

Donations

June 2026

**GREETINGS
FROM
LUDLOW
METHODIST
CHURCH**



What Do These Stones Mean?

‘**W**hat do these stones mean?’ The stones were a cairn beside the river Jordan where, according to the tradition in the Old Testament, God safely led the people of Israel into the promised land. If children in years to come asked what the stones meant, their parents were to tell them: they remind us of the God of Israel who had cared for his people in the past, and would go on doing so in the future.

‘What do these stones (of our church) mean?’ is a good question to ask on the 20th anniversary of the re-furbishing and re-opening of our premises. Every church should ask itself that question from time to time.

The simple answer – and the correct one – is this: *these stones are a reminder of God.*

Do we – does anyone, or everyone -need a reminder of God?

The answer has to be a resounding ‘Yes!’ – especially these days. Life gets so busy – even for older people! And there is so much to distract and tempt us away from our Creator.

All of us who come to church have to find ways of remembering God. A chef in a monastic kitchen long ago, Brother Lawrence, used to ‘practise the presence of God’, as he called it. ‘Abide with me in the serving of the soup’ etc.

Practising the presence of God requires just that – practice. If one day we don’t do very well, start again tomorrow. Or if we think God seems to be having a day off, because He (or She) seems so far away, or just unreal, well – tell God so: file a complaint. The Old Testament psalms are full of prayers like that.

So that’s the first thing for our anniversary: our church building is meant to remind us – and anyone at all who walks past it – of God our Creator.

There is another question for us – and not just for our anniversary this month. It’s a question for every month – for every day in fact, A Methodist evangelist used to tell congregations : ‘When you go to church, don’t look as if

you’re on your way to the dentist, And when you come out, don’t look as if you’ve just been to the dentist.

Of course, the joke is way out of date. There are far too few dentists these days, and certainly not enough for people who can’t afford one. But maybe the old joke still serves a purpose. Will people, in looking at us, realize that Christianity is a religion of happiness? Because it is.

Of course, all of us have to take life, with all its ups and downs, in our stride. But Christians, as we seek to do that, throw ourselves into the arms of God every step of the way. It’s another way of practising the presence of God – at least, as best as we can in all the hurly-burly of life.

The first Christians in Jerusalem, according to the New Testament, resembled a rather riotous street party. ‘....They shared their meals with unaffected joy...’ (Acts 2.46). And remember how Peter started his first sermon, addressing onlookers: ‘These people aren’t drunk, as you suppose; it’s only nine in the morning!’

Maybe that’s a good note on which to end on a Methodist anniversary!

A happy anniversary to one and all – including the whole town.

Neil Richardson

New vicar

The new vicar taking his first service was determined to make a good impression. The congregation sat spellbound throughout the eloquent sermon and the extended intercessions, which seemed to cover the whole category of human wants. After the service one church member asked another in awe: “Don’t you think our new vicar prays well?”

“I most certainly do,” came the answer. “Why that man asked the good Lord for things that our old vicar didn’t even know He had!”

WILL MY CHILDREN DIE TOO?

I often write about the DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo), as does Christian Aid which tells us that in the last 30 years the number of lives claimed by violence in the country is 6 million in 'this unrelenting, brutal and bloody environment where at least four babies in every ten will tragically die before their first birthday' (Christian Aid News Christmas '25).

Joyce, a farmer and mother of four, was forced to flee conflict with her family when violence tore through their village in February 2025. At the time Joyce was expecting their fourth child, Emiliana, and while in labour she could hear the bombs falling nearby. Two months later the sound of gunshots heralded the arrival of soldiers storming their village. Grippled by terror Joyce and her husband, Michael, escaped to hide in the nearby forest. Baby Emiliana clung to Joyce - she was just two months old and in a near-death state. Joyce feared for their lives: Will I die? Will my children die too?

The family escaped to Bulengo, a camp for displaced people. Relief was temporary and life unimaginably hard with food and water painfully scarce. The family has returned home but the trauma remains, as well as the fear that conflicts will return. Christian Aid worked to support Joyce and millions of other families who have survived



violence and poverty against all the odds. They work with partners in the DRC to make cash grants to empower families and communities to move forward working to their own agendas. The Christian Aid DRC director has commented that communities are leading their own recovery and there is a recognition that this is how it should be: 'We have benefitted from humanitarian intervention where we've been asked to choose for ourselves what we want to do and how we want to do it'.

