

# THE LINK

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WOODBIDGE



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ORFORD

FRAMLINGHAM



February 2012

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**GOD  
LOVES  
YOU!!**

*(More than you'll ever know!)*

## MESSAGE FROM THE MANSE

Dear Friends,

There are times when I reflect on why I am a Methodist - not why I became a Methodist, but why I remain a Methodist!

I was caused to do this again recently when I read an article on the Swiss reformer John Calvin. It was a small paper celebrating the glories of Calvinist theology and it started by looking at his doctrine of predestination. In his own words (translated into English!), Calvin wrote:

"He arranges all things by His sovereign counsel, in such a way that individuals are born, who are doomed from the womb to certain death and are to glorify him by their destruction." *John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion III: xxxiii:6*

and:

"We maintain that His counsel, as regard the elect (those bound for heaven), is founded on His free mercy, without any respect to human worth, while those whom He dooms to destruction are excluded from access to life by a just and blameless, but at the same time incomprehensible judgment." *John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion book 3, chap 21, sec 7, 210-211.*

He based his beliefs on various passages in the New Testament (e.g. 1 Peter 1:1-2 and Rom 8:29-30) and on the descriptions of God's power, often violently demonstrated, in the Old Testament.

I find the idea that God created any human beings simply to be destroyed is completely opposed to the God of love we see in Jesus. Jesus taught that sin can be forgiven, that repentance and faith leads to eternal life in God's kingdom. He revealed God not as an unmoving and unmovable judge, but as a loving Father whose heart goes out to people the moment they turn to him. In John 3 Jesus himself said 'God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him' - the implication there is that it is at least possible for the whole world to be saved! THAT is the God I know: the God of grace, of undeserved and limitless love; that is the God proclaimed by the Methodist movement which has always maintained:

ALL people need to be saved

ALL people can be saved

ALL people can know that they are saved and

ALL people can be saved to the uttermost.

I am a Methodist because the very root of my Christian belief is that Christ died for ALL and that therefore, salvation is offered to ALL. As a Methodist preacher I am delighted to be able to say to everyone regardless of who they are or what they have done: GOD LOVES YOU! (and don't let anyone tell you otherwise).

I leave you with a hymn by Charles Wesley, which could justly be said to be the Methodist anthem (the italics are mine):

Father, whose everlasting love  
Thy only Son for sinners gave,  
Whose grace *to all* did freely move,  
And sent him down *the world* to save:

Help us thy mercy to extol,  
Immense, unfathomed, unconfined;  
To praise the Lamb who *died for all*,  
The *general* Saviour of mankind.

Thy *undistinguishing* regard  
Was cast on Adam's fallen race;  
*For all* thou hast in Christ prepared  
Sufficient, sovereign, saving grace.

*The world* he suffered to redeem;  
*For all* he has the atonement made;  
For those who will not come to him  
The ransom of his life was paid.

Arise, O God, maintain thy cause!  
*The fullness of the nations* call;  
Lift up the standard of thy cross,  
And *all* shall own *thou diedst for all*.

H&P 520 StF 320

God bless,  
Martin

## WOODBIDGE FAMILY NEWS

In one of his poems, Coleridge writes “All Nature seems at work...And Winter slumbering in the open air, Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring”. Here in Suffolk, thus far, winter has certainly been smiling at us; in sheltered places daffodils are beating the snowdrops into bloom and some birds appear to be building nests. Let’s hope that nature at work isn’t misinterpreting the signs and that we shall escape the harshness of last winter, when many of us missed special events during December.

Not so this season. Early in December the members of the church responded very generously to the annual appeal for gifts suitable for the families at the Ipswich Women’s Refuge. The Choir Concert was well attended and after a splendid programme of music and readings, we enjoyed a very good tea party. Our thanks to Alan Ripley, Jean Crossley, the choir and all who helped to make the afternoon a success. Musical talents aren’t restricted to singing in church, however, friends are active in the Bach Choir, Woodbridge Choral Society and Julian and Kathryn, besides their Musicology performances, took leading roles in the Sound of Music at the Spa Pavilion, Felixstowe, in December.

Our thanks, also, to the team of flower arrangers who decorated the church so beautifully for the festive season and to the friends who erected and decorated the lovely tree – in fact to everyone who assisted in making the sanctuary and entrance hall especially colourful for the Christmas celebrations. For the first time in more than 40 years, I was away at Christmas but I understand that the Christmas morning service lived up to expectations and was much appreciated by members and visiting family and friends. Special thanks, as always, to our Minister, Martin, and all the stewards for the time, attention and preparation they devoted to all of the services.

