



HUMILITY IN CHRISTIANITY: A PATHWAY TO TRUE GREATNESS

Humility is a central virtue in Christianity, embodying a spirit of lowliness, meekness, and a deep recognition of one's own limitations. It is not merely about thinking less of oneself but rather thinking of oneself less, as C.S. Lewis famously remarked. In the Christian faith, humility is seen as the pathway to true greatness, aligning believers with the character of Christ and drawing them closer to God.

The Bible presents humility as essential to the Christian life. In the Old Testament, the prophet Micah sums up God's requirement for His people: "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8, NIV). This verse emphasizes that walking humbly with God is not optional but a fundamental aspect of a righteous life. It is a call to live in submission to God's will, acknowledging His sovereignty and wisdom above our own.

Jesus Christ, the cornerstone of the Christian faith, exemplified humility in the most profound way. The Apostle Paul highlights this in his letter to the Philippians, where he describes Christ's humility: "Who, being in very nature God, did not

consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:6-8, NIV). This passage reveals the depth of Christ's humility—He, being God, chose to become human and to serve others, ultimately laying down His life for humanity's redemption.

In this act, Jesus redefined greatness. In a world that often equates greatness with power, wealth, and status, Jesus taught that true greatness is found in humility and service. "The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted" (Matthew 23:11-12, NIV). Here, Jesus flips the conventional understanding of greatness, showing that it is not about self-promotion but about self-sacrifice.

The call to humility is also echoed in the teachings of the apostles. James, the brother of Jesus, writes, "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up" (James 4:10, NIV). This verse encapsulates the Christian understanding of humility: it is an act of surrendering our pride and

placing our trust in God. In return, God promises to lift us up, not in the eyes of the world, but in His divine timing and purpose.

In practice, humility manifests in various ways—acknowledging our need for God, treating others with respect and kindness, and being willing to serve without seeking recognition. It is about recognizing that all we have and all we are is by God's grace. As Proverbs 22:4 states, "Humility is the fear of the Lord; its wages are riches and honour and life" (NIV). This verse reinforces that humility brings spiritual rewards, including a deeper relationship with God and the true riches of His kingdom.

In conclusion, humility is not just a virtue to be admired but a foundational aspect of Christian living. It reflects the heart of Jesus and draws believers closer to God's will. By embracing humility, Christians can experience the fullness of God's grace and find true greatness in His eyes. Moreover, humility fosters unity within the body of Christ, as Paul advises in Ephesians 4:2, "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love" (NIV). In this way, humility not only honours God but also builds stronger, more loving communities.

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ANNUAL MEETING 27TH & 28TH JULY 2024 – HAYDOCK

This year's Annual Meeting took place at the Mercure Hotel in Haydock, and for the first time since the pandemic, we were able to hold a two-day meeting. Unfortunately, our President Dorothy Kendrick was unable to attend the meeting as she was testing positive for covid, which left Brian Rowney as General Secretary to chair and lead the meeting.



We began with a time of worship, led by Andy Lomas, with Stuart Hunter and Barry Atherton, all from Tyldesley IM Church who led all of our worship times throughout the weekend. Norman Prescott then presented the credentials report: 7 Officers, 18 Connexional Committee members, 40 Church Delegates, 18 visitors including invited visitors, and 4 employees.

Brian extended a welcome to Yvonne Campbell, General Secretary of the Congregational Federation, who gave greetings, then Brian gave Dorothy's opening comments for the meeting. The main Business session began with a discussion on the IM future. This was led by Shaun Newton who spoke about the regional meetings which were held in April, and that although people agree that they want the Connexion to continue, certain changes must be made. He explained that as part of this, we are no longer able to continue as 2 separate bodies, the Connexion and the Association, due to changes in the law, and becoming a 'single umbrella organisation' has been suggested by the solicitors. There was some discussion, and a vote was taken in favour of a resolution that Annual Meeting

agrees in principle to merging the Connexion and the Association.

