**RAYLEIGH METHODIST CHURCH**

Eastwood Road, Rayleigh

**Minister**

Rev Nana Thomford 01702 298135.

**Coordinating Steward**

Mrs Pat Norman01268 781896



**THE NEWSLETTER**

**MAY 2019**

**“HOLD TO HIS HAND”**

Derek Anthony Redmond is a retired British athlete. During his career, he won gold medals at the World Championships and European Championships. However, his career was blighted due to series of injuries. During the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona he tore his hamstring but continued the race limping and, with assistance from his father, managed to complete a full lap of the track as the crowd gave him a standing ovation.

Derek Redmond was in good form by the time of the Barcelona Olympics. He posted the fastest time of the first round, and went on to win his quarter-final. In the semi-final, Redmond started well, but in the back straight about 250 metres from the finish, his hamstring tore. He hobbled to a halt, and then fell to the ground in pain. Stretcher bearers made their way over to him, but Redmond decided he wanted to finish the race. He began to hobble along the track. He was soon joined on the track by his father, Jim Redmond, who barged past security and on to the track to get to his son. Jim and Derek completed the lap of the track together, with Derek leaning on his father's shoulder for support.

Dear Friends with this Redmond’s story in mind I want to encourage anyone reading this message that perhaps you had a very good life, and everything was going on well with you. You might have started life well like Redmond but somewhere along the line the challenges of life made you tore your hamstring and now you are stuck in life you can’t do things as you use to. You can feel in your heart that things are not going on well and that you can’t continue the race of life. As Redmond’s father held the hand until he finished the race, I want to encourage you that it is not too late because there is someone right beside you who’s hands are ready to help you finish the race His name is Jesus Christ. In this life sometimes, we become weak and weary wanting to give up. Many a times we get discourage, dismayed by some of the news we hear and what comes into mind is just giving up but, I want to encourage you to hold firmly to God’s hand, God’s unchanging hands as Redmond held the father’s hand to finish the race. We cannot depend on our world leaders to finish this life race, we cannot depend on our parents to finish this life race or we cannot depend on our ministers to finish this life race. My dear friends, I recommend you hold on to this God the one who created you and knows your future from the beginning. We live in a world that our greatest security and assurance is Jesus Christ if you rely on His we are sure of finishing the race of life.

**1**

We just celebrated Easter and as the season is still fresh in our mind, we should not forget the sacrifice Jesus Christ did for us in the Cross. Just hold to God’s hand and ask Him to help you finish the race. Lord Jesus Help me to finish this race of life.

Shalom and Peace to you

Rev. Nana Banyin Thomford

Minister Rayleigh Methodist Church

**CHURCH FAMILY NEWS**

Congratulations and best wishes for a happy future to Michael  
Lorrimore and Claire Higgs on the occasion of their wedding.  Details elsewhere in the Newsletter.  
  
Cynthia Hall is recovering from back surgery and we wish her well.  
Please also remember Pam Clark following a hip operation, Anne  
Davidson in hospital and Mary, daughter of Pat and Les Oatley, as she continues her treatment.  
  
We also think of Val Watts and Val Smith at this time of celebration tinged with sadness.

Val Tyler

**SERVICES FOR MAY 2019**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ' 5 May | '10.45 | W | Paul Saunders |
| ' 12 May | '10.45 | P | Local Arrangement |
| ' 12 May | '18.30 | RW | Rev Nana Thomford |
| ' 19 May | '10.45 | HC | Rev Norman Hooks |
| ' 26 May | 10.45 | W | Rev Margaret Deans |
| ' 26 May | '16.00 | Messy Church | Rayleigh Team |

P Parade HC Holy Communion W Worship RW Reflective Worship WF Women's Fellowship

**2**

**MICHAEL AND CLAIRE**

On May 25th at 2 pm, Michael Lorrimore is marrying Claire Higgs at the Rayleigh Methodist Church. Michael is the son of Margaret and John Lorrimore and many helped him by either buying the Evening Echo or voting for them to win the wedding competition. He would love to see many of you at the church to help him and Claire celebrate this special day.

**WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

Ourprogramme for May is as follows  
  
 6 May Bank Holiday

13 May Speaker  Karen Laurie  
 "Keeping fit in later Years"  
20 May Speaker  Paul Adams

"A Historyof Rock & Roll"  
27 May Bank Holiday  
  
Elaine Blades

**WESLEY GUILD**

Our programme for May is as follows:

2 May AGM

9 May Coffee Evening

Further Coffee Evenings throughout the Summer recess to be anounced later.

