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Sharing Life
Sharing Faith

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God.

Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: he sent his one and only son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear

friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another God lives in us and his love is made complete. This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: he given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be Saviour of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. Any so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. **(1 JOHN 4 : 7-16)**

Dear Magazine Reader

New beginnings



Happy New Year to you all!

I guess most of us are glad to see the back of 2020! This time last year who could have imagined what was ahead of us? An often quoted poem at the beginning of a New Year is 'The Gate of the Year' by Minnie Louise Haskins. It was written in 1908 under the title 'God knows' and came to the attention of the public when King George VI quoted it in his Christmas speech in 1939. You can find the whole poem on the internet but the most quoted part is the beginning:

***And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."
And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into
the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer
than a known way." So I went forth, and finding the Hand of
God, trod gladly into the night. And He led me towards the hills
and the breaking of day in the lone East.***

I love this poem as it reminds me that at the beginning of any year, we do not know what lies ahead, but as we walk into an unknown future, we walk with a known God who has gone ahead of us and walks with us, no matter what the circumstances of our lives.

I don't know what plans you have for this year but I imagine we are all hoping and praying that some of what is in our diaries actually takes place!

This coming year holds new beginnings for Mark and me as we prepare to move to Market Drayton, Shropshire in the summer to take up our next appointment, and also for everyone in Ivybridge, Bittaford and Yealmpton as you prepare to welcome your new minister, Amanda and her husband Mark.

We will be sad to leave Devon and all the lovely people we have got to know over the past five years but it will be wonderful for us to be able to see our family more easily. Thankfully we have a good few months to work with you all before that happens and we pray we will be able to have a good party before we go!

The theme that Rev Richard Teal, and myself chose for our Presidential year is taken from some of the final words of John Wesley, 'The Best of All, God is With Us.' Those words, chosen before any of us had heard of Covid-19 remind us of the wonderful truth that we celebrated at Christmas, that in Jesus, God came to earth to live as one of us: to experience our trials, our joys and our sorrows and ultimately to die for us and our salvation. As we trust in the death and resurrection of Jesus, we can each know and experience his peace and strength in our lives. We can have that assurance of his presence with us no matter what we face and there is always hope for the future no matter how bleak things may appear.

I close with the chorus of an old hymn which was sung in practically every service during our visit to Brazil last February – and I pray that the words will bring you encouragement and hope today and for the year to come:

**Because he lives, I can face tomorrow;
Because he lives, all fear is gone
Because I know he holds the future;
And life is worth the living just because he lives.**

Carolyn Lawrence

Visit our website at
www.ivybridgemethodistchurch.co.uk
where you can see a **colour version** of this Newsletter.
If you wish to contact Tony regarding the website you
can do so at **mrmerrit@icloud.com**

God's Greatest Gift
- with us at all times, not just at Christmas

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel because He has come to us and redeemed us.

The Saviour has been born to us; He is the Messiah, the Lord.

He will save us from our sins.

The government will be on his shoulders.

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Him.

His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; His dominion endures from generation to generation.

Jesus has come into the world as a light so that no one who believes in Him should stay in darkness.

God has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of His Son.

His are the power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!

That is why I call Him my wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love.

IMMANUAL, GOD WITH US!

Many thanks to Joan Bulman for the above.



JANUARY NEWS

If you have anything you would like to include in the **Church News** please let Judy Jago know by ringing her on 01752 894829

Although there's not much news, we do have a new baby (though he will have grown considerably by now) to welcome and that's **George** who was born on **November 21st** to **Katie Hamilton Fox** and **Sam Smith** weighing 8lbs 3oz. Grandparents **Linda and Peter Fox** are managing to see them all but looking forward to a cuddle as things hopefully ease. Congratulations to **Katie and Sam** and we know that big sister **Olive** will enjoy her baby brother.