Following this was a discussion about streamlining the Connexion, and Yvonne Campbell came to speak to us about the way that the Congregational Federation is set up. They have 2 committees and 8 areas (geographical), with reps in each area. There was further discussion, with many feeling that some of our current Circuits are not working as they should, but that mutual support and prayer is beneficial for any church. Some circuits are working more on the aspect of mutual support, rather than to feed into Connexional decisions.

Following a time of fellowship over lunch, David Hughes was voted as Assistant General Secretary, and then the Connexional departmental reports were presented. During the reports, the notice of motion regarding the Connexional dues was accepted. Also, Shaun announced that Carrie O'Nions had passed her 3rd year of the Ministry Course. All recommendations from the Ministry report were accepted, and Ann Cheers reported that she had visited Rita Halliwell and taken her certificate to her along with flowers and a card. We prayed for Anthony Southwick as a new minister, and he was offered the right hand of fellowship.



Bill Hampson gave a verbal report as Ecumenical Officer, and spoke about the 'Finishing the Task' project, which is being promoted by the Free Churches within the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) as they encourage preparations by churches to celebrate in 2033 the 2000th birthday since Jesus delivered His Great Commission to His disciples and when some consider Christianity began. He encouraged churches to go online and register to take part in the project.

A vote was then taken on the acceptance of the dates for Annual meeting 2025. This will be held on Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th July 2025. A venue will be decided on after feedback from this year's Annual Meeting.

After a refreshment break, Chris Elsdon gave a presentation on the new Connexional website. The website is still under development and can be accessed by churches. Churches are encouraged to have





This was proposed by Brian Rowney and seconded by Anne Cheers.

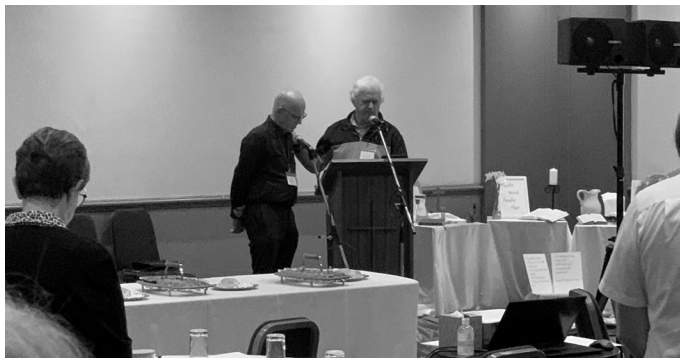
After Roger's induction came the election of Connexional Officers, election of the Circuit Representatives who make up Connexional Committee and the Committee Members for the various departmental committees. It was noted that there are still vacancies on all committees, so churches are encouraged to make nominations during the year.

a look and give comments and suggestions, and Chris is willing to work with individual churches on their own websites.

The notice of motion on the proposed amendments to the Constitution were ratified, having been approved at the 2023 Annual Meeting. James Gleave was then invited to share a presentation with us on the Appleton Cross Project. This is an exciting church plant project being undertaken by Appleton IM church, and we are asked to continue to pray for the project.

'AIM Church has the God given vision to plant a work within the new housing development at Appleton Cross. Our Aims and Plans have submitted to Warrington Borough Council and Homes England. We have employed a chartered surveyor and had initial plans drawn up for a multi-purpose worship and community building. Meetings have taken place with the CEO and Director of Growth at Warrington Borough Council and we have made a presentation to Appleton Parish Council about our aims for Appleton Cross (APX).

Currently, we are awaiting a response from Homes England regarding the allocation of the land. In the meantime AIM Church continues to pray and seek God's guidance, knowing His timing is perfect and continue to be very excited about sharing this with the community!'



As this was the end of Annual Meeting business, Brian asked Sue Rowney to share about the witness she had given to two people who were attending a wedding at the hotel on Saturday night, as they had been asking what why we were meeting. This led to an open time where several people gave words of encouragement, telling of things that were happening in their churches and sharing ideas that were working in their areas. This was an uplifting time, showing us that God is still very much at work in our Connexion.

