



**New Malden  
Methodist Church**  
*At the heart of the High Street*

# Lockdown Life

**Issue 6:  
September 2020**

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## Enjoy live music at a distance – Bank Holiday Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August

Alison, Peter, Caroline, Isabel and friends invite you to come and hear a selection of light classics played from the open windows of 14 Connaught Rd on French Horn, Clarinet, Saxophone, Piano and Violin.

Drop by anytime 2-4pm and enjoy Music in the Open Air. Chairs and refreshments provided in the front garden, but bring your own umbrella.

No need to RSVP, just turn up and remember to Keep your Distance!

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## 3Fs

Thank you to those of you who have responded to my request for comments/suggestions for the future of 3F's. They have been positive, but without any volunteers to share the responsibility for hosting meetings. If there is anyone who might be prepared to have a conversation about this please get in touch with me or Liz Edwards.

When we properly emerge from the Covid epidemic and can not only gather for worship at church, but also engage socially, we will review how best to sustain all the elements of 3F's that would seem to be valued.

**David Knowles**

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# Food Glorious Food

## Make Lunch

Over 2½ thousand meal portions have been provided for families since the lock-down in March.

Thanks to the Cinnamon Trust who gave us a grant we have provided not just food but extra exciting items for the children like comics and craft activities, plus the odd treat for the mums.

The Fairshare Organisation and The Don's Trust have supplied us with an enormous amount of tinned and fresh goods. So please support them if you see a collection point. Molly and Brenda have made cakes for the families, showing a more personal touch from the church.

Susan Knowles gave us the names of families who needed support during this time. The photos show one of the families enjoying a craft activity and an example of a food parcel.

Final thanks go Alison and Judith along with Peter and Ian who have helped with the sorting and delivery of the parcels.

We are now having a break until October half term when we hope to provide a meal on our premises and be "back to normal".

**Julia Morton**



## Food for Thought

I wonder how Lockdown and the pandemic have affected your attitude to food? I'm guessing it can hardly have failed to have had an impact, whether you are someone who suddenly had to rely on neighbours' goodwill when you'd always valued your independence, or had to join the queues for essentials, or perhaps were reduced to tears of frustration in the face of online ordering that wasn't as simple as people assured you it was. Have you relished the extra time for home baking or trying out new recipes, or have you resorted to tins, ready meals and comfort foods? Perhaps you have enjoyed making more use of an allotment and finding new uses - and users - for gluts of courgettes and rhubarb (*see Sue Abell's article below* 😊). Whatever your situation, most people have had to adapt to some sort of change, and that change is now becoming 'Normal'. Thankfully the panic-induced stockpiling of the early days of Lockdown has long passed, and our shops are well-stocked once again with an amazing variety of foods. We are still fortunate in so many ways, compared with what we see on the news in many conflict-torn countries of the world, but it has been interesting to see how even a threatened shortage has affected our behaviour and the way we interact with each other. A new spirit of community and co-operation has emerged in many streets where previously people hardly knew each other even to exchange a greeting. Now folk have bonded over a shopping list or a borrowed cup of flour or a tip-off about what is in stock where. We have perhaps discovered what's important in our lives, what really is 'Essential', and what really doesn't matter at all.

Like many of my and previous generations, I was brought up not to waste a single morsel of food; everything on one's plate had to be cleared, though I did like to spend ages trimming every last atom of fat off my meat. This has now developed into an art form (bordering on an obsession, some might say.) Any leftovers that can't be presented the next day as 'Tapas' can be turned into soup or be disguised in a casserole or a 'sauce.' I used to irritate my children no end by challenging them in the middle of a meal to name the 'secret ingredient'. For some reason that used to make them very suspicious, even though they had been enjoying the taste up until then. Sometimes they would demand to see which jar I had scraped out to add that enigmatic rich savoury sweetness.

We all like 'treats'. What's your favourite? Sweet or savoury? Marmite toast or crème egg? A neighbour of mine recently asked me to get her a multi pack of curly wurlies. Well, I hadn't seen those for ages, and they weren't to be found in the first or second shop I tried. But Poundland came up trumps, and I delivered the said treat to this lady of a certain age, much to her delight. She said she keeps them in the fridge, and snaps off a small bit every so often when she feels like something sweet. I was very impressed. If I knew there were 3 or 4 curly wurlies in my fridge, I would have to finish them up as soon as possible - just so I could re- start my healthy eating programme the next day, obviously.