Another wonderful piece of news to share is that, after a house moving story to write a book about, **Maureen and Bruce Scoble** moved from **Western Road** to **Firtree Rise** just before Christmas and are now hopefully settling into their new home. We send much love and prayers for time to get the house as they want it and enjoy a new adventure.



Meg Gentle has been very poorly and undergone surgery whilst studying in York and at the time of writing has come safely through the surgery and is on the road to recovery. It will be a longish journey but, **Meg**, we will pray for a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing you back to full health.



We pray for those of our friends in **Care homes** where visiting has been restricted - especially **Jenny Light, Dorothy Lucas, Eva Carr and Beryl & Bert Paddock** letting them know we don't forget them and hope Christmas will still be a special time.



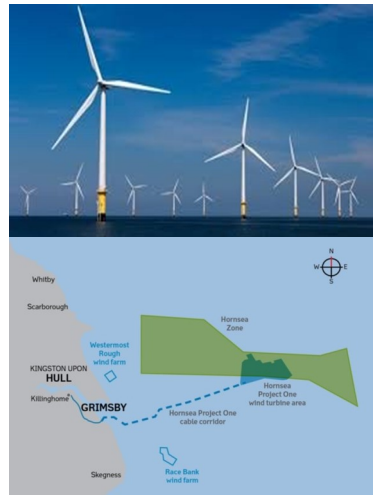
IMC's New Electric Supplier

From the 1st January 2021 IMC's new electric supplier will be Good Energy. This energy supplier sources all its electric from renewable energy within the UK. This is either from the sun, wind, water and biogenesis. Therefore we are directly supporting the environment and the UK's energy industry.

Good Energy's fuel mix is made up as follows:

53.9% wind
28.4% biogenesis
13.4% solar
4.3% hydro

Good Energy own six solar and two wind farms, which generates sufficient power for 18,000 homes. They then source directly from other renewable generators the balance they require to cover what they sell. An example is from Westermost Rough Wind Farm situated in the North Sea, five miles off the Yorkshire Coast north of Hull. To find out more, google *Westermost Rough Wind Farm* and I suggest reading the Wikipedia review.



What is biogenesis? This information is taken from the Good Energy website.

Bioenergy refers to electricity and gas that is generated from organic matter, known as biomass. This can be anything from plants and timber to agricultural and food waste – and even sewage. The term bioenergy also covers transport fuels produced from organic matter. But on this page, we're just focusing on how it's used to generate electricity and carbon neutral gas.



How does biomass generate energy? When biomass is used as an energy source, it's referred to as 'feedstock'. Feedstocks can be grown specifically for their energy content (an

energy crop), or they can be made up of waste products from industries such as agriculture, food processing or timber production. Dry, combustible feedstocks such as wood pellets are burnt in boilers or furnaces. This in turn boils water and creates steam, which drives a turbine to generate electricity.

Wet feedstocks, like food waste for example, are put into sealed tanks where they rot and produce methane gas (also called biogas). The gas can be captured and burnt to generate electricity. Or it can be injected into the national gas grid and be used for cooking and heating. Bioenergy is a very flexible energy source. It can be turned up and down quickly to meet demand, making it a great backup for weather-dependent renewable technologies such as wind and solar.

Is bioenergy environmentally friendly and sustainable? Burning biomass does release carbon dioxide. But, because it releases the same amount of carbon that the organic matter used to produce it absorbed while it grew, it doesn't break the carbon balance of the atmosphere. In comparison, burning fossil fuels releases carbon dioxide that has been locked away for millions of years, from a time when the earth's atmosphere was very different. This adds more carbon dioxide into our current atmosphere, breaking the carbon balance. The overall sustainability and environmental benefits of bioenergy can depend on whether waste feedstocks or energy crops are being used.

Waste feedstocks

Waste biomass gives off gases naturally when it rots. If this happens in a place where there's no oxygen, such as food waste buried deep within landfill, it can generate methane which is a much stronger greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. Instead of allowing methane to vent into the atmosphere, breaking it down in a sealed tank allows it to be captured and burnt. Burning methane leaves you with carbon dioxide and water, which are better for the environment.

