

THE MAGAZINE OF METHODIST EVANGELICALS TOGETHER

RE:VIVE

The Tide is Turning

WINTER 2025/2026

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EDITORIAL

The theme 'The tide is turning' is one which Chris Briggs, our chair, suggested as the theme for this edition of the magazine, given some of the clear and interesting signs of revival and growth that are taking place in the UK at this time.

Our contributors share some insights into this exciting happening. Andy du Feu, Principal of Moorlands Bible College exhorts us to tune in to what God is doing. Rachel Jordan-Wolf, Executive Director of Hope Together encourages us to be ready for 'revival springtime'. Blayze White, Methodist minister shares how God often works through imperfect instruments for

his perfect purposes. Our Bible Study contributor, Derek Burnside explores how God uses ungodly rulers for both his purposes and his people's good. Pastor Kijung Kim shares about his missionary call from Korea to the UK and his vision for uncovering the spiritual wells beneath British church life. Mark Pellow shares a picture of God's work and invites us to pray 'Lord do it again.

We trust that you will be encouraged and inspired with this edition!

On a separate note, we offer grateful thanks to Rev Janet Knowles-Berry, who has stepped down as proofreader for the magazine, having voluntarily given of her time over many years.

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Chair Letter

CHRIS BRIGGS

*He can turn the tides, and calm the angry sea;
He alone decides who writes a symphony.
He lights every star that makes our darkness bright,
He keeps watch all through each long and lonely night.*

Richard Mullen
(American contemporary Christian music singer and songwriter)

The Chair writes...

Part of my ministry was spent in Portland and Weymouth. Twenty years of it! I often joke that clearly no one else wanted me or they wouldn't have left me there that long! I have always enjoyed being close to the sea, whether on family holidays when I was young, or later in life with friends, or during that wonderful period of living daily life near to the sea. When we moved to the Midlands, marvellous as this area is, we grieved a little for the sea. A kindly church member told us we should not worry too much as there was a nearby reservoir! We couldn't quite see the connection.

The wonder of the sea! Being close to the sea would often bring to the forefront of my mind something Rev Donald Rogers, a former minister (presbyter in today's language) said to me. He was the circuit superintendent of the Basildon circuit and the minister with whom I did my Local Preacher studies and under whom I candidated for the presbyteral

ministry. We would talk about the Bible often and, of course, we would consider that – for some – it is not an easy book to interpret. We all know that taking one text out of context can be very confusing, even if it sounds convincing on its own. Donald Rogers would say it helped him to think of the waves on the seashore when the tide was going in or out. If you look at an individual wave when it moves onto the shore it might give an impression of going in or out, contrary to what is happening to the tide.

It is as we stand back and observe the waves and the shore that we see the one wave in the context of an entire movement, still a part of the whole but needing the rest of the tide to make sense of it. I think this is a helpful way of looking at scripture when we are not quite sure of the direction we are to take.

I think the principle of not getting too focused on individual waves works in other directions too. Within our western society it seems that there has been a sustained

period of hedonism, individualism, questioning of the Christian faith and rejection of the church. Often, alongside that has been a distancing (even within the church) from the Bible as a foundation in matters of faith and practice. The liberal and intellectually lacking phrase 'Love is Love' has been but one manifestation of the way society has been going down a rabbit hole. It would be very easy to think we have lost our moral and spiritual compass completely.

I have tried to step back though and look at the tide rather than the individual waves. Some of those individual waves can be very distressing. I discern and believe the tide is turning though. There is clearly a change in the attitudes and minds of parts of society and, whereas some people were fearful of disagreeing with prevailing views in society, more are speaking up when they think they are being asked to believe something daft. Put that alongside the growing evidence of what has been called the 'Quiet Revival' and signs of growth within MET:Revive, I think we may be observing a sea change.

We will need to hold this is prayer and to keep discerning what the Spirit is saying to the churches, but the tide may be turning. I feel the Spirit is on the move in a different way. I do not want this to be a false positivism, but I do want to watch carefully for the signs of God at work. I do feel we can be quietly encouraged though.

Be encouraged. God is good. His Spirit is with us. The name of Jesus will be lifted high.



Equipping for Ministry

'Avoiding Mission Drift'

An online teaching day open to all led by Rachael Heffer, Head of Mission at the Evangelical Alliance.

Saturday 7th March 2026

10.00 AM - 1.00 PM

The event is free of charge, with an option to make a donation. To register for this event go to metrevive.uk/efm



NEW Contact Details

Please note the new contact details for the MET Administrator from 1 January 2026

MET Revive Administrator
PO Box 184
Wellington
TA21 1DQ

Telephone: 01823 765975



MET Re:vive AGM

**Bank Holiday Monday
25th May 2026 at 3.00pm**

AT CLIFF FESTIVAL
(SAMUEL CHADWICK LECTURE ROOM)
Cliff College, Calver, Hope Valley
Sheffield, S32 3XG

This will be a hybrid event (in person and on Zoom). To register for Zoom attendance, contact: admin@metrevive.uk



Revive Gathering

**Friday 13th – Sunday 15th
November 2026**

The Hayes Conference Centre
Swanwick, DE55 1AU

A weekend of Bible teaching, worship, prayer and fellowship
Weekend rate: £300, Discount of £30 per person (£270) if you book by 1 March 2026

Book online at metrevive.uk/revive or send a cheque payable to MET Revive to MET:Revive, PO Box 184, WELLINGTON, TA21 1DQ

Whisper to Wake-Up Call

ANDY DU FEU

Moorlands College Principal, Andy du Feu, contends that we have an opportunity to tune in to what God is doing and see the kind of revival that previous generations have prayed so hard for.

Let me tell you something you probably already know: God has been at work in the UK, so much so that it's hard to escape conversations about the Quiet Revival.

On one hand, it feels so unfair that people are simply walking into churches and getting saved and baptised when for over a decade I grafted – from canvassing mobile home parks to delivering the Jesus film to 4,000 homes surrounding our church – without seeing a single person respond positively and unequivocally to the gospel.

On the other hand, well, people are literally walking off the street and into churches of all shapes and sizes. And that is good news! The Bible Society research is amongst several that underpin the belief that Christianity is experiencing a resurgence in the UK.

Using the pollsters YouGov, it took a snapshot of 13,000 people in 2018 and again in 2024. The results are staggering:

	2018	2024
18-24s attending church at least monthly	4%	16%
Specifically males from 18-24	4%	21%
18-24s who believe in a higher power/god/gods	28%	45%

The growth is less substantial amongst 35 - 44 year-olds, and churchgoing is in decline in the two age ranges between 45 and 64. A 5% jump to 19% amongst those 65+ completes the picture. This all translates to a younger church, with 14% of the church aged 18-34 in 2018 ballooning to around 33% in 2024.

While the Bible Society research did not include under 18s, the Church of England (C of E) found that less than 100,000 children from 0-16 attended church in 2018, with 44% of them concentrated in 6.4% of churches (CofE, Youth and Children Growth Research, Jan-Apr 2022), and Scripture Union launched their 95-campaign based on the stats that showed 5% of children went to church, calling congregations to reach out to the 95% who don't. That will need updating!

