

THE NEW MAGAZINE OF METHODIST EVANGELICALS TOGETHER

RE:VIVE



Biblical Revelation
Biblical Renewal
Biblical Revival

SPRING 2024

Contents

SPRING 2024

LAUNCHING RE:VIVE

We are delighted to launch a new look to our magazine - now renamed RE:VIVE with the first edition this spring. We do hope that you will enjoy this new look. At the same time, we are launching a fresh focus to MET which becomes MET:Revive. The three areas of focus for MET:Revive are Biblical Revelation, Biblical Renewal and Biblical Revival as David Hull explains in his article on page 3: 'Revived Hearts and Radiant Faces'.



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Revived Hearts and Radiant Faces

DAVID HULL



As we open this first edition of RE:VIVE, our Chair David Hull explores our foundational convictions.



The new season in which we find ourselves within both the church and the world calls for a fresh focus. Methodist Evangelicals Together becomes MET:Revive, and MET Connexion becomes RE:VIVE. It is a great privilege to contribute the opening article.

Jesus himself suggested that building work should begin with the foundations and these, of course, should be nothing less than his teaching (Matthew 7:24-27). It is a great honour, therefore, to lay out the foundations of MET:Revive as we set out together into this new season. Our foundational convictions, inherited from our evangelical forebears within the Methodist Church, continue to be threefold: Biblical Revelation, Biblical Renewal, and Biblical Revival.



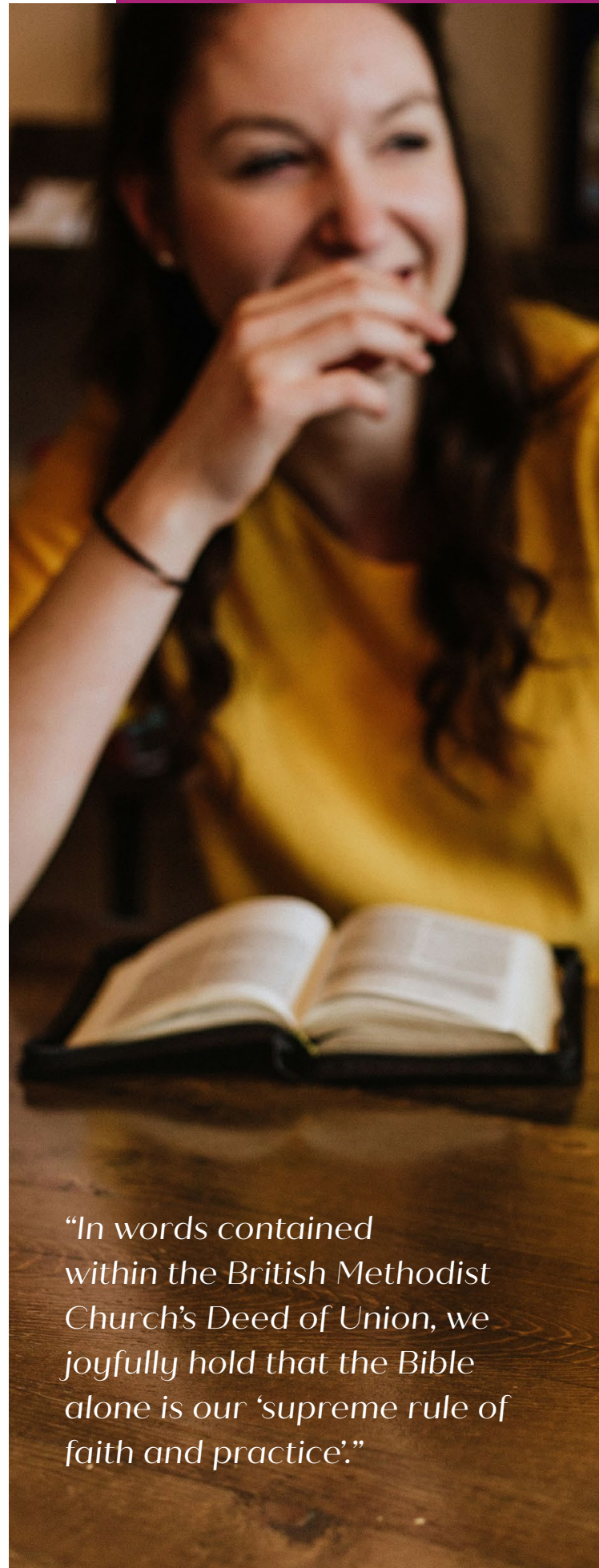
BIBLICAL REVELATION

With the Apostle Paul writing to Timothy, we gladly affirm, 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work' (2 Timothy 3:16-17). In words contained within the British Methodist Church's Deed of Union, we joyfully hold that the Bible alone is our 'supreme rule of faith and practice'. It uniquely teaches us what to believe and how to live. The conviction, of course, goes all the way back to the origins of our Methodist movement, and far beyond that to the earliest days of the history of the people of God. John Wesley described his own approach to the Bible in the Preface to the first collection of his sermons:

I want to know one thing, the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way: for this very end he came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be homo unius libri (a man of one book). Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone: only God is here. In his presence I open, I read his book; for this end, to find the way to heaven.

Within MET:Revive, we are people of one book. That is the heritage we are so grateful to have inherited from our predecessor evangelical movements within the Methodist Church, particularly Conservative Evangelicals in Methodism which was established to stand for the authority of the Bible within our denomination.

I remember hearing one of its founding leaders, Rev. Dr Donald English, speak movingly of the Bible's unique power as a channel of the Lord's grace into our lives. He



“In words contained within the British Methodist Church's Deed of Union, we joyfully hold that the Bible alone is our 'supreme rule of faith and practice'.”



said that he was approached, after a service in which he had preached, by someone who wanted to know more about Christianity. Because he was due to leave the next day for some international travel, he was unable to offer to meet with the man for a fuller conversation. Instead, he suggested that the man read the Bible, beginning with one of the Gospels. Reading a short passage each day, and working his way through the Gospel from beginning to end, he suggested that he began each daily reading with a prayer: 'Lord, if you are real, please reveal yourself to me.' Donald English said it wasn't long before he received a letter from the man, explaining that he had become a Christian. He wrote, 'As I read, I suddenly became aware that he, of whom I was reading, was present with me.'

Such is the unique power and authority of the Bible, our supreme rule of faith and practice. As we read it with openness to the Lord, we encounter him, the Living God.



BIBLICAL RENEWAL

From the earliest days of the charismatic renewal which spread across the UK from the 1960s and 70s, there has been great hope and excitement that the movement would not only produce new churches but that it would also result in the renewal of historic churches and denominations. Whilst there have been many signs of this beginning to take place, and even gathering momentum, its fulfilment is still awaited with anticipation and longing.

At the heart of this renewal movement is the belief that the experience of the filling and empowering of the Holy Spirit – of which we read in the Book of Acts – is still available to Christians today, if only we would seek it openly and persistently: 'Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord' (Acts 3:19).

This is the 'religion of the heart' that John Wesley so passionately rediscovered in the opening days of our Methodist movement. There is always a deeper, richer experience of the Spirit's presence and power awaiting our response. He too discovered that the same presence of the Spirit known in the earliest days of the Christian church could be experienced by Christians of his own day. How astonishing it is that a prim and proper Oxford don should write in his Journal of events such as this, when he gathered in prayer with his friends to see in the new year of 1739:

Mr. Hall, Kinchin, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutchings, and my brother Charles were present at our love feast in Fetter

Lane, with about sixty of our brethren. About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his majesty, we broke out with one voice, 'We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.'

The experience certainly kindled a flame that soon began to spread like wildfire in revival. As encouraging as such an account is, I found it even more encouraging to read on in Wesley's Journal and discover what happened only six months later. Wesley's friends and colleagues soon began to realise that they could no longer sense the Spirit's presence with them in the same way. They wrote to Wesley, urging him to return to London from Bristol, and he came straight away. They gathered again in Fetter Lane, and turned to the Lord in confession and prayer. Wesley recorded in his Journal:

In that hour, we found God with us as at the first. Some fell prostrate upon the ground. Others burst out, as with one consent, into loud praise and thanksgiving. And many openly testified, there had been no such day as this since January the first preceding.

The sense of the Holy Spirit's presence returned when they realised they had drifted away and sought him again. It makes me think there might be hope for us yet!

It was with the longing for renewal within the Methodist Church that Dunamis was founded – both a movement and a magazine. It is another of our predecessor organisations, from whom we have inherited our commitment to Biblical Renewal. Lord, have mercy, we pray, and send us great times of refreshing!



BIBLICAL REVIVAL

Our fresh focus in this new season places prayer for revival front and centre once again. It is the torch that was carried for many years

by the Methodist Revival Fellowship, the third of our predecessor organisations. John Barker, its founder, believed that the need of Methodism was greater even than a return to the authority of the Bible alone. It must be accompanied by spiritual power. The Methodist Revival Fellowship therefore set out to come to a proper understanding of revival, to pray for it, and to prepare for it. They longed to be people with radiant faces because they had revived hearts.

'Revival' is a word that is used in many different ways, with many different meanings. Drawing on our own



"They longed to be people with radiant faces because they had revived hearts."



revival heritage, I define it as 'the recovery of authentic Christianity, accompanied by the extraordinary power of the Holy Spirit, leading to accelerated transformation'. That transformation, which more ordinarily may take a lifetime, seems to occur much more quickly in times of revival, and it is seen in personal holiness, evangelistic growth, and social change.

Our heritage as Methodists teaches us how to pursue revival: through the 'methodical', faithful use of the means of grace: corporate worship, Christian fellowship and Holy Communion, personal Bible reading, prayer and fasting. When we do these things with the primary intention of encountering the Living God, we uniquely open ourselves to his grace flowing into our lives. As we are faithful in these ordinary things, occasionally we find the Lord moving in extraordinary ways, even in revival as Christians of former generations have discovered.

