

The **Methodist** Church in Scotland



# In Touch

**Issue 6 Summer 2016**

Edinburgh &  
Forth

Strathclyde

Ayrshire &  
Renfrewshire

Central

North of  
Scotland

Angus  
Dundee &

Inverness

Dear Friends,

I hope you have all enjoyed a good summer.

During my sabbatical, from March to June, I managed to do quite a bit research into the Methodist New Connexion, which as some of you will know was one of the smaller branches of Methodism in the nineteenth century. I was looking at the history of their three circuits in Cornwall. They were a denomination that was strongest in the north of England and so this pocket of circuits was a long way from any others – the nearest was Birmingham. Incidentally, the Methodist New Connexion did have one or two churches in Scotland for a while, but they never really thrived here.

As is the case so often, I discovered far more than I had originally expected and was also frustrated by missing records. In one case I am pretty sure that over one hundred years worth of minutes, etc were lost or destroyed when a church was closed in the early 1950's and another in the 1990's. So, if you have minutes or records in your church, please do not throw them away! I am also wondering, in an age of electronic minutes, etc, what record we will leave for future researchers to look at.

One of the things that always strikes me when I am doing this kind of research is that today we stand in a succession of Methodists who have sought, in their own day and generation, to be faithful to their calling to be disciples of Jesus. With the benefit of hindsight, I've often thought 'Why on earth did you do that!'; on the other hand I have been inspired by their readiness to grab opportunities presented to them.

What record of our faithfulness or otherwise will we leave I wonder.

My time on sabbatical was enjoyable and went far too quickly, but it is good to be back.

Kindest regards, as ever,

David

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## **Vice President of Conference, 2017-18**

We are delighted that Jill Baker from Strathclyde Circuit has been elected Vice-President of the Methodist Conference for the year 2017-18. This took place at this year's Conference in London (see reports elsewhere in this newsletter).

We will hear more about this appointment in due course, but meanwhile we wish Jill every blessing as she prepares over the next twelve months, as Vice-President Designate, for this very important role in our Church.

## Churchless Christians and Missing Methodists

Many of you will know that for a number of years we have been encouraging the establishment of small groups across Scotland, especially in areas where we have no churches, but also within our own circuits. We are grateful to Sally Robertson and others for the work they have done to further this.

You will also probably know that we have been discussing ways in which to reach two particular groups of people: those who would claim to have a Christian faith but do not attend Church – 'Churchless Christians' – and some of the 10,979 people who identified themselves as Methodist in the 2011 Census – 'Missing Methodists'.

It was agreed that we would look to appoint a person to work with these two groups of people to see if it is possible to establish a network of groups across Scotland where people can explore the faith. We applied for a Connexional Grant to enable us to establish such an appointment. We heard in June that our application has been approved and that we will have funding for five years. We hope that the person appointed will work with a team of people drawn from across the District to develop this very exciting piece of new work.

This will be a half-time post with the other half being an appointment in the Angus, Dundee and Perthshire Circuit. We hope to make an appointment through the stationing process in the coming year. Please remember the Circuit and District as they prepare a stationing profile and for the process itself. We pray that there is someone in our Connexion for whom this would be an opportunity to use their gifts and imagination.

David P Easton

## News of wives of past District

During my sabbatical I found myself on a Good Friday walk of witness with Margaret Horner, widow of Alan. She sends her warmest greetings to all her friends in Pollokshaws and across Scotland.

Bessy Tennent, widow of Harry, died in July at the age of 96. For some time she had been living in Dunoon near her family. Bessy was the last of her generation of the Lannigan family who were leading members of the old Castlehill (now Netherton) church in Wishaw.

David P Easton

## Donnie Caldwell



Above picture shows Donnie Caldwell of Wallacestone Church third left, receiving his certificate for services to Lay preaching over fifty years, man and boy.

Donnie became an accredited Lay Preacher at the tender age of 21 and has served his Christian family well in the Central Scotland Circuit with great dedication.

He is well known throughout the district and has also served in other denominations when approached.

We wish him well for the next part of his Christian journey.

Bill & May Thompson

## Jill Baker

Conference, Jill Baker describes herself (on her Twitter profile and elsewhere) as 'proud to be one of Scotland's Methodists'.