A lot has been written just recently about those extra 'Lockdown' pounds that seem to have accumulated while we all sat around watching TV repeats and Box sets. Oh, did you not? Are you still doing those online exercise classes you joined so enthusiastically a few months ago? Still pounding up and down the stairs to reach the equivalent height of Mont Blanc in only 2 years? New diets and 'initiatives' abound, as the last few weeks of long daylight hours (if not exactly ideal weather conditions) encourage us out into the open to exercise. An uncertain Autumn is round the corner, and, if we are not careful, another 'Winter of discontent.' Let's harvest the goodness that has come out of this unforeseen and unprecedented set of circumstances and take it forward as we start to meet each other again with cautious relief. We may not be able to gather in Wesley's or people's

homes in the same way as before, but when we do meet over a distanced cup or plate or glass of something, let's try to make it special, and truly make the most of what is in front of us.

**Alison Bullett**

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## Courgette, Cucumber and Kale

We are currently reaping the rewards of our lovely allotment. Having worked our way through rhubarb, gooseberries, damsons, plums, and a few raspberries, we are now mid courgette, cucumber, and kale season. Runner beans too, but they've been very stubborn this year, so the less said about them the better.

For a small family, 3 courgette plants are 2 too many. Whilst others take wine, chocolates or flowers when visiting friends and family, we turn up with a couple of large courgettes and a cucumber. (Courgettes have an uncanny knack of going from tiny to enormous, and completely miss out the supermarket medium size of perfection).



We also have lots of yellow squashes which, it turns out, taste remarkably like courgette. At least their lovely shape and bright colour liven up our vegetable display as well as our dinner plate.

So ... the current excess of courgettes has given me lots of opportunities to try out a range of new recipes. I took the challenge from my husband to include them in every meal one day, so we started the day with toast made from a home-made Courgette and tarragon loaf. Lunch was Courgette, carrot, and coriander soup, followed by Courgette and tomato quiche. Afternoon tea with Courgette and cinnamon cake (surprisingly yummy), and dinner was based on spiralized 'Courgetti' in pesto sauce, having managed to catch a courgette small enough to fit into my spiralizer. Amazingly how versatile this veg can be!

Cucumbers are also doing well, and I can confidently say they are best served in a Hendrick's Gin and tonic.

As for the kale – having a good crop is not a great time to discover the rest of the family's aversion to this. Fortunately, a neighbour's Guinea pigs / rabbits are very happy to help us out with the excess.



Next month the butternut squashes and the first of the leeks should be ready for harvesting, and our brussels sprouts will hopefully be at their best for Christmas.



Now, in case you're tempted, here's the recipe for **Courgette and Cinnamon Cake**

#### Ingredients

80ml sunflower oil  
120g light brown sugar  
2 large eggs  
160g courgette, coarsely grated  
180g plain flour  
2 tsp baking powder  
2 tsp ground cinnamon  
2 tbsp demerara sugar for sprinkling on top



#### Method

1. Preheat oven to 200C/180C Fan. Grease a 900g loaf tin
2. In a bowl mix together the oil, light brown sugar and eggs until smooth. Stir in the grated courgette
3. In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder and cinnamon. Tip this into the courgette mixture and stir to combine.
4. Transfer the mixture to the prepared loaf tin and sprinkle the top with demerara sugar.
5. Bake for 45 – 50 minutes, or until a knife inserted into the centre of the loaf comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tin for 20 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack to cool completely.

**Sue Abell** 😊

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## Blue Bag Dinners

The words that strike fear and dread in our house. “Tomorrow, we’re going to have a Blue Bag Dinner”. Like Alison and I suspect most of our readers, I try very hard not to waste food. This often results in freezing a small portion of something-or-other in blue plastic freezer bags. When the leftovers are put into the bags it is completely obvious what they are and I am confident that I will remember. However, a few weeks later I will have amassed a number of amorphous blocks of frozen ‘stuff’, the contents of which are a mystery.