Like our forebears did in their generation, we believe it is time to place prayer for revival front and centre again. We join in the prayer of the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk:

*'Lord, I have heard of your fame;
I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord.
Repeat them in our day,
in our time make them known'*

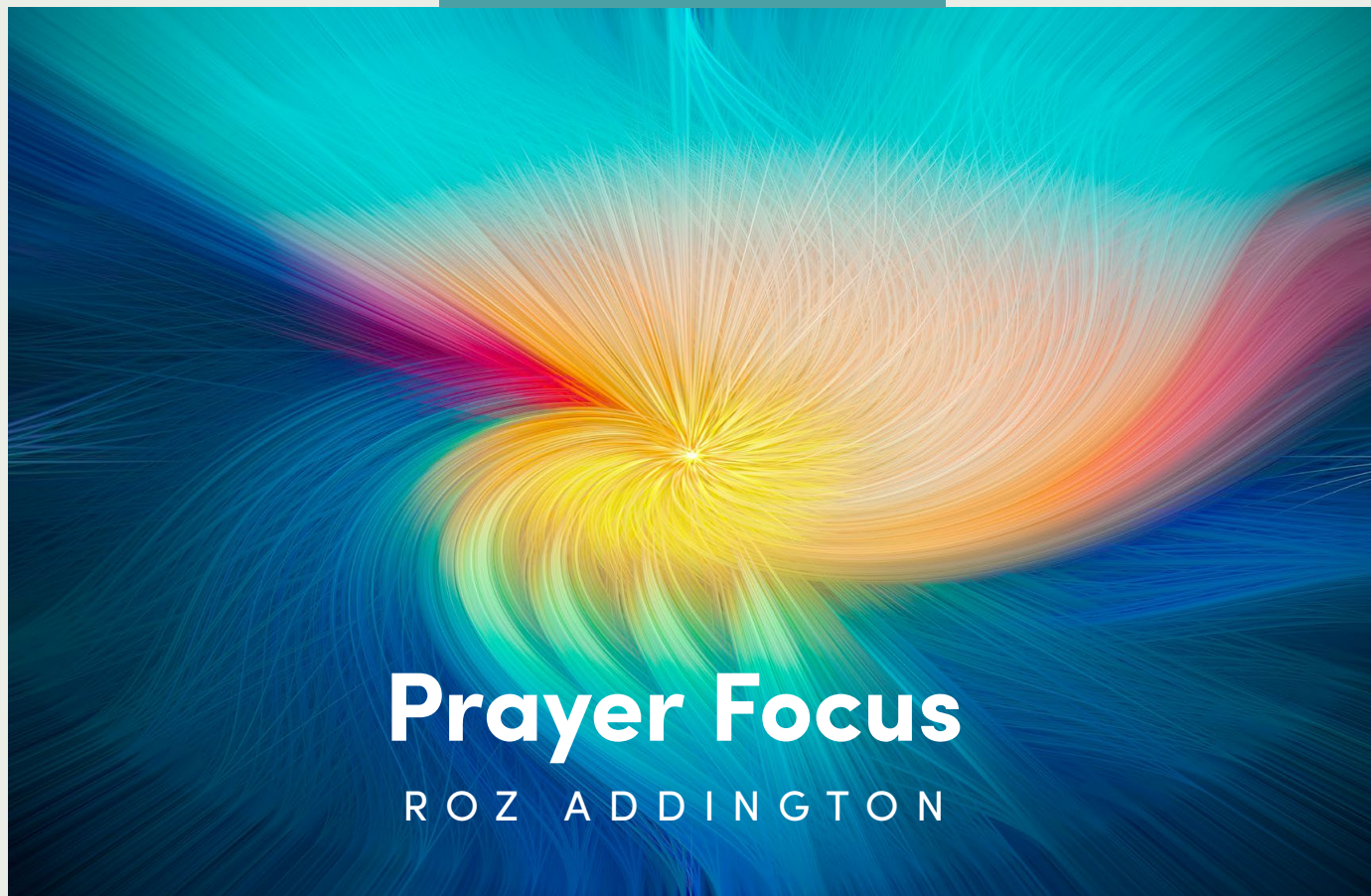
(Habakkuk 3:2)

Read more of Habakkuk's prayer in our Bible Study on pages 22 - 24



REV DR DAVID A. HULL

Rev Dr David A. Hull, Chair of Methodist Evangelicals Together, is a Methodist Minister, currently serving as Lead Pastor of Freedom Church Bristol.



Prayer Focus

ROZ ADDINGTON

Along with a new season and a new look magazine, there has been a refreshing of the 'Praying Always' section. Rather than the whole of 'Praying Always' being together at the back of the magazine, it was thought good to separate it into four sections and place it in the body of the magazine – as a 'Prayer Focus' section after four of the main articles – four monthly Prayer Focus points.

After four of the key articles, there will be suggested prayer topics relating to that article, followed by some points on national and world issues. Prayer remains very much an integral part of the magazine, for we are all called to pray continually with all kinds of prayers and requests (Ephesians 6:18). How it is used will be different for each person, and that's fine; the important thing is that we pray.

We are living in dark and volatile times, causing in many great uneasiness and anxiety. Though things may look chaotic and uncertain, we have faith and hope in a wonderful God, who behind the scenes is in control. The words of the Graham Kendrick song *O Lord, the Clouds Are Gathering*, have come into sharp focus; I feel they have special significance for the times in which we are living. The first verse and chorus are as follows:

*O Lord, the clouds are gathering
The fire of judgement burns
How we have fallen!
O Lord, you stand appalled to see
Your laws of love so scorned,
And lives so broken*

*Have mercy, Lord,
Forgive us, Lord,
Restore us, Lord,
Revive your church again
Let justice flow
Like rivers
And righteousness like a never
failing stream*

Graham Kendrick Copyright © 1987 Make Way Music

The Greatest Injustice in the World ... and the Greatest Love



David Hull speaks to Nicky and Pippa Gumbel about biblical revelation, renewal and revival, hallmarks throughout their life of ministry.

‘Unfortunately, Nicky fell through the shower the day we arrived. It smashed and we spent quite a bit of time in casualty, having his hands stitched together. He ended up looking like an extraordinary visual aid!’ Pippa described the striking scene as she spoke of her trip to the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem, where Nicky preached on Easter Day 2023.

The day proved to be extraordinarily providential in more ways than one. They had received and accepted the invitation some time previously, and yet it would provide the perfect setting for the launch of Alpha International’s 2033 initiative, with ten years to go until the two-thousandth anniversary of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is an initiative that has become a driving passion of their shared ministry since stepping down from the leadership of Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) two years ago.

Standing side by side in ministry, Rev. Nicky Gumbel, former Vicar of HTB and Pioneer of the Alpha Course, and his wife Pippa will be well-known to our readers. It is a ministry marked by an emphasis on making Jesus known, undergirded by an unshakeable belief in the unique, combined power of the Bible and the Holy Spirit. I was glad to have the opportunity to update them on our fresh focus for MET:Revive and to hear their reflections on our shared convictions. The themes of biblical revelation, renewal and revival flowed freely, intertwining the conversation.

THE BIBLE IS WHERE I ENCOUNTER JESUS

Nicky and Pippa are known to many around the world through their daily Bible reading initiative, recently rebranded The Bible with Nicky and Pippa Gumbel (not their choice of name!) Now in its fifteenth year, the project started in 2009 and has produced a new version every two years: from the original classic version, which takes people through the whole Bible in one year with comments from Nicky and Pippa – in about 25 minutes a day – to a ‘10-second version’ of a verse, thought and prayer for the day circulated on social media. ‘There’s something for

every season of life,’ says Nicky. ‘Some days people have time for the longer version; sometimes they can only fit in something shorter – there’s something for everyone!’

I asked what he himself had discovered from these years of intensive work on the Bible. ‘The Bible speaks today! God still speaks through what he has spoken. It’s far more important that God speaks to me than I speak to him, and the main way in which he speaks to me is through the Bible. It’s how I encountered Jesus in the first place and it continues to be the main way in which I encounter him now.’

‘What have I learned? – I have so much more to learn,’ answers Pippa. ‘You learn something new every day, that’s the amazing thing, and you don’t get bored with the Bible. I enjoy the discipline – Nicky is much more disciplined than I am, and I need that – something to read every day. I go through different phases – at first, I was struck by much of the humour of the Bible. Now, with the wars, I’m much more aware of the seriousness of what’s going on. The emphasis constantly changes.’

THE FLOWING WATER IS WHERE I SWIM

The influence of daily Bible reading is evident even in our brief conversation. To keep on top of the schedule, Nicky works about three weeks ahead. ‘The verse that struck me today,’ he mentioned, ‘is “out of the heart, the mouth speaks” (Luke 6:45).’

Suddenly, he is talking about another great passion of his life: ‘We need water coming in and water going out. I swim in the Serpentine in the morning. Water comes in and water goes out. A swimming pool might look clean, but it’s full of chlorine; it’s actually very dirty. The Serpentine looks dirty, but really it’s clean, because the water flows.’

It’s a picture of renewal. ‘It’s what our lives and our churches need: water coming in and water going out. Jesus said, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8) – power flowing in and power flowing out. If we don’t have water coming in, we dry up; if we don’t have water going out, we become like the Dead Sea with no life.’

Since leaving HTB, Nicky and Pippa have joined Holy Trinity Clapham – once William Wilberforce’s church – which HTB has helped to rejuvenate. ‘Evangelism is the water flowing in; for us that’s Alpha.’ Nicky and Pippa are now leading their 101st Alpha group in unbroken succession. ‘We’re also always looking to plant churches. That’s the water flowing out. It’s a way to keep churches healthy and young. Give away your best people! – It makes room for new leaders to emerge.’

“Amongst many terrible injustices, the greatest injustice in the world is never to have heard about Jesus. The greatest act of love is to tell people the good news about Jesus.”

THE WAVES ARE WHERE I SURF

Flowing water provides a picture of revival, too. ‘The Holy Spirit flows in waves. Sometimes it can seem very powerful and dramatic, at other times it is much quieter and calmer. We’re much less interested in the manifestation; it’s what happens in the heart that matters. God is incredibly generous.’ He takes us back to his daily reading: “Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, running over, will be poured into your lap” (Luke 6:38). ‘All we have to do is ask!’