Jill has not been in Scotland very long, she moved to Glasgow last year as her husband

Andrew took on the role of Superintendent Minister in the Strathclyde Circuit, but she has always been a Methodist. Brought up in Codsall, just outside Wolverhampton, both her parents were committed Methodists and encouraged Jill's discipleship from an early age. At Durham University she studied theology and (despite sending him away when he first knocked on her door to invite her to the MethSoc) met, then eventually married Andrew.

For the early part of their married life together, Andrew was a Maths teacher and they lived in first Richmond, Yorkshire then Wolverhampton where Jill worked for the local council. Then came their first child, Timothy John and the call to ministry for Andrew soon followed. It was during the process of discerning their call to serve the church overseas that their second son, Peter Mark, was born.

This young mission partner family was posted to the South Caribbean, four years in a rural fishing village called Chateaubelair in St Vincent, then to the capital of Grenada, St George's. Jill is a reflective Christian with a deep spirituality and a gift for writing – these years in the Caribbean led to several resources for use in worship, not least *Coming and Going*, a daily Lent study guide.

The time as a mission partner also produced an ongoing love of the world church, and Jill has continued to share this passion since returning in 2001 to nine years in Stoke-on-Trent and a further five in Slough. This has included serving on the World Mission Forum and the World Church Committee for the Methodist Church and bringing a strong sense of the global church to her leadership of Methodist Women in Britain. Jill played a key role in founding this organisation, as a continuation of the women's movement within the church and served as its first Connexional President, during which time she established a partnership with the Church of North India and campaigned in solidarity with Dalit people at home and abroad.

Whilst in Stoke, Jill was heavily involved in local church and circuit life, where she trained as a local preacher and then became a local preacher's tutor in Slough, a role she continues to fulfil in Strathclyde. She is a firm believer in the important role of lay leadership in the church and will continue to highlight that during her time as part of the Presidency.

Tragically, in 2012, her younger son Peter took his own life, which has had a profound effect on the whole family. Since then, Jill has explored something of the power of silence and a more



meditative theology, including leading several pilgrimages to Lindisfarne and the Holy Land and is involved in introducing the Five-Day Community for Spiritual Formation to the UK. She has also written a book about Peter, celebrating his short life and reflecting on many happy years in the Caribbean - called *Thanks Peter God* it was published earlier this year.

As she becomes the Vice President Designate, she is already serving on the Board of Studies, Ministries Committee and is a regular member of Methodist Conference. Her commitment to the church, and to seeking how it can be the best servant of Christ in the current age, has been a major driving factor in her life and will continue to be for her time in office. We wish her every blessing on that journey.

## Methodist Conference 2016



**Holiness and Justice** is the Presidential theme for the year, and the address from the President (Roger Walton) (on the right in the photo), Vice-President (Rachel Lampard) (on the left in the photo) and Secretary (Gareth Powell) should be read or heard by every Methodist (copies and video are available online).

For those of us from Scotland and Shetland, the election of Jill Baker as Vice-President Designate for the 2017 Conference was a delight and a source of great pride. As Methodists in Scotland we have a minority status – in Scotland we are a tiny denomination, and at Conference represented a tiny proportion of the Methodist Church. Certainly at Conference the Scottish representatives made their presence felt (including with our Saltire displayed on the



Chair's desk). I am sure all of the Methodists in Scotland will pray for Jill as she prepares for her year in office, and that we make the most of this chance to highlight the contribution of Methodists within Scotland and Scottish Methodists within the Connexion. Jill's colleague as President-designate is the Revd Loraine Mellor (Chair of the Nottingham and Derby District).

The referendum vote on the European Union took place just a week before the Conference met; it was a time of great anxiety and uncertainty for many people, and a time of great hope and optimism for others. The Conference voted unanimously to agree to a statement condemning racism, which was read out in local churches the following Sunday. This wasn't about taking sides or expressing a view on the result, but was an acknowledgement that a reported increase in racist and xenophobic incidents since the referendum had generated a very ill feeling, especially after the murder of MP Jo Cox in June. One thing that the Conference wished to affirm is the inherent equality and dignity of every human being, regardless of race or nationality.



