



PARKWOOD HERALD

**JANUARY
2016**

Happy New Year

NEWSLETTER OF PARKWOOD METHODIST CHURCH
PARKWOOD ROAD LONGWOOD HD3 4TT

From the minister,

The start of a new year is always an exciting time in our household. On New Year's Eve even though we don't go out of our way to do old traditions like the Scottish tradition of first stepping, (although perhaps we should since my side of the family are Robertson's), we do tend to ask each other what our hopes are for the year ahead and what New Year's resolutions we intend to make. My New Year's resolutions tend to revolve around eating more sensibly and doing more exercise, whereas Andy's promises are often to walk the dog more frequently. Neither of us manages to keep these resolutions for any length of time, but that doesn't stop us from making the promise and having another go at reaching our targets, for at the end of the day if either of us ever wants to achieve our goals then we have to be prepared to keep having a go at reaching them rather than give up and not try in the first place. Of course there are many different kinds of promises that we make in life, both to ourselves and to others. At the start of the New Year most churches look forward to their Covenant services where folk are offered the opportunity to enter into or renew their covenant promises with God and affirm their desire to live for Him. Whilst we know that we will inevitably make mistakes and fail to keep our promises to God, that should not stop us from wanting to serve Him. The important thing to remember is that a covenant is a two way promise, when we resolve to serve God, He promises to come alongside us and help us, and when we do fall down and make mistakes He graciously forgives us and restores us and continues to remain faithful towards us offering us His love and care on a daily basis. Our relationship with God however, is not the only covenant relationship many of us enter into in life. Those who have chosen to get married have also entered into a two way promise with their spouses and made important promises before God, friends, family and each other. In the marriage service we ask all those present including God to help the couple to make and keep their vows. Of course in the world we now live in the concept of marriage and even what that word means has been gradually changing over time and what the church has traditionally defined marriage to be is not necessarily the definition others

in the world around us would use these days. Because of this, the Methodist Church wishes us all to engage in conversations about what marriage means for us, and is asking us if we the Methodist People want to look again at our own definition in the light of recent changes in the law and in the world around us. To this end there will be four opportunities across the circuit at different times, days and places to join together to discuss these issues openly, honestly and sensitively, so that when we come to our church councils we are able to share our views having already engaged in the discussions, thus enabling church councils to send our views back to Conference and answer the questions they have put to us. For more information please see the 'What is Marriage?' posters for times, dates and venues of the discussions. Of course January isn't the only time when we make promises. In the Church year, Lent is often a time when we try to either give something up or do something better, and for many it's a time when we attempt to join together with others to look at the Bible and see what God might be wanting us to do and be, both as individuals and as churches. This Lent, Rev. Sue Burton and myself will be leading a series of six small group meetings looking at the theme, 'Back to Basics', and asking what are the most important things that we as Christians should be doing as part of our walk with God? Posters with more information about venues and times will come out soon and we hope you will join us for as many sessions as you are able. In the meantime, I hope and pray that we will all have a happy, exciting and blessed new year ahead of us.

Every Blessing,

Rev. Debbie Hopkinson

Dates of 'Breakfasts' 2016

16th January

20th February

19th March

'Seeking to be the People of Christ at the Heart of the Community'.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

5th Pat Battye
5th Robin Whittam
8th Margaret Noble
10th Rita Crossley
12th Jane Flaherty

Churches Together in Lower Colne Valley Week of Prayer for Christian Unity meetings:-

Monday 18th @ Parkwood 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 19th Friends Meeting House 1.30 p.m.
Milnsbridge Baptists 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 20th St Thomas 6.00 p.m.

**Thursday 21st Paddock Village Hall time to be
arranged**

Friday 22nd St Marks time to be arranged

**Sunday 24th Churches Together Faith Agape meal
@1.00pm, Service Parkwood 2.30 p.m.**

Everyone welcome to any or all of these events



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DIARY FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

Saturday 2nd LVG Coffee Morning @ The Mechanics 10.00am to noon
Sunday 3rd 10.45 Messy Church/All Age Worship Service Own Arrangement
Thursday 7th Churches Together meeting Parkwood 7.30
Sunday 10th 10.45 Service led by Mrs Judith Robinson
Saturday 16th Community Breakfast 9.30 – 12
Sunday 17th 10.45 Service led by Mr Phil McSweeney
18th-25th Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity. See above
Monday 18th Parkwood Unity Meeting 7.30 with Rev Debbie. See above
Sunday 24th 10.45 Covenant Service led by Rev Debbie Hopkinson
Sunday 24th Churches Together Faith Agape meal @1.00pm: Service 2.30 p.m.
Saturday 30th Winter Warmer lunch Outlane 11-2
Sunday 31st 10.45 Service led by Mr Mike Richardson followed by Faith Lunch

FEBRUARY

Saturday 6th LVG Coffee Morning @ The Mechanics 10.00am to noon
Sunday 7th 10.45 Messy Church/All Age Worship Service led by Mr Iain Spencer
Monday 8th Church Council 7.30 Please try to attend
Tuesday 9th Leadership/Focus meeting John & Elaine's 7.30 p.m.
Sunday 14th Joint Service @ Lindley
Saturday 20th Community Breakfast 9.30 – 12
Sunday 21st 10.45 Service led by Mr Barry Lee
Sunday 28th 10.45 Communion Service led by Rev David Bidnell