

Central Norfolk Methodist Circuit

Facebook Posts

May 2025

A thought from Aileen Fox:

A week ago I had the opportunity to visit Norfolk Tulips near Sandringham in aid of Tapping House Hospice. These tickets are hard to obtain; you have to apply on the first day of their release and many people are disappointed. I managed to get a ticket but very few slots were available when I had the opportunity to look.

If you look at the pictures you will see rows and rows of beautiful colours. But look a little closer and you will see that one or two of different colours or hues have crept in. Does it spoil the overall effect? I don't think so and it makes me think of people, we like to follow others be in with the crowd. But sometimes we need to do things differently and we need people prepared to stand up and encourage others. It can be challenging, it can be hard to be that person. We need individuals who are not afraid to stand a little apart and suggest new ways of doing things or standing up for justice.

Returning to these tulips they are not grown as cut flowers but for sale as bulbs. On the 5th May the flowers and foliage will be removed allowing the bulbs to gain nutrients and put all its energy into the bulb rather than a flower. Sometimes it takes just one person to show the way forward. Jesus was of God and showed there was a different way of living and that Love is the greatest thing. Because God loves humanity he gave us the opportunity of everlasting life that death is not the end. Jesus the one who was different who died a painful death on the cross for each one of us.



A thought from Rev Derek: Everything I do, I do it for you.

I maybe ought to have written this thought last Sunday, but to be honest, I wasn't even aware that last Sunday was the London Marathon until after I had written last Sunday's thought. I'm glad that I didn't write something, because it would have been very different to how I feel today. No doubt some of the 56000 runners will have been listening to their playlist as they ran the 26.2 miles through the streets of London. I too have a playlist although have never listened to it while running, come to think of it, I can't even remember when I last even broke into a jog. One of my favourite tracks is the 1991 Bryan Adams song (Everything I do) I do it for you, the theme song for the film Robin Hood Prince of Thieves. Even thirty years on, I still love it and it came to mind as I watched some of the pre marathon interviews last Sunday.

I was moved by the girl who running her first ever marathon on her eighteenth birthday, almost certainly the youngest runner. She was running for MacMillan Cancer Care in memory of her dad who had died. It was amazing to hear the story of the woman who had been told three years ago that she had just twelve weeks to live, having just been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. She was running with a research doctor who was pioneering early diagnostic, non-invasive procedures that could save thousands of lives, reminding us that one woman's miracle, three years on from her own devastating diagnosis could be experienced by so many more people.

In a quiet area, away from the hustle and bustle of runners getting ready, presenter Gabby Logan spoke with Sergio Aguiar and David Stancombe the fathers of nine-year-old Alice da Silva Aguiar and seven-year-old Elsie Dot Stancombe who died in the Southport attack on Monday 29th July 2024. The interview was clearly emotional and painful, touching raw nerves, but these two superheroes were putting themselves through this experience in memory of their little girls and I can only imagine that the pain of running the 26.2 miles was nothing in comparison to the pain they still felt in their hearts.

This experience on Sunday morning reminded me that events like the London Marathon are much more than simply a sports event. Sure, for some, it is about winning, it is about personal bests, cracking a certain time target. But for the masses, this is no "fun run" this is a tribute to the memory of others, it is an opportunity to raise money so that the lives of others can be changed for ever and as the runners arrive at the finish line, many completely spent, the words of Bryan Adams ring true.

Everything I do, I do it for you and as a Christian, I see a man, brutally nailed to a cross, completely spent and I hear his words It is finished!



Please pray for the congregation and community in Beetley



A thought from Rev Jonny:

"How many are your works, Lord!
In wisdom you made them all..." - Psalm 104:24

The month of May begins with birdsong and blossom. Even in small, quiet places, new life is unfolding. In a world that celebrates the loud and the fast, let's pause today to notice the God who moves in gentle ways — in the turning of seasons, in small kindnesses, and in the hidden hope that grows, slowly and surely.