Some of our dear friends have been missing from worship for some time and some have been confined to hospital for several weeks. We miss them and they, and all others who are in special need of our prayers just now, young and not so young, are much in our thoughts and concerns. Others after serious conditions are on the road to recovery after surgery and we are pleased to hear news of them or to see them with us once again. Three families have welcomed new

babies in recent weeks. Vera Keer has a new great-granddaughter, Autumn Elizabeth, born in USA; Barry Giffard has a new grandson, Dalton, thanks to his son Ian and Kathy; and Jenny and Brian Archer's daughter Caroline, who lives in Canada with her husband and young daughter, gave birth to Harry after quite a struggle. We ask for God's blessing on all these little ones and send our congratulations to the proud parents and grandparents. Congratulations also to Terry Goodchild who is the County President of Suffolk Bowls England for 2012. That sounds very impressive, does it not?

The Robertson family who left us last year and are much missed have been in contact and all seems to be going well, apart from Grandma being poorly. Caius and Keira are happily settled, Andrew is hopeful about a suitable job and Deidre is to work as an Employment Advisor for Mission Australia.

Charitable causes have done well as a result of the church's efforts in past weeks. The Choir Concert raised £424.00, half of which went to The Fund for World Mission (the remainder to our own kitchen fund), while the collection on Christmas Day produced £277.15 for Action for Children. Half of the sponsorship money raised by the cycling stalwarts on the day of the Historic Churches Cycle Ride comes back to our church for which we say thank you. Derek Peats presented certificates to the worthies who had taken part and they are John Summers, Ron Hepworth, Helen Peats and not forgetting Derek himself. Well done to everyone involved and we do not forget the efforts of other church members, such as Laila & John Orme, Muriel Booth and Betty Marks, whose efforts on behalf of the aforesaid kitchen fund have, at times, been nothing short of amazing. Church members have also been contributing items to the Salvation Army's Food Parcel distribution scheme.

On 15 January 2012, the Woodbridge congregation renewed its Covenant with God, as is our Methodist tradition and, following Martin's sermon, none could be left in any doubt of its depth, significance and commitment for every one of us. May 2012 prove to be both happy and fulfilled.

Audrey Robertson

## **FRAMLINGHAM FAMILY NEWS**

Such a variety of events and services have taken place since our last Link contribution that it would be difficult to comment upon them all.

The mild weather enabled many to attend the Advent and Christmas services and several from our church spent a happy time in Solar carol singing for Christian Aid one Saturday afternoon.

The six members of the Women's Guild enjoyed a delicious lunch in Orford. Thank you so much to all those who continue to prepare and serve these meals.

One of our Cameo evenings was at Ron and Avril's home in Badingham. Carol singing and festive refreshments provided by our hosts were enjoyed by many. I suspect that this will become an annual event!

Although there were many sales and coffee mornings taking place in Framlingham leading up to Christmas, our Stall on the Wall raised the super sum of approximately £700 .

Although several people help to set the stall up a special "thank you" must go to Linda and her team who wrap the presents, wicker baskets and hampers in such a professional way. Someone commented on the fact that they could have been in Fortnum and Masons!

Nancy Delaney a member of our fellowship for the last 3 years sadly died just before Christmas. In spite of mobility problems she was always determined to climb the stairs and was so cheerful and positive. She will also be remembered for talking to Frank in his native tongue as she had travelled the world and was not afraid to try out her German! Many of our fellowship attended her funeral sympathetically lead by Martin. We send our condolences to her family and friends.

The proceeds of the Christmas Tree gifts this year were shared between the Ipswich Churches who opened their doors to the homeless over Christmas and the Scripture Gift Mission who provide Christian Literature.

Two Soup and Pud lunches have taken place since the last Link Edition. Jean Crossley came and accompanied the carol singing for the December one and Meserit (Mercy) entertained us with a lovely spiritual Ethiopian song and dance. Any volunteers for the next one please?

Date for everyone's diary! The church Party is on 25 February. More details nearer the time.

We wish all our friends in the Circuit a healthy and a very happy 2012.

Our thanks go to Martin, Andrew and our Lay preachers who serve us so unfailingly throughout the years. We are very blessed

Gay Clarke.

## From The Beatles to the Bible

Most people don't realise many everyday phrases have been plucked straight from Scripture says a Bible Society survey. Respondants attributed some to Shakespeare—or even The Beatles.