This ended the business sessions for Saturday, but we continued with a service of praise later in the evening, when Roger Stone gave the message, which was a wonderful time of worship and fellowship with one another.

Sunday morning began with communion, led by Daniel and Gail Castro. This was followed by the In Memoriam service, which was led by Carrie O'Nions, where the names of members and friends of our church families who have passed away in the last year were remembered.

After another break, when the members of the Association had their meeting, Brian gave votes of thanks and read to us Dorothy's closing remarks that she had prepared. As she had been unable to join us, it was suggested that we phone her from the meeting. Dorothy was able to join us singing 'Jesus is the Name we Honour' over the phone, which she greatly appreciated.

We left feeling uplifted by the fellowship and the time of sharing over the weekend, remembering that God is truly at work in our churches.



During the morning, there was an offering for Overseas Missions, which amounted to £1656.00.

Alison Tipping, Medlock Valley Circuit Rep

Following this, we had the induction of Roger Stone as President of the Connexion, to serve until Annual Meeting 2026.

SECOND FIDDLE

I expect you have heard the phrase “playing second fiddle”. It generally means that someone or something is seen as less important or subordinate to someone or something else and can often be used in quite a derogatory way. If you’ve ever been in that position, I wonder how it made you feel? Not many of us appreciate being thought of as “second best,” do we?

The phrase itself comes from the arrangement of an orchestra. The first violins (or “fiddles”) are regarded as the best players – indeed, one of them is usually the leader of the orchestra – and they sit in the prime position. Next to them (or sometimes behind them) are the second violins; players who might be good but not as good as the first violins.

As we look through the Bible, we come across quite a few people who could be said to have “played second fiddle” to someone else. Let’s think first of all about Jonathan, Saul’s son. By rights, he should have been king after his father, but 1 Samuel 23:17 shows that he was not afraid of losing the kingship to his friend, David. He was willing to play second fiddle rather than stand on his rights and insist on being Number One. As a result, Israel was blessed with a great king (even though he didn’t get it right all the time!)

The disciple Andrew is another example. Although he was equal in rank with all the other disciples, he is generally referred to as Peter’s brother and always seemed to be in Peter’s shadow (that might ring a bell with some of you with older siblings!). Several times we read of Peter doing something or being somewhere special (like the Transfiguration) along with James and John – but poor Andrew never gets a mention! There must have been times when he felt a bit like the second fiddle.

In the Book of Acts we are introduced to Barnabas, one of the early members of the church who seems to have been given some

sort of leadership position. He was certainly very well thought of and was known for his generosity and encouraging manner. Then along came Paul and Barnabas seems to have been somewhat eclipsed by him; reduced to the rank of second fiddle. However, Barnabas does not seem to have minded about this; in fact, quite the opposite. When others were wary of Paul because of his past reputation as a persecutor of Christians, Barnabas stood by him and spoke up for him (see Acts ch.9). And there are other examples in Acts where Barnabas encouraged Paul and was content to sit back and see his friend’s ministry flourish.



Barnabas played the second fiddle well. He was generous, humble, and ready to advance the cause of others. He had no intention of building an empire for himself. Like all of us, he was not perfect and we know that his relationship with Paul broke down but there are valuable lessons from his life that can teach us today.

Perhaps the ultimate Biblical example of “playing second fiddle” is John the Baptist. For some time, crowds had flocked to hear him preach and to be baptised by him. In today’s world he would probably have had a huge following on Instagram or Facebook! Then along comes Jesus – and John had to step aside and point his own disciples towards Jesus. How might he have felt? How would you have felt in his shoes?

Look at his response when people began asking him who exactly he was (John 1:19-28). He immediately put them right. He made it clear that he was NOT Elijah, Moses or

even the Messiah. He would not lay any claim to fame or seek celebrity status, even when he was given a great opportunity to do so. He is another example of one who played “second fiddle” very well. Instead of capitalising on being the centre of attention, he deliberately turned the spotlight on Jesus.

