m. Junior Choir Practice.

7p.m. Youth Club.

WEDNESDAY

2.30—4p.m. Wives Club (First
and third Wednesday in the
month).

6.30—8p.m. Life Boys.

SATURDAY

7 p.m. Badminton.

CLASSES as announced.

THURSDAY

3 p.m. Sewing Circle—Tea at

Within this arrangement there
is something for everyone. We
cordially invite all who read this
letter to avail themselves of the
opportunities provided.

THE PASTORAL LETTER

My dear Friend,

The outstanding event in the life of our Church during this quarter has undoubtedly been the Bible Week. Nothing like this has been done before in Gravesend and the life of the Churches of the town can never be the same again. Something has happened. Whatever we may or may not have learnt from the preliminary study of the Epistle to the Romans, from the nightly exposition or from the Group discussions, the sense of fellowship which was good at the start deepened as the week progressed and thrilled us. Some have told me that they were astounded at the depth of unity of outlook and that they realised our essential oneness. This in itself was a great step forward. Of course, we can all see how it could have been done better but when we hold the second Bible Week we shall profit by our lessons. In the meantime let us go on in every possible way to strengthen these ties which bind us to our fellow Christians.

Another event of great interest lies before us. In July the Free Churches will be celebrating the events of 1662 which led to the formation of the three oldest Nonconformist Churches. Our coming was later and for different reasons but we have very close ties with these Churches. We shall join with them in celebrating the loyalty and sacrifice which inspired their fathers to stand by their convictions. The first re-action of a number of us was to ask whether it was wise in days of increasing unity to remember times of disunity. But that is not the way to put it. We celebrate events which were of the utmost importance in the religious life of Britain. While these happenings were sad we should never forget the devotion which inspired our forefathers. We shall not emphasise the negative but the positive. If the Navy celebrate Trafalgar Day are they seeking to destroy the Entente Cordiale? Any such remembrances should always be in the light of the present day and the special services to be held on July 8th will be in the Anglican Church of St. George's! All the Free Churches are asked to close on that morning and attend the united one when the preacher will be Dr. E. A. Payne, the General Secretary of the Baptist Union and a leading Church historian.

By a coincidence, on the 150th anniversary of these events Methodism began its work on the present site. So on the same day the older Free Churches hold their Tercentenary we are holding our Sesquicentenary. After the morning service at St. George's we shall hold our "domestic" celebrations at Milton Road in the evening when what is essentially Methodist will be stressed. A very unusual day. Well, if you like special events, you can't say that things never happen!

I promised a report on the progress of Sesquicentenary Fund. After our teething difficulties with the heating apparatus we hope that it will give increasing satisfaction. We are proceeding with the internal decoration of the Church which we hope will be done in August to cause as little dislocation to our work as possible. Towards the cost of the whole scheme we appealed for £1,400. Probably the final figure will be £1,800. In response to our letter we have received in cash and promises £929. From 120 families this is a worthy response but half our letters have had no response. We do not want to ask those who have contributed to do more. We do want to remind the others that we shall be pleased to hear from them. And may I say how much the small donations will be appreciated. We are grateful to those who are giving practical help in the way of decorating some of the back rooms. Much money can be saved in this way.

One of the most encouraging signs in our Church life during the past year has been the growth of a number of PRAYER CELLS in some of our Classes. One class, for example, has a list of things about which to pray — any Church problem or person in need. In class and

at a given time each day they unite in prayer. They have had some wonderful experiences. This is the kind of thing about which one cannot write in detail without betraying private matters but it is the sort of constructive praying that we must develop.

Details of the services in Holy Week will appear in due course but do let us make this a time of rich blessing and deep spiritual renewal. Nothing in our Church or in human life matters if "Jesus be not raised." "Our preaching and your faith is vain." A deeper understanding of the Eternal truths behind the events of the first Easter is essential.

With every good wish,
Yours affectionately,
J. LEONARD WADDY.

