

# Fulneck Moravian Church Magazine

April 2023



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## Minister's Letter

April is a month that always begins by making people feel like a fool. The tradition of April Fools day has been going for hundreds of years, although the exact origin is uncertain. It began to be celebrated in this country around the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and there have been many great examples throughout the years.

In 1957, the BBC reported that Swiss farmers were experiencing a record spaghetti crop and showed footage of people harvesting noodles from trees. There was the great Grandstand behind the scenes fight when in 1989 Des Lynam talked to the camera about the upcoming action and how it was possible only because of the highly professional team he works with, whilst a melee breaks out behind him. In today's world though, separating fact from fiction is already a complicated matter and so I wonder how much longer this tradition will continue and as I often have to remind Edward (who enjoys watching "Prank" videos online), a prank is only ok if both parties are up for it. Otherwise, it's just mean.

I always think it's appropriate when the same month that begins with people being made to look foolish, is the same month where God produces the most incredible act of love and subsequently shows anyone who doubts the power that God possesses to be the biggest fools of all. Make no mistake about it, when the ruling classes hung Jesus upon a cross and saw his life leave his body, they would have walked away thinking, "job done. That was a chaotic three years but at least it's over now and we can continue just as we were before anyone had every heard of this upstart Jesus." But not only was that

act not the finale, it was actually the beginning of a movement that would last centuries. They are the biggest fools of all. To think that they could stop the will of God and limit it, backfired spectacularly.

It's a trap though that many are still falling into. Whenever something as miraculous as this happens it brings with it scepticism, doubt, and flat-out disbelief. But God created the world and all that is in it. He gave life to life itself. It is folly to doubt the power that God holds. However, the other trap we fall into is disbelieving the motivation behind the Easter story. Love.

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." John 3:16*

It is so difficult for anyone to comprehend that God, who holds the power of creation, of life and death and of everything in the universe, loved us so much that he sacrificed that which is so precious. Yes, you could argue that God always knew that Jesus would be resurrected but as any parent will tell you, seeing your child suffer even a little bit is incredibly hard. Watching Jesus get humiliated, beaten and have His life drain from within as he cried out "Father why have you forsaken me", would have been painful beyond compare. And yet, God loved us so much that it happened anyway. The sacrifice was made and as Jesus hung on a cross He demonstrated the depth of that love by saying, "Father, Forgive them."

**In Essentials: Unity; In Non-Essentials: Liberty; In All Things: Love**

Let us not make fools of ourselves by taking this incredible gift for granted. We should never think of ourselves or other people as unloved, or unlovable. This gift should be celebrated and be the anchor of our actions, not just at Easter but every day of our lives. As hard as it is to comprehend, it remains true. God loves you.

## Fulneck News and Notices

### Lovefeast and Holy Communion

One Moravian described the March Service as “dire”, and because this was an accurate description I write to open up discussion and to try to see what we might do to improve our sense of order and decorum in the most important service, because people did not know when to stand or to sit.

When I was a confirmation candidate we were told that we would be led by the minister. We were to stand when he came into church and when he left at the end of the service. If he stood up during the service - then the congregation would stand. If he sat down - then the congregation would sit. This does work when the minister is consistent and remembers when to stand or sit !

As we are seated for most of the Lovefeast, apart from the first verse of the first hymn, it was good emphasis to stand for the offertory hymn when our gifts were collected and for the prayer dedicating the offering which followed. It was customary to stand for the last hymn of the Lovefeast during which the Minister and Chapel Servants went to the vestry to prepare for the Communion Service.

We were taught that we were to stand to receive the bread and the wine, and when we had received we were to remain standing until the end of the next hymn verse. Then we should sit down until all were served.

The congregation stands for the Covenant Hymn and when the Minister has shaken the hand of the first person near him the members of the congregation offer the right hand of fellowship to those around. This was a particularly contentious bone when I was serving as Minister at Fulneck for there were Committee members who did not like the fact that I encouraged members to move to make sure everyone was included in the hand-shake. The Committee ruling then was that members should only shake hands with the person on their right and on their left. I think we would regard this as too severe for today but it meant that the Minister was able to get to as many as possible without delay.

The singing of the Covenant hymn should be a joyful song of thanksgiving in the fellowship of our brothers and sisters but when rushing about trying to shake hands the singing becomes a feeble effort. I have known congregations where the Covenant verse is sung once without hand-shakes and then is repeated with hand-shakes.

Our Lovefeast and Communion service is so lovely and precious and has meant a great deal to many, many people over the years I hope that we can do all we can to regain something of that which is in danger of disappearing.

Wasn't it lovely to have an organist ?