So, how do you cope when you find yourself being the second fiddle, whatever the situation might be? Being second fiddle, all the time can easily lead to us having a complex, to feel less important, to stop trying so hard. No one ever remembers the runners up, the second placed so why bother?

To go back to our orchestra; whilst the first violins carry the melody, it’s the second violins that provide the harmony! So, whilst it might be true that the first violin is the most important, most noticeable and the second violin plays a subordinate role, the player of this instrument must also possess skill – as well as a measure of restraint. To play the second fiddle well means recognizing that your role may actually enhance the performance of the first fiddle player. The second fiddle player is not striving to be noticed by playing louder than anyone else in his section of the orchestra. He is content to be regarded as second best but at the same time recognise the value of his role. Without him there is no harmony.

John the Baptist was confident in his role; he never doubted that it was important- but he knew that someone else’s role was more important. He got the balance right. And we need to do the same; to be confident in our role, even if we are the second fiddle, but not to become arrogant or proud. Remember, just like John the Baptist, we are here to point others to Jesus

**Judith Diggins
Cornerstone, Nelson**

KIRKHALL LANE
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7.30pm

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phone: 0161 278 1518 email: lilyofthefield29@gmail.com

NORTHWOOD COMMUNITY



Teenagers from **Morley** in West Yorkshire are disappointed that they have not been able to camp at Northwood Centre at High Legh over the summer holidays!

Almost every year since 1999 youngsters from the West Yorkshire mill town have participated in an action-packed holiday week which has included, games, hikes, swimming, bible studies & talks, a day trip to Rhyl in North Wales and visit to Theme Parks and other attractions.

Organisers from the town's Community Church experienced a perfect storm of circumstances which meant they reluctantly could not proceed with a camp this summer. There were problems with availability of minibus, car drivers and key volunteers not being available to help through family bereavement, work and other pressures.

Nevertheless, this disappointment has given opportunity for Coordinator Andy Dalton to reflect on the impact of the camps. He explained that Northwood Centre has been the destination for a total of twenty-three summer camps. Over a twenty-five period a total of 272 different young people between the ages of 11-16 have camped at Northwood. The total number of



visits by them in this time span comes to a grand total of 404 visits. Also, a grand total of 119 different volunteers have helped to organise and run the camps.

Virtually all the youngsters attending the camps have come from Morley and have been from non-

population will be found in a church of any description. Over the last sixty years the number of churches in the town has reduced from 27 to just 8. He went on to say that the camps at Northwood have been a vital portal bringing the gospel message to modern secular families and their children.



church backgrounds. Daily sessions have seen remarkable times of young people listening to the claims of Jesus. They have seen some of them make commitments to Christ or the camps have been an important step in their understanding of the gospel message.

Andy Dalton is known to many in IM circles. He has preached in IM churches on the Yorkshire plan over several decades and organises the **Living Word** Calendar project each year throughout the Connexion. He said that he has occasions when he is out shopping in town when young adults now in their 20s and 30s stop him and reminisce about their memories of camping at Northwood.

He commented that gospel witness in Morley has always been at a low ebb. On a normal Sunday less than 2% of the town

He expressed his gratitude to the connexion *"Northwood Christian Centre is perfect for a youth camp. It is ideally located with superb, affordable facilities. A big thank you too to David Okell who looks after the Centre and grounds and is so supportive. We are so thankful to the IM Connexion for making this facility available to us over the years."*

Andy Dalton



BAPTISM WEEKEND AT HIGH LEGH



Glorious sunshine and a genial atmosphere were among the blessings when staying over for the weekend of 22nd-23rd June. The reason for this occasion being the baptisms of recent converts who were hungry to celebrate their immersion into Christ.

With the benefit of a newly purchased inflatable pool (a Home & Bargain special), we were all able to gather round to clap and sing, as

folks confirmed their faith before friends and fellowship.