The national census 2021 made for interesting reading. For the previous two, I must confess that I had registered as a Jedi Knight, in silent protest that so many people identify culturally as Christians. For the first time, the number of those in England and Wales describing themselves as such dropped below half – 46.2% down from 59.3% in 2011. While cultural Christianity is on the decline, genuine church



attendance is up, alongside a renewed confidence in the church, this despite the high-profile scandals and denominational turmoil.

Between 1981 and 2018, Britons' confidence in churches and religious organisations fell from 49% to 31%, but by 2022 had risen again to 42% in part because while councils made deep cuts to services, the church led the way with initiatives like food banks, warm spaces, and debt counselling. The annual social value of the UK church stands north of £55bn (National Churches Trust, The House of Good, 2021). To put that in context, that's twice the £22bn financial 'black hole' allegedly left by the previous government.

THE WANE OF NEW ATHEISM

In the 90s and noughties, the UK rode the wave of New Atheism, with Christianity captured through the cringe of Ned Flanders and the irreverent Vicar of Dibley. The then Prime Minister's spin doctor infamously remarked, 'We don't do God', and celebrities championed the bus adverts declaring, 'There's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life'. I cannot have been alone in writing to Humanists UK to thank them for the free

advertising given church attendance was in freefall at the time (Brierley, *The Tide is Running Out*, 2000). That wave is still going, only, it seems increasingly isolated. Indeed, around one in four of those aged between 45 and 60 described themselves as atheist (OnePoll, 2025) and monthly church attendance has declined from 6% in 2018 to 5% in 2024 of those between 45 and 54 (Bible Society, *The Quiet Revival*, 2025) – people who would have been in their 20s and 30s when the UK was experiencing peak New Atheism.

The tide has turned, demonstrated superbly in Justin Brierley's book, *The Surprising Rebirth of Belief in God* (2023). A survey of 10,000 people found only 13% of those under 25 identified as atheists, and 62% of 18 to 24-year-olds said they are 'very' or 'fairly' spiritual (Gasson, *Belief in Britain*, 2025). The cynicism that permeated universities has softened, with statistics revealing that 37% of students identifying as 'no religion' acknowledging they owned a copy of the Bible, while 13% of the same group claimed they prayed weekly (Fusion, *What do today's students think about the Bible?* 2025).

Speaking of Bibles, UK sales went from netting £2.69m in 2019 to £5.02m in 2024, an 87% increase in just five years, with a skew towards youth and study bibles. To demonstrate how incredible this is, the 11 years to 2019 saw an increase of just over £277,000, or just 11% (Nielsen, BookScan data, 2024).

This turn is reflected in the BBC's favourable treatment of the beach baptisms in Bournemouth last summer, which were part of the collaborative ministry of several churches. Perhaps we need to keep drawing on the wave metaphor!

New atheism is getting old and isn't aging well.

CAN I SAVE YOUR CHURCH SOME MONEY?

The report shows that it is young men leading the way. The trend towards youth is not exclusive to Christianity, with the average age of those self-identifying as Muslims being 27 compared to 51 for Christians (ONS, 2021), but it should have an impact on how we do mission.

For the last thirty years much of our church budgets have followed the models of mega-churches like Willow Creek and Saddleback, where we make the 'church experience' as accessible as possible, whether conferences or Sunday mornings. Let me save you the money you've set aside for your next seeker sensitive service – they have already been disciplined by Jordan Peterson. His psycho-spiritual teachings answer the questions of identity and significance that New Atheism spectacularly failed to.

The algorithms will have introduced them to biblical scholars and apologists such as Wes Huff. Some will get to R.C. Sproul before they get to your church door, and that changes everything. But Peterson will not lead them into a saving knowledge of Jesus. And that's the wave we need to pick up. One-by-one.

I heard the leader of the UK Chinese church share recently that they are seeing many respond to the gospel, but it isn't led from the platform, but through countless individual conversations. We can anticipate far greater openness to the good news about Jesus and therefore be more confident in taking risks.

While Peterson may have provided the segway for many young men (Brierley, 2023) the Quiet Revival claims are substantiated across other demographics, often anecdotally. At my church summer camp, an 18-year-old with no previous connection to the Christian faith shared how just months before she had felt a strong leading to get to know the Bible. A colleague was at a women's conference recently, and texted me, 'I tell you something, God's Spirit is definitely on the move in middle-aged women in the Anglican church.' A Baptist pastor confided recently that, 'We haven't done anything different. But new families and faces just keep walking in off the street.'

WHEN THE SPIRIT MOVES, ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES

For many years we sang songs of revival, declaring we could see God moving, 'a mighty river through the nations' and with a mixture of faith and hope, believing that, 'young and old will turn to Jesus' (Smith, *Did you feel the mountains tremble*, 1994). Only, that revival failed to materialise. If anything, faith was sidelined, church attendance reduced to a lifestyle choice and leaders parodied on TV. As New Atheism peaked, we sang the less confident yet still hopeful, 'I see a near revival, stirring as we pray and seek, we're on our knees' (Hillsong, *Hosanna*, 2007).

Maybe God has been answering our prayers through immigration, which has shifted the needle, fuelling religious belief across the board. No surprise that the fastest growing churches in the UK are the Chinese Church (Bible Society, *Chinese Christianity in Britain*, 2023), and the Redeemed Church (Faith Survey, UK Church Statistics, 2023). We are importing a vibrant faith that is reviving the church in the UK.

The research isn't all good news. Bible confidence among younger people can be knocked all too easily

(Bible Society, 2025). That sounds like a discipleship challenge. How are we growing the members of the body? More generally, despite small year on year increases, the C of E, like many mainline denominations, is smaller in virtually every metric than it was in 2018 (Statistics for Mission, 2024). This challenges us to reflect on what kind of church do we need to be? What structures are essential to thriving in our contexts and succeeding in our mission over the next few years?

'Religious triumphalism would be premature' writes Sixsmith (The Critic, 2 June 2025), but no one I know is treating it like that. Indeed, we may wish to frame this as a liminal moment for the church in the UK. What a shame if, 20 years from now, we look back and lament what might have been in the years running up to the

2,000th anniversary of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We have work to do.

ANDY DU FEU

Rev Andy du Feu is Principal of Moorlands College, and trustee of both Urban Promise UK, a brilliant youth ministry in London, and the Oswald Chambers Publishing Association. His grandparents were Methodist ministers from Jersey, at the time when Andy led a Congregational church in Oxfordshire.



PRAYER FOCUS

THE QUIET REVIVAL

Thank and praise God for the awakening which is happening amongst our youth; pray for this to spread from young person to young person and upward to older generations; for churches and individuals to take seriously the discipling of these young people, seeking God earnestly in how best to do this, relying totally on him for the right strategy and resources to make it happen (Matthew 11:29-30; Hebrews 13:20-21).

FOCUS ON THE CHURCH

Repentance: An acknowledgement across the Connexion of the move away from biblical holiness; the admission of sin and the need for repentance; confessing all denial of the Holy Spirit's power; going our own way rather than seeking God's vision for the church; for the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit to touch every congregation up and down the land with his purifying power (James 4:4-10; Proverbs 3:5-7).

Children and young people: Inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit for all youth and children's workers across the Connexion; clear biblical teaching; protection from erroneous teaching and false doctrine; for the work of Scripture Union and all who reach out to schools (Proverbs 22:6; Mark 10:13-16).