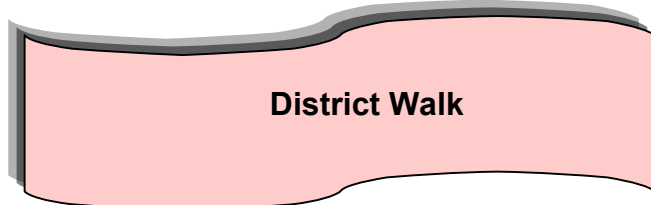
The report of the Marriage and Relationships task group was received by the Conference; thanks were expressed to the many thousands of people who had contributed to conversations during the previous few months. After a sensitive and moving debate, where views from across the theological and pastoral spectrum were expressed, the Conference asked for further work to be done including revisiting the Church's definition of marriage (between a man and woman), which may potentially make it possible for same-sex marriages to happen in Methodist Churches. The Conference heard that the Scottish Episcopal Church's General Synod had already begun an equivalent process and at its meeting shortly after the Methodist Conference, the United Reformed Church General Assembly approved this for the URC.

Conference is an amazing experience, a chance to see old friends and make new ones, and to be involved in the privilege of making decisions for the whole Church. Every Methodist should go

as a rep or a visitor at least once to understand how the Church works. Reports, photos and videos from the Conference are stored at <http://www.methodist.org.uk/conference/conference-2016>

Next year's Conference is in Birmingham from 24-29 June.

David Bradwell



A recumbent supernumerary's reflection  
by Allan Loudon

Jesus liked to go walking with his disciples though I'm not sure he had many options as First Bus didn't run in those days, though he did like donkeys. Nor does it say in the Bible that he had a dog but on the recent District Walk from Clyde Street in the heart of Glasgow to Paisley Abbey and the nearby Methodist Central Hall we gathered eleven walkers and two dogs, and I for one was grateful to First Bus.

We set off prayerfully in bright sunshine from close to the Roman Catholic Cathedral on the Clyde walkway with five walkers, following what we were reminded would have been the route of the early pilgrims to Whithorn. As we reached the Kingston Bridge we were soon joined by a further two people and a dog as we headed down the Clyde through the regenerated Glasgow waterfront. We crossed the river via the Bells Bridge close to the BBC headquarters and headed in to deepest Govan and the redundant shipyards. We made a stop to pick up two further companions and another dog and to use the facilities at Govan Old Parish Church which was open for a local fun day - allowing us to briefly learn a little of the historical significance of the place on the pilgrim route and as the starting point for Rev George McLeod's mission experiment and the founding place of the Iona Community.

Now numbering nine people and two dogs we headed to the shopping village of Braehead where a heavy rain shower saw some of the group sheltering under a tree as we put on kagols and rain coats. Thankfully the rain didn't last long and as two further companions joined the trek we stopped on the banks of the river for our packed lunch, gratefully and prayerfully received.

Refreshed, but having lost one of our number who decided the walk needed to include some retail therapy and briefly parting company with two others who needed to return to Govan to retrieve some left behind property, we set off again into darkest Renfrewshire; as we skirted a golf course, remembered the delights of the Yoker and Renfrew ferries and walked along the perimeter of Glasgow Airport with the still distant spires of the churches and old mill buildings of Paisley beckoning.

The conversation along the way was the full panoply of life; religion, politics and all things in between as old friends chatted and new fellow



travellers got to know a little of each other. In counting our number we realised that all of our male walkers were in fact Methodist Ministers, though this did not seem to affect the enthusiasm. Some of more mature years did begin to feel the distance taking its toll as feet and hips started to creak and blister. Perhaps this was just me – unused to walking significant distances but thinking the 12 – 13 or was it 14 miles was easily achievable. How wrong can you be!

The welcome of the good folks of Paisley Methodist was eagerly anticipated and we were not disappointed as delicious and plentiful refreshments were partaken and stories shared - and having shared we jumped (crawled) on to our First Bus or other means of transport to wend our weary way home.

The joy of a relaxing soak in the bath still left me rather stiff for a few days but with memories of a good walk, in good company. I am told further walks are planned so watch this space and come along next time – you won't be disappointed.



## Book Reviews

### **Holy Habits by Andrew Roberts**

(published by Malcolm Down Publishing Ltd.  
Available from Amazon)

This isn't so much a review as a recommendation.....

I first became aware of this developing work when I heard that the Birmingham District of the Methodist Church was piloting a Discipleship programme entitled 'holy habits'. They were working with the writer of this book (Rev. Andrew Roberts) who I have bumped into on a number of occasions when he was in Circuit ministry, through his work with the Fresh Expressions' team and as he currently works in the Discipleship and Ministries Learning Network in one of the regional teams. The ideas he writes about began to resonate with some discussions which our own Strathclyde Circuit are having which were entitled 'Rhythm for Life' and I thought that I needed to bring the book to the attention of our District – as its influence spreads across the Connexion.