DATES TO REMEMBER

March	8th	United Free Church Communion and Induction of New President.
March	11th-12th	Overseas Missionary Week-end.
March	17th	Second "At Home."
March	18th	Service conducted by Rev. L. MacLachlan.
March	21st	Philharmonic Society present "The Kingdom."
March	24th	(Provisional) Stone laying at The Brent.
April	1st	Mothering Sunday
April	7th	Third "At Home."
April	14th	Rev. D. N. Francis at Dartford. (Connexional Local Preachers' Secretary).
April	15th-22nd	Holy Week Services.
May	6th	Presentation of B.B. Awards following evening service.
May	8th-19th	District Synod at Herne Bay.
May	13th	Sunday School Anniversary.
May	16th	"Home & Community" Year Service.
May	23rd	Philharmonic Society's Concert on behalf of our Organ Fund.

The Church in the Industrial Age

Last October, the London Methodist districts held a one-day conference having as its title "Church and Industry."

The conference was concerned not only with the establishment of effective Christian witness in the factory and the workshop but with the broader issue of evangelism in a society that, in all its aspects, has become industrialised.

So it was a conference that was of interest to all Christians, and not solely those of us who happen to work in industry.

We who attended were not merely exhorted to support the good work that industrial Chaplains are doing by being more conscientious Christians in our places of work; we were asked to re-examine the entire interpretation and application of our faith in this nuclear age society.

Such a re-examination must necessarily involve an understanding of the situation obtaining in our present day world. At the conference, background information was expertly filled in by Norman Fisher (Chairman of B.B.C. Brains Trust and Principal of the Management Training College, Chalfont), and Reginald G. Cook (District Secretary of the

National Union of General and Municipal Workers). The chief speaker was the Rev. William Gowland (now Warden of Methodism's Industrial College at Luton) who challengingly explained the nature of the Christian's responsibility in the society of to-day.

William Gowland has a long and distinguished record of powerful Christian evangelism — Tilehurst, the Christian Commando Campaigns and, more recently, at Manchester and Luton — and he has no illusions. He knows that there is a war on — a war in which the forces marshalled against Christianity, forces of materialism and greed, are organised and militant.

Addressing the conference, Mr. Gowland claimed that Christians must be similarly organised and militant; and, in order to become so equipped, they must re-think their faith in the modern terms of the industrial age and then apply that faith with vigour and confidence. To be able to do this, they must set about understanding the political and sociological implications of Christian doctrine and then invade a world that is at present only dimly understood by most Christians.

Mr. Gowland believed that the situation demanded revolutionary thinking; he urged Christians to consider whether they were witnessing

effectively by doing many things in the Church that they had been doing for years—things that prevented their grappling with the problems of the present day and witnessing in the places where witness was most needed.

He said provocatively that if the Christian Trade Unionist was faced with the choice of being in Church on Sunday morning or at his Branch Trade Union Meeting (a real choice, this, because past neglect by Christian Trade Unionists had permitted meetings to clash with Church services), then he should go to the Branch Meeting!

Two practical suggestions emerged from a conference at which the problems facing the Church in this industrial age were realistically faced:

(1) The establishment of training groups where young Christians can be taught how their faith is to be expressed in terms of education, economics and local government.

(2) The transformation of our class meetings into study groups in which members work out a theological basis for applying Christianity to our present day society.

These suggestions are commended to all our members for earnest consideration. They came from a conference that was both stimulating and informative.

R.H.

NEWS

Overseas Missions

The Anniversary Week-end will be held on Sunday, March 11th at 11 a.m. and 6-30 p.m. when the Rev. E. Oswald Wells (Formerly Missionary in the Transkei S. Africa) will conduct the Services.

3 p.m. Sunday School. Presentation of medals and certificates to J.M.A. Collectors by Mrs. E. O. Wells.

Monday, March 12th:

7 p.m. Prayer Meeting.