More than half questioned in the ComRes poll rightly identified 'my brother's keeper' (Genesis 4.9) as from the Bible. For 'the writing on the wall' (Daniel 5.5-6), it was 19% while 18% thought it was a Beatles lyric. 41% credited 'eat, drink and be merry' (Luke 12.19) to Shakespeare.

A new booklet offers to help. Famous Phrases from the Bible lists more than 300 common phrases from Scripture. It includes an explanation of the sayings with an outline of the relevant passage.

Priced at £3.99, from [bibleresources.org.uk](http://bibleresources.org.uk)

## ORFORD METHODIST CHURCH

Undoubtedly Advent and Christmas was a very busy time - decorating the Church, meals provided, services held - these have all been widely appreciated by many. To mention briefly, the Christmas Coffee Morning, the wonderful Advent Candlelight Supper, Wednesday Christmas Lunch, the gorgeous and inspiring Candlelight Carol service and Tea, Christmas Day and New Years Day worship, not forgetting to mention Monday openings for refreshments and lunch. All this and much more enjoyed by local friends and visitors. Our many thanks to those who have been able to help in any way and especially the 'kitchen staff'.

After some 20 years of holding a New Year's Eve Supper and Watchnight Service this year, instead, Pam and Stephen held an Open House on New Year's Day with lunch and tea for those who came along.

Sadly the Winter bout of sickness prevented some friends from attending as much as they may have liked over Christmastide, however for most there is much improvement in health, for others there remains concern and prayers.

For some time our weekly prayer request (*as part of the Sunday Notice Sheet*) included Liz Higbee's mum Audrey Connor. In poor health it was perhaps no surprise to learn of Audrey's death at the end of November. Our continued support, love and prayers are with Liz and Niall in their loss.

Gratefully, generous Christmas donations together with proceeds from the Christmas Coffee Morning have been received to church funds together with collections for 'Children In Distress' Thank you all very much

## **Prayer Circles update**

Our Prayer Circles continue to be well used and hopefully those we pray for feel blessed and cared for. We are a scattered church, covering a wide area and it's wonderful to think that we can keep in touch easily by phone or email without even stepping outside our doors. Anyone can pray, and feel part of our church family, even if you are very elderly and infirm, and can't be at church regularly.

In the past year we have passed round 64 messages. We have 20 people who send messages by phone and 7 by email. It would be even better if there were more of us.

Would you like to become part of our Praying Church? Carol Hollett handles the emails, and I look after the telephone list. For those who participate by telephone, there are 3 groups and all you have to do is to pass on a message you receive to the next person on the list.

Anyone can put on a prayer request by contacting Carol or myself or the person at the top of their group. At the beginning of this new year I will be adding new people to the list, so this is a very good time to join.

**Helen Macleod** 01394 411232 [helenhollesley@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:helenhollesley@yahoo.co.uk)

**Carol Hollett** 01394 385329 [carol.hollett9@gmail.com](mailto:carol.hollett9@gmail.com)

## Happy New Year!

A bit late, I know, but this is the first 'Link' of 2012!

On 1 January, at the Family Service in Woodbridge, Martin gave everyone a gift: a clean sheet of paper to do with whatever they liked as an illustration of the gift of a new year which God has given us and allows us to use as we wish.

That sheet of paper caused a lot of anxiety as people wondered what they were going to be asked to do with it! In the event, we trust everyone used it for something. Some have used it to write letters, some drew pictures, some folded it up and took it home to use later. (It is a measure of the respect and maturity of the Woodbridge congregation that we didn't have 50 paper aeroplanes flying around the church!) One person used it to write a poem during the service, and bearing in mind the time he had, it is something of a masterpiece! It summed up the themes of the service very well and he has given permission to share it with you.

'Tis the season of goodwill  
a time we should rejoice  
The passing of an old year  
a time to make new choice  
A time of giving presents  
in celebration of a birth  
A gift from God in heaven  
a light to those on Earth

A time of making promise  
of love and hope and cheer  
To share with one another  
throughout the coming year.

*Geoff Jacobs*

"I want to thank Martin and Pam and the many in the congregation together with the Prayer Circle for all their prayers, as I am sure they have helped me to make the start of a firm recovery. It has also helped Pauline during this worrying time. Thanks again.

Alan Clement.