Br John McOwat.

## Pastoral care

Each member of the Church has a pastoral link member of the Church committee who will keep in regular touch with you. However, if you want a chat or a visit from the Minister then please contact Br James directly.

You can phone him on 0113 256 4828 or email him - james.woolford@moravian.org.uk

## **HOLY HABITS**

Missional discipleship as a way of life.

Acts 2: v42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the **prayers**.

The Holy Habits resource says, "Prayer is a conversation with God; it is waiting on God – both in listening and serving. Prayer is sustaining, encouraging, nurturing, exciting and engaging. It is the lifeblood of the church."

It was very encouraging to have all the ideas on the Sunday we launched Holy Habits. Some will be easy to implement, and others will take a little time. There are already some prayers up in church for you to take and use at home, please feel free to add your own for others to use.

It was suggested that we have a prayer chain so that we can personally alert people to any situations and people we need to pray for. If you'd like to be part of this then please let Sr Allison or Br James know and we'll set it up.

We're also going to create a prayer walk round Fulneck that highlights places in the settlement from the past and offers prayers for these places and people today. For example where the sanatorium used to be, stop and pray for all health and medical workers today. When you're praying at home, do you have a way of letting whoever you're with know? In church we tend to bow our heads and close our eyes, but at home we may not do this. Maybe you hold something. I've known people having prayer pebbles they carry with them at all times and hold when praying or they remind them to pray when they touch them. You can pin your ideas to the prayer boards then others can see them and maybe try them out.

### **A prayer of intercession**

Lord, in our weakness we come to you for strength,  
In our sorrow we come to you for comfort,  
In our joy we come to you to celebrate with us,  
In our times of anxiety we come to you for succour,  
In times of confusion and doubt we come to you for guidance and help,  
So now we come to pray for ourselves and others.  
In Jesus' name  
Amen

## Pudsey Carnival: 20 May

This years we're going to have a stall at the carnival on 20 May, to promote the community in Fulneck.

It's still in the planning stage but we've decided we'd like to have something small to sell to attract people in. One idea is to have some felt flowers that can be made into broaches or hair clips. The craft group has found a simple pattern and would love anyone who is able to make some as well.



This is one we made using some scraps of felt we already had. You can find the instruction here

<http://livingthewelllife.blogspot.com/2010/12/friday-idea-book-felt-flower-tutorial.html>

If you'd like to knit or crochet some flowers we'd love to have those as well.

## EASTER MORNING BREAKFAST: 08.00: BB Hall

We hope that many of you will be at the Easter Morning breakfast. The cost will be £6; please sign up on the list in the Bell Room.

## CORONATION STREET PARTY: SUNDAY 7 MAY.

Please note that the **Holy Communion Service will be at 13.00 on 7 May.**

Following this service, everyone is warmly invited to join a Street Party to celebrate the Coronation.

There will be no Lovefeast service in the Church on this day.

## ORGAN RECITAL—date for your diary

It is good news that on **TUESDAY 18 JULY, 19.30**, there will be an organ recital by Dr Gordon Stewart.

## Minister's day off

From now on, Br James will be taking his day off on Friday of each week. Should you need help or support on a Friday please ring a member of the Church Committee.

# Calendar

## April

Sat 1	10.00	Burial Ground tidy up
Sunday 2	14.30	Palm Sunday. Lovefeast & Holy Communion led by Br James Woolford.
	18.00	District service. Horton.
Mon 3	19.30	Holy Week Readings
Tues 4	19.30	Holy Week Readings
Wed 5	14.00	Craft Group at Vi Hayton's home
	19.30	Holy Week Readings
Thurs 6	09.45	Morning Prayers
	19.30	Maundy Thursday. Holy Communion. Joint service at Baildon Church.
Fri 7	11.45	Churches Together Walk of Witness
	19.30	Good Friday Liturgy
Sunday 9	07.00	Easter Day early service. Br James Woolford.
	08.00	Easter Day breakfast
	10.30	Easter Day service led by Br James Woolford.
Thurs 13	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sunday 16	10.30	Morning service led by Br Paul Greenhough
Tues 18	19.15	Church Committee
Wed 19	14.00	Craft Group at Vi Hayton's home
Thurs 20	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sunday 23	10.30	Morning service led by Br James Woolford
Thurs 27	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sunday 30	10.30	Morning service led by Br Martin Smith
		Morning coffee in the BB Hall after the service.

## May

Thurs 4	09.45	Morning Prayers
Sunday 7	13.00	Holy Communion led by Br James Woolford. Coronation Street party.

Please submit material for the next edition to myself by **Monday 24 April** . Thanks, Mary