Plant Sale & Coffee Morning Tea – Coffee – Cake



Plus introduction to
New Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Saturday 10-12.00 May 10th

THE HIVE AT BLAKENEY

METHODIST CHURCH, 110 HIGH STREET, NR25 7NX

THURSDAYS 2.00 – 4.00PM

Thursday 8 May 2.00 - 4.00

CELTIC JOURNEYS

Rhythms

Discover, explore and experience rhythms and patterns in life as practised in the Celtic tradition

ALL ARE WELCOME

All our events are
free - donations
welcomed

All ability access



Light
refreshments
provided



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THE HIVE
CREATIVITY · SPIRITUALITY · WELL BEING

Charity Reg. No.: 1134271

A thought from Dee Moden:

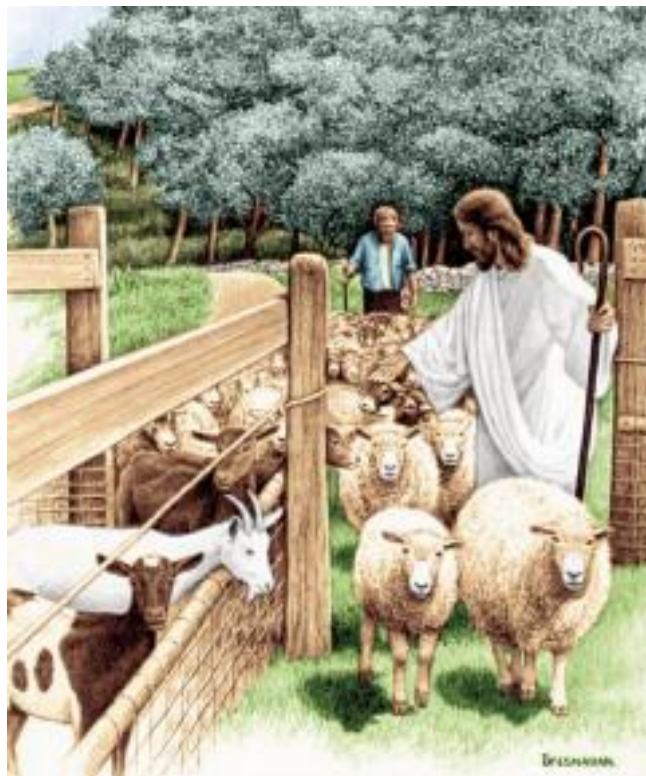
In the world of technology in which we now live, amazing things can be achieved which we never would have thought possible a few years ago.

A couple of weeks ago we called at our son's to check on things whilst they were on holiday abroad, he saw us go from the camera on the door, and he switched the heat on for us, all from their hotel!! Then visiting our eldest son over Easter, he told us how the previous week, when he had been on business in Hong Kong, he had taken a driverless taxi!! Wow! I asked him how it felt and if he felt safe sitting in a car without a driver, and he said yes, they were lots of them about.

Then I thought that God, unseen through his Holy Spirit, has been guiding us forever, this is not something new. We cannot see him but we know he is there and we trust in his guidance, leading us along the right paths, and when the road becomes difficult, he is still there shepherding and protecting us. Leading us safely to our destination.

I might feel a bit worried going in a driverless taxi, but I have no worries placing myself in the vehicle that God is in charge of!

Psalm 23 says it all.



Rev Anne writes:

I recently went to Holkham Hall and into the Walled Garden. They have wonderful glasshouses and even when I went a few weeks ago, before the recent warm spell, they were brimming with greenery! But a closer look at one of them revealed it was full of pesky little black insects that were gradually destroying the leaves and fruit.

What are the pesky little things in our lives that slowly wreak havoc? Is our faith being eroded, our witness being spoiled?

I'm sure the gardeners will soon be spraying and treating the infestation. What about us? Maybe a date with the Gardener is needed?!



Please pray for the congregation and community in Dereham



A thought from Rev Derek: An army of ordinary people

Many years ago, I guess in the early eighties, Karen and I went with my in-laws to see Ken Dodd at St Georges Hall in Bradford. It was one of those performances with a definite start time, but the show ended whenever Ken ran out of steam, which in some places had turned out to be quite epic performances. My father in law had booked us good seats just a few rows back from the stage, and I know this sounds ridiculous, but I can still remember sitting and looking up at one of Britain's most famous comedians of the day and thinking "he's just an ordinary bloke" I don't know what else I expected, but my mind was filled with thoughts that he had grown up in an ordinary family, living in an ordinary house in an ordinary street in Knotty Ash, a suburb of Liverpool.

I guess that this was one of the problems the early Church had with Jesus, he was an ordinary bloke, had grown up in an ordinary town, the son of Joseph the carpenter, we don't know, but it is fair to say that he would have had brothers and sisters, the gospel story tells us at one point that his mother and brothers came looking for him. As I sat in St Georges Hall, looking up at Ken Dodd, I was overwhelmed by his ordinariness, yet I don't know what else I could have expected, and maybe as I read my Bible, there is something almost overwhelming about the ordinariness of Christ. I wonder what the religious people of Palestine expected of the Messiah they had been longing for, could Jesus have made the impact he did on the world, if had been an ordinary bloke?