‘When you see a wave coming,’ Pippa adds, ‘you want to get on board, to ride with it, and to make sure the old don’t stand back and think, “That’s not the way we did things in our day.” I have been very encouraged by the Asbury movement in the US, which has continued in universities and churches across the country, growing spontaneously amongst students. It all begins with seeking the presence of God. Before we can change the world, he has to change us first, and fill us with his Spirit.’

Nicky and Pippa’s heart for the young, for encouraging them to live for Jesus, raising them up in ministry, cheering them on, and passing on the baton, shines as they speak. ‘It gives us much joy,’ says Pippa.

They handed on the leadership of HTB two years ago, and now they have a ten-year plan for handing on Alpha. It will take them to Easter Day, 17 April 2033, two thousand years on from the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Nicky’s vision is as clear as ever, ‘Jesus said, “Go and make disciples of ALL nations” (Matthew 28:19). How are we doing? We have a massive opportunity to make the message of Jesus available to everyone on the planet. Amongst many terrible injustices, the greatest injustice in the world is never to have heard about Jesus. The greatest act of love is to tell people the good news about Jesus.



‘There have been moments in history when there has been the potential for exponential growth for the gospel. To name three, the first was Roman roads in the first century, enabling the gospel to go out in an extraordinary way. Next, was the printing press in Gutenberg. A hundred years later, Martin Luther was printing 5000 copies of the New Testament every week. This is the third. We now have technology which enables us to reach the entire globe. How is that going to be done? We believe our part is to make Alpha available to everyone on the planet by 2033 and we’ve already started work on a number of contextualised versions of the videos. Ten years gives us long enough to make it feel achievable, and short enough that most people can hope to be alive by that date!

‘We need everyone to do what they can to play their part. Some people will have a vision for everyone in their street, others for everyone in their town, or their nation, or their continent. It will require every local church ... every organisation ... every one of the 2.3 billion Christians around the world, all getting involved, asking ‘Lord, what can I do?’ and doing what they can to get the message out. All of us, working together, can do it!’



REV DR DAVID A. HULL

Rev Dr David A. Hull, Chair of Methodist Evangelicals Together, is a Methodist Minister, currently serving as Lead Pastor of Freedom Church Bristol.

“It will require every local church ... every organisation ... every one of the 2.3 billion Christians around the world, all getting involved, asking ‘Lord, what can I do?’”

PRAYER FOCUS

REVIVAL: As God continues to shake the country, an awakening to the need for God; a hunger and thirst for prayer and Bible study; for godly values and a return to our Christian roots in government and other institutions; a conviction of sin and repentance across the nation resulting in an outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 3:19-20; Revelation 2:5).

CHURCH: Biblically based teaching; the spread of scriptural holiness; the voice of evangelicals to be heard and acted on; the President and Vice-President of Conference, Rev Gill Newton and Deacon Kerry Scarlett in their last weeks of office; the President and Vice-President designate, Rev Helen Cameron and Mrs Carolyn Godfrey; the Secretary of Conference, Rev Dr Jonathan Hustler, and all in positions of leadership in the Methodist Church (1 Peter 1:14-16; Acts 20:28-30).

MET: Pray for Rev Dr David Hull as he prepares to step down as Chair, and for Rev Chris Briggs as he prepares to take over as Chair in January 2025. Pray for the trustees and executive; for wisdom and discernment for the future work (Isaiah 41:9-13; Hebrews 10: 22-24).

NATIONAL ISSUES: Christians in the workplace: especially in the media and those working in schools. Pray for courage and strength to stand against unwholesome teaching and the spread of immoral content; protection against false accusations and lies (Isaiah 43:1-3a; Luke 21:14-15).

WORLD ISSUES: Planet in Crisis: Concern over the changing climate and the effect on wildlife: on land and in the ocean. Pray for the cleaning up of polluted environments; how we can mitigate the loss of habitat and extinction of wildlife and destruction of ecosystems due to human activity. Pray for effective government intervention (Isaiah 24:4-6; Revelation 4:11).

Revive Thy Work O Lord

ALBERT MILDANE (1825-1909)

Revive thy work O Lord;
Thy mighty arm make bare;
Speak with the voice that wakes the dead,
And make thy people hear:

Revive thy work, O Lord,
While here to thee we bow;
Descend, O gracious Lord, descend!
O come and bless us now.

Revive thy work, O Lord;
Now let us thirst for thee;
And hungering for the bread of life
May all our spirits be:

Revive thy work, O Lord;
Exalt thy precious name;
And, by the Holy Ghost, our love
For thee and thine inflame:

Revive thy work, O Lord;
Give power unto thy word;
Grant that thy blessed gospel may
In living faith be heard:

Revive thy work, O Lord,
And give refreshing showers;
The glory shall be all thine own,
The blessing, Lord, be ours:



Destined to die or ripe for renewal?

NATHAN VEALL

What would you say to someone who just doesn't seem to accept the reality of the situation they're in? In recent years we've had multiple examples of leaders in the public square who go on and on despite it being obvious to everyone that their time is up. Though they ultimately head toward failure, they never seem to wake up and smell the coffee. It's never a pretty sight.

What about the Church in our land today? If we take an honest look at the situation, isn't it fairly bleak? Fewer and fewer people identify as Christians. Regular churchgoing is at an historic low. Secularism

seems to dominate the collective thought, and Christians increasingly feel marginalised. Perhaps some might say to us that we should stop burying our heads in the sand; we should recognise the reality that we're destined to die; that talk of revival is poppycock; that we really ought to throw in the towel.

I think we all know better than to accept that kind of defeatism. But the question is, why?

The birth of a butterfly is a remarkable process. As the caterpillar enters the chrysalis (cocoon), things look pretty bleak. It stops moving; it's confined to a small space, the outer casing stiffens and everything is sealed up. At this point in the process (from the outside at least), it looks like the end of the road for the poor insect. And yet, just a short while later, new life comes. What may have appeared as destined to die, was actually ripe for renewal, because that's how the process works.



Though the church today may look (from the outside) like it's destined to die, I believe we're ripe for renewal; because that's how our God works. We believe in a God who works precisely when things seem most bleak.

Consider the history of our own country. Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley, the Oxford Martyrs, were sent to be burned for their gospel convictions. Nevertheless, they had reason for hope, even at the point where they were literally destined to die. Famously, Latimer said (whilst at the stake) 'Be of good comfort, Master Ridley... we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.' Here we stand, today, with the gospel flame in England still burning.

Think of William Tyndale, who laboured for God's Word, and before his execution asked 'Lord, open the King of England's eyes'. Here we stand today, with the Bible in over 700 languages.

Think of the Wesleys, at a time when the church seemed to have lost all sense of true spirituality, and society around them desperately needed the gospel. Here we stand, today, on the other side of the Methodist Wesleyan revival.

Consider the early church, persecuted and totally without power in an empire that was as far from 'a

Christian country' as one can imagine. And yet, here we stand today, thousands of years later, knowing that 'the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church'.

Above all, consider Christ. Christ, who was abandoned by his friends, and left to die the death of a slave. Here we stand, today, in his resurrection life with a whole new kingdom to proclaim.

Just a quick sweep of Church history and a brief look at the gospel should tell us that when the situation within looks grim, and the world around us feels bleak, that is perhaps the very time when God is about to bring revival. Destined to die? I don't think so. Ripe for renewal? Why not!

NATHAN VEALL



Nathan Veall is an elder in his local Church and has served on the MET Executive Committee. He preaches regularly at local churches and is currently employed as Senior Cyber Security Consultant, having previously worked in Parliament under the CARE leadership programme.

PRAYER FOCUS

LOCAL CHURCH: Seek and pray earnestly for God's vision for the church. Pray for identification of local church strengths, bringing them before God, seeking to be blessed and used. Pray for the needs of the local community and ways in which these can be met; for the resources to reach out – whether people or material (Proverbs 8:17; James 4:8).

THE METHODIST CONFERENCE (27 JUNE – 3 JULY 2024): Pray for the truth of God's Word to sink deep into delegates' lives, for all policies to be based on biblical values, a purging of all that is not holy and pleasing to God; a spread of scriptural holiness; voting in of those whom God wants as President and Vice President for 2025/26 (Titus 1:6-9; Romans 12:1-2).

NATIONAL ISSUES

Government: For all MPs in Westminster, and the devolved nations; the coming General election – the

election of those whom God wants in power. Pray for wisdom, strength and resilience for Christian MPs to speak out against wrong policies. Pray for Rev Patricia Hillias, Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons (Zechariah 7:8-10; Proverbs 28:2-3).

Loneliness: For people to reach out to those who are isolated and house bound, particularly elderly people. Pray for the marginalised, those released from prison, and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Pray for communication of the hope of the gospel and for lives to be transformed. (Psalm 82: 3-4; Philippians 2:4).

WORLD ISSUES

Russia/Ukrainian war: Pray for a de-escalation of the conflict; for Russian people detained for speaking out against the invasion. Pray for strength and resolve for Ukrainian troops and people; for resources needed by Ukraine to be forthcoming (Psalm 55:16-19; Psalm 31:14-15).

Shoots of new growth at Wonford, Exeter

B E N H A S L E M



*Ben Haslam
shares what God is
doing in and through
a local church.*

We have a lovely lady called Edith in our congregation at Wonford Methodist Church who works at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital. Part of her role involves supporting and welcoming those coming to work at the hospital from overseas. Many of those she has supported have come to worship with us at Wonford and brought new life and energy into our midst whilst we were still reeling from the impact of Covid restrictions. Others joined us when walking past the church one Sunday to find us belting out a hymn in the car park (this was when we were banned from singing indoors). We have become much more diverse as a result.

Preaching there only once a month as I do, every time I go to Wonford, I meet at least one person for the first time and the past year has seen a spate of baptisms and welcoming new people into membership.

This, of course, goes very much against the prevailing narrative of decline. Why should Wonford be different? Being near a major hospital is part of it, of course, but I'm sure there's more to it than that.

God brings growth when his people pray for it, of that I'm certain. That's not all though. I'm also becoming increasingly certain that God brings

growth to churches which teach and honour the holy scriptures without distortion, and have a genuine openness to being led by God's Spirit.