### **Fund Raising Committee**

Over the past few months our treasurer Colin has been outlining the need to raise more funds for the church. The Stewards have discussed this matter and feel that there is a need have a small committee formed to co-ordinate Fundraising activities and help organise extra activities. So if you feel you can get involved with this please let me know by the end of February. If you would like more information please have a word with me.

Anne

e.mail [stevensonanne61@yahoo.com](mailto:stevensonanne61@yahoo.com) or 01394 385728

a Cuppa  
and a Chat



Coffee, Tea or Hot Chocolate  
with Homemade Cake £2.00

Drink & Biscuits £1.00

Drink only 75p

***\*Free drink refills!!***

50% of the profit goes to Charity

***Please join us any Saturday***

**10am-12noon**

Woodbridge Methodist Church, St John's Street, IP12 1ED

### **LADIES' FRIENDSHIP GROUP**

Unfortunately the computer broke down after 15 minutes so we could not enjoy 'Satire in Song'. Although this had not happened before to our speaker, Mrs J. Kimber, she was prepared with an illustrated talk about codes and secret messages from 480 BC to the present day.

'Satire in Song' has now been booked for our meeting in May. Mrs P. Driver will be our speaker on 13 February.

Brenda Dudley.

Many thanks to the Rev Martin and the Church family for all the messages of concern, support, and especially for the prayers offered during my recent illness and resulting surgery. The power of prayer is a very mighty force, and Cath and I were sustained and reassured during a very difficult time. Please join us in offering prayers of thanks to God for the skills of the health professionals who perform daily miracles.

With all good wishes,

Sandy Hamilton

## **Martin's Web Wisdom**

Here is a little gem which came to me over the internet and I thought you'd like to share!

### *"IT'S ONLY A QUARTER*

*Several years ago, a preacher from out-of-state accepted a call to a church in Houston, Texas. Some weeks after he arrived, he had an occasion to ride the bus from his home to the downtown area. When he sat down, he discovered that the driver had accidentally given him a quarter too much change..*

*As he considered what to do, he thought to himself, 'You'd better give the quarter back. It would be wrong to keep it. Then he thought, 'Oh, forget it, it's only a quarter. Who would worry about this little amount? Anyway, the bus company gets too much fare; they will never miss it. Accept it as a 'gift from God' and keep quiet.'*

*When his stop came, he paused momentarily at the door, and then he handed the quarter to the driver and said, 'Here, you gave me too much change..' The driver, with a smile, replied, 'aren't you the new preacher in town?' 'Yes' he replied.*

*'Well, I have been thinking a lot lately about going somewhere to worship. I just wanted to see what you would do if I gave you too much change. I'll see you at church on Sunday.'*

*When the preacher stepped off of the bus, he literally grabbed the nearest light pole, held on, and said, 'Oh God, I almost sold your Son for a quarter.'*

*Our lives are the only Bible some people will ever read. This is a really scary example of how much people watch us as Christians, and will put us to the test! Always be on guard -- and remember -- You carry the name of Christ on your shoulders when you call yourself 'Christian.'*

*Watch your thoughts; they become words.  
Watch your words; they become actions..  
Watch your actions; they become habits..  
Watch your habits; they become character.  
Watch your character; it becomes your destiny."*

I don't recommend putting your minister to the test like that (I probably wouldn't notice an extra coin in my change anyway!), but it is a fact that once people know we are Christians they judge Christ by our actions and our values. As St Paul wrote: 'We are ambassadors of Christ' and I will add: 'whether we like it or not!'

Martin

Just a few words to say Thank You to the church for sending me a gorgeous red azalea to cheer me up as I recover from Shingles. Also for the prayers and messages of concern. They really do make a difference!

Helen Macleod

## **CHURCH CUSTOMS CAN BE CONFUSING**

Sometimes the words and practices of Christians can be confusing to those who are unfamiliar with our ways. Here are three stories to illustrate this.

This story was related to me by Muriel Booth. Muriel helped out with lunchtime duties at St Mary's and Kyson primary schools long before the title "dinner ladies" was even invented. At the start of the term the local Anglican rector arrived to say prayers and grace before lunch. He asked the assembled children to stand, put their hands together and close their eyes. At this stage, a young boy was heard to exclaim, "What? To eat?"