This is where the fun starts. I will get out two, three or four of these little bags and wait for the magic to unfold as they defrost for the next day’s dinner. I then mix them all together in a saucepan to heat up and serve with pasta, rice or potatoes, maybe even some veg. We have never had a complete disaster. The bags are usually a variation on a theme – Bolognese sauce, lasagne, chilli, maybe a bit of stew – and so usually blend together fairly successfully. Luckily we have not had a Bolognese à la rhubarb. (My mother-in-law once confidently defrosted and cooked an apple pie only to cut it up after dinner and discover it was meat! I don’t remember anyone minding eating two dinners!). The only slight downside I have experienced is someone saying, in the somewhat surprised tone that always accompanies me cooking something new and tasty, “this is really nice Mum, what is it?”. The only true answer, “unique”.

In these days of cutting down on plastic waste, the blue bags are a thing of the past as I am trying to use more sustainable re-usable containers in the freezer. Still though, labelling seems quite beyond

me and frankly where's the fun in that? So, plastic box dinner anyone?

**Sarah Moore**

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## Melting Moments

A recipe our Mums used to bake regularly? From **Doreen Downey**.

200g/7oz butter

100g/3½oz caster sugar

1 egg, beaten

1 tsp vanilla essence

250g/9oz self raising flour

140g/5oz oats

1. Line a baking tray with greaseproof paper.
2. Cream the butter and sugar together in a bowl until light and fluffy.
3. Stir in beaten egg, vanilla essence and flour until well combined.
4. Divide dough into 12 equal pieces and roll each piece into a ball.
5. Sprinkle the oats on a plate, roll the balls in the oats and put them on the baking tray. Squash the balls lightly with your hands (or if you prefer under the Co-vid - a suitable implement!)
- 6 Bake the biscuits for 12-15 mins or until golden brown at Gas 4, electric °C180, °F350.



Tried and tested in the Moore household. Hannah remembered that she and Ellie used to make these at Shell Club so I had a go and they went down very well! Thank you Doreen.

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## A lunch time treat

One of my favourite lunch time snacks which takes 3 minutes of time for prep and cooking, is a humble toasted cheese sandwich. A conversation recently indicated that my method for doing it was unusual and the suggestion was that I include it as a contribution to this month's LL.

Cut into small pieces 1/2 oz of hard or crumbly cheese (my preference, predictably, would be Lancashire, but Cheddar equally good) into a bowl suitable for a microwave oven.

Put 2 slices of bread in the toaster and microwave the cheese on a low setting for 1/2 minutes. Pour the melted cheese on the toast and it's delicious. Even better with a sliced tomato mixed into the cheese.

**David Knowles**

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## Tales of Lockdown

I am enjoying every edition of Lockdown Life – Sarah manages to find so many contributors, with a wide range of interests - she is more than earning her keep!\*\*

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> August. My TV licence became obsolete two days ago so while I await its replacement I have returned to 'steam radio' for entertainment/background sound around the house. It's sheer laziness really – CDs, tapes or records have to be changed occasionally! But this change of sound has made me realise how out of touch I have become with today's 'surround-sound'. There are different drum beats and rhythms out there – and I used to play drums /percussion in a church group.

There have been some interesting interviews between a very eclectic range of musical styles too – quite an education, maybe I should use the radio more often. I can also knit during programmes, a skill I have not mastered with TV – as many other people have done.

Today I have heard of 'avocado injury' apparently fairly common – and 'mandolin' ditto, caused by trying to slice fairly hard vegetables of use the kitchen gadget, not the musical instrument! We didn't get those injuries in my days in paediatric A&E amongst the many other injuries caused by kitchen mishaps. Never a dull moment in hospital A&E!

**Jane Bennett**

*\*\* Thank you so much for this endorsement Jane. It is by no means a solo effort, I assure you 😊. More contributions always welcome to myself or John Cronin in any format. Jane writes hers in beautiful longhand and puts them through my door!! Sarah.*

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## Memories of Sunday School

As is probably the case for many people, when I was growing up in the 1960s, Sunday School was at 3pm on a Sunday afternoon, and was different from Junior Church, which was what was organised for children during part of the Morning Service at 11am. Our Methodist Church in Pinner was very similar in style and period to NMMC but with many more rooms at the back. Each and every one of those rooms was used for the various classes on Sunday afternoons where the age range from 3-17 was catered for, and every room had a piano. Children wore their best clothes and generally were expected to be on their best behaviour.

