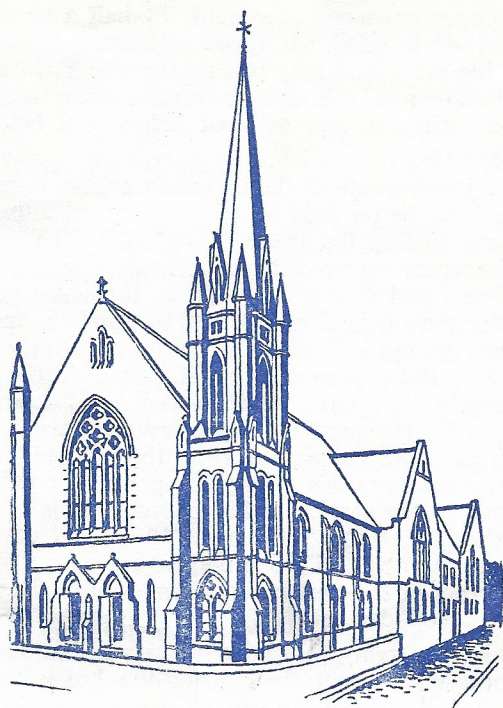


MILTON ROAD METHODIST CHURCH

GRAVESEND



No. 16

NEWSLETTER

June, 1961

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—7 p.m. Brownies.
7 p.m. Boy's Brigade.
7.30 p.m. Choir Practice.

TUESDAY

6.30—8.30 p.m. Guides.

FRIDAY

6 p.m. Junior Choir Practice.
7 p.m. Youth Club.

WEDNESDAY

2.30—4 p.m. Wives Club (First
and third Wednesday in the
month).
6.30—8 p.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,

There is much to write about this quarter and so I have decided to contain it all in the space of my personal letter to you.

Little more has been said about the organ because in the last three months it has been examined thoroughly by half a dozen firms and the reports are not yet to hand. It appears apparent however that we are facing a very big job. You may be sure that the Trustees will give very careful consideration to this and to certain other matters which are demanding our attention and will put before you before long a well thought-out scheme.

As I have just sent off all the necessary annual forms to the Inland Revenue to reclaim the tax paid by our Covenanted subscribers, I cannot refrain from mentioning the matter here. THIRTY of our members have signed forms stating what they give to the Church, (i.e. collections, subscriptions etc.) and promising to do so for seven years. The sum which these thirty contribute is £709/18/0d., and the tax which will be returned in the Autumn is £449. This means that thirty people are contributing £1,159. If everyone who could, would do this, our difficulties would very largely disappear. And why not? If a person contributes 2/- per week in his envelope and signs the necessary form, the Church would receive £3/5/6d. per annum from the Income Tax Office. The contributor pays no more, his money has gone; but he can arrange for it to come back in the service of his Church. This is so easy and so profitable to the Church that I am amazed that only thirty of our members are prepared to do it. Let me emphasize again that no one except the minister knows of the transaction. And you ought to know by this that he can keep confidences.

This has been a trying, and in some ways a disappointing winter to me. The uncertainty about the organ; the break between our last organist's going and the appointment of a new organist-Choirmistress; the long drawn-out negotiations over a new caretaker have placed a lot of work on some of us and especially upon the Trust Secretary to whom we are greatly indebted.

In spite of this, the solid devotional work of the Church goes on in the Classes. In this connection I would urge upon all our members a renewed reading of the New Testament in the latest translation. There is no doubt but that this book is making its impact upon those who hear it read and a greater impact upon those who read it regularly. Where the Bible is read carefully and thoughtfully, the devotional life flourishes; where it is ignored, that life languishes. No longer can people say that it is written in difficult language.

It was with deep thankfulness that I took part in the service on Ascension Day at St. Mary's with so many of my own people present. All through this country some really amazing things are happening in the realm of Christian Unity. The questions which I am asked about Methodism in Young Anglican groups are really refreshing and the interest shown by them in our Church is enheartening. What we need to do is to continue to explore ways of working together. This rapprochement is not a fancy idea of a few, it is a movement of God's spirit.

