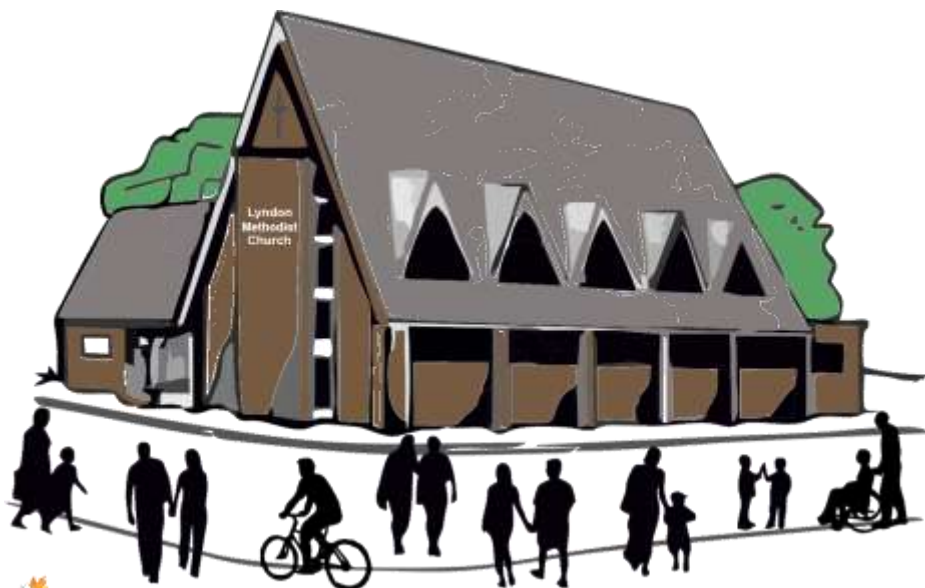


LYNDON MAGAZINE



**SEPTEMBER &
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The opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the Ministerial team or the Editor

MINISTER'S LETTER

THE WILL OF GOD part II

In the previous article on this topic I showed from the Holy Scriptures that the will of God is to be sought and known and done by everyone truly born of God. The general feeling in the church as I have known it while growing up as a Christian is that the will of God is nebulous and burdensome. This of course is a myth, and nothing could be farther from the truth than this myth. I remember at a youth camp the subject of marriage was being discussed, and we were advised as young people to seek God's will when choosing our marriage partners. A friend of mine asked a question that echoes the minds of many regarding the will of God. He asked: "What if God shows me his will and I DON'T LIKE HER"? There was raucous laughter! But do you see what I am talking about?? We think God's will is to take fun away from us and impose on us some rigours we are not keen on. This is a VERY UNWHOLESOME NOTION TO ENTERTAIN ABOUT THE MOST HIGH. We need to vigorously discard this mindset. God is loving and always yearns to give us the very best. Hear the words of holy scripture:



Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. **Then you will learn to know God's WILL for you, which is GOOD AND PLEASING AND PERFECT.** Rom 12v2 NLT

Did you get that? God's will is described here as being:

GOOD
PLEASING
PERFECT

Why will any sane person wish for something different from this? Our way of thinking is the biggest obstacle. Because we think wrongly, we think God's will is meant to make life difficult for us. I remember when I took my lovely daughter to school for the first time. When I was leaving her, she cried and screamed so hard it broke my heart. What was her problem? She was thinking wrongly. Later when she came to her right mind she saw that taking her to school was a glorious thing I did for her. To know God's will we must renew our minds by inundating our minds with scripture. There are too many Christians who know more of football heroes and politics than the Holy Scriptures, I trust I speak charitably.

There is a very common phrase often heard when we pray. After we have made our petitions we add: "Lord do it for us if it is your will". It gives the impression that we are not sure whether or not God will answer our prayer so we add the phrase: "if it be thy will". If it does not happen we straight away assume it was not his will. This is a NEAT way of avoiding responsibility. So, for example if an inveterate drunkard is seeking deliverance from alcoholism his prayer will likely be: "God, deliver me from alcoholism if it be thy will." If he is able to kick the habit, then it was God's will, if he continues with his destructive habit then it was not God's will to

save him from drunkenness. So according to this theory it is the will of God for that drunkard to continue in his sinful ways! This of course is a misunderstanding of how God's will is ascertained and how God's will works out in practical experience. I can see many pointing to our Lord praying in the garden of Gethsemane just before his crucifixion and saying: "Not my will but thy will be done."

I will explore this thoroughly in my next article and show from scripture when to pray with confidence that the thing asked for is God's will and therefore will be done and when to we cannot be certain of what God will do- TBC

Rev Joseph Ribeiro

BELOW IS A POEM FROM AN UNKNOWN AUTHOR. IT USED TO BE IN THE GIDEONS BIBLE WHICH WERE DISTRIBUTED IN ALMOST ALL HOTELS GLOBALLY. I FIND IT HUGELY EDIFYING — I TRUST IT WILL BLESS YOU

"The Bible contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers.

Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable.

Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy.

It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you.

It is the traveller's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christians' charter.

Here paradise is restored, heaven opened, and hell disclosed.

The Lord Jesus Christ is its grand object, our good its design, and the glory of God its end.

Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully.

Let it fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet.

It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure.

It is given you in life, will be opened in the judgment, and remembered forever.

It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the highest labour, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents."

Anon

Rev Joseph Ribeiro Sabbatical

16th October 2026 – 16th January 2027

Sabbaticals are a required part of a presbyter's or deacon's performance of his or her duties. They can be extremely beneficial both for the individual minister and for the health of the wider Church and can significantly enhance the ministry of the whole people of God.

