

Keeping in Touch
Welford on Avon Methodist Church
February 2018

God among Us

**Incarnational God,
we celebrate your coming
as a baby in the manger
but where can we meet you today?
Have we imprisoned you
in a frenzy of acquisition
not just at Christmas
but throughout the year,
failing to recognise you
in the needs of so many
less-privileged than ourselves?
May the spirit of the resurrected Jesus
burst open the doors of our hearts,
stretch out our hands, through our generosity
liberating your incarnational presence
to transform our needy world.**

Our Methodist newspaper, The Recorder, very helpfully issues at the beginning of each year, a calendar identifying 'special Sundays' when those of us who plan worship are encouraged to include or at least mention a particular focus. In February this year, the 11th, the Sunday before Lent, is identified as Poverty Action Sunday, whilst the 25th, (memorable for me as my son's birthday), is the Sunday preceding Fair Trade fortnight when we try to ensure that the producers of what we buy get fair price plus a percentage to improve life in their communities.

So in February we seem to be focussing mainly on the needs of others. This reminds us of two routes by which needy people can be helped; by direct giving sometimes vital as emergency aid, but also by giving help which enables people to fend for themselves in the long run.

In my teaching RE days, the focus for understanding these two kinds of aid was a Chinese proverb, 'Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach him to fish and you feed him for life' I was very heartened much more recently when I was explaining to the undertaker, one of my former pupils, organising my husband's funeral, where we wanted donations to go. As he understood, he quoted the proverb and said, 'You taught me that when I was about fourteen!' It is uplifting to realise that at least some of what we teach – or even preach – does stick in the memory of those who listen to us!

This care for the needs of others resonates throughout our scriptures in one form or another, from very early days and is emphasised as time passes as being more pleasing to God than elaborate ritual which has no impact on the way we relate to others. For many people Jesus' teaching that anything done, or not done for the least of people, is as if done, or not done for him, governs much of their work to help others.

With all this in mind, I ask you to reflect on the item in this magazine submitted by our church steward, Alan Cumming, about our summer tool collection.

Perhaps you might start the spring cleaning of your tools early this year. Strange though that sounds, it might be that this is at least as important as our Sunday worship and personal prayer!

Sincerely, Ros Murphy

Welford Methodist Church Services all at 11 am

January 14th Rev Ros Murphy ACS

January 21st Mrs Anne Yelland MW

January 28th No service

February 4th Mr Alan Cooper MW

February 11th Rev Ros Murphy HC

February 18th Mr Stafford Mortimer MW

February 25th No service

MW – Morning Worship, ACS Annual Covenant Service, HC Holy Communion

There are services at Methodist Churches in Stratford, Bidford and Mickleton on 4th Sundays, all at 10.30

For service dates further ahead, please consult the church notice board or the Parish website:
welfordonavon.com/community/institutions/methodistchurch

.This is the note from Alan Cumming also to be in the Jan/Feb edition of WM.

Two years ago the Methodist Church in Welford acted as a collection point for tools which were no longer being used. The tools were then collected by WorkAid and refurbished as necessary before being shipped out to support various programmes in Africa.

This was highly successful and there have been reports of how the tools are being used by young people in Kenya and Tanzania. The last collection was a joint venture with Stratford Soroptimists and for the next collection we are expecting to work with Wellesbourne Lions Club as well as Soroptimists. There will be a collection point in Wellesbourne as well as Welford. A date has not been finalized but is likely to be at the end of May. All sorts of hand tools are welcome and there is a consistent need for sewing machines. The WorkAid website gives more detail of special needs from time to time.

Do please start to look in the tool box and see what is no longer used. A date for the collection (together with coffee) at Welford Methodist Church will be announced in the next issue of Welford Matters.

Thank you.

Alan Cumming.