Margaret Flintham

**3**

**24 MAY JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY**

John and Charles Wesley were the founders of Methodism.  Two of 19 children born to Samuel and Susannah Wesley of Epworth Rectory in Lincolnshire in 1703 and 1707, their father was the local rector, while their mother was a spiritual inspiration to her many children.

Both John and Charles went to Christ Church, Oxford (1720 and 1726).  John was ordained, and Charles and some friends formed a “Holy Club” while still at college.  It consisted of men who dedicated themselves to Bible study, prayer, fasting and good works.  Such regular disciplines soon earned Charles the nickname ‘Methodist’.  The name stuck.

Both Charles and John felt called to the mission field, and so in 1735 they sailed to Georgia.  Their time among Indians in America was not a success – they struggled for any real spiritual authority in their ministries. Feeling failures, they returned to England in some depression.  John summed it up: ‘I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?’

Then the Wesleys made friends with some Moravians.  They stressed that salvation cannot be earned, but must be received by grace through faith in Christ.   Charles was the first to experience this ‘true’ conversion, when on Pentecost Sunday, 21st May 1738, he wrote that the Spirit of God ‘chased away the darkness of my unbelief.’

Only three days later, on 24th May, 1738, it was John’s turn.  As he wrote in his journal: ‘In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed.’

John and Charles Wesley then devoted the rest of their lives to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ – and turned England upside-down.  When the established Church threw John out, he took to the fields, preaching to coal miners and commoners. His itinerant evangelism took him 250,000 miles on horseback and to preach over 40,000 sermons.  His small “societies” attracted some 120,000 followers by the time of his death.

Charles became the most prolific and skilled hymn-writer in English history, writing hymns that are sung widely today, such as “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling.” In all, he wrote more than 6,000 hymns.

The legacy of the two brothers lives on.  As well as Methodism, their teaching has widely impacted the holiness movement, the Pentecostal movement, and the charismatic movement.

**4**

**THE STORY BEHIND THE HYMN “ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA! GIVE THANKS FOR THE RISEN LORD.”**

Not many university students are able to write Christian songs which become worldwide hits, but Don Emry Fishel managed it with his Alleluia No. 1.  Nearly 50 years on, it is loved and sung by millions of Christians worldwide.

Fishel wrote it in 1971, while he was a student at the University of Michigan and also music leader of a Roman Catholic charismatic community based in Ann Arbor, Michigan.  These were the days of folk songs and guitars, and Alleluia No. 1 fitted the prevailing mood perfectly.  Written in E Major, it is ideal for guitar accompaniment.

Mr Fishel became a freelance flutist, flute instructor and composer.  He was publications editor for the Word of God and Servant Music for a number of years, and then worked in computers for 25 years.  In 2008 he moved to Nashville and returned to music, teaching the flute.

Alleluia No 1 was Fishel’s first song, written “rather quickly, in about an hour.”  It had four verses to begin with, but a fifth verse (which became the third verse) was added later, as he prepared for baptism.  As Fishel explained, he wanted the line ‘We have been crucified with Christ; now we shall live forever’ “to be the centre of the song.”

Alleluia No. 1 was first published in the UK in Sound of Living Waters, in 1974.

**LADIES CLUB**

Our programme for the following weeks is as follows:

May 1 - Name Five

May 8 - Peter Lazell - Wet behind the ears

May 15 - Christian Aid Fundraiser

May 22- Battlesbridge

May 29 - Half term

Elizabeth Ellis

**5**

**ALL IN THE MONTH OF MAY**

It was:

500 years ago, on 2nd May 1519 that Leonardo Da Vinci, the Italian artist, scientist and inventor, died.

200 years ago, on 24th May 1819 that Queen Victoria was born.  (She reigned from 1837 to 1901)

175 years ago, on 3rd May 1844 that Richard D’Oyley Carte, British theatrical impresario, was born.  He built the Savoy Theatre and the Palace Theatre in London, managed some of the most important theatrical stars of the era, and founded a touring opera company.

125 years ago, on 21st May 1894 that the Manchester Ship Canal was officially opened.

100 years ago, on 18th May 1919 that Dame Margot Fonteyn, British ballerina, was born.  (Died 1991)

90 years ago, on 4th May 1929 that Audrey Hepburn, Belgian-born British actress, fashion icon and humanitarian, was born.  Her film roles included Roman Holiday, Breakfast at Tiffany’s and My Fair Lady.

80 years ago, on 25th May 1939 that Sir Frank Dyson, Astronomer Royal of England and Scotland, died.  His observations of the 1919 solar eclipse helped prove Einstein’s theory of relativity.  He also introduced the Greenwich Time Signal (‘pips’).