For Methodist presbyters and deacons, a sabbatical is a period of release from ordinary ministerial duties, in addition to normal holidays, for the purpose of pursuing an approved programme of study, research, work or experience. It is intended as a time for re-equipping, refreshment and renewal.

All presbyters and deacons in Full Connexion and stationed in an appointment within the control of the Church are expected to take a regular sabbatical. The years in which sabbaticals may be taken are normally every seventh year of travel as a minister. For Joseph, I understand that he was due to take his sabbatical a few years ago, but circumstances meant he wasn't able to do so. The rules do not allow him to take a sabbatical during his first year of ministry at a new church, and therefore, this is the first time since he moved to our circuit that he has been able to take it.

The Methodist church is required to oversee and approve the nature of the sabbatical, be it some form of work, study, research or experience that a minister has decided to undertake, and this has to be agreed in advance.

The hope is that following taking a sabbatical "ministers return re-energised, refreshed and their calling re-ignited". Some of the quotes I have seen from ministers who have recently returned from their sabbatical include, *"It gave me the time to simply be with God, to listen and not have to rush away; to be touched, healed, restored and directed"* and *"Both I and the church benefited from creative work undertaken."*

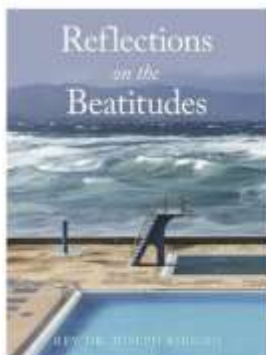
Rev Joseph has decided to take his three month's sabbatical based in Ghana. Whilst he is there his intention is to do relevant research to allow him to write a book on marriage. He will be away from the middle of October 2026 until the middle of January 2027. Whilst he is away from his normal duties, he will be covered by Rev Peter Bates who is well known at Lyndon and has taken many services. Peter will also be leading our Bible Study groups and will be available should any pastoral issues arise during the period.

We would like to offer our best wishes to Rev Joseph that his period of research goes well and he comes back refreshed and eager to continue his service to our church. We would also like to welcome Rev Peter Bates to our church and pray that his time with us is blessed.

Lynne Tyler

Note

Rev Joseph is not new to writing books. In fact, his most recent book was published in June this year. He has asked me to let you know details of his book which is called “Reflections on the Beatitudes” and is available from Amazon, priced at £14.99 for the paperback edition, or £3.99 for the Kindle edition.



Reflections on the Beatitudes

by Dr REV Joseph Ribeiro (Author) Format: Paperback



[See all formats and editions](#)

In this book you will discover that God wants you to be happy and fulfilled in life. He wants to be your friend and walk with you not just as God to be worshipped (he is to be worshipped indeed) but he wants to be your friend in such a way as brings you true dignity, power and fulfillment. However just as there is a path by which one who seeks an academic degree must tread to obtain his aim so the almighty has ordained a path for all who will walk with him and experience his power and riches this path is enshrined in the beatitudes and this book seeks to explicate the beatitudes.

Report an issue with this product

Print length



90 pages

Language



English

Publisher



AuthorHouse

Publication date



14 Jun. 2025

Dimensions



20.96 x 6.48 x
27.34 cm



MHA Sunday 2026



We have not had an MHA Sunday service this year, although we recently prayed for their work and leaflets were distributed as part of a recent service. However, I think that it is important that we recognise the work that is done by MHA and help where we can.

The information below has been taken from the MHA website – mha.org.uk. There is also a video which goes with the service which you can watch on the website, too.

This year's MHA Sunday service focuses on the issue of loneliness. At MHA, loneliness is seen as an issue of justice – loneliness doesn't just happen but becomes an issue wherever people face marginalisation or exclusion. This contrasts with the picture of God's kingdom painted in this year's scripture passage – Luke 14:15-23 (the parable of the banquet). Here we see an image of everyone being welcomed in together, especially those who are usually on the edges.

The article on the website includes some statistics which are quite shocking and offer an insight as to why the work that MHA does and challenges us to do to is so important.

During the period from October 2023 to March 2024, approximately 3.1 million people in England reported that they felt lonely often or always. Risk factors that can lead to loneliness tend to increase and converge as we get older – key factors associated with older age include:

- Facing bereavement
- Living alone
- Living with limiting disabilities or illnesses
- Caring for a partner
- Physical and mental health difficulties
- Low fixed incomes (e.g. pensions) making activities unaffordable
- Digital exclusion
- Reduced mobility

According to Age UK older people living in England are 5.5 times more likely to be lonely if they don't have someone to open up to when they need to, 5.2 times more likely to be often lonely if they are widowed and 3.7 times more likely to be often lonely if they are in poor health.

MHA's Befriending services around the country tackle the issue of loneliness. But befriending is just one of the ways that MHA works. MHA communities services also run a whole range of activities and clubs, which bring older people together and help them to make connections within their communities. Their Retirement Living Schemes and Care Homes create community, supported by the work of our chaplains across all these homes and schemes. If you want more information about these, then it is all available on the MHA website.

I have included the sermon directly from the website. It certainly makes you stop and think and reading it probably has more impact than if you sat and listened to it as you have the opportunity to re-read and reflect on what is said. It challenges you to contemplate how you live your own life and what you can do to make a difference. For ease, I have also included the text of the Bible reading below:

Luke 14:15-23 A Story About People Invited to a Dinner

15 One of the men sitting at the table with Jesus heard these things. The man said to him, "It will be a great blessing for anyone to eat a meal in God's kingdom!"