In July, Edeltraud Minich, the daughter of our refugee family, is coming for some weeks. This family is slowly getting on to its feet and we intend to stand by them until they no longer need us. The girl is looking forward very much to her visit and I know that our people will be more than pleased to see her.

I believe that the more we look beyond our own Church to the neighbourhood which we can serve, to our refugee family and to other ways of international reconciliation as well as to co-operation with other Christian communities, the more fresh and vital will our religion be. The Church which looks inward and is concerned only with its own fellowship grows stale. Along these lines there are wonderful opportunities of

service and if we lose ourselves in them we shall indeed find ourselves.

I trust that you will have a good summer, happy holidays, and that in September you will be ready for an eventful winter in the life of our Church.

With good wishes,

Yours affectionately,

J. LEONARD WADDY.

A Date to Remember

July 1st — J.M.A. Garden Party (See further information in this Newsletter).

Viewpoint from Pew-Point

Quarter by quarter we have endeavoured to bring before you the varying aspects of the life of our Church by contributions made by the Leaders and Secretaries of all the Organisations and Departments and by the Minister. The object of these articles has been to let the readers of our Newsletter know what is going on in the life of our Church and in the hope, too, that where a special need is made known, someone may be inspired to meet that particular challenge.

I could speak of all the devoted and loyal service being done year in and year out by all who hold any kind of office in our Church, but that is not the object of this article. I want, if I can, to gather up all our manifold activities into the one word "Churchmanship" and to consider what our attitude should be to the Church from the point of view of the person in the pew, and even if *all* we do is to attend the Services regularly and share in public worship, we can make a valuable contribution to the effectiveness of the Church by our very presence.

We have included in the Newsletter over the past three years articles on the Sunday School, Youth Work, Home and Overseas Missions, Christian Citizenship, Womens Fellowship, Wives Club, our Local Preachers work, our Refugee family, the Class Meetings, the pressing needs of our friends at Dene Holm and, with a wider outlook, the work of the Local Council of Churches and the Free Church Council. Such a variety of interests, and surely something for every member of the family! I believe that the dynamo of our Church is to be found in the Class Meetings and in that sphere alone a great fellowship of souls can be built up and that *IS* the Church with Christ as the foundation stone.

We pride ourselves on being a family and it is in the fellowship of the Church that we show what this means. Having fellowship with one another means with every member of the family and not just those we meet in a particular group. Of course it is impossible, with a membership of over 300, to know everyone who shares worship with us, especially as there are also those on the fringe who are not in full membership; but if we

really have a deep passionate concern and a sincere caring for people, we must extend the hand of friendship and let something of the warmth of God's love which we feel, overflow in our greeting. We are continually seeing strangers in our midst so let us continue to be the Church of a happy welcome, and thank God if we enter the Church one Sunday and find a stranger sitting in *our* favourite seat.

Why do we go to Church? This question could be asked of a dozen people at random and each would give a different answer—our loyalty as Christians to worship on the Lord's Day to join in praise, adoration and thanksgiving—we go that we might receive spiritual refreshment and renewal—to get help for daily life and living — of course we do — but shouldn't one of our reasons be that we go that we might *give*?

We must remember that there must be a link of prayer between the person in the pew and the preacher. Those who occupy our pulpit must be surrounded by the prayers of all of us who sit in the pews. It has been said more than once by preachers at Milton Road that when they have entered our pulpit they have felt a warmth of fellowship, and a sense that they are borne up on the wings of prayer which has made all the difference to the service. The atmosphere is charged with power. I would not for one moment minimise the responsibility that rests upon our preachers, but that responsibility must be shared by the congregation in the most effective way possible—prayer. The strength of a Church rises and falls with the level of its prayer. We shouldn't sit back and leave everything to the preacher; he needs to feel an upsurging of spirit from the pew to the pulpit, and we can give it.

