## NEWSLETTER

Benefice of Clothall, Rushden, Sandon, Wallington, and Weston

#### Welcome

Well, another week of sunshine and even I have taken to tackling some outdoor jobs and I am renovating two old garden chairs - a gloriously messy job that has, so far, kept my finger out of the cookie jar! I wonder what you are all doing to keep yourselves occupied? We had lovely pictures of people's gardens and flowers to cheer us are there any other projects (in or out of doors) that you could share with us - it would be wonderful to see what you have all been up to. In this issue of In Touch we have an article about the Wesley brothers, those great hymn writers. How many hymns can you remember? What is your favourite? Mind is 'O for a thousand tongues to sing my great redeemers praise'. Stay well all of you and stay safe. With blessings. Fiona x



#### Lighting the night with hope!

We are still encouraging everyone to put a candle in their window at 7pm each Sunday night as a sign of hope, community and support for all those who are working for our health and safety.



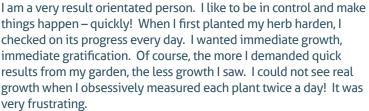
#### A prayer for all those affected by coronavirus

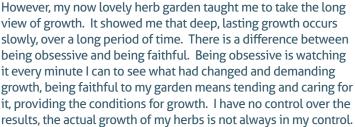
Keep us, good Lord, under the shadow of your mercy. Sustain and support the anxious, be with those who care for the sick, and lift up all who are brought low; that we may find comfort knowing that nothing can separate us from your love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

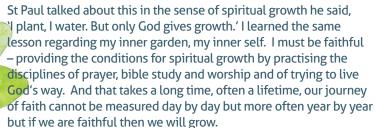


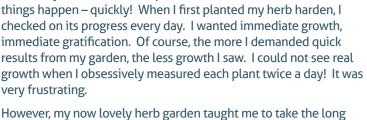
### **Growing our spiritual gardens** by Harriet Crosby

'Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble' Psalm119:165











Since Covid came to stay We don't dress up or do our hair But still we come to pray! Our Vicar is a clever girl A Zoom with her IT And so we sit down ev'ry week And meet up virtually! *Our Parish Churches stand empty* With praise they do not ring; But still their people gather round To pray, and praise, and sing! The virus is a nasty thing Yet it has helped us see The church is NOT a building But folk like you and me!

By Nigel and Carol Beeton





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### intouch

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# John & Charles Wesley, evangelists & hymn-writers

John and Charles Wesley were the founders of Methodism. Two of 19 children born to Samuel and Susannah Wesley of Epworth Rectory in Lincolnshire in 1703 and 1707, their father was the local rector, while their mother was a spiritual inspiration to her many children.

Both John and Charles went to Christ Church, Oxford (1720 and 1726). John was ordained, and Charles and some friends formed a 'Holy Club' while still at college. It consisted of men who dedicated themselves to Bible study, prayer, fasting and good works. Such regular disciplines soon earned Charles the nickname 'Methodist'. The name stuck. Both Charles and John felt called to the mission field, and so in 1735 they sailed to Georgia. Their time among Indians in America was not a success – they struggled for any real spiritual authority in their ministries. Feeling failures, they returned to England in some depression. John summed it up: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but, oh, who shall convert me?"

Then the Wesleys made friends with some Moravians. They stressed that salvation cannot be earned, but must be received by grace through faith in Christ. Charles was the first to experience this 'true' conversion, when on Pentecost Sunday, 21st May 1738, he wrote that the Spirit of God 'chased away the darkness of my unbelief.' Only three days later, on 24th May, 1738, it was John's turn. As he wrote in his journal: "In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed."

John and Charles Wesley then devoted the rest of their lives to sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. In doing so, they turned England upside-down. When the established Church threw John out, he took to the fields, preaching to coal miners and commoners. His itinerant evangelism took him 250,000 miles on horseback and to preach over 40,000 sermons. His small 'societies' attracted some 120,000 followers by the time of his death. Charles became the most prolific and skilled hymn-writer in English history, writing hymns that are sung widely today, such as 'Love Divine, All Loves Excelling.' In all, he wrote more than 6,000 hymns.



#### **Sweet dreams?**

From large pink hamsters that smile and wave at you, to cars that can't get off roundabouts, a lot of us are reporting weird, vivid, and intense dreams just now.

Experts say that financial worries, cabin fever and boredom may all be factors. But – on the plus side, there is also the fact that many of us are finally catching up on our sleep. And by waking up without an alarm, we will have better recall of our dreams.

#### Solitary, but not alone?

Dear people, please don't sigh, try not to moan,
These troubled days must sometime have an end.
Though solitary, you are not alone
For you are close in thought to many friends.
The wonders of the media fill the room
With music, drama, silliness and fun Diverting sorrow, dissipating gloom,
And showing you're the same as everyone.
The house is quiet and still but outside, see You can't feel sad and lonely when all round
The Earth is seething with new energyTo boost your spirits, lift you from the ground.
So while the sun is shining and the air
Is soft and warm, take comfort, don't despair!

Josephine Rogers April 2020

