

# The Newsletter of New Malden Methodist Church 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition



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## Words from Choi

150 years ago, when the faithful Methodists gathered together in this place to worship God, who would have thought that a man from the West end, Cornwall, and a man from the Far East, Korea, would join together to unveil the mosaic in celebration of the 150th church anniversary? I am honoured and grateful for being part of this celebration. Lord our God, may you continue to bless your people in this community as they serve you sincerely with all their hearts, minds, and spirits. Amen.

Rev. SC Choi



## Opening service and the grand unveiling

The Church was lucky enough to get Reverend Steve Wild, former President of the Methodist Church Conference, to take the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary service on 18<sup>th</sup> June. To say Reverend Wild was from the evangelical tradition would be an understatement: everyone was engaged and involved, and the children in particular were given starring roles. Everyone likes dressing up and playing with puppets, as you can see below:



There was also a time for thought and prayer for the victims of the Grenfell fire:



After the service the congregation gathered outside for the unveiling of the mosaic.



Members of the church had been working hard at this over recent weeks, carefully supervised by local artist Kim Porelli. Everyone was desperate to see the result of this combined effort, and to try and locate the particular tesserae they had stuck in place. The result was and remains quite simply stunning. A truly befitting way to mark such an important anniversary and a long-lasting gift to the community.





Here is Reverend Wild blessing the mosaic:



The children of the church pose for the first of many photos:



The unveiling and blessing was followed by a rather sumptuous bring and share lunch:



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### Children's Party

The opening weekend also saw the children celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> at a party! Isabel has provided a few words for this newsletter:

Liz Edwards provided a lovely party for us children to enjoy and understand why people of the church are celebrating. We played some games such as musical statues, musical chairs, pass the parcel and another game that Greta explained that involved looking for things under cups. We also had a selection of party food including mini sausages, some fruit and veg, a special cake with 150 written on the icing, and some ham and cheese sandwiches. The sandwiches were shaped as people. Everyone had a good time and all the children got to take home a bag of fun things and an anniversary mug. Thanks to Liz and everyone who helped out.

Isabel

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## The Parade

The Malden Fortnight Parade beckoned the following weekend and is always a keenly fought but good-natured competition. This year's theme was the sea and the church was able to support this in many ways including leaving 150 knitted fish in the High Street and local shops (more on this later). As usual, the entry from the church was well-thought out, and well-constructed. Of course, it is the taking part that counts, but we did win as well 😊

The children had been busy making fish-related costumes:



Adults who didn't want to be left out turned up in their own impressive costumes:



And we set off down the High Street:



With a beacon of light leading showing us the way- complete with seagull I might add:



And a man on roller skates (Gareth, of course) inside a boat bringing up the rear:



It's not surprising that we won!



## Hymnathon

People only just had time to get out of their galoshes and home-made boats before the hymnathon kicked off in the church. Members of the congregation had submitted requests in advance and the indefatigable Peter Bullett had organised an order, a PowerPoint presentation and a rota of pianists. A merry crowd from the church choir, the congregation, friends and relatives sang their way through verses from 150 different hymns. There was quite literally something for everyone. Luckily the coffee bar remained open all day so those who lasted the course were able to maintain their energy levels with caffeine and a wide range of cakes and biscuits. No energy drinks and protein bars for us!



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## Fish

150 fish, made by the congregation, were distributed throughout New Malden in shops, cafes, accountants, estate agents, dentists and the library. Some of the premises had "homed" a sheep during advent and so needed no explanation of how to help, but others were new to the concept of looking after a creature but on the whole were interested, enthusiastic and eager to assist.

Some fish were reluctantly handed back and were returned with the hope that their fish had had a good time!

The remaining fish will be for sale on a Fish Stall at the Christmas Fair.



## Prayer Net

“immediately they left their nets and followed Jesus”

Jesus’ first followers were fishermen. Jesus called them to leave their nets and follow him.

People passing were invited to take a piece of wool and tie it to the net as a symbol of a prayer, and to return as often as they liked. The wool could express the prayer of your heart without speaking a word. The prayer net was brought into church at the Junior Church Festival, of which more later.



Photo credit: Perry Martin-Loat on behalf of Malden Fortnight

## The Picnic

The institution that is the church picnic took place the same weekend and involved more cake and sugary drinks, this time in Beverly Park. A good time was had by all and a few people showed real talent with a skipping rope, rounders ball or hula hoop....

Sarah Choi reminding herself how to skip:



It may look like Choi is awaiting a message from above, but he’s playing rugby:



## Doreen Downey



We are very fortunate to have a key member of our congregation whose connection with NMMC goes back continuously through almost half of the Church’s existence.



Doreen Downey first came here as a small child in the 1940s and quickly established strong links with the Church Community through her membership of many different groups in the Church, from Sunday School, through the Junior and Senior Choirs to Guides, Youth fellowship, Wives, and many more.

Our Evening Service on **July 2** was a Cafe Church format, devoted to an interview with Doreen about her earliest memories and her unique view of how things had changed and developed over the last 70 years.



It was a fascinating evening, brought alive by photographs and many laughs. In between the reminiscences, Doreen chose hymns that had personal resonance and significance for the various stages in her Christian journey here.

Again, there was a good turnout and people very much enjoyed hearing about 'The Old Days', finding parallels in their own lives and experiences, whether here or in other churches.

The rules sounded much stricter then, but it was good to hear that a sense of humour and fun could still be applied at strategic moments!



Everyone enjoyed looking at Doreen's photos after the service.