Courageous Congolese communities are facing unimaginable hardship. The survival of the most vulnerable now rests on urgent humanitarian support. This is where and how we can play our part. Already this year you have demonstrated your willing to do so through attendance at our Lent Lunches. Now Christian Aid Week approaches – 10 – 16 May. Please give generously to our retiring collection on May 17 in St Laurence's. Thank you.

Claire

Christian Aid Week 10 - 16 May
Seven days to make a difference

The Christian Aid logo, featuring the words "christian aid" in a stylized font with a red arrow pointing to the right.

Wesleys celebrates its 20th Anniversary



Holy Days

3rd Sunday in June Fathers' Day, a time to celebrate male role models

In the UK, USA and Canada, the third Sunday in June is Father's Day. It's usually a good time for sons and daughters to take their father to his favourite restaurant, or to watch a favoured sport, or whatever else he enjoys doing.

How will you celebrate it this year? If your own father cannot be with you, how about a Zoom meeting?

How do these special days ever get started, anyway? Well, Father's Day began because way back in 1909 there was a woman in Spokane, Washington, named Sonora Louise Smart Dodd. That year she heard a church sermon about the merits of setting aside a day to honour one's mother. Mother's Day was just beginning to gather widespread attention in the United States at this time. But Sonora Louise Smart Dodd knew that it was her father who had selflessly raised herself and her five siblings by himself after their mother had died in childbirth. So the sermon on mothers gave Sonora Louise the idea to petition for a day to honour fathers, and in particular, her own father, William Jackson Smart.

Sonora Louise soon set about planning the first Father's Day celebration in Spokane in 1910. With support from the Spokane Ministerial Association and the YMCA, her efforts paid off, and a 'Father's Day' was appointed. Sonora Louise had wanted Father's Day to be on the first Sunday in June (since that was her father's birthday), but the city council didn't have time to approve it until later in the month. And so on June 19th, 1910, the first Father's Day was celebrated in Spokane.

Gradually, other people in other cities caught on and started celebrating their fathers, too. The rose was selected as the official Father's Day flower. Some people began to wear a white rose to honour a father who was dead, and a red one to honour a father who was living. Finally, in 1972, President Richard Nixon signed a presidential proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father's Day - a permanent, national holiday.



20th June Summer Solstice – longest day of the year

June, of course is the month of the summer solstice, the month of the Sun. Sol + stice come from two Latin words meaning 'sun' and 'to stand still'. As the days lengthen, the sun rises higher and higher until it seems to stand still in the sky. The Summer Solstice results in the longest day and the shortest night of the year. The Northern Hemisphere celebrates in June, and the Southern Hemisphere celebrates in December.

While the Druids worship at Stonehenge and elsewhere, here are some Christian alternatives that honour the Creator rather than the created.

God in All

He inspires all,

He gives life to all,

He dominates all,

He supports all.

He lights the light of the sun.

He furnishes the light of the night.

He has made springs in dry land.

He is the God of heaven and earth,

of sea and rivers,

of sun, moon and stars,

of the lofty mountain and the lowly valley,

the God above heaven,

and in heaven,

and under heaven.

A prayer of St Patrick

Green Pages

A round-up of environmental
and climate-change news

June 2026

Mary, the Blessed Virgin, visits Elizabeth

Mary – the virgin mother of Jesus. For centuries, the eastern and western churches have considered her pre-eminent among all the saints.

In the gospels, Mary makes her first appearance as a teenager. Nothing is known of her childhood, and what we do know of her is found mostly in Matthew 1 – 2 and in Luke 1 – 2. If you read both accounts, you'll notice that Luke's account seems to give the story from Mary's standpoint, whereas Matthew concentrates more on Joseph's side of things. In both accounts the virginal conception of Christ is clearly stated. Mary's quiet devotion to God and her total acceptance of His will shine forth.

