

The Methodist Church

Harrow & Hillingdon Circuit

May 2019

Dear all,

So much has changed since my last time of writing. As a Circuit we hurriedly and sadly said goodbye to Nick and wished him well as he embarks on the next stage of his ministry and spends time focusing on health issues. Firstly, I want to thank Nick for his ministry amongst us. Secondly, I want to use this opportunity to thank all those preachers both lay and ordained who offered extra help to cover services and appointments- without your kindness and generosity my task would have been a lot more difficult - so thank you.

The Church Mission Plans have now been returned. I look forward to reading them with interest as we move to the next stage and weave these together to form a wider mission strategy for the Circuit.

In this quarter we celebrate, the third most important festival of the year and the one which in my opinion is undervalued, misunderstood and certainly side-lined by the majority of Christian leaders - that is Pentecost. Christmas has Advent and then of course its own season, Easter has Lent and of course its own season. What does Pentecost have? Nothing. Then one wonders why the Church is lacking in power?

The Person of the Holy Spirit is the most misunderstood, underrepresented and underutilised gift the Church has today. It is my opinion that if the Methodist Church spent as much time talking about the Holy Spirit as it does about the legacy of John Wesley then the Church would be more like the early Church described in Acts, not where it is today. If Pentecost had its own season and was a higher teaching priority in the Church, the Church would be powerful, dynamic and innovative. When I was training to be a Local Preacher (a couple of decades ago) I said to my tutor that for my research project I would examine the value of the Holy Spirit in worship. My tutor's response was "What! Do you want to fail? The people at Methodist Church House won't stand for that, that's far too controversial, look at the use of Worship Leaders instead." So it was.

This Pentecost, exclaim with Paul – “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline”. This should be our way of operating as believers in the power of the Spirit, celebrating Pentecost exuberantly and embracing the gifts of the Spirit to fulfil our mission as God's people.

You may have heard the expression that we are Easter people. How about being a Pentecost people - building God's kingdom here on earth.

Every blessing in the Power of the Spirit,

Andrew

Revd Andrew Pottage
Superintendent Minister