FOCUS ON THE NATION

Political Landscape: A recognition of the dangers posed by a complete ban on conversion therapy and the 'no loopholes risk'; protection of children and teenagers from sexual distortions; the rights of Christian parents to teach biblical truth; freedom for the gospel to be preached across our land; for God to reign supreme over all legislation (1 John 2:15-17; Romans 1:18-20).

Social Reform: Creative solutions to deal with the crisis in mental health services; the prison system and all who work in it – especially chaplains & Lord James Timpson, minister in charge of prisons; integrity and uprightness in the criminal justice system and of all serving in the police force (Romans 15:1-2; Philippians 2:3-4).

FOCUS ON WORLD ISSUES

War torn areas of the world: All fleeing conflict to find refuge; refugee camps; adequate resources for relief and aid agencies to tackle suffering, famine and disease, especially Christian organisations; safe access to areas of greatest devastation; those affected to find their hope through the redemptive love of Jesus (Proverbs 14:31-32; Psalm 9:9-10).

Planet in Crisis: Give thanks for initiatives tackling our exploitation of the planet; the planting of new areas of rainforest; the great green wall across Africa, bringing life back to degraded landscapes; conservation areas on both land and sea; projects supported by A Rocha; pray for other such initiatives (Psalm 33:6-9; Psalm 19:1-4).

Winter is past, and we need to be ready for 'Revival Springtime'

RACHEL JORDAN-WOLF

Rachel Jordan-Wolf considers the call to respond to the Quiet Revival, with stories of simple and fruitful ways to act now.

“

The church is witnessing a shift that we prayed for and hoped for, for several decades.

”

FREE BIBLES



Have you ever watched the film 'Narnia'? In the film, the mythical land of Narnia is frozen under the wicked rule of the White Queen; literally the land is snowbound, cold and dark, and they never have Christmas or reach springtime. Years of winter rule under the White Queen have passed with no change, until one day the true King of Narnia, Aslan, a lion who represents Jesus Christ, comes to save Narnia.

As Aslan moves in to reclaim Narnia, the winter thaws, the grip of frozen darkness recedes, Christmas arrives and new green shoots emerge. Spring is coming! This is what is happening in the UK right now!

The latest research from the Bible Society, the 'Quiet Revival', shows this early spring growth and the promise of a new harvest in England and Wales of people coming to faith in Jesus Christ - in greater numbers than we have known for many decades. Other research commissioned from the Iona Institute in Northern Ireland witnesses this too, and research from the US and Europe are all echoing this new day - there is a true sense that King Jesus is on the move. Spring is coming.

The numbers in the Quiet Revival report speak clearly. In England and Wales, about 12% of adults attend church every month. Two million people have joined churches in regular attendance across England and Wales since 2018; a remarkable sign of growth. Among 18-24 year-olds, the engagement and openness is high, with 16% of this age group attending church regularly. Astonishingly, 21% of young men aged 18-24 are now regularly attending church, more than the young women in this age group. Amongst students, a Savanta survey commissioned by Fusion found that 33% of non-Christian students in this age group would be interested in reading the Bible, especially with a friend.

The Iona institute in Northern Ireland also commissioned a survey and found similarly hopeful data showing a rise of positivity about faith and religion in particular amongst Gen Z in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This, along with research from the United States and stories from across Europe paint a picture of a new generation, behaving differently from their parents, and who are exploring faith for themselves. The church is witnessing a shift that we prayed for and hoped for, for several decades.

As I have travelled across the UK this year, I have heard stories of this hungry generation turning to faith in Jesus Christ. Just this morning, a pastor was sharing how he is now holding a regular Bible study with young men who have brought themselves to church. This phenomenon is not just limited to certain towns or places, but is



happening widely across the UK. King Jesus is moving in this new generation and we as a church are living in a new hope-filled time. What should be our response?

It is time to return to the simple outreach practices that we abandoned in the years of freezing winter - as they were deemed ineffectual and outdated. In the new openness we are seeing that simple and authentic outreach works.

In the village of Southwater, two ladies decided to try the Bible table idea that is part of the Hope Together 'Great Gospel Give Away'. They could only spare one hour - they weren't really expecting anyone to be interested, but they thought they would give this a go. They took a table out into the street near the cafe and shops. They had a cardboard box on it with a sign saying 'Free Bibles' then they waited. Within minutes people were approaching the table for the beautiful gospels that were placed upon them. Faith conversations took place and in one hour, the ladies had given away 32 gospels. They were staggered by the interest and reception. Southwater shows that what began as a renewal of openness in Gen Z, is impacting other generations as well. Spring is spreading!

Evangelism needs to be clear and visible. People are ordering camping tables as they take to the streets to share the Good News with the beautiful gospels from Hope Together. Others are putting the gospels in cafes, food banks, at toddler groups, or in open churches. These gospels can be given to friends or neighbours or left in a book swap phone box!

Another easy outreach is 'Adopt a Bench' which is as simple as it sounds. A gentleman called Frank who heard about 'Adopt a bench' and has now adopted two benches. He sits on one bench on a Wednesday afternoon and another on a Thursday afternoon. Each time he prays and waits for the Lord to bring someone along for a divine encounter. He has so many testimonies of encounters with all the people he has met on his benches. This idea is based on how Jesus met the woman at the well (John, chapter 4). Jesus was sitting where people naturally came as part of their daily tasks of drawing water from the well. It was there that he encountered the woman of Samaria bringing her to new life! In this season of spring and openness, why not consider how you might 'Adopt a Bench'!

Churches are returning to door-to-door evangelism. One church said that two new families have joined their church because they simply went door to door. Heading out might seem daunting, but it's a new era and most people are pleased to meet the local church

at their front door. The wonderful offer of prayer at the front door is quite staggering: two out of three of those who don't currently go to church would like to receive an offer of prayer! An invitation to church from door-to-door visits shows that one in three of those who currently don't attend church would love an invitation. Furthermore, the offer of a gospel at the front door shows that one in four of those who currently don't attend church would be interested to read the Bible!

These are all the positive statistics from the Quiet Revival and show that whether its door to door, simply conversing with a friend or neighbour, or chatting to someone at the gym or in the bus queue is fruitful. To find out more about door to door and the Great Gospel Give Away, check out the Hope Together website: hopetogether.org.uk

New Christians are coming to faith fast, most of them in under a year. This is what was found in the Finding Jesus research, commissioned by the Evangelical Alliance. When I was out on a busy Sunday with our Bible table this year, I got there for just half an hour. In that half hour, I stopped one young man, I invited him to church that evening, he came and gave his life to Jesus - the most worthwhile half an hour!

Why are we seeing such hunger? One of the reasons is the power of the online world. The digital generation are starting their search online. Many are finding Christian influencers and some non-Christian influencers are even recommending the Bible and Christianity to their followers! Here in the digital space Gen Z are discovering so much about faith and then they are coming to church after doing online searches. We need to encourage our young generation Christians to inhabit the online space for good and use it as digitally native Christians to share their faith.

What can you do? Start by praying, and gather others to pray with you that spring shoots of people coming to faith where you are can happen.

Make sure your church has an evangelism team - people who are ready to talk about their faith with others. You



could use the Talking Jesus course to help them. Do something - don't spend all your time planning. Why not follow the example of Frank and adopt a bench, or like the ladies in Southwater order some gospels and grab a camping table and see what happens where you are!