Let me, however, add a brief caveat. There are faithful, Bible believing churches which are struggling, owing to many other factors thrown against them. To such churches I can only say that faithfulness is always worthwhile and important, even if the fruits seem to be elusive.

If a small number of Christians are growing in their faith together, they can still, even without realising it, be a formidable spiritual force and should never lose heart. At Wonford, we have been richly blessed in welcoming new members to our fellowship, but we are not complacent. We are thinking and praying about how to best integrate new people, from different cultures, into our fellowship and to ensure that their gifts and graces are enabled to enrich our life together. Above all, we are thankful to God for giving us renewed hope for the future and we wait in eager expectation to see what he will do next!



REV BEN HASLEM

Rev Ben Haslem is minister of Wonford Methodist Church in the Exeter Coast & Country Circuit: wonfordmethodistchurch.org.uk.





Creating space to encounter God as our healer

ALISON BRYAN

Alison Bryan shares about the well-established Healing Ministry at Methodist Central Hall Westminster.



You never know what path that the Lord is going to lead you on! Having worked as an NHS Speech & Language Therapist for 35 years, in 2019 I found myself led into early retirement to take over the role as Coordinator of Healing Ministry at Methodist Central Hall Westminster (MCHW).

MCHW has had an active Healing Ministry for over 25 years. It was originally set up and led by Rev Dr Malcom White, and later was taken over by Rev. Peter Edwards. The ministry offers opportunities for individual and corporate prayer for healing and wholeness (body, heart, mind & spirit). It is a real joy to experience the whole-hearted support of the ministerial team, church leadership and congregation for the Healing Ministry as part of the life of the church. So often in our churches it is seen as an add-on or is non-existent.

As a member of the MCHW staff team, I facilitate and train a fantastic group of experienced volunteers who make up the Healing Prayer Team (HPT). I also am involved in the planning, leading and preaching for Healing Services. My passion is for Holy Spirit led ministry, particularly for inner healing. The Lord cares deeply about every area of our lives, not just our physical bodies.

As a team, we seek to draw people into a personal encounter with the one who heals, Jesus Christ, through his Holy Spirit. Healing can at times be miraculous and instantaneous and, at other times, it is a process we walk through together in prayer.

More recent testimonies include:

- being healed of travel sickness with a long journey coming up
- an instant lifting of long held pain and grief
- tangible strength, hope and peace whilst going through medical treatment.

Over the past few years we have made even more space intentionally to listen to and be led by the Spirit as we minister. When you submit and offer the space... the Lord can fill it with his presence and power!

Members of the HPT are available at our twice monthly Healing Services, after Sunday morning services and at our monthly Healing Space drop in. We also take email prayer requests. Our annual Healing Conference, in partnership with Premier Lifeline, happens in May. The next one is coming up soon on 11 May 2024.

HEALING CONFERENCE 2024
TIME TO HEAL
 Exploring the work of the Holy Spirit through healing and transformation.
GREAT HALL
 Methodist Central Hall Westminster, London
11 MAY
 10:00 - 4:30PM
KEY SPEAKER
WES SUTTON
 Director, Acorn Christian Healing Foundation
WORSHIP
DAVE BILBROUGH
 Musician, Song Writer & Worship Leader
THE MCHW STAFF TEAM
JONATHAN CLARK
 Director, Premier Lifeline
BOOK NOW
 via our website at mchw.live or call the church office on 020 7654 3809

Here are a few testimonies from last year's conference which had a focus on inner healing.

I experienced a full overhaul of what's holding me back and a resuscitation of my calling.

I felt able to forgive and wept deep down sobs after prayer. I'm feeling lighter.

I felt touched in my deepest being, receiving freedom from many negative beliefs that were holding me back.

I am at peace. There is stillness in my heart. Thank you.

And the future...? We are standing on prophetic words of a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We are sensing an initial wave of this, particularly when ministering through anointing with oil. So, with God's help, we will continue to submit and follow as best we can....

'Come Lord Jesus'

More information can be found at mchw.live

11 May 2024 Healing Conference:
www.mchw.live/healing2024



ALISON BRYAN

Following being healed of M.E. by the Lord at Spring Harvest in 1996, Alison Bryan became involved in healing prayer ministry, leading the prayer team at Christchurch Methodist/URC in Hitchin, Herts for 20 years and now leading the prayer team at Methodist Central Hall Westminster. She is married to Robert and they live in Shefford, Bedfordshire.



FRESH FOCUS FOR MET

...church leaders give their endorsement.



GAVIN CALVER

'I love the work of MET and am so encouraged and excited about the fresh focus moving ahead. I wholeheartedly share in the desire for biblical revelation, renewal and revival. I am praying for you and cheering you on. Go for it!'

Gavin Calver is the CEO of the Evangelical Alliance. He has a burning passion to see the church working together to share the gospel throughout the UK.



ANDY FROST

'We so need another Wesleyan! I'm thrilled that in this new season as its bedrock, there will be a focus on Revelation and Revival. May God bless you and the work we could ask or imagine!'

Andy Frost is Director of SJI, Gath & London Mission Collective

CAROLYN LAWRENCE

The zeal and passion for the gospel of Jesus was so evident in the early Methodist Church. It is time for us to allow the Holy Scriptures to challenge and refine us and to regain our passion for reaching the lost.

Carolyn Lawrence is a past Vice President of the Methodist Church in Britain and currently works as a debt centre manager for the charity Christians Against Poverty.



JANE HOLLOWAY

We are so encouraged to learn of MET's fresh focus on Biblical Revelation, Renewal and Revival. May you continue to contend for these three areas in your daily discipleship, mission and ministry.

Jane Holloway, National Prayer Director, World Prayer Centre, Birmingham



IAN BUCHANAN

The Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust (LWPT) has partnered with MET for many years simply because we share the same longing – to see the churches in our nation strengthened by taking a biblical worldview into every aspect of life in the UK.

MET's driving passion, to see local congregations well-equipped for front line ministry, puts MET at the very heart of what God is doing on our islands today.

Ian Buchanan, CEO at LWPT



BRIAN HOARE

I am pleased to commend to you the years our journal has had with your organisation! Each year has a commitment to the authority of something which this new mission on biblical revelation, renewal and revival become a tool that helps the church faithfully its evangelical roots.

Brian Hoare is a retired Methodist Testament tutor at Cliff College, Connexional Team and President

n awakening in our times.
reason for MET, with Scripture
focus on seeking Revelation,
and do immeasurably more than

her Movement



RACHEL JORDAN-WOLF

Keeping focussed on the Bible means keeping ourselves ready for mission. The Bible speaks and is alive today and it can change lives – yours, mine and those who haven't yet met Jesus. Immersing ourselves in the Bible brings revelation, renewal and revival. Who could you invite to read the Bible today?

Dr Rachel Jordan-Wolf is the Executive Director of Hope Together



ASHLEY COOPER

In these days it is essential that we develop a biblically based emphasis on renewal and revival. These nations are in desperate need of a fresh outpouring of the Spirit of God. Therefore I am delighted to join MET in exploring Scripture, seeking renewed vision and praying for that transformation that we long for.

Ashley Cooper, Principal, Cliff College



GRACE PRATT

MORRIS-CHAPMAN

God has already set in motion such marvellous things, exceedingly, abundantly, above and beyond all that we could possibly think or imagine, to renew and revive his Church and to accomplish his kingdom purposes. May we, like Simeon and Anna (Luke 2), be alert, waiting and serving faithfully, with joyful anticipation for what the Lord is about to do.

Grace Pratt Morris-Chapman is a British Methodist Mission Partner, currently serving in Uganda – with her husband Daniel and their family.



you this new MET magazine RE:VIVE. Over a number of different names, as indeed, had its own emphasis, but all were united in unity of scripture and the evangelical faith, magazine also reflects with its threefold focus val and revival. I pray that it will increasingly Methodist Church to reflect ever more

ist minister. He has been a New Secretary for Evangelism in the of Conference (1995-96).



RON ABBOTT

For over 70 years I have been richly blessed by meeting up and praying with the saints in MET and its predecessors: The Methodist Revival Fellowship (MRF); Dunamis and Conservative Evangelicals in Methodism (CEIM) and then Headway. We continually wrestled in prayer for our Methodist Church. Today, we stand in the same long line in battling for the truth of Scripture; recognising the vital importance of earnest prayer.

Ron Abbott is a former secretary of the Methodist Revival Fellowship and former Cliff College Tutor.





Bible Study

Habakkuk's Prayer For Revival: Living By Faith In Troubled Times

DAVID HULL

A whole-book overview – read it as an article, or use it section by section for personal study or group discussion.


HABAKKUK INTRODUCES HIMSELF (HABAKKUK 1:1)

Habakkuk was a prophet. That's all he tells us and all we really know about him. He seems to have lived and worked in the time leading up to Judah's fall to Babylon (see 2 Kings 25). His introduction tells us more, perhaps, about the Lord than it does about Habakkuk himself. He 'received' a 'prophecy'. The word 'prophecy' would more literally be translated 'burden'. This was a heavy load that he carried. The word 'received' is more literally translated 'saw'. In difficult days, he began to see through the Lord's eyes – just as the Apostle Paul did entering Athens 'greatly distressed' (Acts 17:16-34), and supremely as the Lord Jesus himself, looking down


over Jerusalem and weeping (Luke 19:41-44).

SELAH: PAUSE AND PONDER

Although not included in the NIV's most recent translation, Habakkuk uses the Hebrew word commonly found in the Psalms, 'Selah' (3:1). It may be an invitation to pause and ponder – and it is in that spirit that these Selah interludes are included in this study.

 *The burden Habakkuk carried was a gift given to him by the Lord. We can often resent, resist, or seek to be relieved from the burdens we carry. Without in any way contradicting the invitation of Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30), are there burdens you carry which may be a gift from the Lord as a spur to join in his work?*



 *The beginning of Habakkuk's prophecy is given the heading in the NIV translation 'Habakkuk's complaint', which could be misleading. The prophecy was given by the Lord himself, who would enter this world and pray similar, even deeper, prayers: 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me ...' (Matthew 26:39); 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me ...' (Matthew 27:46). What fresh perspective might this offer to the difficulties you face and feel?*

REVELATION (HABAKKUK 1:2-2:1)

Habakkuk was a prophet who pondered and prayed. Prompted by the burden the Lord has given him, he brought his questions to the Lord (1:2-4). We might be tempted to think that questions undermine faith, and yet Habakkuk's questions had the opposite effect. His questions proved his faith, because he brought them to the Lord, trusting his goodness and

wisdom, trusting that he would have the answers, trusting him to speak. In troubled times, filled with questions, Habakkuk doubted his understanding and trusted the goodness of God.

