

The Drive Methodist Church
Eastern Avenue, Ilford, Essex, IG1 3PP

NEWSLETTER

March 2016



Minister: Revd Bernardino Mandlate

<http://www.the-drive-methodist-ilford.org.uk>

Revd. Bernardino Mandlate's Message.

Friends

It is Lent and as such, it is a time of repentance and reflection on our lifestyles and relationship with God and those around us. There is more to Lent than giving up on chocolate or cheese. It is what we do with our time, how we share our meagre resources with those who may be desperate and in need. Repentance needs to be accompanied by amendment. Amendment happens when we consciously contribute to other people's lives and make a difference.

During Lent, we are journeying with Jesus as he heads to Jerusalem to suffer our behalf. Each Sunday in Lent we read something of that journey, the contacts he makes with people, the confrontation with some in authority at the time and his own intransigence in getting his work done at whatever cost, in this case putting his life on the line. As he said in Luke 13 that prophets are killed in Jerusalem and that is where he is heading to, to face death head on in order to fulfill his Father's instructions. So it is our journey too if we suffer for the sake of the Gospel or we suffer in order to witness. Carry on doing the good work through Lent and beyond Lent.

There are refugees around us, they may seem an insurmountable problem which is good to be left for the politicians to deal with. This would be the easy way out. However, this is a problem on our doorstep. Politicians couldn't care less. We see it, let us respond to it in whichever small way we can this Lenten season. How and what you do it, it's up to each one to discern.

Let me leave you with a Franciscan blessing ' May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.

May the peace of God and the God of peace be with you for evermore.'

God bless
Dino

Flowers in our Church.

We hope you get pleasure from the flowers that decorate our church each week. Many are now given to celebrate a birthday or commemorate a loved one or a special memory and we are always happy to receive requests and donations.

Our dear friend Catherine, who has delighted us all with her stylish and artistic floral skills over many years has retired as flower arranger in chief; leaving Anne Dellow, Janet Brunnen, Ruth Joyce and myself to regroup and carry on the good work.

Forthcoming Workshop.

As we would very much like to welcome others onto the flower rota we are planning to organise a workshop for you to try out your skills on Saturday 30th April from 10am – 12.30pm we will provide all flowers and accessories so do please let Janet, Anne, Ruth or myself know if you are interested.

Lorraine Bendon.



Would you like to sponsor an Easter Egg?

Please donate a small amount of money and sponsor an Easter Egg. Soon there will be Easter branches by the main doors and gift tags for you to write an Easter message on. A donation box will be there too.

All the money will be used to buy Easter Eggs for the annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday 26th March.

With thanks

Jo Wright



Date for your diary

Easter Egg Hunt, crafts and refreshments on **Saturday 26th March**
10.30am - 12.30pm.

Hall Floor

The hall floor has worn out and will have to be taken up and replaced. It is expected that this work will be done during the summer holiday period. So the hall will be closed for all August.

Brian Taylor.



**Our annual JMA FAMILY BEETLE DRIVE and TEA (and raffle)
will be held on:**

SATURDAY 5th MARCH 2016

2.30 pm for 3 pm START

THE DRIVE METHODIST CHURCH HALL

Adult: £5; Children (under 16): £2.50

All profits go to JMA (Junior Mission for All)
raising funds for projects both at home and abroad.
Come along and enjoy an afternoon of fellowship, food and fun!

***Tickets are available from me now
so please tell all your family and friends.***

With thanks
Diane Foster



A Free Keyboard

We have a Casio keyboard which we no longer have use for.
Anyone interested please contact Janet or myself.
Roy Brunnen

How Can It Be?

How did it all begin? A hedonistic disc jockey and local radio presenter with my own Saturday night rock show and living my life egotistically in pursuit of the fast lane. I lived on a cocktail of alcohol and late night parties in a group of beautiful islands in the South West of England (the Isles of Scilly). However, I was destined to become a Methodist lay preacher on trial and seven years later still being in a called place in life, regardless of so many changes in moving to live in East London and married to a beautiful wife.