In 2 Corinthians 5:20, it reminds us that we are Christ's ambassadors; he is making his appeal through us and has entrusted us with the message of reconciliation: to invite all to be reconciled through the life and sacrifice of Jesus to be reconciled into the family of God.

The window of spiritual openness is real, but it is not guaranteed to stay wide forever. We are called to act now - with courage and simplicity. Let our churches burst out with an invitation to all. Let's not spend forever planning, but do something! Try simple ways to witness and point to Jesus. We are called to be ambassadors to tell our stories - of the genuine encounters with Jesus that impact hearts and minds; stories that travel through social feeds, classrooms, and kitchens alike.

Spring is here and simple acts - a table, a bench, a Bible, a prayer - can unlock a generation for Christ.

DR RACHEL JORDAN-WOLF

Dr Rachel Jordan-Wolf is the Executive Director of HOPE Together. She has always been passionate that others meet and come to know Jesus Christ. In her current role, she travels around the UK speaking on mission, oversees research, creates resources, and catalyses initiatives that inspire local churches to reach out to others with the Good News of Jesus. Rachel is married to Darren, who is a church planter in East London.



PRAYER FOCUS

The tide is turning: Give thanks for this move of God creating an openness to the gospel message in the population; pray for people to take up the challenge of finding simple ways of reaching out to local communities; for motivation and an excitement to pray regularly for revival, especially for those who live close by, those using church premises for different activities (Isaiah 43:18-19; Colossians 4:2 & 5-6).

FOCUS ON THE CHURCH

The Methodist Church: The President and Vice President of Conference, Rev Richard Andrew and Mr Matthew Forsyth; Secretary of Conference, Rev Dr Jonathan Hustler; for all presbyters, deacons, Local Preachers, and Worship Leaders to be set on fire by the power of the Holy Spirit, bringing the word of God to congregations in new and dynamic ways (1Peter 1:13-16; Acts 1:8).

FOCUS ON THE NATION

National Leaders: Integrity and justice, wisdom and strength for the Prime Minister, Sir Kier Starmer and all cabinet members; a return to God at the centre of

Government and the formulating of godly policies; courage, wisdom and discernment for Christian MPs; the Royal family (Psalm 2:10 -12; Deuteronomy 28:1-2).

Sanctity of life: Pray for the upholding of the sanctity of life with regards to abortion and the assisted dying bill currently being debated in the House of Lords (Psalm 139:14-16; Genesis 4:8-10).

FOCUS ON WORLD ISSUES

Ukraine/Russia: Pray for President Volodymir Zelensky in the volatile situation he faces; for Ukraine to receive the necessary resources they need; for a de-escalation of the war and a fair solution for peace to be found acceptable to Ukraine; the threat of increased espionage across Europe from Russia: the influence of President Donald Trump (Psalm 33:13-16; Psalm 46:8-11).

Disaster areas of the world: Flooding in Asia; fire in Hong Kong; hurricane affected areas, especially Jamaica; pray for people who have lost everything; aid to reach those most affected; re-building of shattered lives; for victims to find their hope in Jesus (Acts 20:35; Galatians 6:2).



A11



Revive Weekend Reviews

14-16 NOVEMBER 2025 AT THE HAYES,
DERBYSHIRE





Revive Weekend Reviews

Several attendees from the weekend share their insights

SANDRA HAYWARD SHARES:

I'd been to various day conferences organised by MET before, mainly Digging For Treasure, but this was the first residential. The journey to Swanwick was memorable for all the wrong reasons (it rained – a lot!) but at least I didn't have as far to travel as some. This was also my first time at the Hayes Conference Centre and the first time I'd heard Paul Smith teach. Neither disappointed; quite the reverse.

The Methodist Catechism asks the question: What are the distinctive features of the Methodist Church?

And it gives the answer:

Its message has been summarized as:

- All need to be saved
- All may be saved
- All may know themselves saved
- All may be saved to the uttermost

I found out about the Four Alls of Methodism when training to be a Local Preacher and I love this Methodist

distinctive. I had become a follower of Arminius long before I even knew about him! It was fascinating to learn more about the Four Alls and it warmed my heart. I have many friends and indeed members of my family who are Calvinists and we love and respect each other, but it was good to be among a gathering of believers who believe, as the old hymn puts it, whosoever will may come.

I love learning and there was much that was stimulating and encouraging. There was also much that was challenging. We may affirm that all can be saved, but what are we doing about it? Do we have assurance that we have been saved? Are we living a life worthy of the calling we have received, as the writer to the Ephesians puts it?

Everything that Paul Smith taught was complemented by Grace Pratt Morris-Chapman on the Saturday evening. Are we all for Jesus, or are we not? Have we been set free for God's kingdom and God's glory, or do we just want to play at Christianity? Are we keeping the fire burning, or are we wavering between different opinions? Much to ponder prayerfully.

It was good to finish the weekend with Holy Communion and the final prayer was particularly appropriate:

Give us new awareness of the intensity of life around us; open our senses to the images of hope within us; expand our hearts to receive the fullness of the love you have for us. Strengthen us to be your servants in the world.

ANDREW AND MELODY JONES SHARE:

We had such a wonderful time at the recent MET Revive conference at the Hayes. We had come across MET Revive at Cliff Festival earlier in the year and very much enjoyed the magazine. When we found out that Paul Smith was speaking on the Four Alls we decided to book! From the outset we were welcomed so warmly and we had some great conversations throughout the weekend.

We found the worship sessions and prayer times uplifting and full of the Holy Spirit, and Paul's teaching was insightful, clear and transformative as ever. It was sobering to realise that evangelical Methodism is now seen as a minority voice and the reminder to hold on to the truth that all can be saved, and to the uttermost, was a timely one.

We felt energized in our faith journey following the weekend away, and for Melody, as a Local Preacher on trial, I left with a conviction to preach on and pray for the work of the Holy Spirit every Sunday.

If you haven't been on a MET Revive weekend before, we can highly recommend them!

NORMAN HOOKS SHARES:

What a privilege it was to be part of the MET Revive weekend!

Inspiring worship, sound and inspiring teaching and preaching.

Challenging and also encouraging.

In our local situations it can at times be difficult to enter into deep conversations that are truly Christ centred and yet so often over meals I found myself so blessed and encouraged by shared deep and meaningful heart to hearts with people who I had never met before.

Thank you MET:Revive for making this possible!

BELINDA KAUR SHARES:

All 4 Jesus

All 4 Jesus - all is for us,
A weekend wrapped in holy trust.
Through Wesley's fours we journeyed deep,
Finding truths we're called to keep.
Paul inspired from his first word spoken,
Hearts awakened, spirits woken.
Counting blessings, one by one,
Grateful for the work he's done.
As Paul was leaving, my heart did say,
'Let's sing together before you go away.'
In the coffee lounge, without organ sound,
'Love Divine' rang all around.
He lined the verses, led us through,
Our voices joined as one we grew.
Dear Grace, so full of Spirit's fire,
Lifting hearts and souls up higher.
Love and prayer and joy she brings,
Teaching us of sacred things.
Chris preached with joyful heart,
Hilary made the organ an art.
Old faces, new, a blessed sight,
Watching, learning in God's light.
Engulfed within the Spirit's flow,
Standing in His presence, aglow.
Food in abundance, souls well-fed,
Breaking together the holy bread.
Wendy and I in my car did pray—
Another story for another day!
All to remember, love, and hold,
These precious moments, pure as gold.
Thank you, MET, for all you've done,
For hearts united, kingdom come.



