

inter
MISSION
PRUDHOE METHODIST CHURCH

January & February 2022



Minsteracres in winter

image by kind permission of Minsteracres Christian retreat centre



Dear God, I wanna
take a minute not
to ask for anything
from you, but
simply to say
THANK YOU for
all I have.

His Unfailing Presence
Author Unknown

Another year I enter
its history unknown;
Oh, how my feet would tremble
to tread its paths alone!
But I have heard a whisper
I know I shall be blest;
"My presence shall go with thee,
and I will give thee rest."

What will the New Year bring me?
I may not, must not know; will it be love and rapture,
or loneliness and woe?
Hush! Hush! I hear His whisper;
I surely shall be blest;
"My presence shall go with thee,
and I will give thee rest."



6th February
1952 - 2022

Church Council
9th Feb 7:00pm

Ash Wednesday
2nd March (the first day
of Lent)

Women's World
Day of Prayer
4th March 11am at
Mary Magdalene

Mothering Sunday
(4th in Lent)
27th March

Good Friday
15th April

Easter Sunday
17th April

Acknowledgements to Margaret G for her inspiration to create this page

2

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Rev Jenny writes ...

Happy New year and welcome to our latest edition of Intermission.

- What is your favourite Bible Verse I wonder? I have many, but I love the phrase 'Be Still and Know that I am God' from Psalm 46:10.



It's a wonderful idea but it is not saying 'relax, I have everything covered' (although we know that God does!) This passage is about the might and power of God. It is saying 'Be still' as in 'stop, think, recognise that I am all powerful' and it is followed by the very decisive phrase 'I will be exalted among the nations'.

God calls us to retreat and reflect not just so that we get the physical rest we need. He calls us to stop and pay attention to his glory and might. When we take our sabbath rest - even if it isn't on a Sunday - we demonstrate by stopping that we know life is all about God and putting him first. It is a way of humbling ourselves and saying 'the world will keep turning without me, it is more important that I step back and focus on God.' Our sabbath rest and our retreat times are a mark of respect to God as well as a blessing to our own bodies and souls.

You will quickly spot that the recurring theme is one of reflection and retreat, this issue. We hope you find it helpful and that you are blessed and encouraged as you STOP for God and exalt his name in the days to come.

- Rev Jenny Porterpryde

We all have questions from time-to-time about scripture, our faith and our church practices. Why do we do this? What does this mean? Where can I find more about this? When did that happen?

On page 9 of this issue, Jenny answers a question about why we celebrate Christmas on 25th December.

Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow

Minsteracres, North East Women, weekend away 18-19th September 2021 .

I have enjoyed many weekends at Minsteracres over the years but because of the long and difficult 'lockdown' of Covid I felt especially drawn to this through the title alone. The weekend was led by Paula and Tim Rogers and was split into Bible study and craft, three sessions of each.

Session one: Lamentations ch3 v1-18, we discussed how the prophet had felt and how we could identify with the feelings of loss, emptiness and separation.

Session two: Lamentations ch3 v19-39 and Philippians ch4 v4-7 looked at 'Strength for today'. We discussed the fact that God is here – and so, we endure. Jesus doesn't promise plain sailing or easy times ahead but gives us the Holy Spirit which brings strength - to endure.

Session three: Lamentations 3 v23-24, Isaiah 55, John1 v1-9 and 14-18, John 10 v10. Bright hope for tomorrow. We are told not to worry about tomorrow and discussed the possibility of learning to live with Covid. Is Bright Hope for tomorrow all about what we 'do' or might there be elements of attitude or simply being? Romans 15 v13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Lots of work from the North East Women Committee and the Minsteracres team in order to keep us safe resulted in a wonderful time spent with God and our Christian friends.

Judith Dunn



Lynne Graham writes: I've been asked to be President of the MWIB Newcastle district, which will begin with a service at Corbridge Methodist church on the 17th March, where I will become President Elect. In November I will take over the role from Marie Beard. I'm to choose a charity for the northeast women's groups to fundraise for. I have a few ideas, but if anyone has any suggestions I will consider them. The following year it would be a charity abroad.

Minsteracres with North East Women

I chose to do the craft workshop rather than the bible studies, based on the word Lament. Lament is not a failure of faith but an act of faith, we cry out directly to God because we know that our relationship with God counts, to us and to God. Even if God seems not to hear, we believe that God is within shouting distance. During lockdown we all had a hard time, we've had different forms of worship, by phone, youtube, zoom etc. People have been ill, some have died, relationships have been strained.

Session 1 : Quilt Making

Our craft entailed making a quilt representing our shout to God about how we've been feeling, all the pieces connected, even in times of trouble. If we feel God is far away we are still connected through family and friends and the feeble prayers we sometimes whisper.

I made my quilt with coloured paper hexagons, pale blue sky, shades of green representing my walks in lockdown. I had a small amount of black, re: sadness of family members really ill with COVID. Red ones with close families' names on them. Yellow ones with friend's names on and bikes, walking boots, **signing** songs and encouragement. Bright blue and Fuscia pink for my two great grandchildren. Silver for my son's 25th wedding anniversary celebration, tinged with sadness that my daughter in law's great niece (Grace aged 11) had been diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumour.