Her visit to Elizabeth, when both were pregnant, is a moving and poignant account of two humble, ordinary women, suddenly caught up in a great event that would shape world history. Their trusting faith in God and acceptance of His will, shine through.

After Jesus is born, Mary fades into the background, and makes few appearances: when the family visits Jerusalem and she loses her son on the way home; when she urges Him to help the wedding party in Cana with its wine problem; and when Jesus gives her into the keeping of the beloved disciple when He is dying on the cross. Mary's last appearance is in Acts chapter one, just before Pentecost.

Mary obviously joined the early Church, but her role was never one of teaching and preaching, and indeed she remained so much in the background that nothing more about her is known for certain. Both Ephesus and Jerusalem have claimed to be the place of her death.

Mary, chosen to be the mother of Jesus Christ, one who is both God and Man, holds a unique place in the history of mankind. Down the centuries that have followed, the Church has paid special honour to Mary – and well deserved it is. "All generations shall call me blessed..."

(Usually celebrated 31st May)

Support pollinators

Nothing says Spring like the buzz of a bee! But these precious pollinators are declining due to habitat loss, climate change and agricultural intensification. How can you improve habitats for bees and other pollinators?



Did you know?

- There are 270 species of bee in Britain and Ireland.
- Bees will generally reside where there is a place for them to build a hive, with abundant flowering plants, and a water source.
- Like many other insects, bees are crucial pollinators.
- Climate change may be causing bumble bees to wake from hibernation in winter, increasing their dependence on early flowering garden plants, if they are not available, bees can starve.

How can we help?

- Plant bee-friendly plants and flowers which are rich in nectar. Grow flowering plants all year round. If you do not have a garden, use windowsills and hanging baskets.
- Provide a source of shallow water - a shallow bowlful is fine.
- Create habitats through suitable mowing regimes - allow some areas of grass to grow taller.
- Avoid using pesticides whenever possible.
- Use peat-free compost.

People's Emergency Briefing

Ludlow

Saturday 6th June, 4pm, Ludlow
Methodist, Broad Street, SY8 1NH

Saturday 27th June, 4pm, Ludlow
Assembly Rooms, Mill Street, SY8 1AZ

The People's Emergency Briefing is an eye-opening film featuring nine leading UK scientists and experts updating us on the latest about the climate and nature crisis and its impacts on everyday national life.

The film is based on the National Emergency Briefing presented to MP's and leading public figures in Westminster last November.

The 45-minute film will combine authoritative scientific content from the Westminster event with reactions from members of the public and some more familiar faces - designed to help audiences process the information on a more human level. It will deliver the frank facts about the threats, but also the enormous benefits if Government leads genuine emergency action.

It will be followed by a short panel discussion hosted by Ludlow 21.

Refreshments, nibbles and the chance to mingle with your community.

EVERYONE WELCOME (suitable for 16+)

Book your FREE seat or just turn up on the day.

emergencybriefingludlow@yahoo.com

Renewable Power

The continuing drop in the cost of solar panels offers a stark contrast to skyrocketing fossil fuel prices – and a cause for optimism.

As emissions continue to rise and governments fail to respond with anything like the urgency required, it's tempting to conclude that the prospects for a liveable planet are growing dim. But there is one striking spark of light: sunlight captured on solar panels is producing electricity on a scale unimaginable even a decade ago.

The amount of solar installed worldwide doubled between 2022 and 2024. In 2025 it accounted for 83% of all new electricity generated. Key to this is that costs have fallen by close to 90% per kWh in just the last decade. Crucially, the cost of batteries, which are essential for storing the power generated, has plunged by a similar amount. Over a longer period, the huge fall in the cost of solar is unprecedented for any energy technology: in 1975 it was £75 per watt, today it's just 15p – a fall of 99.8%.

Combined with similar falls in the cost of wind power (down 80% in a decade), these trends explain why renewables are now growing fast enough to exceed all new global electricity demand, and are already producing more energy than coal.

In the UK, renewables now meet 37% of our needs, compared to 35% from fossil fuels. China may be notorious for its large number of coal plants, but it's also a world leader in renewables. It added nearly 400GW of solar and wind capacity in 2025 – as much as the rest of the world combined.