We use to sing a song written by Dave Bilbrough, why not take a look at the words

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pir4zISWiko>

We are reminded in this song that the future of the world lies in the hands of ordinary people. I find myself asking the question "what does an ordinary person look like these days. I am always humbled by the way that people refer to me as Revd Derek, as though I am different, set apart, somehow more holy than others, yet over the years I have worked hard at just being an ordinary bloke, growing up in an ordinary family, the son of a mill worker, living in a modest little terraced house, never a high flier at school, never with abundant wealth and possibly forgotten now by most of my contemporaries.

Yet, I thank God that throughout generations, he has called ordinary folk, to do extraordinary things, whether it is making people laugh, penning profound words in songs, poetry, or best sellers, whether it is performing on stage or screen, excelling at sports, growing flowers baking cakes, or just making a great cup of tea, we ordinary people all have God given gifts, it is the way that we use them that matters the most.



A thought from Rev Jonny:

"...They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the Lord
for the display of his splendour." - Isaiah 61:3

By now, our gardens and hedgerows are full of colour and life. It's a reminder that things planted in earlier seasons - in the cold, often not knowing if it will fully take - do eventually blossom. Faith is like that, too. It doesn't always show itself quickly. But it grows. Like an acorn, slowly opening, spreading its roots down and sending a shoot up, faith may require time, and actions may need a long while to work. The seeds we sow may leap to life quickly, but some may take time and we don't know how they will take.



"It is a great privilege to represent the Methodist Church in Westminster Abbey on 8 May at a service to remember the 80th anniversary of VE day in the presence of the Royal family. We give thanks for the service and sacrifice of so many in order that we all might enjoy freedom..."

The Revd Helen Cameron, President of the Methodist Conference



For when I
am weak,
then I am
strong

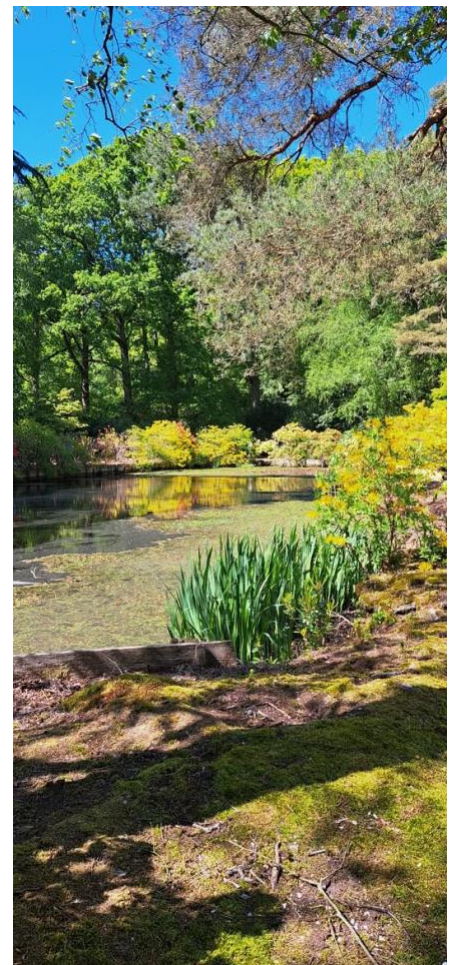
2 CORINTHIANS
12:10



A thought from Aileen Fox:

I have written many times about one of my favourite poems, Leisure by W H Davies **“What is this life if full of care we have no time to stand and stare”**. A week ago these lines came back to me as I wandered around a beautiful estate garden of Azaleas. It had been a busy few days, I had a list of things that needed doing and my diary seemed full, with few gaps to achieve all I had to do. I had booked in advance a ticket to explore this garden open for charity. The sun was shining; the sky had not a cloud in it. I stepped through the entrance and a riot of colour hit me. The daily news of suffering, hunger, war and deprivation was for a moment lost as I just took in the beauty all around me.

Yes, we have a beautiful world if we only look and sometimes we need to stop, look and see what is around us. “What is this life if full of care we have no time to stand and stare.” It is important to stop, take in what is around us and then continue trying to make sense of the turmoil and the need around us. Jesus regularly took time away from the crowds, the busyness and found a quiet place to pray, recharge and be ready for the next work he needed to do. A reminder to us all to stop sometimes and recharge.