Session 2 : Strength for today.

We did a finger Labyrinth on paper (there is actually one in Minsteracres garden outside the ball room) . The winding path helps us to let go, unwind and rest in God, Prayer with a labyrinth has 3 movements:

- 1.Move towards the centre letting go of worldly attachments
- 2.Come into a relationship with God
- 3.Move back out into the world walking with Jesus

We were given 9 points:

- 1.Start...I place myself in your presence, O Lord my God
- 2.Name our daily concerns, family etc
- 3.Confess any sin, let it be washed away. I listed my use of time ,lack of bible study, prayer time etc
- 4.God at the centre
- 5.Be prepared to share our life stories/ testimony
- 6.We are each unique, Gods knows our needs so we can have confidence and hope
- 7.Take a light with you. For me that meant friends who help my faith walk
- 8.Faith, take the Lord by the hand. Trust
- 9.End ... Go in the strength of the Lord

Session 3 : Bright hope for tomorrow

We pray and listen, read our bibles and gain strength and wisdom, but we remember what happened yesterday, help us see light in the darkness, our craft was to make a tea light holder.

Next time there is a retreat to Minsteracres, why not give it a go? There is a plan for a Saturday in June as well as 12th Feb. There is good food, good fellowship and a chance to make new likeminded friends and renew old ones, growing in our faith together will strengthen our church life.

Your friend in Christ, Lynne

Minsteracres Retreat, Saturday 12 February, 9.30am-8pm.
Information and booking form from Helen Taylor. Closing date for applicants is 24th Jan.

A New Year Story

Ernest Shackleton was very intrepid explorer and having been on several polar expeditions and was asked in 1914 to lead the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition. Though he was not taking part in the first world war his assignment was more hazardous than the average soldier was given. The object was to cross the continent from one side to the other from the Weddell Sea to the Ross Sea. But the project completely failed when his ship, the Endurance, got stuck in the ice and began to break up and had to be abandoned. The twenty eight men made a perilous journey over drifting ice and when the ice started to break up quite severely they had to row sixty miles in small boats to Elephant Island.

Most of the men stayed on this barren island while Shackleton with five others went on in twenty two foot boat to the nearest whaling station. They were 750 miles away and it took sixteen days through cold stormy weather. Imagine their disappointment when on reaching South Georgia they found that their boat would not last long enough to reach the farther side of the island where the whaling station was. Shackleton took the fittest two men and they had to climb up to the rugged peaks of the South Georgian Mountains, over the glaciers down to the far side and to the whaling station. This took a day and a half and in their already distressed condition was the worst part of all their journeying. A rescue boat was sent which picked up the men on the far side of the island and those who had been left on Elephant Island.



Sir Ernest
Shackleton
and the
Endurance

Shackleton wrote a book about this expedition and of this last part he said that during the long racking march from one side of South Georgia to the other, when all were too tired to speak, and their thoughts were about their closeness to death, in the absolute silence, they felt that there was someone with them. The sensing of a fourth person with them has been made by others who have travelled over lonely areas and many have felt such a presence when in deep meditation on their own or when in great danger. This phenomenon has even been given a scientific name "Third Man Syndrome."

In the book of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego endured the flames of a fiery furnace sooner than worship an idol. They said "Our God is able to deliver us, but if not, we will not bow down to an idol." They came out of the fire unharmed, not even singed and the king said he had seen one other in the flames with them like unto the Son of God. Jesus before his ascension said to his disciples, "Go and preach the gospel, and I will be with you always." We can be sure that he will be with us at all times and that means throughout this New Year.

There is no problem that you will have that he cannot solve, no danger that he cannot bring you through. You are never alone if you really believe that the main reason for Jesus permitting his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension was so that his spirit might be with all his children all the days. Perhaps we should ask God to open our eyes so that we might recognise his presence.

Prayer. At the start of this New Year we ask for your continued presence with us Lord, to guide us with your wisdom and to protect us with your love, each and every day. Amen

Charlie Bear donation (received by email)

Thank you so much for donating the proceeds of your recent Bring and Buy sale to Charlie Bear for Cancer Care. I have posted the cheque, with a covering letter, saying where the donation has come from.

I set out to raise £2020 during 2020 for this amazing charity. Due to Covid, the fundraising had to be adjusted slightly and it has rolled over into 2021, and now 2022! With this generous contribution, the total raised so far is £2483. I would like to thank everyone who has made this possible. I would appreciate it if you could send a thank you to everyone through the newsletter. Having support from Charlie Bear can make such a difference to the life of anyone struggling to deal with Cancer .

To find out more about the reason I chose to support this charity, please visit my just giving page:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/janetschallenge2020>

Many thanks,
Janet Orrock

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

- We continue to pray for all in our church family and their loved ones who are anxious or unwell at this difficult time and for friends struggling with bereavement or loneliness.
- Thank you, too, for your support for Action for Children; we will be able to send a cheque for £111.30 to this worthy cause.
- On 12th December we welcomed Gareth Veal into membership of the Methodist Church.