It's no coincidence that China is also leading the way on the electrification of transport. One in two vehicles sold in China is electric. In the UK the figure is one in four – and rising. By comparison, petrol car registrations are down by a quarter year on year.

Since power and transport combined account for a hefty share of global carbon emissions, the trends offer an unmistakable ray of hope amid increasingly serious climate warnings.

Martin Wright, Positive News

Good News Story from South Arran

Thousands of seabed-dwelling species have returned to a marine protected area off Scotland since bottom trawling, which involves scraping the seabed with dragnets, was prohibited. A new study of Scotland's South Arran marine reserve found that twice as many species and three times as many animals live there compared to areas still open to trawlers.

The South Arran study said that efforts to protect the seabed could help to tackle climate change. It concluded that the role these habitats and their ecological communities may play in carbon storage has emerged as a compelling argument for strict protection.

Gavin Hughes, Positive News

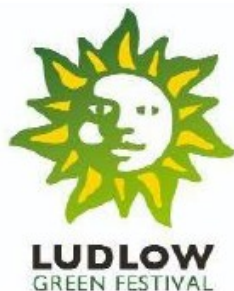
Ludlow Green Festival

Sunday 12th July, 10.00 am - 4.00 pm

The theme will be Resilience (the ability to adapt to and recover from times of adversity).

The aim is to name the challenges posed to our world by the climate crisis and also encourage a spirit of fortitude and recovery. Not to demoralise people with doomsday predictions, but instead to celebrate a range of local initiatives and projects where people are working towards solutions and adaptations.

And to have a good time! There will be free live music, tasty food and drink, sustainably produced things to buy, family activities and interactive workshops.



The Green Pages of the Ludlow Methodist Church monthly magazine are brought to you by the Care for Creation Group.

For more information please contact Elizabeth Wright.

Chiefly Yourselves concert May 2026.

As part of our 20th anniversary celebrations, we held a concert compered by Adrian, with his own unique contributions and several acts accompanied by Sylvia on the piano; who also performed a solo.

There were songs from Pip, who also recited his own composition about the food fads of the famous Albert, Roger, Vernon and Linda from Melville, John Mountford, and John Eadie, who told of the delights of hell whilst wearing a pair of fetching red horns. Maureen Farmery read two of her own compositions. Our friend Ethan played his own piano compositions and the first half ended with community singing for which the AV was operated by Mike Owens, before refreshments were served by Annie, Chris and Tony.

There were recitations and readings by Janet Williams who had trouble with the bank, Brian Dawson, who had trouble with an 'ole in the ark, and Joyce and David who had trouble remembering their first date. Edith entertained with jokes, Peter, under a red fez, impersonated Tommy Cooper and he and Amy sang a duet together. Stephen told the tale of Albert and the Lion.

A good time was had by all, and the audience donated £243 to church funds in order to be allowed home, after they had had coffee, biscuits and admission for free! Many thanks to all who took part or helped in anyway.

Stephen

Quiet prayers

The little boy was saying his go-to-bed prayers in a very low voice.

"I can't hear you, dear," his mother whispered.

"Wasn't talking to you," said the small one firmly.

House Groups

Looking at the Gospel of Matthew

June and July dates for your diary

1st June at 2.30pm at the home of Jo & Nigel Gibbon
(Hopton Bank & Melville, SESSION 6)

15th June at 3.00pm at Orleton Chapel
(Orleton & Wyson, SESSION 6)

25th June at 3.00pm at the home of Ruth & Mike Owens
(Ludlow, SESSION 6)

6th July at 2.30pm at the home of Jo & Nigel Gibbon
(Hopton Bank & Melville, SESSION 7)

13th July at 3.00pm at 51 Fishmore View, Ludlow
(Orleton & Wyson, SESSION 7)

22nd July at 3.00pm at the home of Ruth & Mike Owens
(Ludlow, SESSION 7)



Anyone can attend any group, but please let the host know, so they can cater better and have enough seating.
There will be handouts for each person.

Please note that these groups are continuing with local leadership while Rev Denise Hargreaves is on sabbatical.

What is the Future of Christianity in the Holy Land?

A senior Benedictine abbot has warned that the Holy Land risks becoming a 'Christian Disneyland' as the region's indigenous Christian population continues to decline.