A thought from Rev Derek: A helping hand

Just before the pandemic, Karen and I decided that we would take up camping. We had previously owned a caravan but had come to the conclusion that we couldn't justify the cost with our work commitments, a tent would cost much less and the idea made perfect sense, so we bought the biggest tent we could find and opted for an inflatable one so that we weren't fiddling with poles. The tent was purchased in the autumn of 2019 and then the pandemic hit, so it sat unused for the best part of two years. We did our first test run in August 2021 with a week in York on a lovely flat campsite, we'd had a few practice runs at erecting the tent in the privacy of our own garden so that we didn't entertain the campsite too much with our first novice attempts.

In June 2022 we set off on our first serious camping expedition and headed for Bude in Cornwall. After a drive of over 300 miles we arrived at the campsite mid-afternoon on one of the hottest days of the year so far, we were shown to our pitch, which was on a steep gradient. I made the executive decision to put the front door on the lower edge of the plot and started inflating, looking every bit the professional tent erector I believed I was. Having inflated three of the five large arches, gravity took control and the whole thing collapsed. Dripping in sweat and feeling light headed in the blazing sun, I simply didn't have the energy to pull the tent back into the upright position. Completely drained and feeling ill, I could have cried.

All of a sudden my help came in the form of a pretty little blond-haired woman, maybe in her early twenties "do you need a hand?" she asked and then her and her boyfriend Jack, a builder from Bath came to our aid. Looking every bit an adonis Jack dressed in just a pair of shorts and flip flops, with an impressive muscular frame, simply pulled the tent back up with me making my best attempt to help, but in honesty I was pretty useless, we chatted to the girl while Jack erected the rest of the tent single handedly and pegged it out for us. They stayed for the weekend and they went home on Sunday night and we have never seen them again, but I remain indebted to them. In our hour of need, they came to our rescue.

We used the tent for the last time last year and had a lovely holiday thanks to our nephew and his partner who came and set up camp for us and other family members who helped us pack everything back into the car and we sadly made the decision that with arthritic knees and hips, high blood pressure and the challenges of aging, the time has come to say goodbye to camping. We still love it, but it is time to move on. Our foray into life under canvas has taught me an important lesson. I can't do everything myself and there are times when I need a helping hand, and I will always be grateful to those who have helped us when we have needed it. On the flip side, I have also tried to look out for folk who are struggling and try to lend a helping hand.



Listen in on BBC Radio 3 on Friday 16th May at 7.30pm to hear Sarah Rodgers' Prom commission, *Seascapes*, performed by the BBC Concert Orchestra, as part of Friday Night is Music Night - it comes about halfway through the programme.

If you miss it, you can hear it for the next 30 days on BBC Sounds!



Please pray for the congregation and community in Fulmodeston



A thought from Rev Jonny:

In the city of Nicaea (now İznik, Turkey), it was the first time that bishops were able to come together, as they had to be more hidden due to persecution at the time. The Council came together, in part, to discern how to speak faithfully of Jesus Christ. The first day of the Council was 20th May 1700 years ago!

From their prayers and debates came a statement of belief we still echo today:

“We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ... true God from true God...”

May the boldness of those who gathered at Nicaea inspire us; not to 'settle' old arguments, but to live out a living belief in the God who is love.



THE HIVE AT BLAKENEY

METHODIST CHURCH, 110 HIGH STREET, NR25 7NX
FOURTH** THURSDAYS 2.00 – 4.00PM

Thursday 23 January 2.00 - 4.00 | **THOUGHTS ON THURSDAY**

Thursday 27 February 2.00 - 4.00 | **LET'S TALK ABOUT IT - CLIMATE CHANGE**

Thursday 27 March 2.00 - 4.00 | **WALK AND TALK**

Thursday 8 May** 2.00 - 4.00 | **CELTIC JOURNEYS**

Thursday 22 May 2.00 - 4.00 | **LET'S TALK ABOUT IT - NEURODIVERSITY**

Thursday 26 June 2.00 - 4.00 | **THOUGHTS ON THURSDAY**

Thursday 24 July 2.00 - 4.00 | **MUSIC FOR BODY, MIND & SOUL**

Thursday 28 August 2.00 - 4.00 | **OPEN PLAY READING**

All our events are
free - donations
welcomed

Light
refreshments
provided

All ability access

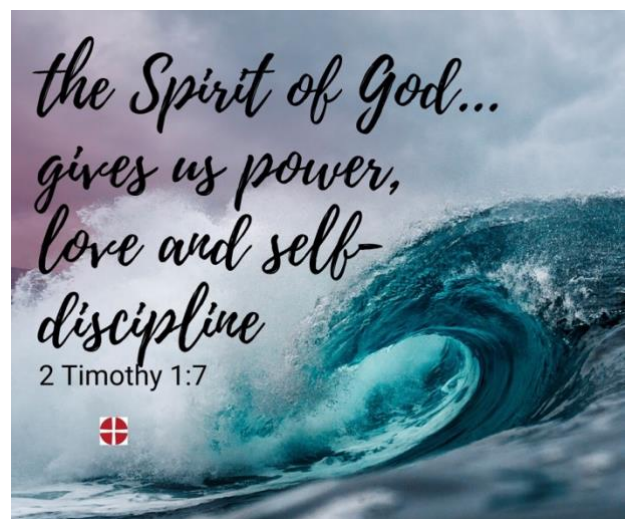



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THE HIVE
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Charity Reg. No.: 1134271