Whilst not everyone stayed over on Saturday night, those who did enjoyed praise and prayer in the hall until it was time for heads to touch pillows. Fellowship and picnic-style food followed on Sunday until the baptisms at 5.00pm. An evening service finished off the weekend as



it began. The whole event was not only blessed for the baptism part but even more so for the bonding of the

folks who all worked hard, yet can testify to God's grace upon them as they did so.

Roger Stone
High Legh Christian Fellowship



NEWS FROM THE MISSIONARIES

L. and P. spent an enjoyable and very busy time in the UK in July. They were able to meet up with family and friends and also share fellowship with many of our churches. They found it a great blessing to see old friends, supporters and churches and to make new friends too. They are very grateful to all who provided hospitality during their stay. There was a circuit gathering held in the Northeast and they visited several individual churches in the Northwest. Their time in the UK ended with a conference arranged by their mission at which L. had been invited to lead a seminar. August was spent in France where they were able to have a week's holiday as well as visiting friends and relatives there. At the end of the month they returned to North Africa.

The Overseas Missions Department held an event at the Northwood Centre on August 3rd which was attended by Liz Greenhalgh and Gail and Daniel Castro who gave an update on their ministry.

Liz Greenhalgh has been continuing with her youth work and the summer months of June and July have been particularly busy with

various holiday activities. She is also very much engaged with outreach among the Roma people in the town. Roma children find it extremely difficult to make any headway in their education because they struggle to keep up. Consequently, Liz and her team attach great importance to the after-school programmes they arrange with the outreach through the canteen. Not only are those who come provided with food, but are also helped to access health care and apply for state support.

Gail and Daniel are continuing in their roles, Daniel as an assistant pastor as well as his work with their supporting mission OMS. Gail is

involved with member care, supporting OMS missionaries both at home and abroad. She is also occupied in supporting local families who have children with special needs and other issues. At present they are also attending weekly prayer meetings at our Roe Green church and are willing to come to other churches to speak or offer support.

The Overseas Missions Department would like to thank all our churches who contributed to the OSM offering at Annual Meeting. The amount raised was £1656 (before Gift Aid).

Anne Fambely
OSM Committee



INDEPENDENT METHODIST CHURCHES

STATEMENT OF FAITH

INTRODUCTION

Towards the end of 2022, our churches were encouraged to go through a series of six Bible studies produced by the Connexion, which could either be used through YouTube videos or presented in person, using workbooks and prepared scripts to assist. From the feedback provided by the churches, one comment made by several of them was that many people aren't aware of what is in our Statements of Faith and Practice. Indeed, some questioned why they should be interested in these Statements, when they themselves do not have an Independent Methodist background and, although they attend IM churches and have become members of those churches, do not consider themselves Independent Methodists.

The Statement of Faith is very much like the various Creeds which, in the times before most people could read or write, would be learnt by heart and repeated during worship - as, in some churches, they still are. It should not be something to be simply repeated parrot-fashion, but it should be a reflection of our individual and corporate beliefs - if we say it, we should mean it. Furthermore, the elements of the IM Statement of Faith are essentially common to all Trinitarian, Bible-believing Christian denominations, albeit some of them may emphasise certain issues, such as believers' baptism or speaking in tongues, and play down others like the priesthood of all believers, especially if they practise a clergy-laity divide. We should, though, hold most aspects of the Statement of Faith in common with all other Christians. In any case, if you are in regular fellowship with a congregation of Christians, why should you not want to know what they believe, and understand how they live out their Christian faith? If you are part of the body of Christ in your local area, you should do. Lisa Green

pointed out to me that you wouldn't join the Labour Party (or any other political party) without knowing and embracing what they stand for, and Christians shouldn't be any different.

This series was originally given in a number of Sunday morning talks at Astley Christian Fellowship, and has been adapted for the *Connexion* magazine. It examines the elements that make up the Statement of Faith, to show how it is rooted in scripture and how it should impact on our Christian living. In other words, not just what we believe, but why we believe it.