In what attitude of mind do we go to Church? How often have we gone literally weighed down with the perplexities and problems of everyday life, our hearts heavy with anxiety or sorrow, but if we have entered the sanctuary "expecting to receive" we have found through the singing of the hymns, the spoken word, or just in the silence, a deep peace and joy and the burden lifted. Don't we often lose much of the blessing intended for us because we fail to believe that something wonderful is going to happen?

We are called to be ambassadors for Christ in our everyday lives—in other words, we may be in the pews on Sundays, but we are in the pulpit all the week witnessing to our faith.

What kind of a Church would my Church be if all the members were just like me? A terrifying question—we must in all humility pray that we may make some worthy contribution to its effectiveness by serving where we can, by our presence at the Services, our prayers for those who occupy our pulpit, a real caring for all the members of our big family, and, whether we are “on active service” or not, our contribution (if only as members of the congregation) can make our Church either one that is on fire or just lukewarm. It all depends on us and what we regard as true Churchmanship.

E.M.P.

NEWS

Overseas Missions

The Juvenile Missionary Association Garden Party to be held on Saturday, July 1st, in the garden at St. James's Church, will be opened at 3-30 p.m. by Mrs. Charles Bone of Norwich. Mrs. F. Nicholls will be Chairman.

In addition to the usual stalls and sideshows there will be a display of dancing by children of the Darnley School of Dancing.

If the weather is wet all the activities will take place in St. James's Institute.

We shall be grateful for any gifts for the garden produce stall.

Guides and Brownies

We invite you to “*A Country Evening*” in the Wesley Hall, on Saturday, 10th June.

Commencing at 6-30 p.m., the programme will include a Play by the Brownies, Country Dancing and a Camp Fire.

Light refreshments will be served at 8-30 followed by Square Dancing, in which we hope you will join.

The proceeds from this evening will be shared between our Church Organ Fund and the Pax Wood Camp Site Fund. This latter fund is to provide money for the development of a County Camp site which has been secured to the Guides on a 60 year lease. Our Company and Pack, in common with others in the County, have a target of £1 to raise for the fund, and we should therefore appreciate your support.

But, quite apart from the financial side, we would like to see you all on the 10th June and look forward to your company then.

Guide Capt. & Brown Owl.

The Womens Meeting

The Womens Meeting have shared a warm fellowship together during another quarter and we have greatly appreciated the help given us by our various speakers, to whom we extend our grateful thanks.

We ask that you may share with us the prayers we offer for our sick members and our bereaved member and for help and guidance in the work we are seeking to do among the women who attend our meetings week by week.

The Sunday School

Our Sunday School Anniversary one of the highlights of the year, was, as usual, a great day. The young people did very well—a grateful word of thanks to them and all who trained them.

Perhaps this is also the time when, as a Church, we can say thank you to our Sunday School Staff for all they do Sunday by Sunday.

PERSONAL NEWS

Baptisms

Hilary Jane Buckler
Elaine Janet Davis
Ian Robert Gordon

Marriages

James Geddes to Iris Jacqueline Dodd.

We record the death of Ellen Waters at the age of 89. She transferred her membership to us some 15 years ago when Princes Street Chapel closed. Her niece, Annie, who lived with her is in hospital in a very poor state of health.

We offer our sympathy to Mrs. Gwen Rayner, whose husband, aged 37, was electrocuted at work. She lives in Higham but transferred her membership to us a year ago. She is left with a baby girl.

Another sad funeral took place from our Church recently. Terence Harcup, a medical student, age 22, was drowned in the river.

Membership

We hope to receive about 20 new members at a Recognition Service in June.

We are happy to welcome Mr. and Mrs. C. N. Hudson from the Woking Circuit.

All items for the next Newsletter must be handed to Mrs. Page by 13th August, PLEASE.