Energy crops

Energy crops are grown specifically for generating energy. So, unlike capturing methane from waste, there isn't an argument that burning them reduces greenhouse gases which would have been given off anyway. However, energy crops can still be low carbon if they are managed sustainably. For example, when energy crops are burnt,

equivalent crops should be planted that will absorb the same amount of carbon that was released by burning.

Does Good Energy use bioenergy? Yes. 20% of our renewable electricity is from biogeneration and 6% of the gas we supply is biomethane (this will be 10% from 1st April 2020). Our biogeneration procurement policy makes sure that we only contract with bioenergy generators that have sustainable and responsible generation practices.

To keep our energy supply as clean and ethical as possible, we only source bioenergy that meets the following requirements:

It must come from waste or sustainable sources

Land must be used sustainably, respecting natural habitats and biodiversity

Energy crops must not impact food production

Animal welfare must be respected

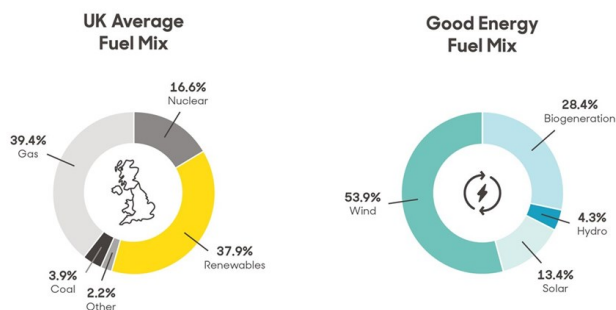
Transportation of biofuels should be minimised

Biofuel generators should be highly efficient and able to put waste heat to good use

Impacts on air quality must be appropriately managed

Green Gas must be certified under the Green Gas Certification Scheme

Why was IMC's gas not switched to renewable? The sourcing of renewable gas is possible, but the availability is limited and therefore makes it much more expensive. Hopefully as energy generation changes IMC will be able to make a further change with gas.



IMC Financial Status end 2020

2020 has been a challenging year, as we can all testify to. What has been more amazing though, is God's provision through the unmistakable generosity of His people during this year. Your faithfulness is His faithfulness.

This has meant that IMC has been able to focus on its mission without financial concern; for which we praise the Lord. This has also enabled the church fellowship to continue to give generously by its tithing and more.

The church finances at the end of 2020 are in a healthy state. The forecast for the end of the Methodist Church financial year (end August 2021), after deducting the required church reserve, is an unallocated account balance of £19,000.

Encouraged by this financial strength we are spending money wisely for the needs of the church. The heating is the current focus, with three heaters being replaced and a fourth due to be replaced. The cost of all these heaters, repairs and adding remote controls to enable switching the heating on a few hours before a church service, is now nearing £14,000.

IMC has also invested in Livestreaming to improve the quality and make more accessible our services via YouTube. This is costing nearly £9,500. The recent quinquennial survey has identified that the flat roof over the cafe needs repairing and this is estimated at £10,000. Chris Phillips and the property team will also be getting quotes in the New Year for the flat roof and some pointing work on the external Sanctuary wall.

So far, IMC has been able to meet these costs. The current thought for the 2021 New Year's Gift Day is an appeal for support for the heating costs.

We should look forward to 2021, knowing that God's faithfulness through his people in 2020 has been immense and that the testimony of His love for his people and for the Ivybridge community is freely available and overcomes all things.

The Treasurer on behalf of the Trustees

Dear friends

Please see the following email which is an update of our Kisumu Compassion project. They certainly need our prayers and practical support. Blessing Mark.



Dear Mark,

I hope this email finds you well. We have had a response from our colleagues in Kenya regarding the Key to Life Church Kisumu. Below, I have included a message from Pastor Alfred Onyango:

Receive Calvary greetings in Jesus name.