7-30 p.m. Public Meeting in the Wesley Hall. An illustrated address on "South Africa as we found it" by the Rev. E. O. Wells.

Chairman: Mr. E. Chase.

"Teach us the lesson Thou has taught
To feel for those Thy blood hath
bought.

That every word and deed and
thought

May work a work for Thee.

For all are brethren, far and wide
Since Thou, O Lord, for all hast
died;

Then teach us, whatsoe'er betide
To love them all in Thee."

Womens' Fellowship

We are not holding our usual Special Service for Women this year, but in place of this we shall be

sharing in the Service to be held under the auspices of the Gravesend and District Council of Churches on May 16th in the Chapel of Unity to inaugurate the Home and Community Year, particulars of which will be announced later.

Mrs. Edmund Potts, a former President of Womens Fellowship, will be the speaker.

Please book the date and make a special note that this is not a service for 'Ladies Only' but for all the men and women of our Church and the other Churches in the town.

It will be an evening meeting. We hope you will support it. Everybody will be welcome.

Womens Meeting

Our annual Committee Meeting, held on February 12th, was most encouraging. Our numbers are steadily growing and we feel that prayer is playing a great part in the lives of our members. The women who attend our meetings have expressed their joy in the peaceful spirit which they find there and we feel that all who take part in our meetings, whether speakers or listeners, receive rich blessing from this hour of fellowship together.

Youth Fellowship

Cliftonville, Feb. 9th-11th

A dozen or so young people of our Church, accompanied by our Minister and Youth Fellowship Leader, left the Church on Friday evening bound for Cliftonville. Our purpose in going there was to have a week-end of fellowship, in the fullest sense of that word.

Upon arrival we were immediately made to feel at home by our hosts for the week-end, Mr. and Mrs. Porter, who had prepared for us the first of many excellent meals. The last hour of Friday evening was passed in the first of the hymn-singing and discussion sessions which were to prove a really great blessing to everyone who participated in the week-end.

The free periods which we had were spent in going for walks along the front, in playing table tennis and in hymn singing. However, these were but the lighter moments of our days, the more serious and more enjoyed times were the sessions led by Mr. Waddy and Mr. Mayne, and the various 'chats' we had in the lounge, for one of which we were joined by some young people from Cliftonville Church.

The theme of our week-end was "WHAT IS JESUS CHRIST TO ME?" and the following are some of the conclusions that were reached:

Jesus is a friend who is always at

hand to help, especially in times of bereavement and of deepest trouble.

Jesus was not just a great teacher and leader; and He can only be fully known if He is recognised and accepted as SAVIOUR.

Jesus' presence, first felt at conversion, is not a momentary flash, but just the beginning of an eternity of love and joy with Him.

Jesus means *everything* to the Christian, life without Him is not worth living, and life with Him is so full that no one can hope to explain it, all we can do is to invite others to join in our fellowship with Jesus and they will find for themselves the true meaning of life.

All of us who went were convinced that only through Jesus can we find the true meaning of life, and those of us who did not as yet really know Him realised their lack, while those of us who did know Him were once more brought to realise that only by sharing him in fellowship with all men could we show our love for Him.

The truth of this was shown to us not only through the service we attended at Cliftonville Church, when the preacher talked about their newly initiated scheme of pastoral visitation, but also in the opportunity to witness which was presented by the service at the hospital, which a number of us attended upon our return.

The week-end was finished by worship at our own Church where the subject of the sermon, unbeknown to the preacher, fitted the theme of the week-end.

The final assessment of this time of fellowship can best be made by saying that all who attended felt that Jesus was with us, and we are all looking forward to the time when we can introduce still more of our friends to the sense of being all members of one body of which Christ is the Head.

Hospital Services

It was a great joy to hold a Carol Service on Christmas Eve Sunday in one of the Wards for men. This was well attended by members of our Church and Choir, which added greatly to the singing. Portions of the Advent Story were read by three male members of our team, interspersed with carols connected with the readings. We have every reason to believe this was much appreciated by the patients and staff.