2026 REVIVE WEEKEND

The Revive weekend this year will be taking place from **Friday 13- Sunday 15 November 2026** at The Hayes Conference Centre, Derbyshire. For more details visit: metrevive.uk/revive



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This is really a place where my heart is open to listen to what Jesus wants to tell me and to reconnect with Him again.

- Dominique, Holiday guest

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Bible Study

Bad Kings in the Hands of a Good God

DEREK BURNSIDE



Derek Burnside explores God's reassuring habit of using ungodly rulers for both his purposes and his people's good.

'Dominion belongs to the Lord, and he rules over the nations.' (Psalm 22:28)

'God changes times and seasons; he deposes kings and raises up others.' (Daniel 2:21)

'You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.' (Jesus to Pilate, John 19:11)

God, clearly, is in control. Scripture repeatedly shows him as ruler over not just his own people but also over the nations that surround them, regardless of the degree of unbelief, idolatry and sheer thuggery so frequently on display. His plans are thwarted neither by the spiritual amnesia of his covenant community nor the rebellion of the nations.

If history is his tapestry, let's watch as he gleefully weaves the threads of sinfulness into his very deliverance from it. Let's marvel as he delegates temporary authority to human rulers without his own eternal reign being in any way threatened. Let's enjoy the tension of the perfect God using far-from-perfect rulers. Let's celebrate his intended ends being met through human players whose own moral agency - and therefore accountability - is left intact. And

let's see these themes in action through the Bible's portrayal of five pagan rulers.

1. PHARAOH: THE STAGE FOR GOD'S GLORY

'I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.' (Exodus 9:16)

The King of Egypt serves as a stage on which God's glory is performed. He is the epitome of rebellion against God - enslaving Israel, refusing God's commands through Moses, and hardening his heart against divine warnings.

And yet the plagues, the Red Sea rescue and Israel's liberation set a salvation motif that defines Israel's identity and sketches the shape of

the gospel. God uses Pharaoh like a Swiss Army knife; he has many uses! The impotence of Egypt's gods is exposed, God's compassion for oppressed people is spot-lit, and the groundwork for the covenant at Sinai is laid. The stubborn opposition of the most powerful human on the planet shows that no earthly power can stand against the purposes of the Almighty.

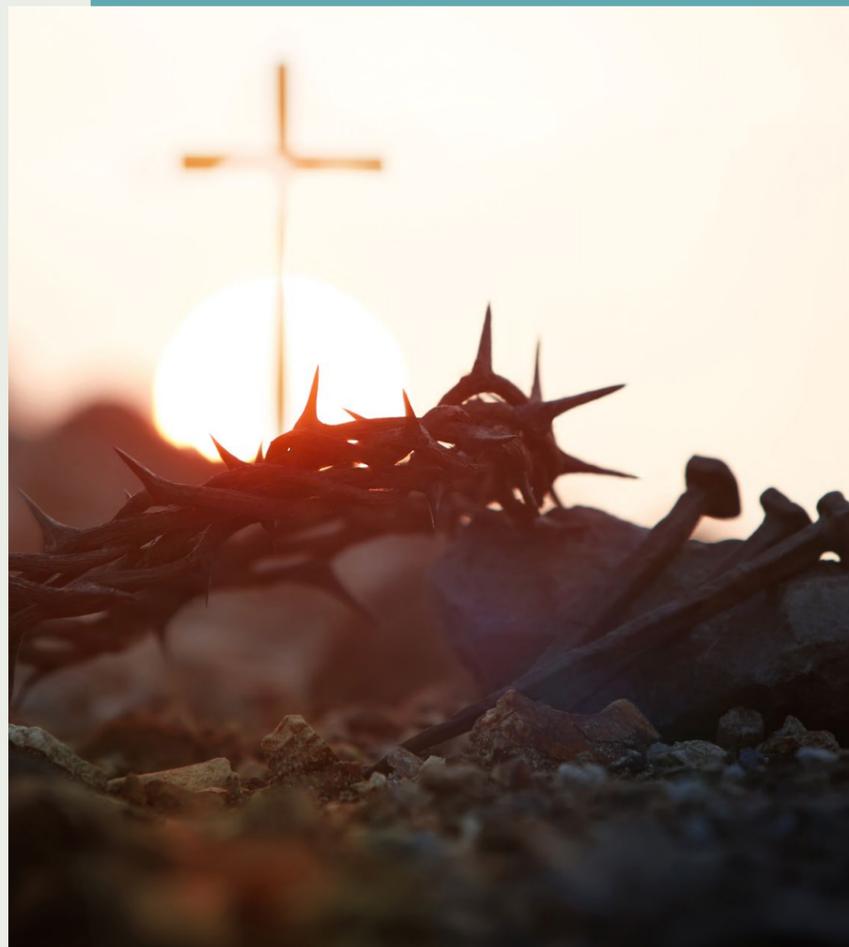
2. ASSYRIA: THE ROD OF GOD'S DISCIPLINE

'Woe to the Assyrian, the rod of my anger, in whose hand is the club of my wrath!' (Isaiah 10:5)

The Assyrian kings were no pussycats. The British Museum's collection of stone panels from Sennacherib's Nineveh palace includes graphic scenes celebrating the decapitated corpses of defeated enemies. Responding to Jonah's warning, the Assyrian king himself confesses his people's 'evil ways and their violence' (Jonah 3:8).

Such sin will not go ultimately unpunished, and Assyria's brutal, hubristic expansionism earns the 'woe' referenced above. God's use of pagan kings does not absolve them of responsibility; Assyria will be judged for her arrogance and cruelty. God may use ungodly rulers for a season, but he remains morally just and ultimately holds them accountable.

Nevertheless, God uses them as 'the rod of my anger,' to discipline his people for their idolatry and injustice (Isaiah 10:7). He uses Assyria's assaults to shape, purify, and correct His people. These are divinely permitted and directed acts of discipline, of grace. The goal is not his people's destruction but their purification and eventual restoration. 'The Lord disciplines the one he loves' (Hebrews 12:6).



3. NEBUCHADNEZZAR: THE REFINING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

'Now I will give all your countries into the hands of my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; I will make even the wild animals subject to him.' (Jeremiah 27:6)

Nebuchadnezzar is one of scripture's most apparently effective opponents of God's people and purposes. The seemingly catastrophic siege of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple and the exile of God's people all came under his reign as Babylonian king. Yet Jeremiah and Daniel both interpret those events as part of God's purposeful plan, to the extent that Nebuchadnezzar is called God's 'servant', an unwitting instrument in the creator's hands.

Through the exile, God accomplishes profound spiritual renewal among his people. It confronts God's people with the consequences of their covenant unfaithfulness, strips away idolatry and prepares them for restoration. It deepens their longing for God's presence and sharpens their understanding of his sovereignty, holiness, and mercy.