16 Jesus said to him, "A man gave a big dinner. He invited many people. 17 When it was time to eat, he sent his servant to tell the guests, 'Come. The food is ready.' 18 But all the guests said they could not come. Each one made an excuse. The first one said, 'I have just bought a field, so I must go look at it. Please excuse me.' 19 Another man said, 'I have just bought five pairs of work animals; I must go and try them out. Please excuse me.' 20 A third man said, 'I just got married; I can't come.'

21 "So the servant returned and told his master what happened. The master was angry. He said, 'Hurry! Go into the streets and alleys of the town. Bring me the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.'

22 "Later, the servant said to him, 'Master, I did what you told me to do, but we still have places for more people.' 23 The master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and country roads. Tell the people there to come. I want my house to be full!'

The Sermon

Jesus tells a story at a dinner party where everyone watching him knows exactly who should be there, and exactly who should not.

And then he tells a story that quietly offends every assumption in the room.

At first, it sounds like a story about hospitality. About a generous host and a great banquet. Then, just as the listeners are beginning to imagine packed tables, and overflowing cups it becomes clear that this is not a comforting story at all. It is a story that unsettles the people listening, because it exposes the invisible rules by which they live.

Who gets invited. Who is expected. Who is overlooked.

Jesus tells this story in a place where everyone believes the table already makes sense. And he tells it precisely to show them that it does not.

In the story, the invitations are sent



The second cup

out. The food is prepared. The table is laid. And then the excuses begin.

One person has property to attend to. Another has business commitments. Another simply has other priorities.

None of these excuses are shocking.

The problem is not hostility. It is distraction. Comfort. Busyness.

And the host is angry. Not because his pride is wounded, but because he refuses to accept an empty table.

In this story, absence is the scandal.

The banquet has been prepared for people, and when the expected guests will not come, the invitation goes wider. The host sends his servants out again, first into the streets and lanes of the town, and then even further, until the table is full.

In this story, absence is never treated as normal.

This is where the parable turns towards us.

Because the question it raises isn't simply, "Who is welcome in God's kingdom?"

It's, "Who is missing?"

And more uncomfortably, "Whose absence have we learned to accept?"

In Jesus' world, there were people who were routinely left out. The poor. The disabled. Those who did not fit the social or religious expectations of the time. Their absence from the table was normalised.

Jesus refuses to accept that normal.

Absence is rarely accidental. It is shaped by loss, exclusion, and neglect, as people are quietly pushed to the edges.

When people disappear from our shared life without anyone noticing, something has already gone wrong.

The kingdom of God is not simply about gathering those who already belong. It is about noticing who is not there, and refusing to let that absence be the end of the story.

In every era, there are absences that are easy to explain away. People we stop expecting to see. People whose disappearance feels almost



make it matter

natural.

In our own time, one of the most normalised absences is the loneliness of people in later life.

Loneliness in later life is rarely dramatic. It grows through bereavement, declining health, reduced mobility, limited income, and shrinking confidence.

In England today, over three million people say they feel lonely often or always. That is not a marginal issue. It is a quiet reality for millions of lives lived largely out of sight.

But loneliness is not, at heart, a statistic.

It is the experience of days without meaningful conversation. Of being known once, and no longer. Of sensing that your presence or absence would make little difference. And that is why loneliness is a matter of justice.

The most important thing about the parable is not who refuses the invitation.

It is what the host does next.

He does not cancel the banquet. He does not lower his expectations. He does not accept that this is simply how things are.

He sends his servants out.

First into the streets and lanes of the town. Then further still, beyond the usual boundaries, until the table is full.

It's an active, deliberate, and persistent welcome. God does not wait for people to find their way in. God goes looking.

The kingdom of God advances not by accident, but by invitation.

And notice this: the servants are not asked to judge who deserves a place. They are sent to make room.

It's the turning point in the story.

The problem of loneliness and exclusion is not met with explanation or sympathy alone, but with movement. With action. With people willing to be sent.

God's response to empty seats is not resignation. It is commissioning. God's hospitality continues wherever someone is willing to pour a second cup. At this table there is the cup set before us, and the cup we choose to share.

This is where the story meets our own time.

In the parable, the servants are sent out to make the invitation real. They bring the promise of the banquet to those who had assumed it was not meant for them.

That is where MHA stands in this story as one way the Methodist Church responds to this commissioning of God.

Across our care homes, retirement living schemes, and community services, MHA works to create community where isolation has taken hold, and connection where

loneliness has become normal.

One expression of this is our befriending service.

Through regular phone calls and visits, volunteers offer something that sounds small, but is anything but: presence. Attention. Relationship.

One person who receives befriending through MHA put it like this:

"I love the calls from my volunteer. We hit it off from the very start. She's given me confidence to go out again and meet my friend for coffee once a week. I look forward to the calls, and so does she."

That is not just companionship. That is dignity being restored. A life widening again.

Alongside this, MHA's chaplains work day by day in care homes and retirement living schemes, offering pastoral presence, noticing who is struggling, and helping to ensure that no one is left unseen at the edges of community life.

It is the servant stepping out again, saying: there is room at the table.

And the story slows down there.

With servants moving through streets and lanes, carrying an invitation that feels almost too generous to be true. With a table filling slowly, unevenly, unexpectedly.

The banquet does not fill itself. It fills because the invitation keeps being carried.

And that raises a question the parable never answers directly.

Not whether the invitation is generous. But how it continues to be offered.

Sending servants costs something. Time. Energy. Commitment. Provision.

A banquet that keeps its doors open must be sustained.