Well for every high there was a come down on the next day that required a fix. Yes, the instant fix nothing meaningful, lasting or progressive. I was existing and not living. Yet I had a yearning that there had to be more to life than this which was undeniable. I had tried the complete range of Spanish islands down in the Canaries. I travelled my way around mainland Spain yet I felt something was missing in life. Life was built upon performing my DJ sets to provide pleasure for

others in the moment and yet it was all so temporary. My alcohol consumption was constantly on the increase until I finally crashed. When you crash in a community of 2000 people, it is not long before everyone knows about your circumstances. My public life began to spiral downwards and my place on Saturday night radio taken away. A lot of the friends I would party so wildly with in my nice barn conversion home were nowhere to be seen and a reputation of a has been rapidly creeping up on me.

I was in despair and my life was an emotional state. It was in this time I was saved. For whilst the community was turning their back on me, the most unlikely friendship was to blossom. I became friends with a Methodist Superintendent Minister called Rev Charlie Gibbs. In my opinion, I owe the life I have today to this wonderful fellow. Yet Charlie would be quick to point out that it's not him but something that was in the realms of a higher power. So yes God intervened when I needed him most and Charlie was the vessel he used but either way I will be thankful for the rest of my life.

In a community that liked to point the finger, Charlie had no hesitation in standing by me. It was Charlie who showed me what I was later to

learn which is a principle known as unconditional positive regard. The one thing I have learnt is if you can get a person to take ownership of self-respect, God will move mountains. It makes me think of the parable of the mustard seed: you do not need a lot to reignite a spark for life. So much lays in the principle of being non-judgmental and accepting the people we encounter at face value. We are called Christian disciples of Jesus. We only see at first what life has done to the person in front of us but within lays a blank canvass. It's going to take time to establish trust. It's going to take time to peel back the layers of hurt, emotional harm and abuse but underneath it all lies God's canvass. A soul that can be rebuilt in God's undeserved grace to the original intended purpose. Yes, spiritual restoration is

possible. Reflecting from experience, I would say the issue that takes the longest to go is self-forgiveness. We are told by calling upon God, we are forgiven but in ourselves we may still be living with guilt. Sometimes it can feel like we are hanging on in there with everything we have. In effect the holy spirit is at work within and we are being challenged in transformation of our former self. Yes, old habits die hard but the fuller picture begins to appear and understanding deepens as we learn of biblical geography, history and events. It all begins to become logical but the glorious moment is when the heart first believes.

In this moment we have an experience that changes life forever. For faith is not so much an issue of knowledge (although it helps) to understand the logic of our faith but a conversion of heart is what is truly required.

When I encountered my first moments of fellowship, I remember feeling a warm glow. I also remember feeling and still feel a part of Christian family which is based on encouragement and love. I was still in the community I had once lived so hedonistically people seem to have such long memories when it suits them. I found myself fending off comments that were frequently being made, some of which were a lot less welcomed than some of the more up-building support I was receiving in recovery. I was also discovering the history of Methodism and this was perfectly acceptable to me. The one thing that draws me to Methodism is we are a people of ministry and social purpose in real

life, rolling our sleeves up and not being shy in getting our hands dirty.

Methodism when carried out in the correct manner is mission with purpose and I love the statement "do not wait until you feel good enough to come but come as you are." It reflects the attitude of our Lord Jesus who did not come for the high and mighty rulers who he would have despised because Jesus came for the sick and troubled and to heal. I feel Methodism hits the mark more than a lot of other faiths. I feel I can

make this claim from personal experience and view Methodism as a central part of my personal recovery. It has helped me to find my style of leadership when I preach and maintains a healthy social conscience in my delivery.

In the early days there were so many things that happened that surprised the local community. Certain events will stay with me for the rest of my life. I will relate just a couple of these events here. I hope you will discover a level of joy from these encounters.

I will always remember the day I was asked if I would carry the cross out of the chapel and down the main street on Good Friday. It caused a few looks but served its purpose. My decision had been made, I for one was happy to be on the Lord's side. The last person the community felt would be involved in such an act was making known where his heart stood in his homeland.