75 years ago, on 20th May 1944 that Joe Cocker, British blues/rock singer and musician was born.  Noted for his gritty, raspy voice. (Died 2014.)

70 years ago, on 5th May 1949 that the Council of Europe was founded.

65 years ago, on 6th May 1954 that British athlete Roger Bannister became the first person to run a mile in under four minutes. (Three minutes, 59.4 seconds in Oxford.)

Also 65 years ago, on 29th May 1954 that British athlete Diane Leather became the first woman to run a five minute mile. (Four minutes, 59.6 seconds in Birmingham.)

50 years ago, on 11th May 1969 that the Monty Python comedy group formed.

40 years ago, on 3rd May 1979 that the British General Election was won by the Conservative Party, and Margaret Thatcher became Britain’s first female prime minister.  The election was triggered when Mrs Thatcher instigated a no-confidence vote against James Callaghan’s Labour government on 28thMarch.

**6**

25 years ago, on 6th May 1994 that the Channel Tunnel linking England and France was officially opened.

Also 25 years ago, on 10th May 1994 that Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as South Africa’s first black president after many years of white rule.

20 years ago, on 6th May 1999 that the first general elections for the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales took place.  Donald Dewar became First Minister of Scotland and Alun Michael became First Secretary for Wales.

**15 years ago, on 1st May 2004 that the following countries joined the European Union:  Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.**

**THE MONTY PYTHON PHENOMENON**

The Monty Python surreal comedy group was formed 50 years ago, on 11thMay 1969. They pioneered a type of stream-of consciousness television sketch show, Monty Python’s Flying Circus whose influence on comedy has been compared with the Beatles’ influence on music.

45 episodes were made over four series, and the Python phenomenon developed into stage shows, films, albums, books and musicals. Being iconoclastic and anti-establishment, the Pythons – John Cleese, Michael Palin, Eric Idle, Graham Chapman, Terry Jones and Terry Gilliam – were inevitably controversial and made many Christians uneasy, especially after the release of their Life of Brian film in 1979, which seemed to poke fun at Jesus, though they denied that this was the intention.

Ironically, by 1994, the point was already being made that they had “begun to occupy an institutional position in the edifice of British social culture that they had once had so much fun trying to demolish.” The term ‘pythonesque’ as a definition for a type of humour is included in standard dictionaries – a fact that Terry Jones said meant that they had failed.

**Seven asteroids are named after Monty Python or its members. The word ‘spam’ referring to unsolicited e-mail is derived from their TV ‘Spam’ sketch in 1970.**

**7**

**30 MAY ASCENSION DAY**

40 days after Easter comes Ascension Day. These are the 40 days during which the Risen Christ appeared again and again to His disciples, following His death and resurrection.  (Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; and John 20.)The Gospels give us little of Christ’s teachings and deeds during those 40 days.  Jesus was seen by numerous of His disciples: on the road to Emmaus, by the Sea of Galilee, in houses, etc.  He strengthened and encouraged His disciples, and at last opened their eyes to all that the Scriptures had promised about the Messiah.  Jesus also told them that as the Father had sent Him, He was now going to send them – to all corners of the earth, as His witnesses.

Surely the most tender, moving ‘farewell’ in history took place on Ascension Day.   Luke records the story with great poignancy:  “When Jesus had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, He lifted up His hands – and blessed them.”