We often remind ourselves that prayer is a two-way conversation. Habakkuk discovered this truth: the Lord replied to Habakkuk's questions with revelation. On first reading, it might appear that he received the Lord's reply quickly. Yet his first question was 'How long?' This is a prayer that was prayed for a long time, in the face of God's seeming silence (1:2). Habakkuk persevered in prayer.


The Lord's revelation in response to the questions is something at which to 'be amazed' (1:5). At first, the Lord's response seems wonderful indeed (2:5) – think of all the amazing things Habakkuk would have known the Lord to have done in the pages of the Old Testament – the birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah, the raising up of Joseph in Egypt, the later Exodus from Egypt ... To hear that the Lord was going to do something amazing in his own day that he would find difficult to believe must have set his mind racing.

What the Lord revealed next to Habakkuk was devastating. He was raising up the Babylonians (2:6). Habakkuk would surely have found that almost unbelievable. As the Lord himself made clear, the Babylonians were doing things far worse than anything Habakkuk had seen in his own country (1:6-11). Yet the Lord was actively 'raising' them up. Habakkuk's faith meant that he trusted the heart of God – his goodness, wisdom and power – even when he couldn't make sense of what the hand of God was doing.

When Habakkuk responded to the Lord in prayer a second time,

he began by speaking of God's character. It's an excellent example of persevering in prayer (see the parable of Luke 18:1-8, and the picture of Genesis 32:22-32) and of the power found in praying the promises and personality of the Lord. Again, he proved his faith – he trusted that the Lord would have the answers and would respond at the right time. His attitude should surely be ours too, especially in troubled times (2:1).

SELAH: PAUSE AND PONDER

 *Far from undermining your faith, your questions prove your faith if you bring them to the Lord. What questions do you have to bring to him? Trust him and doubt your understanding! Be amazed by him, persevere in prayer, and wait for his response.*

REVERSAL (HABAKKUK 2:2-20)

Having looked up to the Lord in troubled times, Habakkuk then looked to the future. His task was to receive revelation from the Lord and then to record it and make it known (2:2-3) – an excellent model for all Christians.

In another, briefer, description of the horrors of the Babylonian regime (2:4-5), the Lord made the statement that is the heart of the message of the book: 'The righteous person will live by his faithfulness' – a verse frequently quoted in the New Testament (Romans 1:7; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:37-38). Translators debate whether this refers to the Lord's faithfulness in keeping his people, or in the faithfulness of his people in holding on to him. The implication of the wider biblical message is that it could refer to either, and we would do well to understand it as referring





to both. We are called to live by faith in troubled times.


Habakkuk has already realised that what the Lord has foretold is judgement (Habakkuk 1:12 – see also the reference to judgement as a present, as well as future, reality in Romans 1:18). Judgement has frequently been misunderstood. It is a good thing, reflecting God’s good and loving character, putting right the injustice that Habakkuk saw all around him (1:4). The Lord does not, in any way, vindicate the evil behaviour of the Babylonians. Instead, he assures Habakkuk that he is in control of all things, and is working for good in all things, even this (see Romans 8:28).

For now, there will be present judgement on Judah as the Lord refines them through the great difficulties coming upon them, but there will also be future judgement for Babylon – and upon all who, like Babylon, live not by faith but as the Babylonians did: self-reliant, self-sufficient, self-righteous, self-seeking, self-serving.

Judgement is pronounced in a series of five ‘woes’ (2:6-8; 2:9-11; 2:12-14; 2:15-17 & 2:18-20). These are addressed to those who become rich at the expense of the poor, who are dishonest in their way of life, who

enforce abusive practices, who live drunken lives giving way to sexual immorality, and who worship idols in place of the Living God.

SELAH: PAUSE AND PONDER

 *Identify the reversals in each of these woes and compare them with Mary’s song in Luke 1:46-55. In the light of eternity, we will never feel that the Lord has acted wrongly, unwisely or in any way that is unfair, but only ever in utter goodness. In what ways could looking to the future like this help you to live by faith in troubled times?*

RENEWAL AND REVIVAL (HABAKKUK 3:1-19)


Having looked up to the Lord and ahead to the future, Habakkuk looks again at his present circumstances with new perspective. His final response is full of awe – his famous prayer for renewal and revival (3:2). It’s a wonderful prayer for us to pray too.

Habakkuk reminded himself, and his readers, of some past great acts of the Lord, most notably the Exodus, in a song characteristic of the Old Testament (3:3-15). He continued to wait patiently for the Lord’s good purposes (3:16), making

a profound statement of hope (3:17-18) and praise (3:19).

In troubled times, Habakkuk looked to the Lord with his questions, to the future with trust, and then again at his circumstances with renewed hope and strength, despite appearances, praying that the Lord would have mercy and move in great power in his generation. What a way to live by faith in troubled times! What a way to pray for renewal and revival!

SELAH: PAUSE AND PONDER

 *Call to mind some of the great acts of God, both from scripture and from your own experience. Praise the Lord for who he is and what he has done, and plead with him for mercy and power.*

REV DR DAVID A. HULL

Rev Dr David A. Hull, Chair of Methodist Evangelicals Together, is a Methodist Minister, currently serving as Lead Pastor of Freedom Church Bristol.



MET:Revive At Cliff Festival

Bank Holiday Monday 27 May

VENUE: Samuel Chadwick Lecture Room,
Cliff College, Calver, Hope Valley, S32 3XG

SEMINAR: 1.00pm - 2.00pm

Revival: Going Back to where it all began.
Rev Dr David Hull

AGM: 3.00pm - 4.00pm

For 2024 reports & 2023 minutes, and to
register for possible Zoom attendance:
www.methodistevangelicals.org.uk/AGM

Digging for Treasure

Preaching Conference
Saturday 12 October

9.30am - 1.00pm

A hybrid event:

Plymouth Methodist Central Hall and on Zoom

Rev Dr David Hull & friends

For further details visit:

methodistevangelicals.org.uk

Revive National Gathering

AWESTRUCK: The
Bible's Big Picture

Friday 15 - Sunday 17 November 2024

The King's Park Conference Centre, Northampton NN3 6LL

A weekend focussing on revival with Bible Teaching, Vision,
Worship, Prayer, Fellowship and Ministry.

Worship led by Hilary Balsdon.

CONTRIBUTORS INCLUDE:

Jacqui Parkinson | Textile artist and creator of exhibitions: Threads Through Creation, Threads Through Revelation and currently working on Threads Through the Cross

David Hull | Chair of Methodist Evangelicals Together and Lead Pastor of Freedom Church, Bristol

Chris Briggs | Chair-elect of Methodist Evangelicals Together and District Mission Enabler of The Methodist Church Nottingham and Derby District

The weekend will also include a farewell service for David Hull as he concludes his time as Chair of MET.

Book online at methodistevangelicals.org.uk/revive
or complete the form enclosed.



RENEW

Luke's Model for Renewal

ANDREW ROBERTS

Methodist Minister and author Andrew Roberts introduces Holy Habits: an approach to discipleship and renewal based on Acts 2:42-47.



In scripture we are blessed with many pictures of what it is to be a Kingdom Community. Jesus' teaching on the vine in John 15, Paul's picture of the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12 and Peter's discussion of living stones and a chosen people in 1 Peter 2 being three of the most well-known. And then we have Luke's dynamic picture of the community of followers of Jesus in the immediate aftermath of the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost in Acts 2:42-47.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47 (NRSV)

The esteemed biblical scholars CK Barrett, and James Dunn both believe that this passage is instructive for those seeking to form healthy, Christ centred, Kingdom communities today. Commenting on the passage Barrett says:

Luke wished his readers to see what the life of the Christians was like in the apostolic period in order that they might imitate it... His story is not simply a series of biographies but the story of a community.

(CK Barrett, Acts 1-14, T&T Clark, 2004, p160)

Dunn meanwhile argues that

[Luke's] portrayal may be somewhat idealized.... But anyone who is familiar with movements of enthusiastic spiritual renewal will recognise authentic notes: the enthusiasm of the members of the renewal group, with a sense of overflowing joy, desire to come together frequently, eating together and worshipping and including the readiness for unreserved commitment to one another in a shared common life.

(James D.G. Dunn, The Acts of the Apostles, Epworth, 1996, p34)

I spoke with Professor Dunn about this and asked him: was he saying that if we look at significant times of revival in the history of the church we see the Acts picture re-emerging? 'Yes', he replied.

At that time, I was working for the Fresh Expressions agency and was struck by how in fruitful examples of the new forms of church that were emerging, many and often most of the characteristics of the Acts 2 community could be readily identified. The confluence of Jimmy Dunn's comments and what I was seeing in Fresh Expressions got me thinking. What if, prayerfully, we were intentional about shaping, or reshaping, our churches (older and newer) around the practices that Luke describes in Acts 2? Might we see 'enthusiastic spiritual renewal' in our times and places? Spiritual renewal that is not an end in itself but a means of grace to God's needy world.

HOLY HABITS

To encourage this thinking, I began to develop Holy Habits: an approach to discipleship, mission and Christian community based on ten practices that Luke presents in what John Stott described as his 'beautiful cameo of the Spirit filled church' (J.R.W. Stott, The Message of Acts, IVP, 1990), 81). The ten practices are:

- Biblical teaching
- Fellowship
- Breaking of Bread
- Prayer
- Giving or the sharing of resources
- Service
- Eating Together
- Gladness and Generosity
- Worship
- Making More Disciples

One of the reasons, perhaps the major reason, why Holy Habits has helped both individuals and churches to be fruitful in their missional discipleship is that none of this is new or novel. All of these holy habits are deeply biblical; we see them throughout both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. They are also fundamental to what it is to be wholesome human beings made in the image of God. As such, Holy Habits has attracted the interest of people of other faith communities too.