The time has come for a change of leadership with regard to the services in the Gravesend Hospital. It is with much regret that one relinquishes this much loved work for Christ. In doing so one feels a great sense of indebtedness to all those members of the church and choir who

have so faithfully maintained this service. It may be an unspectacular department of work, unknown to many, but one of immense importance, we believe in the eyes of God.

As we take our part with other churches in the Town, we feel conscious of that unity of the Spirit—so much desired—in bringing comfort to the fearful and sad; and the Word of Reconciliation to the lost and indifferent.

It is our earnest prayer that those who have given such consistent and loyal support in the past will be willing to assist the new Leadership in future days.

W.G.J.

The Sunday School

The Sunday School Anniversary will be celebrated on Sunday, 13th May.

The preacher at the three services will be our Superintendent Minister, the Rev. John Mayne.

We feel sure that the Church members will give their generous and encouraging support at all services, and look forward to a happy day of worship.

PERSONAL NEWS

Baptisms

James Christopher Tomlin.
Diane Carol Bain.
Alan John Buddin.
Christopher Clifford Roe.
Sandra Ruth Bentley.

Marriages

At Patcham Methodist Church,
Brighton :
Richard McElroy Scott to Anne
Elizabeth Andrews.

Deaths

Gladys Jane Woodland.
Isabella Cummings.
Albert Lane.
Angela Newlyn Judd.
Wilfred Lewis Browne.
Sarah Ann Langridge.
Constance Marjorie Mace.
Ernest Pinfold.
Claire Hutson.

Membership — 385

We are happy to welcome :

Janet Slade from London, Highgate.
John and Doreen Farrow from
North Shields.

We are grateful to the anonymous donors of a Reading desk and the Red Bible which we have received without knowing whence they come.

Lesley Morey

We are sure that all our friends will be pleased to hear that Lesley, after almost a year at home, is keeping very well indeed. She has a full time-table each week and is able to follow it without fatigue.

Lesley is physically very much stronger than when she first returned to Gravesend and the slow progress which has been evident over the months has been maintained.

We are, indeed, grateful to the Church for all the prayers offered on Lesley's behalf.

Beatrice & Gordon Morey.

At Homes

We are very encouraged by the success of our "At Homes," the first of which this year was held on the 17th February. In this informal way our people are getting to know each other better. The next will be on March 17th. If anyone who was invited to the first and could not come, wishes to come to another, will he or she feel perfectly at liberty to do so? If anyone who will be invited to the second and cannot come wishes to attend the third on the 7th April he or she will be welcome.

Westminster & Southlands Appeal

On October 22nd the preacher spoke of the importance of *Christian* education. It seems that the Roman

Catholics and Church of England are fully awake to this. The one Church has twelve Teacher Training Colleges and the other twenty-four. Methodism has two. Quite a number of the teachers in this Circuit were trained at Westminster and Southlands. To meet the requirements of the present day these Colleges must be considerably expanded at the cost of £600,000, of which the Ministry of Education will give three-quarters. From other sources £62,000 is available. Methodism is therefore challenged to raise another £88,000. Our Church is asked to have a target of £50. The Leaders' Meeting said that if the congregation would raise £25 they would give the other £25. To inform our people of the work of these Colleges so that they might know what the appeal is about we distribute leaflets and showed a film on the evening of the 18th. Our disappointment at the lack of interest is profound. Will those who believe that teachers should themselves receive a Christian training please make a contribution to this fund?

The Gravesend Philharmonic Society who have had a long and happy association with our Church are giving a concert on May 23rd, the proceeds of which are to go to our Organ Fund. We trust that this will be given much publicity and that our own people will support it fully.

All items for the June Newsletter must be handed to Mrs. Page by the 13th May PLEASE.