Its my prayer together with the entire family of Key to Life Church Kisumu that our good Lord has kept you safe in the middle of this storm of COVID-19. Its quite a blessing to hear from you, the love you have for us and your unceasing prayers for us before the Throne of Grace. Currently our churches are open for fellowship and we thank God.

At KE434 we are really praying as a church that our faithful God intervenes in all our situations because nothing is beyond Him. The pandemic has brought several families down economically. The small businesses they had collapsed. We have been blessed to empower a few to restart their businesses with the resources that the lord has provided. We are still trusting God to bring more back to their businesses.

Part of our beneficiaries come from the KANO PLAINS. With the prolonged rains experienced this year and still ongoing, several houses have been affected structurally since most of them are mud houses. Its our prayer that the rains tone down.

During our campaigns to sensitize our caregivers and the community at large on the importance of COVID-19 containment measures. We've met families who are struggling to spend time together because of the Lockdown.

Struggling to put both ends meet has for along time denied them this warmth of family fellowship. We are praying that this state of families being together and knowing and understanding one another be a blessing that has come to stay.

Our young boys and girls are in danger being derailed because of the prevailing circumstances. There is a rise in pregnancies and substance abuse amongst teenagers all around us. We thank God that as KE434, the Lord has not allowed this in our children. It's our prayer that the Good Lord continues to Prevail.

The most immediate remedies that we are now working on is instituting skills training environment within the center to engage our youths who are out of school as at now to acquire practical skills like BAKING, Kitchen GARDENS and AUDIO RECORDING STUDIO. This is to nurture and develop their talents and to disciple them to keep them away from being swallowed by the evil wave that's blowing now.

We are really trusting God to equip for us a WOODWORK WORKSHOP and METALWORK WORKSHOP with the basic tools required to train our boys and girls and even some of our caregivers. This is able to turn them into very serious skilled personnel and employers.

May our good Lord richly bless you as a family of believers and secure you divinely. Pass our deep love to the entire family of believers. We feel the love of God that you have for us as Key to Life church.

SHALOM

Pastor Alfred Onyango

Key to Life Church -Kisumu

Please be in touch if we can be of any further help.

God bless, Jess Walley

Compassion UK

T: 01932 836490

Releasing children from poverty in Jesus' name

Cambodia 2021: Great is Your Faithfulness

Thank you to all in IMC for your support of Cambodian Communities out of Crisis (CCC) and your prayers for Cambodia in 2020. What are some of the challenges that the country and CCC may face in 2021?

Covid-19: Until the end of November, all the cases notified (officially—no one knows whether the true picture has been different) were travellers entering the country. Since then, there has been a small community outbreak. Church meetings are limited to 20 persons. Please pray that Cambodia's infection rate may remain low.

Freedom: The Prime Minister has boasted that one in every five people in online discussion groups reports to him. Many Cambodians are very careful about what they say in public. Please pray for freedom of expression and for a viable opposition to hold the government to account.

Poverty: Cambodia's tourism and garment production industries have not yet started to recover from shutdowns caused by the pandemic. One in five garment workers is reported to be experiencing hunger on a daily basis. Please pray that the slow improvement in the standard of living of the poor may resume and accelerate.



Village outreach: CCC's mission to preach the gospel and serve the poor in a small village just outside Phnom Penh was set back by Covid-19 restrictions and precautions in 2020. Please pray for our small but faith-filled team of ladies to be prepared and equipped so that they are ready to launch into action once the Lord opens the door for them.



Education: Studying online has not been easy for the group of children whose education CCC sponsors. Unreliable Internet connections and pressures on working parents have hindered their learning. Please pray that in 2021 uninterrupted on-campus learning may resume.

**This I recall to my mind,
Therefore I have hope.
The LORD'S loving kindnesses indeed never cease,
For His compassions never fail.
They are new every morning;
Great is Your faithfulness.
(Lamentations 3:21-23)**

Myers Cooper

Angel Tree at Channings Wood

Our local Prison Fellowship say a big thank to all who so kindly supported Angel Tree this Christmas.