Whilst to paraphrase Ecclesiastes 1:9 'there is nothing new here', at one and the same time for this, or indeed any approach to renewal to be fruitful, everything needs to be made new by the refreshing life-giving breath of the Holy Spirit.

The holy habits are not complicated. They can be lived out as simply as by providing a chair and a bowl of water. They are a way of life to be lived. Love in action. Embodied grace. To practise them we don't need a PhD, just a willingness to follow Jesus. We don't need a Church building – although practising them there is a good idea! Like a glass of Martini, they can be offered and enjoyed anytime, any place, anywhere. In villages, towns and cities. Any context, culture, community or country. We can be five, ninety-five or any age in between, or either side. So I invite you to give them a fresh go.

DON'T FORGET HOLINESS

As you do so, don't forget the holy part of holy habits. 'Be holy because I am holy' says the Lord (Leviticus 11:45). Being holy involves being close to, intimate with, the divine community of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

So, keep close to the Father. Let the Father's creativity infuse the habits as you practise them. Let there be colour and variety, freshness and vitality. Let the Father's generous giving of creation, of love, of

salvation, shape you. Let the Father's passion for the poor and thirst for justice and righteousness inform and guide you.

Keep close to the Son, the one who calls you and through you calls others to follow and to serve. Let the mind of the Son 'dwell in you richly' (Colossians 3:16). Let the resolve and self-giving, sacrificial love of the Son be your model for living. Let the incarnate, down to earth, involved, way of life of the Son keep you grounded and immersed in the joys and struggles, laughter and tears of life. And enjoy the parties and banquets, the laughter of children, the tender touches of love and the joys of creation the Son enjoyed when walking this earth.

And keep on being filled with the life giving, God breathing, flame-warming Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). Let the fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control flavour your practising of the holy habits (Galatians 5:22-23). Pray for the gifts of the Spirit to be released afresh in you and amongst others with whom you live, in the adventure of discipleship. Let the Spirit inspire new dreams and visions of how you can be part of the Kingdom coming in and through your home, church, community, workplace, world.

ALL AROUND THE WORLD

Around the world all sorts of Christians and churches have chosen to work with Luke's model as they seek to be renewed by the Holy Spirit. Their work has been helped by a range of resources first produced by the Birmingham Methodist Circuit and then further developed by BRF (Bible Reading Fellowship).

Commenting on Acts 2, David Watson said this in his seminal book *Discipleship*:

It is not surprising with such a community of disciples bound together in love that God added to their number, day by day those who were being saved.'

(David Watson, *Discipleship*, p37, Hodder and Stoughton, 1981).

Whilst it would be fake news to say that all churches that have engaged with Holy Habits have seen people added to their number daily, there are those that have seen significant growth. One such is Romsey Methodist Church. Under the leadership of Rev Gareth Hill, the Church embarked on an intentional journey with Luke's model over a two-year period. To use a significant phrase from Acts 2: 'They devoted themselves to' that journey. When they began, they were a Church of 67 members but no children. Two years on they had grown

“

Whilst it would be fake news to say that all churches that have engaged with Holy Habits have seen people added to their number daily, there are those that have seen significant growth.

”

to a community of 100 including 10 children. It would be wrong to credit that entirely to Holy Habits. The resources played their part but the vital ingredients were; the scriptures on which they are founded, excellent local leadership, the devotion of the members and most importantly the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit.

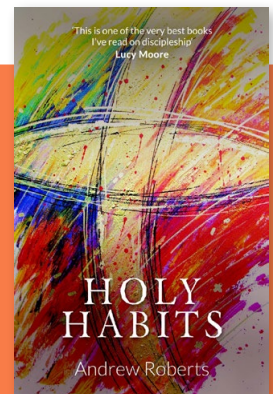
If you would like to explore Holy Habits more you might like to read the book of the same name written by myself and published by Malcolm Down Publishing.

And for much more, including resources for churches, a series of bible reading notes, small group studies and a Lenten course, please visit

<https://www.brffonline.org.uk/collections/holy-habits>

ANDREW ROBERTS

Andrew Roberts is a husband, father, Methodist Minister, writer and speaker based in the West Midlands. He is the author of the book Holy Habits and editor of the Holy Habits resource booklets and daily bible reflections (published by BRF). Previously he was Director of Training for Fresh Expressions. He loves all forms of sport and despite that supports Aston Villa!



Holy Habits

ANDREW ROBERTS

Stafford: Malcolm Down Publishing, 2016

ISBN: 978-1-910786-15-4

pp.250 | £10.99

PRAYER FOCUS

HOLY HABITS: for churches to seek a deeper relationship with Jesus based on early church principles; a desire for the transforming power of the Holy Spirit; a greater up-take on the adoption of Holy Habit principles (Colossians 3:1-4; Hebrews 6:1).

CLIFF COLLEGE: Ashley Cooper, Principal of the College; spiritual growth in the student population; opportunities for students to share their faith and the gospel message with others (James 1: 22-25; Mark 16:15 - 18).

NATIONAL ISSUES

Prison system: Prison chaplains; openings and opportunities to share the gospel with prisoners; forming of programmes which will help transform the lives of prisoners and the resources to enable this to happen (2 Corinthians 1:3-4; Isaiah 61:1).

NHS & Social Care: The backlog of patients awaiting treatment and the resources needed to deal with it; doctors and nurses on the front line struggling to cope; better communication between the various departments - children's services, social services & mental health; care packages for the vulnerable (1 Peter 5:7; Philippians 4:13).

WORLD ISSUES

War torn areas of the world: Israel/Gaza; Russia/Ukraine; those fleeing war and living in refugee camps; adequate resources for relief and aid agencies: to tackle the suffering, famine and disease; for Christian Aid and other relief organisations – that they also may offer hope through the redemptive love of Jesus (Psalm 46:8-11; Proverbs 14:31-32).



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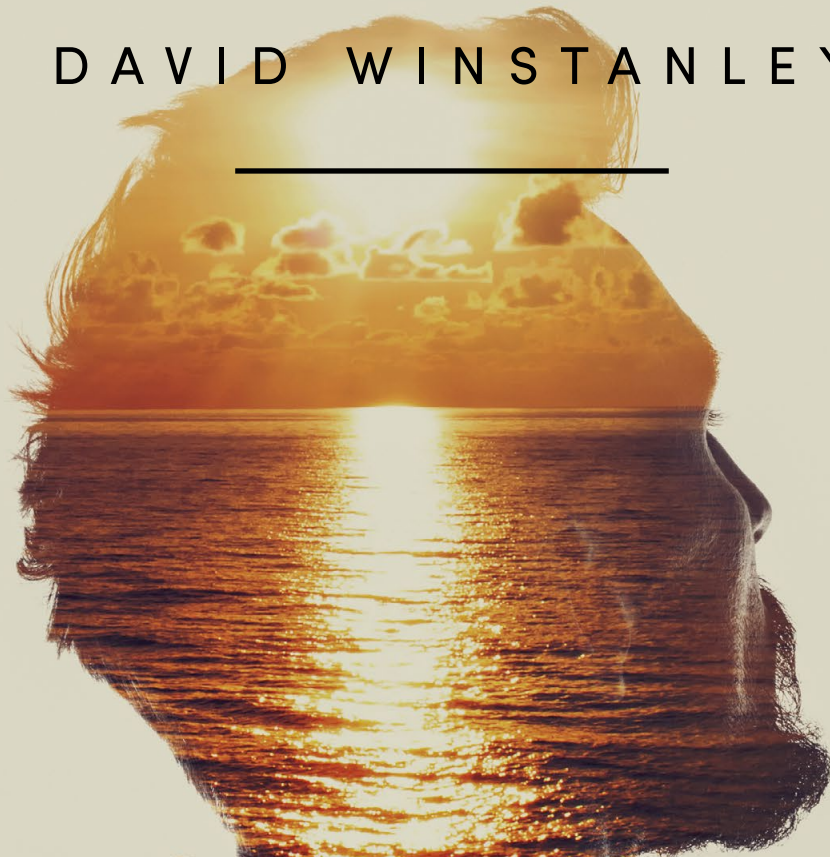
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Getting Personal With Renewal

DAVID WINSTANLEY



*Methodist Minister and
CEO of Aldersgate Renewal
Ministries-UK, David
Winstanley looks at how the
renewal we long for needs
to start with each one of us
individually.*

IT BEGINS WITH ME

There is a problem in politics: we seem to have lost faith in our politicians. We have seen too many scandals, heard too many lies, had too many promises broken. There have been many who have prayed in our churches seeking a renewal of the hearts of politicians and that is a good prayer, but I believe that there is a prayer that needs to go before it and that is 'Lord, renew my heart'. If we want our leader's hearts to be changed then it has to begin with my heart. It seems to me that the same is true for Renewal when talking about the church. It begins with me.

I have been a part of the Methodist Church all my life (I've just turned 60!) and have only ever seen it in decline. Every year the Statistics for Mission are published and show yet another depressing set of numbers that says we are nearing the end of our days as a church. But we are not a people of statistics, we are a people of God, we stand on his Word. In Isaiah 9:7 we are told 'Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end' (NIV). This is a word of God for the church to live by and to live into. It is a word of God that gives hope to our prayers for revival and renewal. So my question to you is, where have you seen God at work in your life recently, and who have you told about what you experienced? Rather than lamenting our numerical decline, what if we started talking up our everyday experiences of God? What might happen? Well one thing is certain, other people will get excited. They will be encouraged and they will start to notice God in their own daily lives. Last week a man at one of my churches told us about where he had seen God this week and it was about a group of people pushing his car when he got stuck. He got a round of applause as he ended with the words, 'you see, prayer does work!'

Sometimes we might be guilty of only looking for God in the dramatic, the miracle, when he is present in all our circumstances. When we start to notice that we are living into that promise of God in Isaiah, we find that the renewal we long for has already begun.