'You disciplined me like an unruly calf, and I have been disciplined. Restore me, and I will return, because you are the Lord my God. After I strayed, I repented; after I came to understand, I beat my breast.' (Jeremiah 31:18-19)

Nebuchadnezzar's dreams, Daniel's interpretations and the king's downfall all point towards the fact that 'the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives

them to anyone he wishes' (Daniel 4:32). Nebuchadnezzar's own confession of faith is one fulfilment of the blessing to the nations that comes through Abraham's line: 'I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.' (Daniel 4:37)

4. CYRUS: THE AGENT OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

'To fulfil the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm.' (Ezra 1:1)

God's precise orchestration of history is seen vividly in Cyrus, King of Persia. God raises up a pagan ruler, 'moves his heart', guides his policies, and through him restores his covenant people to their land, in the process fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 45. The ambitions and administrative reforms of a pagan king serve the redemptive plan of God. For the Jewish people returning from exile, Cyrus's decree is evidence of God's continued faithfulness to his promises.

5. PILATE: THE KILLER OF GOD'S LAMB

'"Shall I crucify your king?" Pilate asked.' (John 19:15)

So many of these themes find their fulfilment in Pontius Pilate. A ruler with power only because, as Jesus tells him, it was 'given to him from above' (John 19:11). A man motivated by compromised political pressures that are used to fulfil God's redemption plan. Flawed and fallen, his failings and weakness lead to an unjust execution. Yet it's that death that brings freedom from sin and death for all who will believe on its

power and significance. Joseph's words to his brothers find their ultimate fulfilment in the actions of Pilate and his collaborators: 'You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives' (Genesis 50:20).

CONCLUSION

God's use of ungodly kings and rulers in scripture reveals his character and mission. From Pharaoh's hardened heart to Pilate's cosmically-significant decision, God will accomplish his will through any circumstance, any nation, any ruler. These stories affirm his power, his control, his commitment to a lost world, and his capacity to weave even the actions of the ungodly into his redemptive plan.

This same God remains sovereign over history today. Let's take confidence in his ability to work all things - including the rise and fall of rulers - for his glory and the good of his people. Ultimately, the Old Testament's testimony prepares us to see in Jesus Christ the fullest expression of God's kingship and the hope of a kingdom that will never be shaken, and points us to five key truths:

1. God is in control of kings.

Even when rulers appear godless, corrupt, or hostile to God's people, Scripture assures us that their authority is limited and subordinate. God can steer the course of their decisions to accomplish his purposes.

2. God uses ungodly rulers to both judge and deliver.

Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar are instruments of judgment, Cyrus is an instrument of liberation, Pilate is unwittingly a contributor to God's plan of redemption.

3. God's people can flourish spiritually even under oppressive pagan rule.

The faithfulness of, amongst others, Daniel and his companions, of Esther and of (eventually) Jonah shows that godliness is possible even in hostile environments. Sometimes the very pressure of ungodly rule refines faith. The witness of the persecuted church today is often testimony to that truth.

4. God's heart is always the good of his people.

Whether through discipline, cleansing, rescue, or restoration, God works for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose.

5. God's dealings with the nations highlight his love of the world.

By involving foreign rulers in his plans, God foreshadows the reality that his salvation is not for Israel alone but for every tribe, tongue, and people.

DEREK BURNSIDE

Derek is the principal of Capernwray Hall Bible School, an evangelical, non-denominational, residential Bible School and Christian Holiday Centre in Lancashire, which is currently home to 135 students from 17 different nationalities. Previously he has served as a staff member at Belmont Chapel, Exeter, as a UCCF Staff Worker, and as a high school RE teacher.



The Tale of the Tide

BLAYZE WHITE



A 30-year-old Methodist minister who should've known better than to believe the Church was finished.

At thirty, I'm often told how 'refreshing' it is to see someone so young in ministry, as if I'd stumbled into a retirement home by mistake. When I'm out in the wild, pubs, parks, people often ask, 'Why would someone your age want to become a minister?'

It's a fair question. By all accounts, I belong to the unlikeliest generation to hear God's call. I came of age in the early 2000s, when the so-called 'New Atheists' were the rockstars of reason. Dawkins told us that 'faith is the great cop-out.' Hitchens declared that 'religion is man-made.' At school, no one refuted them; we just nodded politely and moved on. It seemed as though Britain's

long Christian story was ending, faith replaced by facts, prayer replaced by peer-review.

And yet, in the middle of that climate, God called me.

A QUIET REVIVAL

Fast forward to today, and something unexpected is happening. The Bible Society recently reported what it called The Quiet Revival: a 50% rise in monthly church attendance in England and Wales since 2018, with the biggest surge among 18 to 24 year-olds. It seems the 'God delusion' wasn't the last word after all.

Across the Western world, the so-called secularists are quietly becoming seekers. Podcasts, universities, and social media are again alive with talk of meaning, morality, and even, dare we say, the divine. Historian Tom Holland publicly credits Christianity as 'the moral revolution' that shaped the modern world. Jordan Peterson lectures to packed halls about biblical wisdom. Russell Brand and Joe Rogan, once poster boys for secularism, now muse aloud about God. It appears that after decades of disbelief, people are realising that atheism, though clever at tearing down, offers little to build life upon.

As Ecclesiastes reminds us, 'He has set eternity in the human heart' (Ecclesiastes 3:11). However sophisticated our scepticism, the ache for transcendence remains.

WHEN GOD CHOOSES THE UNLIKELY

But what intrigues me most is who God seems to be using. Not the expected clergy or theologians, but controversial, even scandalous figures such as politicians, pundits, and provocateurs. The list makes for uneasy reading. Nigel Farage calls for 'a muscular defence of our Judaeo-Christian heritage'. Donald Trump peppers his speeches with talk of God and prayer. Even in tragedy, such as the recent murder of commentator Charlie Kirk, many have been moved not by the vitriol online, but by the grace expressed in Christian responses. This is not to canonise such figures or endorse their every stance, but simply to acknowledge that God often works through imperfect instruments for his perfect purposes.

It's strange, isn't it? The loudest public talk of God sometimes comes from the least saintly mouths. But then, that's hardly new. Scripture is full of such paradoxes.

God calls Cyrus, a pagan Persian king, 'my anointed', using him to rebuild Jerusalem (Isaiah 45:1). He humbles Nebuchadnezzar, a tyrant who destroyed

the Temple, until the king himself proclaims, 'Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt the King of heaven' (Daniel 4:37). He turns Saul the persecutor into Paul the preacher, saying, 'This man is my chosen instrument' (Acts 9:15). God's recruitment strategy has always been suspect and gloriously effective.

THE REACTION TO THE REACTION

Perhaps this is the equal and opposite reaction to the militant secularism of the early 2000s. When a culture swings too far from its spiritual centre, there's often a pendulum correction. As Joel put it, 'Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision!' (Joel 3:14). Many sense we've lost something vital, our moral compass, our shared story and are looking again toward the faith that once grounded us.

But there's a warning here, too. If people are being drawn back to church, they must find Christ, not merely cultural Christianity. The tide may be turning, but it's our task to channel that movement – to disciple, not just to cheer from the shore. As Paul wrote, 'We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making his appeal through us' (2 Corinthians 5:20).

THE CALL FOR TODAY

So yes, the 'new atheism' had its moment. It won the lecture halls and the airwaves, but it could not satisfy the soul. And now, through the most surprising of voices, God is stirring hearts again. He always has a habit of doing that, calling light from darkness, faith from doubt, and prophets from the least likely places.