On another occasion, we had a week of ecumenical visit from Tim Thornton, the Church of England Bishop of Truro, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Plymouth Christopher Budd (Born in Romford) and our own Steve Wild Methodist Chair for Cornwall. Charlie and I went to the airport to meet our guests and I was appointed chauffeur for the week. At the time, I had a six seater MPV. Just picture it, there was this ex-character of some colourful life, chauffeuring the leadership of faith around a small island for the week and socially partaking in the events.

We had a fine week that week and visited most of the other islands. During the week, we visited inhabitants of the other islands that make

up the Isles of Scilly and on one day we visited the world famous Tresco and dined with the leaseholders of the island i.e. the Dorrien Smiths. Yes, it was a fine week.

During this period I was on note as a local preacher before moving on to on trial and I had begun to feel that I wanted to get more involved with helping others who needed help. Since the islands are a place of no real poverty this would involve a move to the mainland. I didn't know how God was going to do this but as always he had the matter in hand.

In October 2012 I made one of my trips away. A lot of islanders go away out of season because the summer season is in the main earning period (March – September). They say if you see more than two people a day outside this period you have had what could be seen as a busy day a little different from London with its large population. As part of my trip I visited London. I had no plan to visit Westminster Central Hall that day. In fact, I had not heard of it but I ended up in Parliament Square in front of Westminster Abbey. As I glanced over, I saw Westminster Central Hall in the corner. I felt the urge to go to Central Hall. Upon entering, I was greeted by a guide who very politely asked me if I would like a tour. I replied "yes, ok". I had an hour to spare. That was almost three years ago and we are still following each other around. The tour guide was my Bella. Yes, Bella asked me like she would anyone else to come back on the Sunday morning and worship at Central Hall and the rest is history as they say. When I returned to the Isles of Scilly, we kept in touch and became engaged in March 2013 on the Isles of Scilly. Well for the next six months, Bella got on with her work in London and I got on with my seasonal employment on the Isles of Scilly. We got married in October 2013 and it was Superintendent Minister Charlie Gibbs, my mentor in the way of our Lord who joined us together in marriage. We had a wonderful chapel wedding with holy communion for our guests, followed by a great reception.

I came to live in London in October 2013. London felt like the centre of the universe after life on a small island twenty-eight miles southwest of Lands' End. Bella and I initially attended Westminster Central Hall and it was here I was to become involved with the homeless as a team leader. I coordinated with the team to pick up

food for the evening meet and greet our guests. We provided a hot meal for them, we spent some social time together and then I would settle down for the night with them before a member of the team would come in early the following morning and cook breakfast. It was good experience and I learnt anyone at any time can potentially become homeless including city workers.

My other experience in London has involved working in addiction. It has been interesting greeting people at the prison gate upon their release and escorting them to various parts of the country. During my time of working in addiction I picked up various certificates of experience and became a qualified facilitator in teaching alcohol reduction.

I am now following my passion in helping others by studying the CPCAB Counselling and Psychotherapy Course. I have passed level 2 and God willing I am due to pass level 3 before setting out on a two-year diploma from this September. eventually from being the party king of Scilly, our God will grant me the qualifications I require to help others in a meaningful way. Friday evenings for me involve taking an active part with Premier Radio as a telephone life-liner.

We love being a part of such a warm Methodist family that exists in The Drive Methodist Church Ilford and I feel God has called me to this part of East London. We find within The Drive community all the aspects of true worship, friendship Christian love and a feeling of belonging and purpose while studying for my qualifications in counselling. I have recently set up my own oven cleaning business which is called East London & West Essex Oven Cleaning and I am starting a cleaning service just up the road in Wanstead. This cleaning service is called Kings of Grease. My encouragement to anyone who feels the call of God is to listen. It will take you on one of the most interesting transformations of your life.

God Bless you all.
Dave Pender.

Peer Talk

A letter was received from Revd. Stephen and Philippa Normanton in January giving the latest news of their Peer Talk charity. For new members of this Church, Revd. Stephen Normanton was our minister before Revd. Bernardino Mandlate. Their whole letter is printed below, and was addressed to the members of The Drive Church.

First of all, we want to thank you for your very kind gift to support the work of Peertalk.