The book describes the ten habits of discipleship seen in the early Church and as told in the book of Acts, chapter two, as a life-giving and transforming adventure. The ten habits are biblical teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, prayer, giving, service, eating together, gladness and generosity, worship and the making of more disciples. The book looks at what discipleship is and each chapter allows us to explore each holy habit in more detail with some contemporary storytelling, biblical links and useful aids to personal or group reflection. (It would make good group study material) The final chapter is an invitation to 'dream the dream'.....

The book offers no simple answers but poses questions to simply explore the why and how of being a disciple of Jesus in our fast changing and challenging world. Some may consider it as teaching your granny how to do what she has always done - but it is a challenging read about habits rather than occasional practices, potentially addictive and life changing ways of being a follower and learner and would be a helpful contribution to exploring what makes a true disciple for those who dare to dream.

Maybe if all the Methodists in Scotland read this book alongside other like-minded folks and explored its meaning for our place and time we might find a clearer way forward in our sharing together in God's mission .... Dream the dream!

Allan Loudon

As you will see in the report elsewhere on Conference, it was agreed that we would revisit our understanding on Christian Marriage. Material to help this on-going discussion will be available but I recently came across this book which I haven't had time to read properly, but which I thought might be of interest to some:

*Amazing Love: Theology for Understanding Discipleship, Sexuality and Mission*, Edited by Andrew Davison, Darton, Longman & Todd, 2016. £8.99

David P Easton

### Scottish Churches Rural Group

The Scottish Churches Rural Group exists to act as a 'bridge' between congregations of all denominations and the many statutory and voluntary organisations. Our aims are:

- a) To keep denominations informed about issues that affect the lives other organisations, locally appropriate ways to offer care and support;
- b) To encourage organisations active in rural communities to work in partnership with of people in rural communities and to encourage congregations to find, along with churches both to identify and to respond to local needs and concerns.

I am writing this just after another busy time at the 'Churches in Rural Scotland' Tent at the Royal Highland Show at Ingliston. As always, a team of volunteers was on hand to welcome visitors, offer refreshments and provide activities for children. The main purpose of our presence at the RHS is indeed that: to be present, to *be there* to talk and to listen, and to declare by our presence that the churches in Scotland are ready and willing to be involved in the problems and opportunities that life in rural Scotland bring.

Being present at our largest agricultural show also provides a fantastic opportunity for Christians committed to rural Scotland to share ideas, concerns and plans with a wide range of organisations, including our Scottish Government, RSABI, Social Farming and Crofting, Scottish Young Farmers and many more. These organisations are keen to identify local solutions to local needs in partnership with local congregations. *Members of the Scottish Churches Rural Group, therefore, want to hear from local congregations willing to work together in this way.*

I am currently in communication with several organisations ready to work together on developing a 'rural support network' for Scotland,

based on the model of the well-established Farming Community Network (for details see [www.fcn.org.uk](http://www.fcn.org.uk)) in England and Wales. As plans develop, we will be looking for volunteers to train in listening and signposting skills. Our aim is to

provide care and support primarily through supportive listening; volunteers will also be made aware of agencies offering specific support, so that they can pass on details, where appropriate, to callers to the helpline.

If you are interested in hearing more about this opportunity for volunteering, or would like to know how to get in contact with any of the organisations mentioned above, please get in touch. And if you would like to hear more about the work of the Scottish Churches Rural Group, or know of any issues relating to life in rural Scotland that the group should be aware of, then please let me know. My contact details are in the Synod Directory.

Lorna Murray  
June 2016

### Scottish Methodist History & Heritage Group

Are you interested in Scottish Methodist History and/or Heritage?

A meeting for all those interested in forming such a group will meet at

**Rosyth Methodist Church**  
**on Saturday October 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**at 2.00pm.**

For further details, contact  
David Cowling  
[ladywell@chapelden.co.uk](mailto:ladywell@chapelden.co.uk),  
01337 860291,  
or David Easton.