All presents have now been wrapped and posted to the children. On Christmas morning there will be 79 thrilled children to receive a present, a Nativity book and a personal note from their father, who possibly they have not seen for many weeks due to lock down. Those of you who may know Bob Fretton, he is an honorary Chaplain weekly supporting Father Anthony and the Chaplaincy team at Channings Wood. Our local prisons do need our prayer, it has been a challenging time with many normal activities cancelled and without the support of local volunteers.

Plymouth PF looked after Dartmoor Prison and Exeter Prison was also covered by the local team.

Pam Shead

IMC Now a Registered Charity - 1192612

The church has always been a charity even before registration. The change is a result of IMC's income, which includes the Youth Vision Fund, being above £100,000 per annum.

The charity law states, that once a church's income exceeds this threshold, they are legally bound to register with the Charity Commission. The registration was completed on line by Val Marriott and Robin Duckering in two Zoom sessions lasting just over 5 hours. Clearly, if we had done this a few times before we could have reduced this time considerably! We were very blessed to have some helpful notes from the central Methodist Church to guide us, plus Val's in depth IMC knowledge.

Before registration, IMC operated as a charity under a Statutory Instrument 2014, No. 242 that relates particularly to churches, in that if their income is below £100,000 per year then they are 'excepted charities' and do not need to register with the charity commission. Before registration IMC made its gift aid claim via the central Methodist Church, with many other Methodist Churches using a combined gift aid number. This will now change, with IMC making its gift aid claim directly. IMC is in the process of registering with HMRC for its own gift aid number.

With registration, the trustees of IMC will now have to legally submit an annual report, that has to cover certain aspects of its charitable purposes and including its financial accounts each year. The purpose of this reporting is transparency and accountability to the general public. Examples of these reports can be found on the Charity Commission website.

If you search the charity register, using just 'Methodist' it returns 1,892 registrations! I actually found this encouraging, that if you said on average each church has say only 100 members, then that is 189,200 believers. I am sure though there are many more.



The IMC leaders are reviewing the obligations for reporting each year and will be making some recommendations to the Church Council some time in the New Year.

Robin Duckering, Treasurer



JANUARY Worship



Due to the current restrictions and any possible extension of these restrictions, all services are liable to change. As I write this all services are via Zoom or Live Streaming but this could change, so please check if you are unsure.

For those who missed it, this was **Bittaford's Nativity Scene 2020**.
Really good and very visible to all.



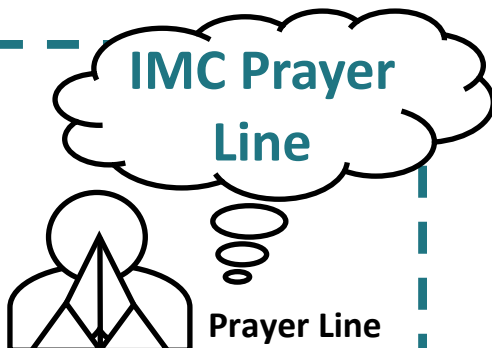
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Pam and John Montgomery

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Helen Maddaford Tel: 01752 892810

Youth Work:

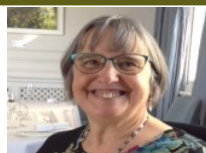
Phil Blunt Tel: 07816 910152

Church Address: Fore Street, Ivybridge, PL21 9AB

Ivybridge Methodist Church registered charity 1192612

From the Editor

If you would like to include anything in the **February Newsletter**, please let me have details by Wednesday 20 January in any of the following ways:



- ◆ send it by email to: **imc33chris@gmail.com**
- ◆ ring me on: **01752 892341**
- ◆ post it through my letterbox at: **33 Julian Road, Ivybridge PL21 9BU**
please put your name on it