EQUIPPING FOR RENEWAL

At Aldersgate Renewal Ministries-UK our mission is to Equip the local church to minister to the world in the power of the Holy Spirit. We do this through team-led renewal weekends in local churches where we teach about the different ministries of the Holy Spirit, share some of our own testimony and offer prayer ministry. We've been privileged to minister with churches across the UK and abroad, and are constantly excited to see how God's promise to pour out his Spirit is just as true today as it ever has been.

A question that frequently arises on one of these weekends, when there has been a discernible move of the Holy Spirit and when people have shared testimony of how God has impacted their lives over the course of the weekend is: 'what are we going to do with this?' Meaning what are we, as a church, going to do with what we have received? My answer is always, 'what are you going to do with what God has given to you?' There is a personal responsibility that each of us must take up to bring the riches that God has given to us back to him in worship, prayer and service.

Being equipped for renewal comes in many forms and many different ways. Some of it will be in gathered places, maybe a weekend event such as the Aldersgate ones I have mentioned, or perhaps a MET conference, those places where we gather and fully expect to see God moving in all sorts of wonderful ways.

But what about on a Sunday morning at your own church? For many of us our week-by-week experience of church can be very dry and there might be a yearning in our heart for it to be more like that special gathering we attended. But even in that dry place God's promise is for renewal: 'I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs' (Isaiah 41:18, NIV). Even in the driest desert there are springs of water, often deep underground just waiting to burst forth. Is God calling you to be one of those springs of water?

If you find yourself in a dry place, take heart from God's promise in those words from Isaiah and keep pursuing personal renewal so that you might be a part of that spring of living water in the church today. As with so many things in the Kingdom of God, the personal benefit is often matched and more by the benefit to others. As the Holy Spirit pours more of his life-giving water into you as you pursue him, so those same streams will overflow from you and that is a great gift to bring to your church and your community.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE RENEWER

I remember finding a piece of metal in the garden many years ago; it was buried in the soil and I found it whilst digging. I picked it up and cleaned all the dirt from it and discovered it was an old 2d coin. I could have really cleaned it up and polished it, but it didn't seem worth it. I could also have thrown it back into the soil and let it get all covered in dirt again. I didn't. I had brought it back to the state it was most likely in before it was buried. You might say I had renewed it. We are mistaken if we think about our own renewal by God's good grace is the same as washing the dirt off us so that we're as we were before. That's just the start of it because God thinks that we are worth polishing up!

Recognising that God, through the work of his Holy Spirit dwelling within me has already begun a work of renewal is almost too amazing for words, but at the same time it is only the beginning. In Romans 12, Paul urges the church to 'not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind' (NRSV). Don't throw yourself back into the dirt



“

Sometimes we might be guilty of only looking for God in the dramatic, the miracle, when he is present in all our circumstances.

”



to be covered and buried, but instead allow that work of renewal to continue. Paul gives us some helpful advice when he says don't 'be conformed to this world'. Your community, this country, the whole world needs a church that is not conformed to the lies, greed and power of this world, but is conformed to God's ways, to ways that make the things of God's Kingdom a reality in the lives of people who we meet day-by-day.

So it has to begin with me; it has to begin with you. I think it was Bill Hybels who said 'the local church is the hope of the world', by which he wasn't trying to push Christ to the side, but rather emphasize the fact that if you and I (the local church) take seriously the idea of personal renewal then the saving grace of Christ Jesus can come to bear on each and every community and everyone who lives within them.



DAVID WINSTANLEY

Rev David Winstanley has been in full-time circuit ministry for over 20 years and has led Aldersgate Renewal Ministries-UK since setting it up in 2011. He loves leading worship and seeing Christians of all ages ministering in their local setting through the power of the Holy Spirit. If you would like to talk to him about an Aldersgate team coming to your church email dwinstanley@aldersgaterenewal.org.uk

PRAYER FOCUS

RENEWAL: Individuals and churches to take seriously the need for prayer; the equipping of the church in the power of the Holy Spirit; pray for the Holy Spirit to flow into a dry and barren church (Ephesians 6:18; John 14:26).

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY: Being aware of where God is at work in each of our lives; seeking God through the power of the Holy Spirit to discern what he wants us to do. Courage to step out into possible new forms of ministry; recognising the need to be 'polished' by the transforming power of God and the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7).

NATIONAL ISSUES

Royal Family: Healing and wholeness through adversity - especially for King Charles and Catherine, Princess of Wales; for members of the Royal family to find strength and transformation in a relationship with Jesus (Isaiah 40:29-31; Psalm 51:10-12).

Children and young people: For all teaching to be biblically based; for all to come to know Jesus as their

Lord and Saviour; all youth and children's workers, school workers; raising up of more Christian people to reach out to a lost generation of youth across the nation, bringing them a fresh hope and wholeness in Jesus (1 Timothy 4:12; Mark 9:42).

WORLD ISSUES

Persecuted Christians: Recognising the darkness of oppressive regimes, pray for justice and fair treatment for detainees and their families. Pray for protection for churches. Pray for organisations working to bring to public awareness the plight of the Persecuted Church across the globe, such as Barnabas Aid, Open Doors and Release International (James 1:12; Romans 8:32-39).

Israel: Pray for the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. Pray about the worldwide rise in anti-semitism; the War with Gaza; leaders of opposition groups - Hamas, Hezbollah, PLO & Fata. Pray that adequate aid will reach civilians in Gaza. Pray for all who are living in Israel and the Palestinian Territories to come to a living faith in Christ Jesus; for God's will to be done (Matthew 24:6-9; Psalm 122:6-9).



MET SW CONFERENCE 2025



Friday 24 - Sunday 26 January

9.30AM - 1.00PM

Livermead Cliff Hotel, Torquay

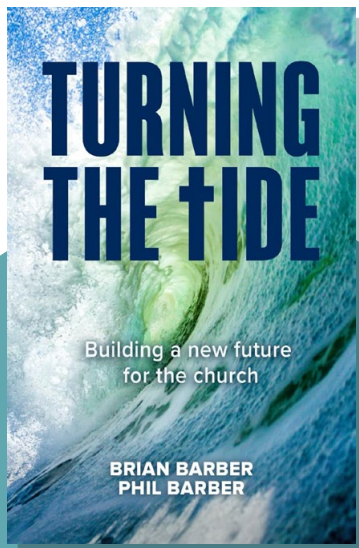


**REVIVING A NATION:
JOSIAH'S CHALLENGE TODAY**

Exploring 2 Kings 22-23

Speaker: Rev Dr David Hull, Lead Pastor of Freedom Church Bristol and Chair of MET

Resource Reviews



Turning the Tide: Building a new future for the Church

BRIAN BARBER AND PHIL BARBER

PublishU, 2023

ISBN: 979-8-86697-4337 | pp. 158 | £10.99

Available on Amazon and PublishU.com

How would you feel about inviting an unchurched friend to your church with the specific outcome being that they write an honest critique? That is the suggestion posed by the authors of this book. Using the story of a young family who have decided the appropriate thing to do is start attending church, Brian Barber and Phil Barber enable the reader, in an entertaining and non-threatening way, to explore through this family's fictional experiences, how their own church might appear to an unchurched visitor.

This book is an excellent way to view your own church through the eyes of a potential newcomer. Each chapter begins with a portion of the continuing story, looking at a different aspect of church life. This is followed by various points to ponder drawn from the family's experience, and then a series of discussion questions ideal for small group discussion, facing the issues pertinent to their setting.

Reviewed by Liz Miller, Vice-Chair of MET. Liz is a Local Preacher in the Launceston Area Circuit in Cornwall.

Revive Us Again

REJUVENATING A MOVEMENT OF TRANSFORMATION

LESLIE NEWTON

PublishU 2023

ISBN 979-8860496682 | pp. 145

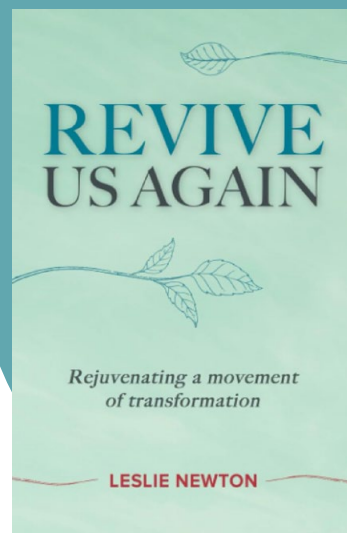
£10.99 paperback; £6.99 Kindle edition

Available on Amazon and PublishU.com

Leslie Newton is a Methodist Minister serving as Chair of the Yorkshire North and East District. His experience of new ventures and creative positive thinking comes across in this book, perhaps because of his experience as co-chair of the Methodist Church's 'New Places for New People' Guiding Team and as a Trustee of Fresh Expressions.

The writing style is accessible and, whether you enjoy reading or not, it is worth picking this up. Based on a premise that God is not finished with the Methodists yet and that they can be "galvanised and motivated by our 'divinely appointed mission' that has at its heart a call to spread scriptural holiness through the land" (pp. 17-18), there is a challenge to be open to revival and rejuvenation. A key chapter for this was 4, 'A Passion for Holiness'. The point is well made that there is both personal transformation and social transformation arising out of that (p. 49). With a helpful setting of the tension between Methodism as a movement or a church, there is a pertinent question about how these understandings might be blended for a modern age.

Key questions with writing about revival are how revival is defined and to what extent we are seeking and praying for it, acknowledging that it is Holy Spirit led. It would be a good exercise to read this book with those questions in mind.



Reviewed by Rev Chris Briggs, Chair-elect of Methodist Evangelicals Together and District Mission Enabler of The Methodist Church Nottingham and Derby District.



Smoke and Mirrors: A church deceived over sexuality

SARAH SEDGWICK

Independently Published, April 2024

ISBN: 979-8880382231|pp.258| Paperback £10; Kindle Version
£3.25 Available on Amazon

Ministry Leader, Sarah Sedgwick, gives an insight into her new book in which she considers how easily we have been distracted from our key focus as Christians and considers how we can better respond to the lies and deceit of Satan.

One of the biggest distractions of the modern era for Christians is the debate that rages within churches over homosexuality. As we focus on this, our eyes are pulled away from the main thing, the Great Commission.