The measure of this banquet is not the beauty of the host's intention, but whether the invitation keeps reaching those who have not yet heard.

This is where the work of MHA belongs.

Not outside the story, but within it.

Befriending, chaplaincy, community life – these are not side projects. They are ways the invitation continues to be carried to people who would otherwise remain unseen.

But like every act of sending, this work relies on shared commitment.

For some, responding to this invitation will mean becoming a volunteer with MHA's befriending service, continuing to say to people in later life: you matter, and you have a place in this world.

Some do this by praying – holding before God those who feel lonely, and those who go out week by week carrying the invitation.

And some do this by giving financially as a way of ensuring that the invitation keeps being offered, and that the table remains open to those who have stopped

expecting a place.

The banquet in Jesus' parable does not end with perfection. It ends with fullness.

A table crowded with unexpected guests.

People who did not expect to be there, discovering that the invitation was real after all.

This is the vision of the kingdom Jesus offers.

Not a community formed by similarity, but by welcome.

Not a gathering defined by status, but by grace.

At this table, there are two cups. The cup poured for us, and the cup that says, "There is room at this table for you, too".

May we be people willing to share that second cup.

Willing to pray, to give, and to serve, so that the invitation keeps being offered.

And somewhere, even now, someone who has stopped expecting an invitation is waiting to hear that it is true.

Let us be people who help carry that invitation.

Amen

If you feel moved to help support the work of MHA, there are many ways you can help. This is not just about giving financial donations (although of course those are vital to sustaining their work and much appreciated!) People can also join with MHA in this work by praying for them, and also by volunteering their time at a local home or scheme, as a telephone befriender. All the necessary details can be found on the MHA website mha.org.uk. There are also some copies of the MHA Sunday leaflet and some Gift Aid envelopes in the vestibule. If you can't find them, please speak to one of the stewards who should be able to help you. Thank you.



LMC – A WEB DESCRIPTION

I transcribed the following words from a screenshot of a website described as a Review Website covering venues and visitor attractions in over 200 countries. The words were accompanied by photographs lifted from our own website. I came across it after doing my usual Google search for Lyndon Methodist Church on my phone, my quick way to access our calendar.

I terminated further investigations of the site using my PC after reading comments on Reddit, and after my Norton Antivirus blocked connection to another reference! Such is the world of AI.

(Interestingly, another of Google's initial offerings was a link to alamy.com who had a nice picture of the church 'Download this stock image for US\$ 39.00')

About Lyndon Methodist Church

Lyndon Methodist Church stands out as a beacon of community spirit and faith, offering a welcoming environment for worship and connection. The church features a beautifully refurbished worship area, making it an ideal venue not only for spiritual gatherings but also for concerts and community events. With its stunning stained-glass windows that capture the essence of light and warmth, the atmosphere is both uplifting and serene. Key facilities include ample parking spaces, reasonable adjustments for disabled access, and a public address system that enhances the worship experience for all attendees. Families appreciate the availability of recreational spaces such as a basketball court and a mini football area, providing children with safe and engaging activities. The church fosters a sense of belonging, with friendly members who extend a warm welcome to visitors and participants in various community programs. Regular events, like tea and biscuit services and local plant displays, create opportunities for social recreation and community building. Lyndon Methodist Church is not just a place of worship; it is a hub for faith, friendship, and personal growth, where individuals can explore and deepen their spiritual journeys in a supportive and nurturing environment.

Roger Hancock

Editor's note

It just shows how AI, although it can be useful, it can still get some things very wrong. It is interesting to see how our church is portrayed, and this article shows how you can't always believe what you read on the internet. Anyone know where the stained-glass windows have gone?

Prayer For September and October

Please continue to pray for peace across the world. The war between Ukraine and Russia shows no signs of stopping, so we pray that meaningful discussions can be brokered to bring an end to the death and destruction. Please also pray that there is a peaceful solution to the conflict between the US, Iran and Israel, and the other conflicts happening around the world. May the sum of all our prayers lead to a world of peace.



The effects of climate change continue to mount with pictures of fires and floods and their resulting damage and loss of life constantly on our TV screens. Please continue to pray for all those who have been affected as well as praying pray for the many people involved with charities, agencies and medical personnel who are giving help where possible, often in dangerous situations. Give us the drive to do what we can to limit our own negative impact on the world and support these agencies where we can. We think of the new initiative in our own area to separate out our food waste to reduce our impact on the climate.

Please pray for those in need of God's support for whatever reason. May they feel God's guiding presence in their lives.

Please continue to pray for the doctors, nurses, care workers and volunteers. Give them the skills and strength they need to support those in need.

As the new term begins, we pray for those who are starting a new school or college or university, or those starting new roles or apprenticeships. We also pray for the teaching staff and managers that support them.

Please pray for our services in September and October and for all those that lead them that we can all be truly uplifted and feel God's presence in all that we do.

We pray for all those volunteers that help our services to run smoothly, so that we can bring God's love and message to our community. We also pray that other people may feel the urge to help out and offer their skills to share the load of work in the church.

Please pray for Rev Joseph as he starts his sabbatical that he may find it a time of renewal and blessing, and for Rev Peter Bates as he steps up to keep the ship running whilst Rev Joseph is away.

Amen

A Guide to Devotional Guides

In the early 2000's I realized that I wanted to find some structure to my Bible reading and prayer. In short, I wanted to develop a daily habit of making time in my life for me to be with God and the space to deepen my understanding and relationship with Him. I knew that this should involve Bible reading and prayer time. Since then, I have used several different devotional guides. Initially these were in the form of printed books that covered a three-month period.