Speaking to the Roman Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need, the abbot of the Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem, Dom Nikodemus Schnabel said Christians now make up less than two per cent of the population, driven away by conflict, economic hardship and uncertainty.

'For us, dreaming of reaching five or six per cent would already be a lot,' he said. 'If you think of the most secularised regions in Europe – such as Czechia or the former East Germany – even there, Christians are much more numerous than here.'

He warned that historic centres of the faith could become 'empty symbols devoid of witnesses', with holy sites maintained by clergy but lacking ordinary Christian life.

'There is no Annunciation without Nazareth, no Christmas without Bethlehem, no Easter without Jerusalem', he said, stressing the link between sacred places and living communities.

'If you think this is an El Dorado of Christianity, the reality is different.'

The abbot described a complex Christian presence comprising long-established Arabic-speaking communities, a small but growing Hebrew-speaking group and a large population of nearly 100,000 refugees and asylum seekers, many of whom face exploitation and restrictive conditions he described as 'a form of modern slavery'.

He also highlighted increasing hostility towards Christians from extremist, ultranationalist groups, including vandalism and harassment, warning that such incidents can 'no longer be considered marginal'.

Methodist Recorder, May 2026

A joy and privilege to be received by the Pope, says Archbishop of Canterbury

The Archbishop of Canterbury has praised the Pope for speaking out against injustice and about hope; has commended working together for the common good; and has endorsed the strengthening power of common witness, in an address after a recent private meeting at the Apostolic Palace in the Vatican.

She prayed with Pope Leo and said: "It is a joy and a privilege to be received by you, together with this delegation from Lambeth Palace."

She said: "Your Holiness, you have spoken powerfully about the many injustices in our world today, but you have spoken even more powerfully about hope. The world needed this message at this time — thank you. It reminded us that, despite our sufferings, people long for life in all its fullness, and countless people are working each day for this vision of the common good."

She continued: "May we continue to work together in that hope, trusting that the one who has begun this good work among us will bring it to completion. Please be assured of a warm welcome for the Church of England should you honour the United Kingdom with a visit."

Some of the great questions of life

Why are buildings called buildings when they are finished?
Shouldn't they be called built?

Why is abbreviated such a long word?

Why is it that when you tell a man there are 400 billion stars he will believe you, but when you tell him there's wet paint, he has to touch it?

If your supermarket has been lowering prices every day, how come nothing is free yet?

If con is the opposite of pro, is Congress the opposite of progress?



Part of the 20th Anniversary celebrations

Open Gardens

You are cordially invited to join us at Ludlow for **Tea in the Garden** on 13th June and 4th July.

It all began when we were fund raising for the redevelopment of our building 20 years ago, and then we carried on. What can be nicer than enjoying tea and cakes with friends in a summer garden!

So please put the dates in your diaries:

13th June at the home of Andy and Marie Dunn, 1 Steventon Gardens, Ludlow.

SY8 1LF

4th July at the home of Janet and Adrian Williams, Roscrowden, 6 Julian Road, Ludlow SY8 1HA

Plants, possibly

Cakes, certainly

and best of all friends old and new.

Come and join us between 3pm and 5pm. All proceeds for church funds..

Sermon

A pastor, known for his lengthy sermons, noticed a man get up and leave during the middle of his message. The man returned just before the conclusion of the service. Afterwards the pastor asked the man where he had gone. "I went to get a haircut," was the reply.

"But," said the pastor, "why didn't you do that before the service?"

"Because," the man said, "I didn't need one then."

Geoff's Quiz

- 1 Who developed the first successful polio vaccine?
- 2 They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old. etc, etc. are words we say every November. Who wrote them and what are they from?
- 3 What is the name of the science of determining a tree's age by looking at its growth rings?
- 4 What was the capital of the Aztec Empire?
- 5 What number comes next in the sequence 1,1,2,3,5?
- 6 Who composed the music for the oratorio Saul?
- 7 What dynasty ruled China for nearly 300 years until 1912?
- 8 Which Shakespeare play includes the characters Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?
- 9 What Great Lake does Niagara Falls empty into?
- 10 What is the longest river

Answers next month