

FROM THE DEVELOPMENT WORKER

*The Revd
Derek Balsdon*

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to affect our lives in so many different ways. Many people have lost precious family members and friends, many more have suffered the virus themselves, and an increasing number of people have lost their jobs. I am grateful for being able to continue in full time employment, and I appreciate your ongoing financial support which enables me to continue as the MET Development Worker. I also value your ongoing prayer support. On the day I wrote this, my daily Bible reading was Romans 8:28-38, about being more than conquerors, and of nothing being able to separate us from the love of God. Commenting on this scripture, the late Selwyn Hughes wrote, 'In reality Paul is saying "Nothing can break you, if you don't break with God." If we stick with God then nothing 'will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Jesus Christ our Lord' (Romans 8:38). As this pandemic continues, I find it so helpful and reassuring to remain in and rest in God's awesome love.

When I became the Development Worker two years ago, I never anticipated how much the seventh point of the

Job Description would come into play: 'Other duties as may, from time to time, reasonably be required!' The Covid-19 pandemic has meant that I have been reasonably required to fulfil various other duties. This has included setting up and running numerous meetings on Zoom, including our weekly Prayer Meetings and Bible Studies, along with sorting out online alternatives to the usual MET Receptions. For Cliff College Festival @ Home we produced 'Raising up a new generation of Wesleys,' featuring an interview with Nicky Gumbel, and conversations with Ben Juliano, Carolyn Lawrence and David Hull. For the Methodist Conference we hosted live 'An evening with the Vice-President and friends.' These inspirational videos have had 1200 and 600 viewings respectively, so a much bigger audience than our usual receptions! Our Remaining Faithful: Moving Forward conference also moved online, with around 150 participants. All this is part of developing the work of MET. We now have an open Facebook page in addition to the closed Facebook group and we also have a YouTube channel where several videos are now available (new videos will gradually be added).

In Acts 1:8, Jesus spoke about the Holy Spirit giving us power to witness locally, nationally and to the ends of the earth. Through these various online ways, God's Spirit is enabling us to witness locally, nationally and to the ends of the earth (we have had people in other countries joining some of our online events). As the 'new normal' materialises, within MET we will be seeking God's guidance regarding what previous ways we go back to, and in what fresh ways we are being called and empowered to work

and witness. Within our organisation, and within our churches, we need to be open to God working in fresh ways, practices of which we would never even have dreamt a year ago.

Over the past few months, I have certainly missed travelling to different parts of the Connexion, preaching, teaching and worshipping. I am very grateful for all the online opportunities though, while they are a good second-best, it is not the same as physically being with one another in Christian fellowship. I am willing to make provisional bookings for teaching days and preaching appointments, even if they have to be cancelled nearer the time (or moved online). Please get in touch to explore possible dates.

The Bible Month book for 2020 is Ruth, and during June I led two online weekly Bible studies using the MET group study book, 'Three funerals and a wedding: The message of Ruth today' by John M Haley and Russell G Herbert. For September and October, I will be leading an online / via phone Bible study on Monday evenings; please contact me if you would like to join in. We continue with the MET Prayer Meeting on Sundays at 7 pm, as we pray for our church, nation and world. With regular church gatherings not happening, these online meetings have provided a precious opportunity to share Christian fellowship together, and can be accessed online and from any phone. Please contact me for access details.

May God's Spirit guide and empower your worship, work and witness,
Derek

Raising up a new generation of Wesleys

An evening with the vice-president & friends.

EVANGELISM | CHURCH GROWTH | PRAYER | REVIVAL



Nathan Veall
RISING GENERATION
REPRESENTATIVE



David Hull
CHAIR, METHODIST
EVANGELICALS TOGETHER



Carolyn Lawrence
VICE-PRESIDENT, THE
METHODIST CHURCH



Nathan Veall
STUDENT AT FLORIDA
SOUTHERN COLLEGE

The video is available on our website and YouTube channel