The first one which I used for many years, "The Upper Room", was introduced to me by my mother. It was named after the upstairs room in which the disciples and Jesus met on Maundy Thursday for their Passover meeting and all the rooms in which the early Christians met after Jesus' resurrection and ascension. I loved this little book of devotions as there were many editions around the world and anyone could contribute. Every day there would be a short Bible reading, followed by a brief discussion of it or a related testimony from a different person who had a unique perspective. The Upper Room can still be bought in the form of a published booklet or online at <https://www.upperroom.org> . Currently you can read this for seven days after which you would need to subscribe.



After some years of using this guide, which does contain a significant number of American contributors, I decided to move on to something new. I don't have anything against Americans, but I felt I needed to read the thoughts of people who were "professionals", who have had many years of study and experience of scriptural and spiritual matters. I also wanted to study certain sections of the Bible and themes in more detail. There are several available which take you on a journey over an entire month on a different section of the Bible or a particular theme. They follow the same pattern of one or two Bible readings a day with a devotional to read and a prayer at the end.

The most well-known of these is "Every Day with Jesus" which was written by Selwyn Hugues who passed away in 2006. His guides are still available, and some are now written by other authors. I found the benefit of these was following a train of thought and progression over days and weeks which deepened my understanding.

Another devotional writer I have used is Jeff Lucas, a British Christian. I particularly enjoyed his guides, which combine scriptural knowledge and spiritual wisdom with a practical understanding of what it means to live as a Christian disciple in today's pressured society. His guides are now called "Life with Lucas".

Both "Every Day with Jesus" and "Life with Lucas" are available from eden.co.uk and cost around £7.50 for three months.

A downside of these guides that I gradually became aware of was that I was only hearing one voice and not a range of different life experiences and opinions, so I started to look online. There are now many online apps to guide you in your Bible reading and devotional time. There is even a Methodist daily Bible guide created by the Connexion which I have used from time to time. Oddly enough it is called "A word in time"! It is easy to find if you search "A word in time Methodist Bible study" in a search engine. Unfortunately, it is not very easy to find it when you start from methodist.org.uk but it is available through the resources hub. It follows the lectionary and has the usual format of other devotional guides. It benefits from having different contributors from around the Connexion.

This brings me to the devotional resource I currently use and love. It was recommended to me by Rev Karen Webber a couple of years ago, and it has comforted me, challenged me, and helped my faith grow. At times it has been almost uncanny in the way that what I have read has spoken to me about something that has been going on in my life. The app is called "Glorify". The basic version is free, although a subscription offers additional features. The free option includes a quote from a philosopher or well-known Christian, past or present, followed by a Bible reading, a brief introduction to its context, a devotional reflection, and a prayer. This only takes around 5 minutes to read and as much time as you want to spend on contemplation. What makes this guide different is that it follows a weekly theme which is brought together on Sunday. Recent themes have included "Salt and Light", prayer, and the miracles of Jesus. One of its greatest benefits is the option to listen rather than read, which is especially helpful for people with eyesight difficulties. Subscribers can also access previous devotionals and save favourites. In the free version, each devotional is available only on the day it appears. The app also includes meditations, courses on a range of subjects and needs, opportunities to share reflections with people around the world, and collections of contemporary Christian music by well-known musicians such as Matt Redman and Tim Hughes. I particularly enjoy choosing a playlist to suit my mood, and I often fall asleep listening to one of the relaxing playlists using the sleep timer. The app can be found at <https://www.glorify.global> or on your usual app store.

Ultimately, it doesn't matter how you create space to read the Bible and spend time with God and create that "habit", but I have found it vital in my journey as a Christian to do it. Every one of us will do it differently but I have always found it good to recognise when I am stuck in a bit of a rut and take the step to look around and try something different.

Jo Hancock

Own Arrangement Services at Lyndon

With our Ministers and local preachers being ever more stretched to cover services, Own Arrangement Services are becoming a regular fixture in the Circuit Preaching Plan.

These services give local congregations the opportunity to think about, plan and deliver their own services – apart from services like Holy Communion, Baptisms etc.

We are lucky at Lyndon that there are a small number of our congregation that are prepared to lead a service and we have recently enjoyed services from Jez, Jo and Lynne and you've put up with me as well.

The services take a degree of planning and preparation as you can imagine as none of us are "trained" preachers. There is, however, an awful lot of resourceful material available to use and the Lyndon Methodist Church subscribes to an online tool called Roots on the Web which provides a sample service and plenty of tips and ideas for each Sunday in accordance with the Lectionary.

It would be fantastic if there were others in the congregation that felt called to lead a service – it doesn't need to be a solo effort; you could deliver a service as a pair or even a small group. Those of us that have led a service would be more than happy to help and encourage if needed.

I find that the preparation and planning is as much as a blessing as delivering the service – it opens up thoughts and ideas for you to explore that you may not have otherwise and it definitely cements the learning process.

Another aspect to having Own Arrangements Services is the opportunity for us to put on services that we may want to try – something different perhaps in approach, in location, with a different focus. So even if you don't feel you want to lead a service, if you have an idea for a different type of service please speak up – variety is the spice of life, they say.

If you want to know anything more about these services just speak to any of the Stewards or any of the four of us who I have mentioned above.

It would be wonderful to add an extra name or two to the list of willing participants.

God Bless, Ian

Thought for the Month



“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts.”

Winston Churchill

When I felt close to God.