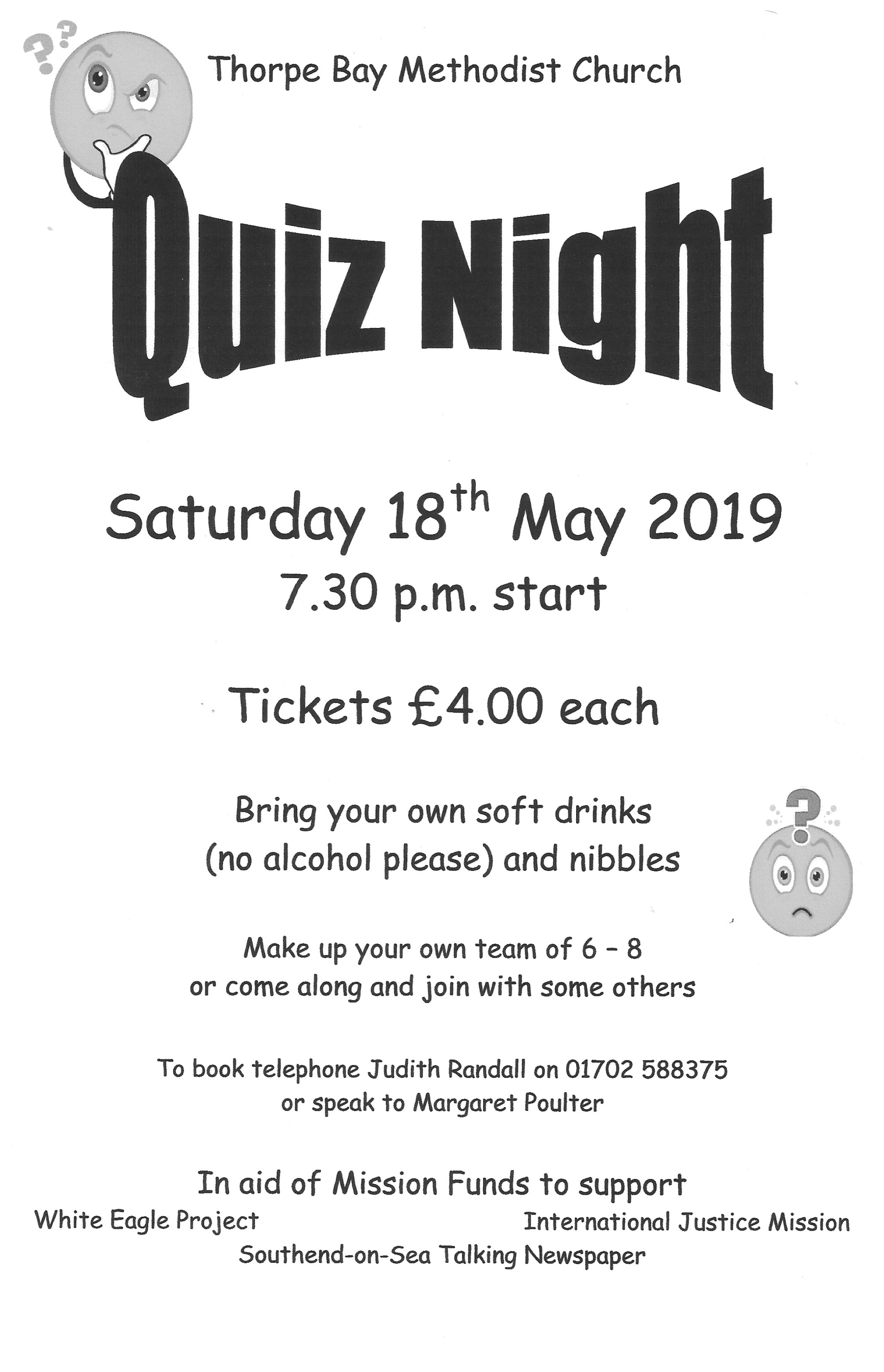
As Christmas began the story of Jesus’ life on earth, so Ascension Day completes it, with His return to His Father in heaven.   Jesus’ last act on earth was to bless His disciples.  He and they had a bond as close as could be:  they had just lived through three tumultuous years of public ministry and miracles – persecution and death – and resurrection!  Just as we part from our nearest and dearest by still looking at them with love and memories in our eyes, so exactly did Jesus:  ‘While He was blessing them, He left them and was taken up into heaven.’  (Luke 24:50-1)   He was not forsaking them, but merely going on ahead to a kingdom which would also be theirs one day:  ‘I am ascending to my Father and to your Father, to my God and your God…’  (John 20:17)

The disciples were surely the most favoured folk in history.  Imagine being one of the last few people on earth to be face to face with Jesus, and have Him look on you with love.  No wonder then that Luke goes on: ‘they worshipped Him – and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.  And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.’    (Luke 24:52,53)

No wonder they praised God! They knew they would see Jesus again one day!  ‘I am going to prepare a place for you… I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.’ (John 14:2,3) In the meantime, Jesus had work for them to do: to take the Gospel to every nation on earth.

**8**

**Do you know your hymns?**



Dentist’s Hymn…………Crown Him with Many Crowns  
Weatherman’s Hymn……… There Shall Be Showers of Blessings  
Contractor’s Hymn………..The Church’s One Foundation  
Tailor’s Hymn…………..Holy, Holy, Holy  
Golfer’s Hymn…………There’s a Green Hill Far Away

**9**

**CHRISTIAN AID WEEK (12 – 18 May) ALL MUMS SHOULD LIVE**

Sierra Leone is the world’s most dangerous place to become a mum. Every day 10 women die from giving birth. In Sawula district, the community struggle with a clinic which has no electricity and only two delivery beds.

Jebbeh is heavily pregnant but as her baby grows, it’s not joy that fills her heart, but fear. When Jebbeh’s sister Fatmata went in to labour, there were so few ambulances that Fatmata had no choice but to walk for three hours under the baking sun, to the nearest hospital. The journey was long and with every step Fatmata struggled to keep walking.