STATEMENT OF FAITH - THE TRINITY

We believe in One Living and True God, Creator of all, eternal in three persons as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; Him alone we worship and adore.

A mystery to begin with - the Trinity, one God in three persons. Nowhere in Scripture is the Trinity explicitly mentioned, yet it is there from the beginning. Genesis 1:1 - *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.* The word 'God' in Hebrew is 'Elohim'. Any Hebrew word ending in -im is plural, such as 'cherubim' and 'seraphim', from the hymn "Holy holy, holy, Lord God almighty", instead of 'cherubs' and 'seraphs' as we would say in the 21st century. A literal translation, therefore, would be "In the beginning, Gods created the heavens and the earth". Throughout the Old Testament, the word predominantly used for God is 'Elohim', with the singular 'El' or the name 'Yahweh' appearing much less often - a concordance such as Strong's Analytical will prove the point, if you look up the word 'God'. In particular, try getting your head round Deuteronomy 6:4-5 - *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart ...* The word for 'God' is 'Elohim'

again, and the word for 'Lord' is 'Yahweh'. Again, a literal, though somewhat ungrammatical translation would be "Yahweh our Gods, Yahweh is one".

The Jewish and also the Muslim faiths (whose holy scriptures include Deuteronomy) ignore this contradiction and deny the existence of the Trinity. However, there are other contradictions, which can only be explained by the fact of the Trinity. When Moses asked God to show him his glory (Exodus 33), God told him that 'no one may see me and live', yet there are instances where people did see God and lived to tell the tale, e.g. Gideon in Judges 6. As God cannot tell a lie (Numbers 23:19, Hebrews 6:18), the explanation is surely that 'no one may see me - God the Father - and live', and it was God the Son, who accepted the offering by fire, that Gideon saw. And God the Holy Spirit - he was there from the beginning - Genesis 1:2 - and throughout the Old Testament. For instance, God filled Bezalel, son of Uri, with his Spirit (Exodus 31:2-5) to design the artefacts for the Tent of Meeting. After being confronted with his adultery and confessing his sinfulness, David begged God not to take his Holy Spirit from him (Psalm 51:11). One of my favourites is Isaiah 9:6 - *And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor (the Holy Spirit), Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (God the Son).* Three names for the members of the Trinity in a single verse - ask a Jehovah's Witness to explain that one!

We see God as 'Creator of all' from Genesis 1 and 2. If, as the Statement of Faith goes, we believe in God as the Creator of all, that puts us in opposition to those who argue the theory of evolution, that the earth was formed millions of years ago, and that all living creatures - including mankind - evolved from simple organisms over those millions of years. If we truly accept our Statement of Faith, we must reject that conventional -

and fatally flawed - wisdom. How do we, as parents, react when our children come home from school with stories of dinosaurs that lived millions of years ago, when the Biblical record implies that creation took place around 4500 BC, give or take a couple of hundred years? This is not an easy question to answer, as the children will be expected to regurgitate this theory and its implications in their work and at their exams. There are books around, though, that contradict the theory of evolution and, without going into too much detail, the worldwide flood described in Genesis 6-8 gives an alternative explanation for the 'evidence' that we see today.

Finally, the phrase 'Him alone we worship and adore'. The Israelites were told that, "You shall have no other gods before me", and that "You shall not make for yourself an idol ... bow down to them or worship them ...". However, time and time again they worshipped the tangible, but false gods that they had created, or some other civilisation had created. Of course, 21st century man is too sophisticated to indulge in idol worship - isn't he? The Catholic and Orthodox traditions did, and in

some places, still do set great store by the worship of relics, icons and praying to 'saints' (but only to the officially-recognised ones, not to every born-again believer that has passed to glory). Again, scripture is quite specific, and John the Evangelist, no less, was told off in Revelation 22:8 when he fell at the feet of the angel that had been talking to him. *"I am a fellow-servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"*