## 200 YEARS OLD AND EIGHT YEARS YOUNG

The City of Edinburgh Methodist Church was formed in 2008 from four previous Methodist congregations in Edinburgh. We adapted our oldest building (completed in 1816 at 25 Nicolson Square) to be our new home. That's how we manage to be both 200 years old and yet only eight years young!

We celebrated this on 28 and 29 May, dates which mark the anniversary of the opening of the chapel building here at Nicolson Square. The anniversary weekend was both fun and informative, and we raised more than £300 for the Edinburgh Courts Chaplaincy Project.

There was a brand-new heritage exhibition at the church, created especially for the weekend, but which will run until later in the year, which celebrates Methodist preaching.

A special First Day Cover was also produced for the anniversary.

Some of the events enjoyed by church members, families, visitors and friends were:

- 'A Few of My Favourite Things': A chance for members, friends and visitors to see and take part in sports, hobbies, toys and activities on display, recalling childhood in the past as well as the present. People had their memories tickled and rolled up sleeves up to try something new!
- Church Family Beetle Drive: Classic church party fun for all the family – included a pie and beans tea. You're never too old to call 'Beetle!'
- Celebration Concert: A Feast of Music with the chance for friends and family to join the choir for the night. Included Handel's Chandos Anthems and Gilbert & Sullivan's Trial by Jury. Guest soloists: Lesley-Ann Hastie, David Norris, George Ross.

Our guest preacher on Sunday 29 May for Morning worship was the Vice President of the Methodist Conference, Dr Jill Barber. After the service Jill formally opened our new heritage exhibition on the gallery 'According to Plan: a celebration of Methodist Preaching'.

The weekend was rounded off with a special Anniversary Lunch in the church's Well Café and garden - the sun even shone for the barbecue!



Deacon Belinda Letby, minister at the church, says, "It was a lovely celebration with the right mix of fun, laughter and fellowship. We are a young church here in many ways, and we also try to be future-focused, but it was very good and right to remember and celebrate our rich heritage as Methodists here in Edinburgh. Here's to the next 200 years!"

See some photos from the weekend on our Facebook Page here:

[https://www.facebook.com/CityEdinMethodists/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=641707075998611](https://www.facebook.com/CityEdinMethodists/photos/?tab=album&album_id=641707075998611)

## District Dates 2016

Month	Date	Event
<b>September</b>	TBC	Local Preachers Training
	10	Synod (Inverness)
	13 - 14	Ministers' Overnight (The Bield)
	14	Superintendents' Day (The Bield)
	14 - 15	ACTS Members meeting (Conforti, Coatbridge)
	17	MWiB (Scotland) President Ann Caldwell Commissioning Service 2.00pm (Wallacestone MC)
	26 – 28	District Chairs & Connexional Leader's Forum

<b>October</b>	8	MWiB (Scotland) District Day, Bless You led by Jill Baker 11.00am – 3.00pm (Armada MC)
	17 - 18	Methodist Council
	12	Ecumenical Stakeholders Meeting (London)
	15 – 16	MWiB Forum (London)
	17 – 19	Chair's Supervision Course (Cambridge)
	TBC	Regional Stationing (Newcastle)
	10	Ecumenical Forum (Stirling)
	TBC	Circuit Treasurers meeting
	22	MWiB (Scotland) District Representative meeting 11.00am – 3.00pm (Armada MC)
	29	LCISO & Ministers Safeguarding Support Day (Stirling MC)
	31 – 3 Nov	Stationing Matching Group 1 (Market Harbourh)

<b>November</b>	3	District Probationers Committee (Dunblane Cathedral)
	7	EMU 11.30am – 3.30pm (CEMC)
	9	DAF Meeting 2.00 – 4.00pm (Chair's Manse Stirling)
	19	District Policy Meeting (Dunblane)
	25 – 27	3 Generate Methodist Youth and Children's Event (Swindon)
	28 - 29	Stationing Matching Group 2 (Market Harbourh)

<b>December</b>	7	Chair's Support Group (Chair's Manse Stirling)
	14 – 15	Chairs' Consultation (Oxford)

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue of "In Touch"  
If you would like to submit an article to the Autumn/Winter issue, please send to Fiona Inglis at  
[fiona@methodistchurch.plus.com](mailto:fiona@methodistchurch.plus.com) by Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2016

Please use Word format when emailing

Please continue to check our website for updates [www.methodistchurchinscotland.net/](http://www.methodistchurchinscotland.net/)

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