Jebbeh told us: ‘My sister was crying out with hunger. She died on the side of the road. She never gave birth.’

This Christian Aid Week, together, we can make childbirth safe for mums and babies. Through our gifts and prayers, we can help give the world’s poorest mums a chance to live.

This Christian Aid Week, 12-18 May, our Church is having a coffee morning see elsewhere for details.  If our church raised £300, it could help provide a new delivery bed so more mums like Jebbeh can deliver their babies safely.

**SMILE LINES**

**Top Ten Silliest Questions asked on a Cruise Ship**– Paul Grayson, Cruise Director for the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line

1. Do these steps go up or down?
2. What do you do with the beautiful ice carvings after they melt?
3. Which elevator do I take to get to the front of the ship?
4. Does the crew sleep on the ship?
5. Is this island completely surrounded by water?
6. Does the ship make its own electricity?
7. Is it salt water in the toilets?
8. What elevation are we at?
9. There’s a photographer on board who takes photos and displays them the next day… the question was asked: ‘If the pictures aren’t marked, how will I know which ones are mine?’
10. What time is the Midnight Buffet being served?

**10**

**All Pastoral Visitors**  
Please note our next meeting is Friday  24th May 2019  
10.00 am on the Welcome Area.  
The meeting will be chaired by Nana Thomford

Pat Shepard

**COFFEE MORNINGS**

The March Coffee Morning in aid of Leprocy Mission raised £259 and the April Coffee Morning raised £274 for the mental health charity Rethink. Many thanks, once again for your generosity and contiuous support.

**Coffee Morning**

**for**

**CHRISTIAN AID**

**(Marion Dann)**

**on**

**Saturday 18 May 2019**

**10.00 to 12.00 noon**

***It will include the following stalls, cakes cards, books, bric-a-brac,***

**and much more**

**Top Ten Silliest Questions asked on a Cruise Ship**– Paul Grayson, Cruise Director for the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line

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**11**



* + 1. **RAYLEIGH METHODIST CHURCH**

1. **PRAYER GROUP MEETING DATES**
2. **2019**

1. *May: 8th & 22nd. June: 5th & 19th.*
2. *July 3rd & 17th. NO MEETING IN AUGUST.*
3. *September: 11th & 25th. October: 9th & 23rd.*
4. *November: 6th & 20th. December: 4th.*
5. ALL MEETINGS ARE IN THE WELCOME AREA, COMMENCING AT 9.30AM, FOR ABOUT 45 MINUTES.



1. ***FROM THE EDITORS WE NEED YOUR ARTICLES for the JUNE 2019 EDITION***
2. *The deadline for the submission of articles for this edition of the Newsletter is Sunday* ***12 May 2019*** *( in Welcome Area) or*
3. *Wednesday* ***15 May*** *by post or email.*
4. [***johnward816@gmail.com***](mailto:johnward816@gmail.com)
5. **Bible Study** at Clifford and Linda's house at 10am on 24 May 2019 subject matter -"Joy" St Luke Chapter 24 v 33 - 53.

**12**

**SERVICES**

**Sunday Services**  10:45 am and (6:30 pm 2nd and 4th Sunday)

**Junior Church**  10:45 am

**Mid-Week Communion**

With the exception of August it is held on the third Tuesday of each month in the WESLEY ROOM at 10:30 am.

**REGULAR WEEKLY MEETINGS**

**Monday**

1:15pm Sunbeams Parent and Toddler Group

2:30 pm Women's Fellowship

**Tuesday**

**Wednesday**

1:45pm – 3:15pm Ladies Club

4:15 pm-5:30 pm Rainbows

5:45 pm -7:15 pm Brownie Guides

7:00 pm-8.45pm Guides

**Thursday**

10:00 am Care and Share

5.15 pm- 6.15pm Beavers

6:30 pm - 7:45 pm Cubs

8:00 pm – 9:30pm Scouts

8:00 pm Wesley Guild (Sept to May only)

**Friday**

4:30 pm-5:45 pm Rainbows

5:30 pm-7:00 pm Brownie Guides

7:15 pm -9:00 pm Guides

7:15 pm -9:00 pm Guides Senior Section (fortnightly)



**Preschool**

Mon 9:15 am to 11:45 am

Tues Weds Thurs Friday 9:15-11:45 am and 12:30-3:00 pm

*Editors John and Sue Ward* 9 *Sheridan Close Rayleigh SS6 8YR Telephone 01268* 742847 **(johnward816@gmail.com)**

**7**