Jesus left us with an uncomfortable challenge, in Matthew 10:37 - *Anyone who loves his father and mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.* This doesn't mean that, in our 'devotion' to Jesus, we should neglect our parents or children, especially when they are dependent on us; and 'being busy in the church' does not necessarily equate to 'love for Jesus' either. Some people who have been Christians a long time, will know that, in some churches, there was a 'tradition' of forming committees that people were expected to participate in, so that they would be too busy to get tempted into worldly

pursuits. How much good these committees actually did, and whether Jesus was anywhere to be found in their work, is another matter. Some people worship created things. While Paul may have had in mind golden calves and totem poles (Romans 1:23 - *they exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal men and birds and animals and reptiles*), how many people worship their 24-reg BMW, their seven-figure mansion, their bank balance - or even the living room where people are reluctant to sit down in case they crease the cushions? Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord (1 Corinthians 1:31 and, as if Paul wanted to emphasise the point, 2 Corinthians 10:17). Everything else is transitory and, as Paul again reminds us (1 Timothy 6:7), we brought nothing into the world and can take nothing out of it. If nothing else, this should encourage us to give God the first place in our lives.

(all scriptures taken from the New International Version)

Brian Rowney

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MY REFLECTIONS ON ANNUAL MEETING

I fully expect there will be plenty of response to our Annual Meeting at Haydock in July. No doubt the Connexion magazine will feature many encouragements from folks who attended and can testify to God's hand on the whole event. Certainly, those who worked so hard to make it such a splendid occasion, deserve our thanks too and I'm sure they will reap the confirmation of the Holy Spirit as well.

Indeed, every detail seemed to conspire together to bring about such a spiritually convivial atmosphere for praise, prayer, fellowship, sharing and business. The business was a pleasurable exercise, largely due to the confirmation of the Lord's presence in our meeting. Notwithstanding, the role and participation of those who were privileged to be there.

Aided by the sensitive ministry of the folks from Tyldesley Worship group, the mood of the meeting carried an enabling quality. People were free and found they could enter into the blessing. Some folks

sat, some clapped, some stood etc. All found their way of expressing joyful praise to our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Without doubt the purpose of God was seen to be effectual in that, folks worshipped Him and were enjoying Him: crucially important. For myself, I didn't expect any surprise in the testimonies of Paul Jones and Fiona Hendley-Jones on Friday as I've met them before. Yet they too were on form and I was able to recall snippets of their testimony to good effect during the ministry of the Word on Saturday night.

Even the layout of the tables and chairs, as though folks were dining and had turned up for a good meal, made a refreshing change from previous experiences. The venue wasn't too vast. Just cosy enough without being cramped in, affording space for very effective displays of books and other publications. I liked it all.

As I recall, there were two points of interest made during the

meeting by Yvonne Campbell of the Congregational Federation. Firstly, that they have streamlined their system of committees and denominational oversight. One outcome being more effective communication. Secondly, that they require 90% of votes in favour before approval is given to proposals/Notices of Motion when put to the meeting. I was impressed by that.

I believe the Connexion has turned a corner. There are struggles ahead of us but, the feel-good factor is there. Moreover and also, there is a real optimism in that, we are conscious of the need to further a model of the team approach. Indeed, it is a good team. I'm looking forward to further developments and to what other folks have to say. Participation and cohesion are two feature words of the weekend. It's time to come out and be the Connexion.

Roger Stone
President

ANNUAL FAMILY FIELD DAY AT THATTO HEATH

On Saturday 6 July we held our Annual Family Field Day. The day did not start well, in fact it rained for most of the morning.

By 1pm the rain had eased, by 1.30pm all the stalls were out, and the BBQ had been lit. Parr Band started the afternoon off with Shine

Jesus Shine followed by a prayer from our President Dot Williams. The Lord blessed us with a truly beautiful afternoon.