This story was sent to me by a friend in North Wales. She is a newly ordained member of the diaconal order and was very pleased to be invited to talk to a primary school for an assembly. She had been requested by the headteacher to be thought-provoking and had chosen the theme of Peace. At the end of her talk, she finished with an open-ended question, "What can we do to bring peace into our world?" She thought that then she would finish the assembly by blessing the children but had not reckoned on their understanding of Christian symbolism. As she raised her hand in the traditional one-handed blessing, she was surprised to see a flurry of hands imitating her raised hand. Of course, she had asked a question and the children wanted to answer it. They thought that was how she wanted their hands to be raised too.

This story was told me by a Methodist minister who helps out at Canterbury Cathedral. The Archbishop had preached, the cathedral was packed with locals and tourists. He invited the congregation to share the peace. A tall, young Australian was observed striding around amongst his more reserved fellow-worshippers with outstretched hand saying, "G'Day ! Cheers ! G'Day! Cheers !"

Monty

## Woodbridge Church Finance Report

<b>October</b>		<b>November</b>	
02/10/11	£ 344.50	06/11/11	£ 178.00
09/10/11	£ 364.25	13/11/11	£ 358.50
16/10/11	£ 303.00	20/11/11	£ 431.00
23/10/11	£ 313.00	27/11/11	£ 231.00
30/10/11	£ 353.00		
Direct to Bank	<u>£2,209.40</u>	Direct to Bank	<u>£2,460.90</u>
Total Giving	£3,887.15	Total Giving	£3,659.40
Budget	<u>£3,750.00</u>	Budget	<u>£3,750.00</u>
Surplus	<u>£ 137.15</u>	Deficit	<u>£ 90.60</u>

<b>December</b>	
04/12/11	£ 296.51
11/12/11	£ 391.70
18/12/11	£ 347.90
25/12/11	£ 33.00
Direct to Bank	<u>£2,259.40</u>
Total Giving	£3,328.51
Budget	<u>£3,750.00</u>
Deficit	<u>£ 421.49</u>

**Deficit for Year to date                      Month 4    £502.49**

In this period the following amounts were raised:

04/12/11    Soup and Roll lunch	£161.61
for Church Funds & Ipswich Women's Aid	
17/12/11    Choir Concert	£424.00
for Fund for World Mission & Kitchen Fund	
25/12/11    Retiring Collection	£277.15
for Action for Children	
Saturday Pie Sales By Leila & John Orme	£358.00
for Kitchen Fund	

### **Forecast Annual Deficit**

A letter is being circulated with this magazine from the Minister, Stewards & Treasurer. Please study it carefully.

Colin Sadler

### **WOODBIDGE DIARY**

5th	10.45	Rev. M. Dawes	Family Service
12th	09.30 10.45	Rev. M. Dawes Rev. B. Barclay	Communion
19th	10.45	Rev. M. Dawes	Communion
26th	10.45	Mrs. J. Paterson	

### **FRAMLINGHAM DIARY**

5th	11.00	Local Arrangement	Family Service
12th	11.00	Rev. M. Dawes	
19th	11.00	Rev. A. Royal	Communion
26th	11.00	Mr. W. Glasse	

## ORFORD DIARY

5 February 10.30am Nichola Glasse  
NO LATE AFTERNOON / EVENING SERVICE

12 February 10.30am Stephen Caley  
4.30pm Informal CAFE WORSHIP

19 February 10.30am David Welbourn  
NO LATE AFTERNOON / EVENING SERVICE

26 February **1st IN LENT**  
10.30am Revd. Martin Dawes COMMUNION  
4.30pm Informal TEA TABLE SERVICE

4 March 10.30am Stephen Caley  
NO LATE AFTERNOON / EVENING SERVICE

### **Meetings / Events:**

Every MONDAY - OPEN for Morning Coffee and Light Lunch  
from 10.30am - 2pm

Every WEDNESDAY - LUNCH at 12.45pm

21 FEBRUARY - SHROVE TUESDAY COFFEE MORNING and  
PANCAKE LUNCH 10.30am - 2pm

*date previous advertised as a QUIET DAY*

Ecumenical LENT DISCUSSION GROUP commencing  
TUESDAY 28 February and each Tuesday through Lent 10 - 11am

TUESDAY 28 February - TEA & CHAT - details to be announced

**The monthly newsletter for the churches of the  
Woodbridge section of the Ipswich Methodist Circuit  
WOODBIDGE, FRAMLINGHAM, ORFORD**

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**N.B.** Items for the March Link must be in no later than  
Sunday 12 February 2012. Please use the box provided in the  
vestibule at Woodbridge church or send to Brian Crowe:

**E-mail:** [link.articles@btopenworld.com](mailto:link.articles@btopenworld.com)