Rev Anne writes: Smart phones are great, aren't they? The camera can take some super photos. I'm pleased with this one - look at all the details we can see - and I love the light on the flower and butterfly!!

At Swaffham, we've started studying the Nicene Creed. The opening phrases are 'We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.'

Without my phone camera, I wouldn't have seen the details on this butterfly. But without being attentive to the flowers and the butterflies, I wouldn't have looked more closely either. May the God who made all things open our eyes to what is seen and unseen!



A thought from Rev Derek: Love changes everything

There are times in my work when I meet some amazing and wonderful people. I recently had the privilege of meeting the daughter of some church members who is working in Gaza, this was not some formal meeting, it was simply a chat over a cuppa after a service. All we seem to hear about Gaza today is all the negative news, and let's face it, there is plenty of that to keep journalists busy for a lifetime. This lady isn't a journalist, she is an educationalist and she is in Gaza to teach the thousands of children who have no real place to call home, often they are orphaned and their schools have been destroyed. School is now in tents and operates in three-hour long shifts throughout the day. The teachers are working long shifts themselves and have to be prepared at a moment's notice to evacuate the makeshift school. I could have spent hours with this lady, listening to the challenges she faces in her daily life.

Last weekend was one of those occasions that I will remember for a long time. It was my privilege on Saturday to conduct a wedding ceremony, and that in itself was a special experience. I can remember a time around forty years ago when there were weddings every weekend in our Church in Bradford and sometimes several each Saturday. Things are different today with weddings being the huge commercial business that they are, with tens of thousands of pounds being spent on increasingly lavish ceremonies. Saturday was special, it was the wedding of an amazing couple who are both in their eighties, there were no stretch limousines, film crews, streams of bridesmaids and all the other lavish necessities of the twenty-first century wedding. This was about the love of a man and woman and it was a true honour to be a part of their special day.

Two days later I conducted a funeral service along with a colleague minister. We had a modest service of interment at the crematorium followed by a service of thanksgiving in the Church. Normally

on these occasions, I am the one person in the room that doesn't know the deceased, this time was different, I both knew and loved this lady who, at just shy of her ninetieth birthday, still managed to fill the chapel and the schoolroom with a live link between the two and even then, some folk had to stand throughout. What was it that made this lady so special? Time and again as people paid tribute, one word was prevailed "Love"

As I sit and write this thought today, I think of the contrast between the image above of Gaza in the twenty-first century. It is an example of how horrible and destructive the powers of evil can be. Why does this happen? Because of people's greed, because of the continual hunger for power and supremacy. It seems to me that whether we are under the threat of scammers, who are continually try to steal from us, faceless cyber bullies who destroy people's lives, those who sell drugs to teenagers getting them hooked and giving them a false place to escape, simply to make the drug barons wealthy beyond imagination.

It is good to be reminded every so often, that while there is so much evil in the world, love changes all that and even in the war-torn streets of Gaza, we see love at work and in very ordinary people, living ordinary lives, we see love at work. My lady whose life we celebrated in her thanksgiving service would almost certainly have said "why all this fuss, I was nobody special" Michael Ball singing Love Changes Everything was played in the service, and never was a truer word spoken.



Please pray for the congregation and community in Garvestone



A thought from Rev Jonny:

On Sunday at New Holkham, we spent some time thinking about the Ascension. One of the things is that Jesus Christ was taken up into heaven, but his body is now us. A part of this is being witnesses to Jesus Christ, and we discussed what this meant. The photo are the points people made in this: that we are to be Christ-like in how we live, which involves supporting one another; speaking what is true; treating people equally even if they are different (or difficult) to love; that we have a mixture of roles (some are good at listening, some are good at speaking, etc.); to challenge things when they are not right, e.g. telling others what is going on; and we are to witness the good and the bad, but to try and emphasise the good in the world.

I wonder what being a witness and being Jesus Christ's body means to you?