It was a most enjoyable day, meeting up with the local churches, neighbours, local community, and friends old and new.

An extremely tiring but very rewarding day!

Fay Williams

Thatto Heath



PLANNING AHEAD WITH YOUR DATES

Nearly 2000 evangelistic calendars were distributed via IM Connexion churches throughout the the British Isles last Christmas/new year.

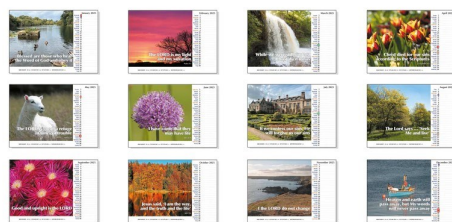
IM Congregations throughout the UK participated with enthusiasm in the 2024 evangelistic calendar & diary project. This project has run since 2005. An incredible accumulative total of **50,750** calendars have been given out in this time



period across the nation by IM churches. This project will be repeated later this year. IM church secretaries will receive further details and order forms in the autumn in their regular mailing from the IM Resource Centre.

Published by Day One Publications, the *Living Word* calendar has beautiful photographs, large print dates and a bold bible verse about salvation for every month of the year. These are being made available at virtually cost price - just 43p each – reduced to 38p each if you buy 40 or more. The pocket sized diaries are extremely cheap (just £1), very colourful and have an encouraging scripture text for each day.

Project coordinator Andy Dalton is encouraging churches to think about they can reach out effectively to their local communities. He said



LivingWord 2025

The Scripture Text Calendar from DayOne Christian Ministries

DayOne



“Anxiety levels have never been so high with the recent riots and ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine. These publications are a simple and very cheap way of bringing gospel hope to people who people who need a message of encouragement in these difficult days”

Andrew Dalton

Update: Connexional Contact Information

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All Officers’ Addresses

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WILFRED 'WILF' McCATHIE Long
Lane Liverpool September 1927 –
June 2024



Born in September 1927 in Prescott, Wilf went on to reach the ripe old age of 96. He looked at the world with wonder and in his life story stated " his childhood was ' idyllic, the sun always seemed to shine and he made many nice friends'. A blessing which carried him throughout his life.

He was never without curiosity and knowledge, and secured a scholarship at the Liverpool Collegiate School where he joined the School Cadet core and when he later volunteered to join the army he was stationed near Barnard Castle. He became a gunner and later a gunnery instructor. He could still

remember the mechanics and details to the exact millimetre.

After leaving the army he worked in a laboratory in Prescott where he learned about copper refining and this turned into a lifelong passion, moving around to many different laboratories, and became a chief chemist travelling across Europe and North Africa.

He met his wife Gwyn in Mill Lane (now long Lane) church and they were married for almost 68 years.

With all his knowledge and skills he became such a vital part of the church. He was a loyal , much loved member of the Church Family, and who, over many years had given practical help, inspiration, and spiritual guidance to many.

He served God faithfully both spiritually as President and Secretary, Sunday School Teacher, Church Elder and Trustee, and practically during the re-building of the "new Church" and Sunday School hall extension. This continued until recently with the maintenance of both the gardens and buildings, with his wide knowledge of the plumbing and drains!!! and wood working skills.

We will miss his wisdom and his wit. Never a week went by without another new (old) joke. It has been an honour to have known him. His position can never be replaced and God will have welcomed him with the words" Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of the LORD"

Sandra O'Nions
Long Lane



Connexion

The magazine of the family of Independent Methodist Churches

The last day for articles to be submitted for the November / December issue of the Connexion magazine is Friday 11th October. The theme for this issue will be 'Presence'.

Please could all articles be sent either directly to the Resource Centre via post, or by email to magazine@imchurches.org.uk.

Just a quick reminder that ideally all photographs need to be digital. Do ensure that safeguarding principles are followed by asking permission for the publication of any photographs and for the articles where people are named and/or can be identified.

Thank you for all the articles – please keep them coming!