If the tide truly is turning, let it not wash past us. Let it carry us, young and old, sceptic and believer alike, back to the One who still says, 'Behold, I am making all things new' (Revelation 21:5).

BLAYZE WHITE

Blayze is a Methodist presbyter serving in the Bury Circuit. Now 30, he was not raised in a Christian household but came to faith at 17 after a long season of searching. Blayze is a devoted husband and the father of three.



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God is Working His Purpose Out

ARTHUR CAMPBELL AINGER



*God is working his purpose out, as year succeeds to year;
God is working his purpose out, and the time is drawing near;
Nearer and nearer draws the time, the time that shall surely be,
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea.*

*What can we do to work God's work, to prosper and increase
The harmony of all the world, the reign of the Prince of Peace?
What can we do to hasten the time, the time that shall surely be,
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea?*

*March we forth in the strength of God, with the banner of Christ unfurled,
That the light of the glorious gospel of truth may shine throughout the world;
Fight we the fight with sorrow and sin, to set their captives free,
That the earth may be filled with the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea.*

*All we can do is nothing worth, unless God blesses the deed;
Vainly we hope for the harvest tide, till God gives life to the seed;
Yet nearer and nearer draws the time, the time that shall surely be,
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea.*

Arthur Campbell Ainger (1841-1919)

A Vision for Growth

PHIL GRIFFIN



Phil Griffin shares a plan to expand a rural Hampshire Circuit

In a Superintendents' meeting about a year ago, those present were invited to 'think creatively' about the boundaries of the circuits in my district. This was a euphemistic way of saying that there was a desire to halve the number of circuits. My own circuit is very small – only 5 churches at present, down from a peak of 12 in years gone by – and from a resource perspective, it would make some sense to throw in our lot with somewhere else. As a single minister appointment, there are also incentives for me to be part of a larger circuit. But as we were discussing it all, a thought crossed my mind: 'What if, instead of amalgamating our circuits, we believed that God might want them to grow?'

From that seed germinated two visions that I have put to my circuit. The first of these was a call to see an increase across the circuit of 100 regular worshippers. If those people chose to become members, that would be nice, but my first priority was getting more people into a relationship with God. In the year since I presented that vision, we have made a good dent in the target: at last count, we have around 40 new people attending worship, with some new growth in each of the churches. I am very happy with this progress (in truth, when I

gave the circuit the challenge, I would have been happy if 20 new people joined the churches!), so it came as something of a surprise to me when I had a second vision come to mind in the summer. More than simply enjoying growth in the current churches, suppose we broaden our vision and look to grow the number of churches?

And so, the new vision is for us to plant 3 new congregations in the Meon Valley area over the next 6 years. This may mean replanting churches in villages in which the circuit previously had a presence, or going somewhere new. I believe we ought to go where there is not currently any regular Christian worship taking place; but we are waiting on God to provide the exact locations in his time. If ecumenical partners want to join with us, so much the better – a personal mantra of mine is 'the Kingdom is bigger than the church' – but whether a Methodist venture or something broader, I am encouraging the circuit to look up and look out, and dare to believe that God might be on the move through us. We trust in the one 'who is able to do vastly more than all we can ask for or imagine, according to his power that is at work in us'.



REV PHIL GRIFFIN

Phil is Superintendent Minister of the Meon Valley Circuit. He is passionate about seeing how God is at work in rural communities.



Uncovering the Wells: A Korean Missionary in the UK

PASTOR KIJUNG KIM



David Hull speaks to Pastor Kijung Kim about his missionary call from Korea to the UK and his vision for uncovering the spiritual wells beneath British church life.

'I dreamt we already had the interview, but in Korean, which was easier!' We agreed English would be wiser for the real conversation. The first thing that struck me about Pastor Kijung when I first encountered him a few years ago was his email address, which begins 'wellsinker'.

DEDICATION & DRIFTING

'My grandmother was the first Christian in our village', Kijung said describing how his parents went on to pioneer a small church. When he was born, they dedicated him to God to become a pastor. 'As I grew, sometimes I rebelled, but all the time the promise of that dedication never left me. Everyone stood with me in their prayers.' When Kijung was just 13, his father died suddenly. 'Life was really, really tough'. Turning 16, he moved to the city for high school, living alone.

Compulsory military service took Kijung, at the age of 20, to the

DMZ frontline with North Korea. The conditions were brutal and he drifted from faith, but when he was discharged, he knew he couldn't continue that way. He went alone to a mountain, praying through the night. 'It didn't change all at once, but it was a serious process of getting back to God.'

JESUS ALONE

Kijung completed his training for Methodist ministry, met and married Soojung, was ordained, and sent to serve a Marine Corps church. With the horrors of his own military service fresh in his mind, he did whatever he could to entertain the troops and bring a little relief as they endured their own service. Five years in, everything changed. Late one night, one of the strongest young leaders in the church, nearing the end of his military service, cut his wrists. He survived, but Kijung was shaken to his core.

'I blamed myself. I stood before 200 young people in the church the next Sunday and apologised. What had I been doing? The answer was very simple. Jesus. The cross. The gospel. I cut all those other things out. From now on, I told them, I'm going to speak about Jesus, every week. Repeat, repeat, repeat. Jesus alone.'

At the end of his sermon, Kijung encouraged them: 'If you want to accept Jesus, stand up.' Many people stood; it was overwhelming. 'That was the moment my focus for ministry totally changed.'

MISSION MIND

With a new passion for evangelism, Kijung went to a Discipleship Training School with YWAM on Jeju Island, and stayed on as an evangelist. Three years in, he heard the pastor preach from John 5: 'Stand up, take your mat and walk.' He felt the Lord calling him to walk on to the next mission field. Jongsin

Lee, a Korean Methodist minister living in the UK, brought British ministers to visit the island. Shortly afterwards, another Korean pastor from London challenged him: 'Why don't you come to the UK?'

'With that comment, I fell in love with the UK. Like falling in love with my wife - there's no big reason. The love just came from God.'

Kijung and Soojung had by now been joined by three daughters and they all spent a week in the mountains praying. They sensed the Lord drawing them to Genesis 26: Isaac uncovered the wells his father Abraham had dug, now filled with earth, to reach the fresh water again.

TAKING OFF THE COVER

'In Korea, many preachers use UK churches in their sermons as examples: sleeping churches, being

sold, being used for different things. That picture stuck in my mind. When I came here, I was surprised. I met so many strong, faith-keeping people. I want to tell people in my country: that picture is not 100% true. There are still many spiritually awake people. I don't have power to dig new wells, but I just try to take off the cover.'

Kijung came to the UK with his family twelve years ago. In the West Midlands, the covers started coming off the wells as he engaged with people through open air worship throughout the Covid pandemic enabling him to relaunch youth work. Now in Bath, he pastors the Korean Methodist Church that was once led by Jongsin Lee. They have started a weekly night of praise and prayer. A Ukrainian lady joined, then an English student, a Chinese graduate, then others. 'We

don't know what will happen, but we've started!'

Kijung's prayer requests are honest: that his English will improve, and that his family will settle well in this city. They need housing by the summer as the property they currently rent has been placed on the market. Above all, he prays for the gospel work: 'The water is still there. We just need to uncover the wells.'

