

O FOR A HEART TO PRAISE MY GOD

Charles Wesley

O for a heart to praise my God,
A heart from sin set free,
A heart that always feels thy blood
So freely spilt for me;
A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer's throne,
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone;
A humble, lowly, contrite heart,
Believing, true, and clean;

Which neither life nor death can part
From him that dwells within;
A heart in every thought renewed,
And full of love divine;
Perfect, and right, and pure, and good,
A copy, Lord, of thine!
Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart;
Come quickly from above,
Write thy new name upon my heart,
Thy new, best name of love.



FROM THE CHAIR

*The Revd Dr
David A. Hull*

Dear Friends,

Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has, of course, been much in our thoughts over recent months. I am delighted that we were able to celebrate her Platinum Jubilee in the last edition. It seems strange to be carrying a tribute to her so soon afterwards. I am sure we will all wish to join in continuing to pray for the Royal Family in their sadness and for King Charles as he begins to reign. That is, after all, what the Bible calls us to do, not least in 1 Timothy 2:2.

As I have reflected on the life of the Queen, my thoughts have returned to reports of her coronation 70 years ago. These words were spoken as she was presented with a Bible:

*Our gracious Queen:
to keep your Majesty ever mindful of
the law and the gospel of God
as the rule for the whole life and
government of Christian Princes,
we present you with this book,
the most valuable thing that this world
affords.*

Never mind the priceless treasures on display in the service and all the crown jewels in the Tower of London. If we own a Bible, we too own the most valuable thing that this world affords. As evangelicals, we are committed to reading the Bible regularly and to putting its teaching into practice in every area of life.

John Wesley believed that Bible reading and study was a means of grace – one of the ordinary channels through which God's grace flows into our lives, to strengthen, challenge and change us. We must, of course, do it in the right way and for the right reasons. Rushing through to tick it off a list without any thought of listening prayerfully to the voice of God will achieve little.

Wesley was very critical of those who had only the form of religion and not its power. It seems to me, however, that he also knew that, ordinarily, we cannot know the power without the form. The way to receive the power of God is to engage in the means of grace: Bible reading and study, prayer, Christian fellowship, Holy Communion, fasting, merciful service.

The Lord does, of course, sometimes work in extraordinary ways. We shouldn't, though, sit around waiting for something extraordinary to happen; instead, we should seek his power using the ordinary channels he has given us, the means of grace. This was the reason that Wesley and his friends were called 'Methodists' – they took a methodical approach to the means of grace. I hope this is still an outstanding characteristic of the people called Methodists in our own day, not least amongst evangelicals. It is how we come to know the transforming power of God's love.

It is good to be able to include an article in this edition of MET Connexion written by Derek Balsdon, our former Development Worker. He will be joining us for Revive, our annual prayer conference and we will say goodbye to him formally during the Sunday morning service. I do hope many MET members will be able to join us. Details are included earlier in the magazine.

I wrote in the last edition of Derek having fulfilled an 'Esther role' amongst us, serving the Lord and his people within the Methodist Church 'for such a time as this'. It seems to me that what is needed now is a 'Nehemiah role' – someone who has wept over the state of things, and now seeks to rediscover the foundations and rebuild the walls, encouraging each of us to play our part in the great task wherever the Lord has placed us. You will have received a mailing with

details of an appeal for funds for this new Director of Ministry role. If you are able to contribute, and haven't already done so, further details are given earlier in this magazine and on our website, www.methodistevangelicals.org.uk/DoM. Please do join us in praying that the funds will be raised and the right person will be found!

There has been much discussion about the future of MET following the God In Love Unites Us decisions of the Methodist Conference. This was the theme of my address at this year's AGM. It seems to me that the future is two-fold: firstly, continuing our work within the Methodist Church to strengthen and encourage evangelical witness, as has always been our *raison d'être* – surely MET is needed now more than ever – and, secondly, developing our work more widely with other Wesleyan evangelical denominations and organisations to seek a renewal of the Wesleyan vision and mission across the motherland of Methodism. Our discussions with other national leaders about this wider vision have been most encouraging.

I am very grateful, as always, to Marian Izzard for all she does behind the scenes within MET, not only in editing MET Connexion, but also in her tireless and patient work as our administrator. The theme she has chosen for this edition is very fitting for these times: 'The Transforming Love of God'. Surely, it is this transformation for which we need to pray, as fervently as ever. How wonderful it was that the Queen herself chose the words of Charles Wesley for her funeral service, setting forth the transforming power of God's love. May this ever be our continued prayer:

*Finish, then, thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be.
Let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee.
Changed from glory into glory,
till in heav'n we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love and praise.*

Rejoicing in our partnership in the gospel,

David