Beginners, age 3-5, I remember for the choruses (eg I am H-A-P-P-Y; Two little Eyes to Look to God) and rolling up the carpet at the end. We had horrid battered old metal chairs and it was a relief to get into Primary (age 5-7) where the chairs were more colourful and wooden. There were special decorated Birthday chairs and we were in groups with our own teacher; usually a teenager, although they seemed very grown up to us of course. The leader was a Mrs Bell, who had been a missionary in Africa with her husband. I can still remember her telling us about leprosy in quite some detail. I also still remember the musical cues for Standing Up and Sitting Down before and after each hymn.

On Promotion or Prizegiving Sunday each year, children would move up to the next tier as appropriate for their age, and prizes were presented in Church for good attendance. We had a 'star card' which would be stamped each week to record this. I seem to remember 48 out of 52 weeks were required to qualify for the hymn book that would accompany us to the Junior Department. I am looking at mine right now. Another special occasion was the Sunday School Anniversary in which everyone was expected to take part, sitting on forms facing the Church congregation. My highlight

was singing 'Dainty Wee Daisy' when I was 6, all bedecked in white crepe paper (whatever happened to crepe paper?).

The Juniors was the heart of the Sunday School. Catering from age 7-11 it was a blend of Church service and school and there were probably 40 children in that Department alone. We sat in groups of 5 or 6 round our teacher's table, and after the singing and praying, there would be a story and a short period of writing and colouring in exercise books which would then be taken in.

Numbers did decline after that. The Seniors, 11-13, was just as structured but more grown up and serious. Mr Chapman was a sweetie, but he still brought out The Pledge that some of our parents had signed at a similarly impressionable age. I can't remember now whether I signed or not.

After this was the Youth, 13-15, led by a dragon of a lady. That was Upstairs, and very few people attended regularly to hear her expound on Good and Evil. We stayed around though, because we were dying to be completely Grown Up and join the Junior Fellowship, run by a dynamic young couple where apparently there were 'discussions.' Nobody had given us a voice until then. There was still singing, however, and by this stage I was the one playing.

I was first pressed into Service in this capacity through Junior Church, the morning group. There were only a handful of children involved in that, but there was a girl a few years older than me who used to show up and play the hymns every week. As her O levels approached, she approached me to take over, and although I struggled at first, it was in front of a small, sympathetic and supportive crowd and I soon got to know most of the hymns in the fairly limited repertoire. I often think I owe her a great debt. If I hadn't learned to sight-read hymns at that stage, I wouldn't have started to play the organ and probably wouldn't have continued studying music. And I most certainly wouldn't have gone on a residential Organ course in 1976 where I encountered one Peter Bullett.

I can still recall many of that army of dedicated teachers, by name and by face. There were opportunities to become teachers ourselves in the Primary department when we reached our middle teens and then we really began to understand about commitment and responsibility. There was a weekly training class, luckily just across the road from my house, and I can remember the leader saying that our schoolwork came first, but that she expected our teaching to be our next priority. We had to learn the story so we could tell it, not read it, and if a child in our class missed 3 weeks in a row we had to call at the house. I found that very difficult.

I remember the Scripture exams and collecting for JMA, all the Ministers, and my excitement and amazement when I saw a new young one outside the manse in a yellow jumper Washing His Car! I don't think it had occurred to me that Ministers had a life or wardrobe beyond the Sunday black cassock.

By the time I left the Junior Fellowship, my mother was leading the Beginners (with the same old chairs!) and I started back there again, playing for them. Watching her, an ex Norland Nanny, I learned about dealing with young children – kindly, firmly but above all with understanding.