I have been fascinated by how rapidly the church has fallen. How has Satan managed to confuse the church so easily?

'Smoke and Mirrors' is the name given to an illusion associated with magicians, yet as I thought more about it, I saw how this is Satan's modus operandi. He attacks the church with subtle deception and lies, and we are left with a church that fails to distinguish itself from the world, with members who fail to change their ways in obedience to God, and leaders who fail to teach biblical truth. We are part of a global church which, in many instances, no longer displays God's glory.

It starts with lies, those five small words found in Genesis: 'Did God really say that?'

In the book, 'Smoke and Mirrors, a church deceived over sexuality', I explore the concept of smoke and mirrors in much greater detail, contrasting the smokescreens of Satan (false doctrine, sexual temptation, bitterness, pride etc), with the holy smoke of God's glory. We, like David when he decided to bring

the Ark of the Covenant home, should earnestly desire the glory of God in our lives at all costs.

As Christians, our role is to reflect God's holiness, to exhibit a love that is like the love of God: a love that is not proud, self-seeking, not delighting in evil, but rejoices with the truth (1 Corinthians 13:4-5). In comparison, Satan seeks to create an illusion; he wants us to see 'an angel of light'. The words of the prophet Isaiah are being fulfilled in our times: 'Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!' (Isaiah 5:20).

As many cast God's plans to one side and champion a 'new and better way,' failing to demonstrate humility, the church is drawn away from God's holiness, not just over sexuality, but in many other areas. Idolatry has become common place (Galatians 5:9).

Launched in April 2024, the book 'Smoke and Mirrors: A church deceived over sexuality' includes testimony of 11 individuals who have found freedom in Jesus from the smoke and mirrors of Satan. These testimonies are a powerful reminder of God's glory, and speak of overcoming not only the great sexuality deception, but idolatry and addiction. As you read the book, I hope you will be challenged to dive deeply into your own beliefs and understanding of God's word.

SARAH SEDGWICK

Sarah is ministry leader for Transformed Ministries, which works tirelessly to support individuals, families and churches impacted by questions of sexuality and faith. Her personal experience of salvation after 30 years in the LGBTQ+ community drives her passion to educate the church to become a spacious place for people to discover Jesus for themselves.



The Surprising Rebirth of Belief in God

JUSTIN BRIERLEY

Tyndale House Publishers 2023

ISBN - 10: 149646672 &

ISBN - 13: 978-1496466778

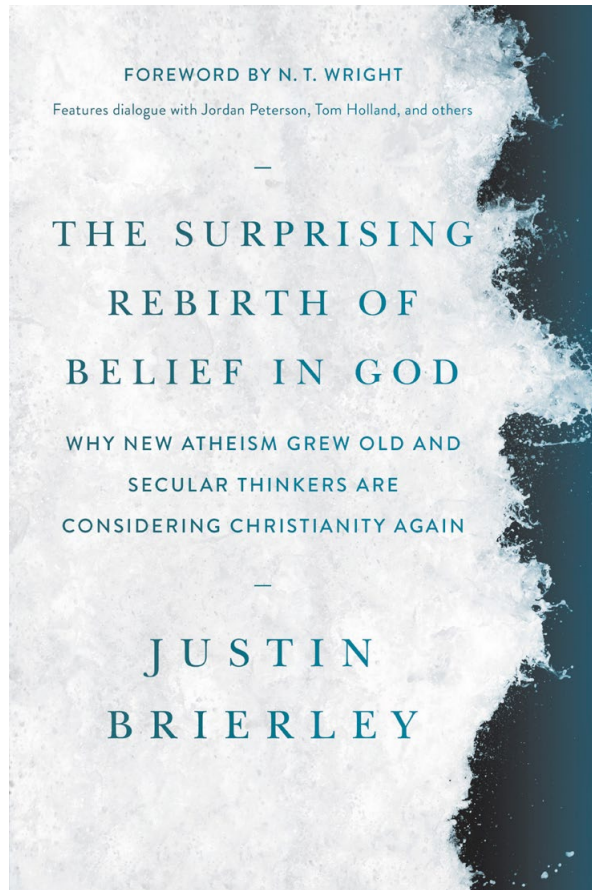
pp. 272 | £13.66

About 18 years ago, I began to host weekly radio conversations between Christians and non-Christians. This was a time when 'New Atheism' was becoming a cultural force to be reckoned with. The movement was led by the so-called 'four horsemen' - Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Daniel Dennett and Christopher Hitchens. Each of these public intellectuals had written a bestselling anti-God book. Not long after, the 'Atheist Bus Campaign' saw red London buses circulating the capital bearing the slogan 'There's Probably No God, Now Stop Worrying And Enjoy Your Life'. For several years it became very fashionable to be an atheist and to dismiss religion as both false and evil.

At the time I was hosting many debates with dogmatic representatives of New Atheism. But as the years wore on, more and more of the non-believers I was meeting were distancing themselves from this aggressive form of non-belief.

It seems that new atheism grew old pretty quickly. People tired of the fact it was fairly fundamentalist itself. The movement itself suffered all kinds of struggles and fractures leading to an internal implosion in due course.

In my book 'The Surprising Rebirth Of Belief In God' I chart the rise and fall of New Atheism and the growth of



a new conversation among secular intellectuals who are reconsidering the value of Christianity.

People like Jordan Peterson, a psychologist whose lectures on the deep wisdom and meaning in the Bible are reaching millions of people. The historian Tom Holland whose book 'Dominion' tells the story of how the Christian revolution shaped the West's moral imagination. Louise Perry, a secular female rights advocate who came to startlingly Christian conclusions about sex and relationships in the course of writing her book 'The Case Against The Sexual Revolution'.

There is a new conversation in God happening in our culture and I am encountering a surprising number of people who, having been let down by the empty promises of secular modernity, are willing to give Christianity another try.

In 'The Surprising Rebirth Of Belief In God' I tell their stories, explain how the tide of faith may be turning and what the church must do to meet the new meaning seekers who are willing to explore Christianity again.

JUSTIN BRIERLEY

Justin is an author, speaker and broadcaster.

You can purchase a signed copy of The Surprising Rebirth Of Belief In God at www.justinbrierley.com.

The accompanying podcast documentary series of the same name is also available on all podcast platforms.

O Breath Of Life

ELIZABETH ANN HEAD
(BESSIE PORTER HEAD) (1850-1936)

*O Breath of Life, come sweeping through us,
revive your Church with life and power;
O breath of life, come, cleanse, renew us,
and fit your Church to meet this hour.*

*O wind of God, come, bend us, break us,
till humbly we confess our need;
then in your tenderness remake us,
revive, restore; for this we plead.*

*O breath of love, come breathe within us,
renewing thought and will and heart;
come, love of Christ, afresh to win us,
revive your Church in every part.*



View from the Chair

REV DR
DAVID A. HULL

Dear Friends,

So, Methodist Evangelicals Together becomes **MET:Revive** – **Methodist Evangelicals Together in Spirit and Truth**. It feels like quite a milestone! I am so grateful to everyone who has contributed to our various consultations and conversations to help us clarify this vision for the present age.

I do hope you will be able to join us for our AGM when we will formally mark this moment of transition: bank holiday Monday 27 May at 3 pm as part of the Cliff College Festival. The formal papers for the AGM are included in this mailing and can also be downloaded from www.methodistevangelicals.org.uk/AGM. I hope you will enjoy reading them.

Earlier the same day (Monday 27 May), I will be presenting a seminar at Cliff Festival from 1 to 2 pm: 'Going back to where it all began'. I will be sharing something of the vision that has inspired our fresh focus – a vision that inspired our forebears in the greatest revival this country has ever known – indeed, a vision for all Christians in every time and place.

I am convinced that preparing for, pursuing, and praying for revival is our greatest need today, both within the church and within the world. Revival is thought of in all sorts of different ways, but if we understand it – as I do – to be 'the recovery of authentic Christianity, accompanied by the extraordinary power of the Holy Spirit, leading to accelerated transformation in holiness, evangelism, and society' then, surely, that has always been a central task for the followers of Jesus.

It has been a great privilege to share the vision more widely at a series of MET:Local events around the country. I am very grateful indeed to all those who have hosted these events, and to everyone who has come along; it has been wonderful to reconnect with friends as I have travelled. There are more of these events on the horizon – for more details, please visit www.revive.me.uk. If you would like to explore hosting one in your own church or circuit please get in touch: invite@revive.me.uk. Large or small, all invitations are welcome. It is a joy to be able to get the message out!

Later this year – in the Autumn – I will hand over the chairmanship to Rev. Chris Briggs. We are already working side by side, so that he can receive the baton smoothly. If you can, please do join us for our MET:Revive Annual Gathering in Northampton from Friday 15 to Sunday 17 November. Come for the weekend, or just a day. It would be great to have you with us! You will be able to witness the moment of the passing of the baton, joining with us in celebrating the past and praying for the future. I am delighted that Jacqui Parkinson will be joining us as a keynote speaker. Jacqui is well known for her unique evangelistic work as a textile artist. She is the widow of Rev. Dr Rob Frost who was a mentor to me in the early years of ministry, and I now support their son Andy Frost in serving as chair of trustees for Share Jesus International. For further details of the gathering and to book, please go to www.methodistevangelicals.org.uk/revive.

As we transition from season to season, and MET becomes MET:Revive, so too does MET Connexion become RE:VIVE. This has involved a very significant amount of work, not least for our Administrator and Editor, Marian Izzard, who has – as ever – continued to work with diligence, patience and good grace to serve the Lord through facilitating our work. I am sure we all want to join in expressing our thanks to her and praying for her continued ministry in this way and many others.

It is a great encouragement to be able to carry, in the central pages of this inaugural edition, words of greeting and endorsement from evangelical leaders, both within and beyond the Methodist Church. We are so grateful for those who stand alongside us, and especially in this moment of transition for those who have preceded us in evangelical witness within the Methodist Church through our predecessor organisations: Methodist Evangelicals Together, Headway, the Methodist Revival Fellowship, Conservative Evangelicals in Methodism and Dunamis. Long may the living waters flow!

Rejoicing in our partnership in the gospel,

David

RE·VIVE

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