Back in July you may recall that I lead our morning worship and we looked at the story of Jacob and the dream he had whilst he was fleeing from his brother Esau, whom he had upset. In his dream, Jacob had a vision of a ladder reaching down to Earth from Heaven and angels going up and down. Also in his dream, God appeared to Jacob and promised him that wherever he went, God would protect Jacob and that his offspring would spread out over all the earth. We tried to imagine how Jacob would have felt after such a dream. The bible passage we read - Genesis 28. 10 – 19a – told us that Jacob was so moved that in the morning he built a pillar from the rocks he had slept upon, poured oil over it and called the place Bethel, which means House of God.

We thought about the times and places when we had felt close to God and I asked you to write a postcard about the experience, as if you were sending it home to friends and family.

Many of you were happy to share your postcards and they are featured below.

I hope we shall all have many more moments and special places when we feel close to God and I'd encourage you to share them with those you meet.

God Bless, Ian

We had a lovely holiday in Cornwall. and we were looked after very well



Strong meeting with God it was in covid times. I looked more for Him and He spoke strongly with me. I felt His presence



I feel I witnessed God presence through a chaplain/Angel whilst I was in hospital in 2023. it helped to reassure me. Thank you, God



THE PEOPLE WHO I LOVE THAT CARE FOR ME AND MY FAMILY AT TIME WHEN WE KNOW THEY CARE



Life is full of unexpected turns. Some will break you. Some will bless you, but each one will shape you.



Every day God is in my life



I was working as an au pair in France caring for two little boys aged 7 and 8. I felt quite homesick one day, during my hour off after lunch, saw a very bright light, heard God saying to me, "wherever you go, whatever you do, I will always be with you"



Being in Israel and what an experience that was - knowing the places that Jesus went was terrific



Asleep one night when in a dream I was attacked and began to speak in a language I did not speak or understand.



About 1 month ago when I was very stressed very unhappy, I decided to say the Lord's Prayer and I felt he heard my prayer and thought I saw Jesus. Gave me comfort & peace

When I got my cd stuck in the cd player in my car. My dad had not long passed away. I screamed if anyone is out there, please help me. And just like that the cd popped out. It made me have a sense of belief.

THE MARQUEE TENT OR COOK HOUSE AT A BB/GB SUMMER CAMP THAT GAVE SO MUCH LOVE AND FELLOWSHIP - NEVER HAVE I FELT SO CLOSE TO GOD DURING THESE TIMES.

At the top of the Alps. Nature all around. Calm and beautiful. Also, in a hospice. Although sad there's a peaceful feeling.

On a day of an outward bound course when I was leading a group. The weather was atrocious, misty cold etc. With no qualifications between us I thought we were lost, but "Someone" showed me the right way to go. Since then I have not felt lost or alone but have felt God's presence helping me.

I first encountered God attending a parade service when James was 5 & just joined BB Anchors here at Lyndon.

I have encountered God on many occasions, in various locations. In a mess tent whilst attending BB camp where youngsters and leaders alike are brought together in celebration and commemoration of God's work through Jesus' love for us.

EARLY 1980's - MISSION ENGLAND @VILLA PARK, B2 4BG with BILLY GRAHAM. I WORKED ON THE FOLLOW UP TEAM – GOD GAVE US THE STRENGTH TO WRK THROUGH THE NIGHT - AMAZING STRENGTH & FELLOWSHIP

HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME SAILING ALONG THE GRAND CANAL INTO VENICE. PASSING ST. MARKS SQUARE, ALWAYS MAKES ME FEEL CLOSER TO GOD AS VENICE IS SO SPECTACULAR IN SO MANY WAYS.

A journey to north Yorkshire, Tockwith near Wetherby and York. To celebrate Mum's 95th birthday.

When my daughter was seriously ill in hospital, I was sent out of her room while the medics dealt with her, left on my own, in a side ward. I felt God's presence telling me everything would be ok, and it was.

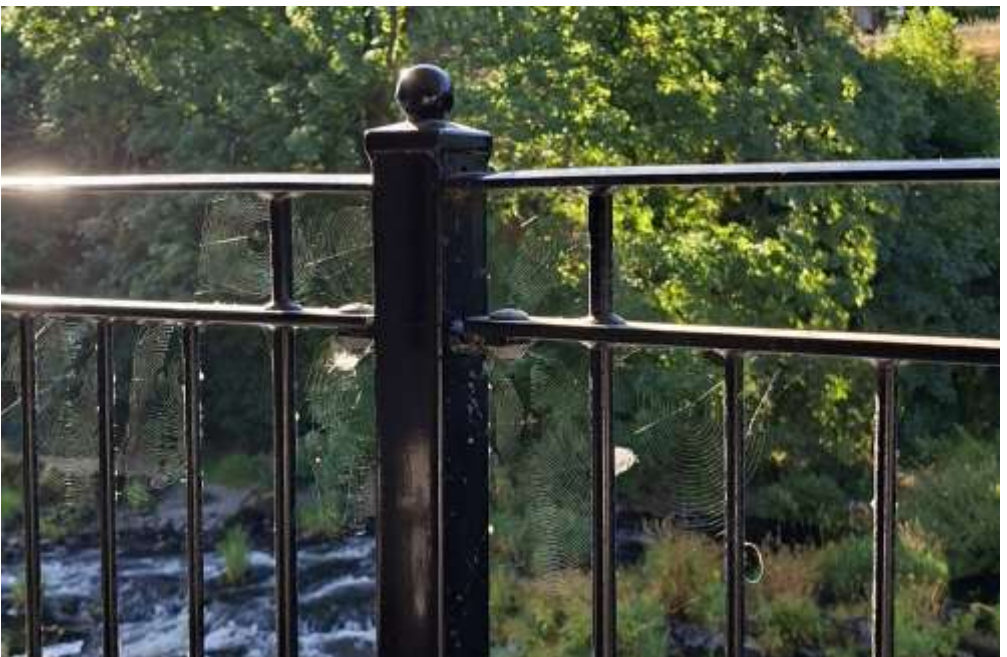
I remember the first time I took Holy communion. I was overwhelmed with emotion - the tears would not stop falling. In that moment I knew God was with me, accepting me. Words cannot explain the love and peace I felt with my Lord and saviour in my heart and soul.