Remembering “The Arch”

“There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they’re falling in.”

- the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu

ASK JENNY - Your questions answered

'Why do celebrate Christmas on the 25th of December?'

After all, it is cold, it's dark and the shops are very busy ...oh no wait, the shops are busy because.....anyway!

To answer this question we need to remember two things. Firstly no-one really knows for certain when Jesus was born and secondly, we had a different calendar in the UK until it changed from a Roman calendar to the Gregorian calendar in 1582. If you think our government makes confusing changes, imagine going to bed on the 4th October 1582 and having to remember the next day was now the 15th October 1582! This is why Christian churches in other parts of Europe still celebrate Christmas on what is now the 6th of January - on the Julian calendar that was the 25th Dec.

(Confused? Don't worry we are nearly done)

The main reason Christmas is celebrated on the 25th December is because of a long held belief that the angel visited Mary on the 25th of March and December 25th is 9 months later. There was one other factor which influenced the decision though. Constantine, the first christian roman emperor, announced this date as a national festival in 336AD because the date clashed conveniently with several pagan festivals he wanted to overshadow to bring the nation to faith in Christ. Equally, in 6th century Britain, St Augustine of Canterbury, (sent from Rome,) started celebrating Christmas on the 25th Dec to overshadow the pagan winter solstice rituals.

The last reason is my favourite. It is simply that because Jesus is the Light of the World it seems fitting to celebrate him in the depth of winter as the year turns and the nights began to lengthen. Have a lovely January and if you feel like celebrating Jesus birth with a picnic on a warm day in 6th months time then why not? It is worth celebrating every day of the year.

A thought for 2022 - Called from obscurity.

God is looking for leaders who can become the hinges of history, those he can use to define the future. The people God uses are not to be found in the expected places. Moses was taken from the bulrushes; David was found in the fields; Esther was found in the fashion parade. Like many others in the Bible, they were taken from obscurity into the centre of God's purposes. God consistently calls people from the edge into the centre, so that they in time can lead others from the centre to the edge.

Thus Peter was called from Galilee into Jerusalem, and was sent out from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth; Paul was called from the Damascus Road to Antioch, and from Antioch to the world. And of course, when God chose to define this pattern (and to reveal what it means to be a hinge on which the doors of history hang) he sent his Son to be born in obscurity at the edge of an empire, so that he could journey to the centre of God's purposes and change the world for ever.

- excerpt from "The Apostle's Notebook" by Mike Breen. Kingsway ISBN 1-84291-007-8

THE NEXT ITEM ON THE A ... GENDER

- or "What about the menfolk?"

Is this something for the Church Council to consider? It is perhaps no secret that our womenfolk have concerns about the lack of local Christian fellowships specifically for men. Our women are well provisioned in this respect. In this newsletter we have often reported on the activities of Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB) and other activities organised by our ladies.

There is no denying that men are actively engaged in local worship, whether as preachers, stewards and providers of technical support. But is there a need for group fellowship specifically for our gentlemen?

We know that the twelve apostles were all men, and it was many years before it became acceptable for women to preach the Good News. And thank God that this is NOW acceptable. But have the men been somehow left by the wayside? Is there a need for a local men's fellowship. More to the point, is God calling us to organise this?

The Proof Reader's Lanemt

Part of the task of editing a magazine is to spot grammatical errors and "typos" and correct these before we go to print. Sometimes we get a bit carried-away and become a little too clever for our own good. So our apologies to Lynne (page 5) for thinking "signing songs" was a typo and changing it to the obvious "singing songs". Not so obvious. Those who know Lynne will know she uses British Sign Language (BSL) to SIGN songs. So we uncorrected her text just before we went to print. Final score ... BSL 1 : Editors 0

How did they get Planning Permission?

"A kitten was today rescued from a building site on the brink of death"
- BBC local news.

Local road sign "Take your litter home. Maximum fine £200"
" (we will get a search warrant)

Downton Abbey?

"I like it when men have manors and hold the doors open for ladies"

Recruitment sign "Vacant man wanted" (That's any man, then)

Butcher's sign: "Try our sausages. None like them."

A tailor's guarantee: "If the smallest hole appears after six months' wear, we will make another absolutely free."

"I hate Hippocrates, especially when it comes to religion"

OUR (inter) MISSION STATEMENT

[1] To inform our local community, and ourselves, of what happens within the walls of PMC (as a building)

[2] To inform the same parties of our organised outreach work beyond those walls (eg Open-the-Book)

[3] To inform about individual work and witness by our members working with the Holy Spirit

[4] To outreach our fellowship to those unable or (perhaps) unwilling to worship with us.

[5] To spread the Good News using a fresh theme each month.

[6] Making disciples. **Rev Rob Hawkins**

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intermission@uwclub.net

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Is the pool attendant called Moses?