Guides was also definitely part of the Church and I learned about organisation and the importance of gentle discipline, shared responsibility and authority from my Guide Captain. All of it was fun and we always felt we were around caring, supportive adults as we grew up through the Church. Many of these adults were long-standing friends of my parents. They had been married in that Church in 1954,

as were my Aunt and Uncle, and later my brother. In due course that is where I went with Peter Bullett.

Reader, I married him, and although by then I knew almost every inch of the church, it was not until that day that I entered the hallowed Ministers' Vestry for the first time, to sign the register.

**Alison Bullett**

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## **More of Jane Bennett's Childhood Memories**

Another Bournemouth instalment. We jump a few years, from primary & junior school on the Winton/Moordown border at St John's School to Bournemouth School for Girls at the Lansdowne just under 3 miles (4½km) away from home. I was bought a bike – 'sit-up-and-beg' style, black and very sturdy – maybe because we lived just inside the area where paying bus fares applied! Cycling to school in all weathers certainly developed my leg muscles, which later came in handy for swimming and lacrosse.

In the Summer term, some of us swam in the sea before school. Unfortunately that meant pushing our bikes up the steep East Cliff zig-zag and getting to school with wet hair. But we sneaked a key from the downstairs back entry door to the cloakroom and had a duplicate made. I often wondered whether the Headmistress knew, as she and her mother lived in the flat two stories above – but no enquiries or punishments ever ensued. Strange though – none of our group every became prefects – we did wonder! Two of my aunts (my Mother's sisters) had been prefects – one was Head Girl – but with a different surname I was never linked to them so could not be unfavourably compared!

Of course all this was after the Second World War, so the beach had been cleared of the concrete blocks and barbed wire. But a reminder of that war was a bombed out building at the Lansdowne opposite the school – it had been the HQ of part of the Canadian Air Force, and was an empty deep pit during all my senior school years.

There were tall scots pine trees in part of the school grounds and red squirrels lived in them and others in nearby hotel grounds. A huge beach tree grew up in our 'playground' and we ate the nuts in season – well, some of us did!

During my years at BSG there was an eclipse of the sun – what excitement. We all made smoked glass to peer at the sun safely from the playground. Any astronomers among you are welcome to work out which year that was! I have 'seen' several eclipses since, in Africa and here, but nothing is as good as the first one!

So here I am now in New Malden, via Bournemouth, Manchester, Old Minatli, Umtali, Makwiro, Gwera, Bilston, Buckingham, Minehead and Teddington. Hardly 'world travel' but each a new adventure in its own way, with or without our children. But with God all the way, more personally after Blackley in Manchester where I met Him and became of full church member during my nursing training. Praise Him!

**Jane Bennet RSCNN, ex GP Practice Nurse**

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## **Methodist Prayer Handbook 2020/21**

The Methodist Prayer Handbook for 2020/21 ("The Earth Is the Lord's") is now available.

You can get one direct from the website below. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact me and I will order a copy for you.

**Sarah Moore**

<https://www.methodistpublishing.org.uk/books/CON-PHKSTD-20/methodist-prayer-handbook-20202021>

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## Creative Opportunity

Could you design next year's London District Christmas card? Here is your chance!



**CHRISTMAS CARD DESIGN COMPETITION**

Show the Christmas story in words, photo or drawing.

Design the London District's 2020 Christmas card cover and let everyone experience the Christmas story through your creativity, drawing or writing. This competition is part of the Woven Project, the London District's theme for 2019 – 2021, a theme centred on the power of storytelling to transform and renew us in our lifelong discipleship as followers of Christ.

**To submit your entry**

Visit [methodistlondon.org.uk/christmascard](https://methodistlondon.org.uk/christmascard) for more information on how to submit your entry and for terms & conditions

All entries must be received by Sunday 20 September 2020

**Open to all ages**

**Woven**  
God's Story, Your Story, Every Story

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OF THE  
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## Next Issue

The next issue will focus on holidays. Many of us have had to forego a holiday this year or take a very different type so please send stories of what you have done in the past, what you have improvised with, and what you hope to get back to. Tales of lockdown or childhood are always popular so keep them coming too!

Please send all submissions for the Lockdown Life 7 next issue to John Cronin at [john.cronin.iii@gmail.com](mailto:john.cronin.iii@gmail.com) no later than 25<sup>th</sup> September.

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