

Friday 26th June – ‘Signs of Growth’



We asked our World Church Partners and Methodist Women in Britain:
“What does Kingdom Growth look like where you are?”

Our prayer is that as you read these stories of what God is doing, even through the challenges, you will be inspired in prayer and faith to step out in mission, be that across the street or across the world.

BLESSINGS IN BRAZIL – from Carolyn Lawrence

I had the privilege of visiting the Methodist Church in Brazil in February; it is a church that continues to grow. It has grown from 167,000 members in 2010 to a current figure of around 275,000 in 1500 churches – and is still expanding. It is clear that God is blessing them mightily and that we have so much to learn from them. I was blown away by the passion and commitment of the church and inspired by their strategic approach to mission and outreach. Part of their growth strategy includes the focus on meeting in small groups, vibrant worship, a devoted prayer life, a passion for the Bible, extensive pastoral care, extravagant generosity, systematic evangelistic outreach, and an emphasis on including the whole family in the whole of the Christian life.

I pray that we in the Methodist Church in Britain can learn from a church that is financially self-sufficient, growing, and full of evangelical zeal, so that we can reflect on our own priorities as well as be inspired by their love for Jesus.

ONLINE AND ALIVE! – from the Isle of Man

Since ‘Lockdown’, The Isle of Man Methodist Church ministers and members have produced videos which can be viewed at any time on YouTube – ‘Isle of Man Methodist Church’.

The videos are beautifully produced and include Sunday services entitled MAST (Methodists at Service Together), MAST Youth, and MAST Kids (in conjunction with Scripture Union Ministries Trust), Q&A, My Story (testimonies), Craft Club, Meditations, Verse of the Day,

and Faith's Home Church (helping us to think about and pray for our church families). Hymns are produced by one of our talented organists, Worship Songs, and *Sthie* (a Manx word meaning 'At Home', pronounced 'sty'), an interactive Facebook Watch Party Worship Service, Flipped Preaching (looking at the passages for Sunday), My Favourite Psalm, and Rocks Youth Group Holy Week Devotions. More are being added.

There are 190 subscribers for the YouTube channel. The *Sthie* group on Facebook has been steadily growing from the start and is at almost 400 members now – an increase of 81%! Also, according to Facebook, *Sthie* has received over 17.2k reactions where people react and respond to the worship, questions posed, prayer requests etc. in real time. This particular form of worship has enabled many people, especially families with young children, to join in Worship every week rather than the occasional attendance before 'lockdown'. People are engaging from all over the Island, the UK, and further afield – and the numbers are increasing! Hallelujah!

HIGH-VIS HALLELUJAH! – from Lancashire

We are a small circuit and in process of transition as we have a change of minister in September. Our biggest church has already undergone major refurbishment in the worship building itself, and it's called Trinity Methodist Church and Community Hub. Now we are in the second phase, and we employed someone to look in Clitheroe and find out what the town needed. Exciting plans were drawn up to connect our church to the halls, and work has begun. Even the wall to the neighbouring park has been breached, so there will be witness to those in the park, for example, on the park run.

During lockdown everything was boarded up, but two weeks ago we walked past the church on Monday morning and the men in their high-vis jackets were back at work. "Hallelujah!" we cried – and we did cry, for we saw it as a sign of hope. Whatever happens in the future we must be transformed. Our Zoom services throughout the country show people are searching, so we must search for them and share the love of a wonderful God with a new searching audience. Let's cling on to the hope that we are given. These are amazing times.