Railings, or are they?

To us: Railings



But to other of God's creatures: A Housing Estate



22 Railings, or are they?

A close up shot (don't look too closely if you don't like spiders!)



These photos were taken from the balcony of a hotel room overlooking the river Dee in Llangollen. Hotel guests are warned not to leave windows open with the room lights on, otherwise they might return to find the room full of midges and similar unwelcome flying guests!

The webs were directly in the flight path of the flying creatures. It seems that humans are not the only intelligent creatures around!

A message to the midges, equally applicable to us, might be 'don't rush towards something that appears attractive without keeping your eyes skinned, or you might come to a sticky end'.

Roger Hancock



The Methodist Church

Subject: Invitation to the Welcome Service for Revd Andy Moffoot and Revd Tokunbo Asogbon and their families

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

It is with great joy that the Birmingham Methodist Circuit invites you to a Welcome Service for Revd Andy Moffoot and Revd Tokunbo Asogbon and their families as they begin their ministry among us. This is a special opportunity to give thanks to God and to offer our prayers and support to our ministers and their families as they take up their new appointments within our Circuit.

Service Details:

Date: 06 September 2026

Time: 17:30hrs

Venue: The Church at Carrs Lane B4 7SX

Presiding Minister: Revd Rachel Deigh, District Chair.

We warmly invite all church members, ecumenical partners, and the wider community to join us in this celebration. Your presence will be a source of encouragement and a sign of the unity we share in the body of Christ.

After the service, there will be a time of fellowship with light refreshments.

Please join us as we extend a heartfelt welcome to our ministers and their families, and commit together to the ministry that lies ahead.

Yours in Christ's service,

Cleopas and Farai

Co-Superintendent of Birmingham Methodist Circuit and Minister of Northfield,
The Church at Carrs Lane, and Longbridge Methodist church

Thingies

You know you're getting old
when you call a thing a thingy
'cause you struggle to remember
what the thing is really called.

You have thingies in the sitting room,
thingies in the kitchen
and thingies on a list
for when your memory has stalled.

You have proper thingies,
faux thingies,
thingies in all colours.
You have thingies on a thingy list
in Times New Roman (bold)
so that when you need a thingy
you can look up where to find it *

* unless someone has moved it
and you've not been bloody told.

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September & October Quiz

All these clues provide information about a famous person and, using their initials, you need to guess the name.

eg "You cannot be serious" JM = John McEnroe

1	The lady is not for turning	MT	
2	The original starter for 10	BG	
3	Senior or Junior	GB	
4	Most famous escapologist	HH	
5	Made milk safer to drink	LP	
6	Mrs Peel	DR	
7	His pen name was Boz	CD	
8	A giant leap for mankind	NA	
9	Norma Jean	MM	
10	'I am the greatest'	MA	
11	Director of Jaws	SS	
12	Spanish tennis champion	RN	
13	Born and died on 23rd April	WS	
14	The other half is Dean	JT	
15	1984 seen in 1949	GO	
16	He made a long walk to freedom	NM	
17	Compassion in Calcutta	MT	
18	Played the MD at Trotters Independent Trading	DJ	

Answers please to Lynne Tyler or Church Email

by 15th October 2026

HARVEST FESTIVAL WORDSEARCH

R	C	T	O	M	A	T	O	E	S	S	C	H	I
Y	H	A	R	V	E	S	T	Y	B	R	A	Z	B
D	X	B	R	O	C	C	O	L	I	E	U	E	Q
Z	P	L	P	R	H	V	F	Q	L	W	L	D	M
Z	C	X	N	A	O	J	P	J	E	O	I	E	T
V	K	B	R	S	G	T	Z	R	T	L	F	W	U
L	Q	D	T	B	W	D	S	J	T	F	L	S	W
A	A	F	R	E	B	M	U	C	U	C	O	I	G
O	I	V	L	K	K	H	S	L	C	T	W	Q	Y
G	T	P	I	N	S	R	A	P	E	I	E	P	X
Z	P	A	F	T	E	Q	Q	P	N	B	R	A	D
A	S	B	T	Z	S	F	Z	L	Q	Y	Y	A	O
W	F	O	O	O	I	E	Q	G	B	Q	U	K	S
C	G	M	T	A	P	Q	F	D	D	N	Y	K	A

APPLE

BROCCOLI

CARROT

CAULIFLOWER

CHARD

CUCUMBER

FESTIVAL

FLOWERS

GIFTS

HARVEST

LETTUCE

PARSNIP

POTATO

SWEDE

TOMATOES

July & August Quiz Answers

1) One more step 2) REMOVED 3) The Lord's my shepherd 4) White Cliffs of Dover 5) And can it be 6) Nellie the Elephant 7) Abide with me 8) If you're happy and you know it 9) Will your anchor hold 10) Mud, glorious mud 11) When I survey the wondrous Cross 12) You'll never walk alone 13) Come and join the celebration 14) Wonderful world 15) Away in a manger 16) Keep right on to the end of the road

First an apology—question 2 was incorrect. I've been told the quiz was too hard and I only received one entry!! Congratulations to the Hunt family who were obviously not fazed and got all the answers correct. Well done. Hopefully this one is more manageable.