The preliminary work has involved talking to many professional people about mental health issues and how to support those living with depression and their families.

In our opinion it is because of the financial support we received, such as your gift, that we have been successful in our bid for a grant from the National (Connexional) Methodist Church which has enabled the Peertalk project to be funded for the next three years.

Revd. Stephen is the chair of the Peertalk project management committee. Philippa is the project coordinator working 20 hours per week. Liz Whitfield is project administrator working 16 hours per week. All the work is overseen by the management committee which is a group of eight people who are committed to delivering the aims of the project.

The Peertalk project aims to establish a UK wide network of volunteers facilitated peer group support meetings for people who experience depression and their families. Initially the focus of the project will be in Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cumbria. This year there are to be four district/regional day gatherings addressing the Churches response to mental health issues and specifically depression. It is often the case that people who experience mental health issues also face difficulties in the wider society through discrimination, intolerance and injustice. The Peertalk project will seek to inform and equip the church to be confident in supporting people through such issues and enabling the church to challenge the stigma associated with depression and mental health illness. We are currently looking at venues and speakers for these events which will require significant planning. They will be held from June onwards.

Alongside this we will need to prepare volunteer training material and prepare publicity and application documents for potential volunteers for each Peertalk group meeting there will be two volunteers on duty with the possibility of a third acting as host. It is the aim to have a duty rota of twelve volunteers for each group in order that a volunteer may have a turn on duty approximately once a month. With the aim of establishing two Peertalk groups by the end of 2016, this will require recruiting at least 24 volunteer facilitators.

If you would like to receive updates on the project, please email your details to admin@peertalk.cu.uk or if you would prefer postal mailings let Liz know at High Park House, Wray, Lancaster LA2 8QU.

Thank you again for your financial support and we would value your ongoing prayerful support for this project.

Yours Sincerely,

Stephen and Philippa Normanton.
Peertalk Project.

I have agreed with Roy Brunnen (Senior Steward) that I will act as a contact point for news on the Peertalk Charity. I have already sent my email details to Liz and will publish future updates when I receive them.

Corinne Smith.

Little Things

The following piece was discovered in the 1990 friendship book by Betty Griffiths, and is well worth a read.

*Thank you God for little things
That often come our way
The things we take for granted
But don't mention when we Pray
The unexpected courtesy
The thoughtful kindly deed
A hand reached out to help us
In a time of sudden need
Oh, make us more aware, dear God
Of little daily graces
That come to us with "sweet surprise"
From never dreamed of places.*

March Church Diary

Thu	03 rd	7.45pm	Choir Practice
Sat	05 th	2.30pm	Annual Beetle Drive In aid of Junior Mission for All.
Sun	06th	11.15am	4th Sunday in Lent. Morning Service Led by Revd. Bernardino Mandlate. with Holy Communion for Mothering Sunday.
Thu	10 th	7.45pm	Choir Practice
Sun	13th	11.15am	5th Sunday in Lent. Morning Service led by Mr Collins Frimpong-Manso
Thu	17 th	7.45pm	Choir Practice
Sun	20th	11.15am	Palm Sunday Morning Service led by Mr John Nicholls.
Thu	24th	8.00pm	Maundy Thursday Service At St Andrews Church, The Drive, Ilford.
Fri	25th	10.00am	Good Friday Service led by Revd. Bernardino Mandlate
Sat	26 th	1030am	Easter Egg Hunt, craft stalls and refreshments
Sun	27th	10.45am	Easter Day. Dressing the Cross. (please bring flowers to place on the Cross)
		11.15am	Service with Holy Communion Led by Revd. Bernardino Mandlate.

Mission Statement
The Drive Methodist Church.

The Drive Methodist Church aims to be faithful to the commandments of Jesus, and the calling of the Methodist Church.

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission, and to fulfil the promises detailed in the Methodist worship book.

Provide a weekly opportunity for all people to worship God in Christ, Enable people to grow and learn as Christians through mutual support and care.

Be a good neighbour to the immediate and wider community. Sharing our faith with others through pastoral care, church activities and communication.

March 2013.