## Talk by Local Historian

On Tuesday **July 12**, local historian Robin Gill came to address a group of about 40 in the church on the subject of the development of the High Street over the last 150 years.

It was particularly gratifying to welcome several newcomers to this meeting. Robin treated his audience to a series of black and white slides dating back to the very beginnings of the Church here on the High Street.

It was fascinating to see how few side streets there were in the very early days, and also to see how the shops, businesses and even the street names had changed over the years, as horse and cart gave way to the horseless carriage, and white lines eventually appeared down the middle of the road. The Town Hall (now Waitrose) at one end and the Fountain roundabout at the other were consistent features almost throughout. Many people had personal memories of all this, of course, and lively discussions and cries of recognition often broke out, although no one applauded when the Tower blocks first appeared, in the 1960s!

Proceedings were enlivened throughout by the awarding of sweets when a member of the audience answered a question correctly. One needed to have lived here for at least 25 years to be in with a chance at this however!

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## Now That's Magic

The middle Saturday witnessed a magic show from Steve Price. If your idea of magic is based on bad Saturday night TV in the 1970's then think again – this was truly mind-blowing and left most of the audience wondering how on earth he did the things he did. Words won't do it justice so I won't even try. Here are some photos:



How did Steve get some many bottles out of those hollow containers?



And how did Chris's watch end up in a loaf of bread? Answers on a postcard please!



The audience looked on in wonder – when they weren't looking at their lasagne:



## The Exhibition

Judith Jewell had organised an exhibition of artefacts from people associated with the church over the years. There was a fabulous slideshow of the church plot over the years pulled together by Alan Vincent. Those of us who are relatively recent members of the church enjoyed spotting familiar faces in photographs from (some) years ago.

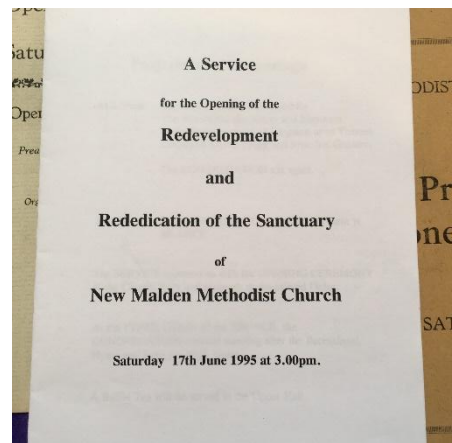


Photo credit: Perry Martin-Loat on behalf of Malden Fortnight



## Jo Henderson



The Morning Service on **July 9<sup>th</sup>** was taken by Jo Henderson, a familiar name to many. As part of her address, she paid a heartfelt tribute to our Church family, as she had come into it as a youngster, independently of her parents, and felt welcomed and nurtured by the love and care shown to her by the people involved in the activities she took part in, particularly the Choir.

She later married here, had her two boys and then moved away, as her husband had a job in the Middle East. The ultimate endorsement of the Faith she had first found here at NMMC came when she was ordained as a priest in the Anglican Church, the first Anglican priest to be ordained in Abu Dhabi and among the first women in the Arabian Gulf to do so.

It was wonderful to have her back among us, and, as might have been expected, her Service was lively and personal, with lots of good hymns. It was also great for her old friends to catch up with her afterwards and see how nearly twenty years' absence really counted for nothing at all!



Here is Jo with her husband Ralph chatting with Prof and Molly

## New Malden's got Talent

A spare Saturday evening was filled with the sound of music and laughter as friends showcased their party pieces:

Judith read a poem:



Julie sang:



Isabel played the violin...





.... then the piano with Robert



Bob played the clarinet and everyone sang along



Des sang:



Caroline played some Mozart



Mick and Gloria duetted



You'll notice Alison accompanying in the background in most of these but she then took the limelight with Judith, Julia and Liz to show us what goes on in Sweden during the long, dark winters: dressage with hobby horses to the sound of Abba (obvs).





Luckily Becky was on hand to explain what was going on....



But that's not all, everyone came together in the second half for a sing-along-a-Joseph. Here is Julia in her MC role resplendent in a coat of many colours:



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## The Orbit

Julia really is a person of many talents and put her organisational and, more importantly, influencing skills to good use taking the church teenagers to the Orbit. This is the metal structure that inhabits the Olympic Park and comes complete with slide – a rather long slide as it happens. One of the participants had this to say about the outing:

On the 24th June, 5 brave members of the youth of the church faced the challenge put to them as part of the 150th Church celebrations. The challenge was to complete the helter skelter from the top of the Orbit at the Olympic park. For this we had to sit in a sleeping bag shaped sack and had to wear protective gear, which made for some great pictures! The side itself circulates the Orbit 12 times and takes 40

seconds to get down. Although some of us were rather nervous about going down the slide, we all succeeded and definitely enjoyed ourselves! As if that hadn't been enough to test our nerves, we then went to take on the Emirates Air Line SkyWay which goes from Greenwich Peninsula to Royal Docks, before returning home via the DLR. We all had a super time and would certainly go again!!



Thanks to Megan for the words and the photo:

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## Junior Church Festival

To close the 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations junior church led the service. The service saw the fish come home and caught in the Prayer Net which had been outside the front of the church during Malden Fortnight to receive yarn as a symbol of people's prayers.



There were waves,



## Bubbles



And the boat made a reappearance



Everyone got to take a fish home and everyone got to play with Lego. Even the grown ups. What could be better?

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## Editor's Thanks

Thanks to everyone who contributed photos and words to this special issue.