Notices & Events

Ladies Club - 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Wednesday 9th and 23rd September

Wednesday 7th and 21st October

Bible Study

Evening Session—7.00pm to 8.30pm

Wednesday 2nd September

Wednesday 7th October

Afternoon Session—2.00pm—3.30pm

Wednesday 2nd September

Wednesday 7th October

Location of Bible Study will move to Wesley room or church if it clashes with Ladies Club.

Treasurer's Role and Flower Co-ordinator

You will have seen the request by Ian for volunteers to lead our own arrangement services. There are another 2 key roles within the church that we are looking for volunteers for.

Although Tony Ludlow has agreed to carry on with his role as Church Treasurer he is finding it a big burden. Ideally he would like to hand over the reins to somebody else so that they can carry on his good works. Alternatively, can you offer a helping hand? There are many tasks involved and it could be you could take over one or two of them to help reduce his burden.

Lorraine Sibson has been the flower co-ordinator for several years now, in spite of taking this over as a temporary role. Are you willing to take over? Lorraine is happy to talk you through it and show you the ropes.

Notices & Events

No flower arranging skills required! This is a behind-the-scenes role supporting our flower ministry — ideal for someone who enjoys planning and connecting with others.

Your role will include:

- Preparing the annual rota for flower arrangers and donors (March February)
- Contacting donors two weeks before their scheduled date to confirm their donation
- Helping co-ordinate special arrangements for Easter, Harvest, Remembrance, and Christmas

If you're organised, enjoy working with others, and want to support a cherished tradition, we'd love to hear from you. Please speak to Lorraine or one of the stewards. Thank you

TIME OUT RESTARTS

Our Time Out sessions will restart after the summer holidays on Sunday 6th September. If you haven't seen it, please take a few moments to look at the updated notice board in the coffee lounge which the children have worked on showing the sort of things we do in Time Out.

HARVEST FESTIVAL and GB ENROLMENT

Our harvest festival service this year takes place on 27th September and will also include our GB enrolment service where the girls and officers receive their membership cards. It is an opportunity to strengthen and deepen the links between the GB company and the Church; to make all aware of the purpose of the GB and the Church; and to emphasise the responsibilities of all concerned.

The ladies will be decorating the church for the service on Friday 25th September and would be pleased to receive items of greenery by 9.45 a.m. Gifts of money towards the cost of the flowers would also be welcome. These may be handed to one of the Stewards. Gifts of tinned and boxed food can be brought to church on the Friday, too or to the service on Sunday. As in previous years, these gifts will be given to the South Yardley Pantry.

Many thanks, Lorraine

Services in September

Sunday 6th September

10:30am Communion Service led by Rev Joseph Ribeiro with
Pastoral Visitor Dedication

5.00pm Lyndon People with Rev Joseph Ribeiro

Sunday 13th September

10:30am Service led by Ian Smith

Sunday 20th September

10:30am Service led by Barry Davis

Sunday 27th September

10:30am Harvest Festival and GB Enrolment Service led by

Services in October

Saturday 4th October

10:30am Communion Service led by Rev Joseph Ribeiro

5.00pm Lyndon People with Jo Hancock

Sunday 11th October

10:30am Service led by Barry Davis

Sunday 18th October

10:30am Service led by Jez Wassall

Sunday 25th October

10.30am Service led by Rev Donald Ker

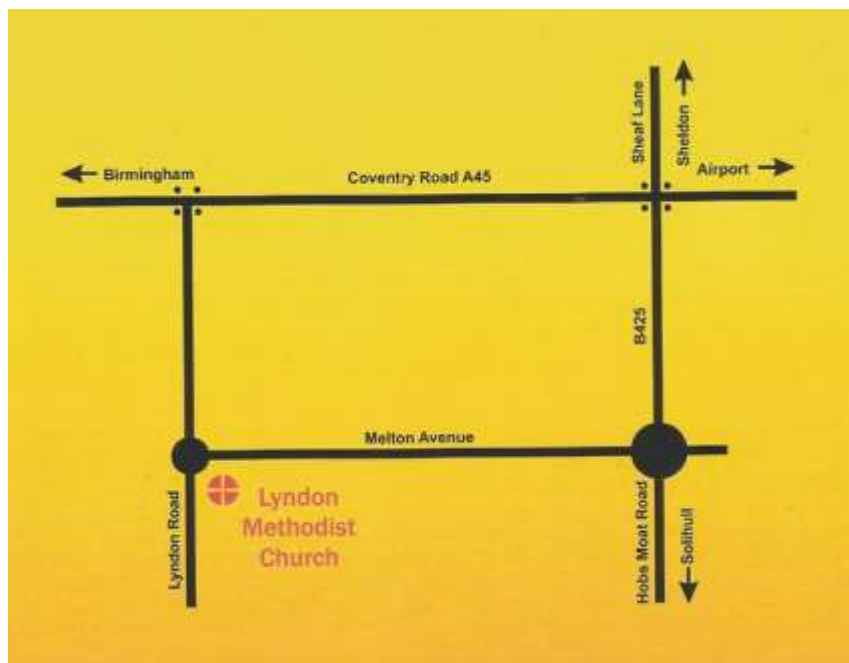
Our next issue will be November 2026

I am looking forward to receiving your contributions by

15th October 2026

by email to Lynne Tyler or to lyndonmethodist@btconnect.com

or by post to Church – address below



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