I am so grateful that Kijung and his family are here - 'wellsinkers', believing their call is not to dig new wells, but to uncover the ones already there, where the living water still flows.

Written by Rev Dr David A. Hull, Ambassador of MET:Revive and Lead Pastor of Freedom Church Bristol, in conversation with Rev Kijung Kim, a Korean Methodist pastor and missionary in Bath.

PRAYER FOCUS

FOCUS ON THE CHURCH

MET:Revive: Rev Chris Briggs as chair; for the trustees and Marian Izzard as administrator; wisdom and discernment on the way forward; Rev Dr David Hull's role as ambassador; ongoing Bible studies and prayer meetings; MET South West Conference in Torquay, 23-25 January 2026, 'Heroes and Villains' - pray for the speaker Derek Burnside in his preparations; safe travel for all (Isaiah 41:9-13; 2 Corinthians 9:8-9).

FOCUS ON THE NATION

Revival: A crying out for God's intervention in our broken society, bringing about a transformation into every aspect of life across our land; for people to find the hope and love they crave in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:1-4; Joel 2:28-29).

Immigration: Minister in charge of immigration, Shabana Mahmood; wisdom on the way forward; those fleeing persecution in their own countries; the exploitation of those crossing the channel in small boats; good working relations with France to tackle

the issue; the bringing to justice of the criminal gangs perpetrating the exploitation and suffering of vulnerable people (Leviticus 19:33-34; Zechariah 7:9-10).

FOCUS ON WORLD ISSUES

The persecuted church: Focus on North Korea, the country where the persecution of Christians is most extreme according to 'Open Doors'. Pray that God will give N. Korean Christians eyes to see his light in the darkness; for the estimated 400,000 secret believers; for God to refresh courageous believers with his peace; for Open Doors, Barnabas Aid and Release International as they reach out to persecuted Christians across the globe.

Focus on Somalia: The second most dangerous country globally for Christians; pray that secret Christians would know they are not alone; for God to protect those in danger of attacks from the Islamic extremist group al-Shabaab; for secret believer parents to have wisdom as they teach their children about Jesus (James 1:12; Matthew 10:18-20).



From STOP to START

Rob Hawkins shares his experiences of when to pick up an activity, be it personal or church, and when to let it go.

I was a supernumerary minister in Derbyshire, but this autumn and quite unexpectedly, I took on the responsibility for three churches. This restart was, I believe, the call of God, that came whilst I was on a sun lounger in Lanzarote. I don't often get these dramatic experiences!

Perhaps more importantly, it is learning to hear God in the everyday.

During lockdown I started joining Michael Harvey, the Church Growth consultant, online using his 'ACORN' process to discern the call of God in the everyday. This simple but profound shared discipline has helped enormously. I'm not surprised Christians across the globe are now adopting this simple daily discipline. (For more information see ACORN on YouTube or email michael@unlockingthegrowth.com)

I have been fortunate to have had quite an innovative ministry, and know the importance not just of starting something, but prayerfully adjusting to what

is currently happening. A verse which is of great encouragement to me is Psalm 92:14, 'They will still bear fruit in old age; they will stay fresh and green'.

In a church facing many changes and challenges, it's more than just trying the latest trend. It is about listening to the Spirit, knowing that only a few loaves and fishes can feed a multitude!

There are times to STOP too.

Listening to how and when to stop an activity can be hard. Especially if it has been successful and pleasurable. It may be stopping something completely, or stepping back to let someone else take over. Stopping can involve a sense of bereavement.

Returning to minister in a church 30 years later is a strange experience! I undertook this interesting step in the last few months. Remarkably, some people can remember something I did or said all those years ago which had been so helpful to them – but which I had completely forgotten. This can be affirming and it is a strong reminder to keep close to the nudge and power of God.

I pray that this article may encourage you ... whether you are planning to stop or start!



ROB HAWKINS

Rob is a Supernumerary Minister living near Derby. He has been in circuit and chaplaincy roles in the Notts and Derby and Newcastle Districts.



Flourish

Katie Hawkins shares how something which started in a difficult time continues to bear fruit.

It's the vaccination season - Flu and Covid. This season reminds us of very difficult times of the pandemic.

'Flourish' is a blog which began during the Covid pandemic. It came about because I had asked God a question when the country locked down for the second time. A simple question: 'Lord will I ever preach again?' I had so missed worship and preaching. I had missed that special close time of preparation and the fellowship. I missed Sundays as I had known then for over 30 years.

I sensed an answer, 'Work from home, as others are doing'. So, the journey began. I set up a Facebook page and invited friends from all over the country and beyond. I posted something every

day for months. The blog was entitled 'Flourish', and its purpose was to encourage followers to acknowledge that God wants us to flourish in every season of life, even a lockdown, to lean into him and on each other.

Posts were frequently prompted on my daily walk. Remember those days, free for an hour in the fresh air? During my walks, as the Lord and I walked together, he showed me so much. I took photos on my phone when the Lord pointed out something, such as the re-purposed buildings in the town and how the Lord was at work re-purposing me and our fellowships. Then I came across a bank of daisies and a reminder that unlike the 'he loves me, he loves me not' game, God's love never changes. There were reminders of God's protection as I walked the hedgerows – of his love being a presence surrounding me – and so much more. I shared these prompts and reminders every morning on my Flourish blog. I was indeed working from home and my followers were on Facebook – the online congregation. The followers

commented on the posts, asked for prayer and shared with each other.

When we were eventually able to meet with friends in our gardens, we visited some very close friends. The conversation was full of what had been happening, what we had been doing and how we thought this might have changed our futures. I told them about Flourish. They were very interested and asked me to email some of the posts – and by that time there were around 200 of them. Our friends read them and suggested that they were ideal for publication as a reflective, devotional book. They kindly introduced me to a publishing company, an editor and a fund set aside for first-time writers. My one, and only book: 'Flourish – Stepping out and beyond' was published in 2021. Copies were bought by followers and friends. One bought 20 copies and has used them for outreach in Northumberland. Other followers hosted book events.

Flourish continues weekly. I am humbled when a friend tells me how encouraged they have been by a particular post. It has been a privilege to hold others in prayer at very sad times. In every season of life, in every situation, God is working and he is faithful.

If you would like to follow the Flourish blog, then contact admin@metrevive.uk and your message will be passed on to Katie.

KATIE HAWKINS

Katie is a Local Preacher in the National Forest East Circuit, married to Rob Hawkins. She has held a number of district and circuit roles over many years in the North East and East Midlands.



Christianity Month Update

CHRIS BRIGGS

2026 is the fourth year of celebrating Christianity Month in May. This is a celebration of the impact Christianity has had on the world and an opportunity to share faith in Jesus. It is a simple way of encouraging Christians, churches, charities and parachurch groups to engage with wider society.

We are used to having to sign up for programmes, to encourage people to be trained, and to carry out prescriptive instructions with so many schemes, programmes and ideas. This is not an idea. It is a vision to be shared from God, a vehicle for the Good News, and provides a voice so that as we seek to advocate for Christ and be his ambassadors, our coming together creates a very loud noise.

There are encouraging signs that the observance of Christianity Month is growing. Individual Christians are paying attention and more churches and church networks are getting involved. It's encouraging to see that some national organisations have been finding out how they can offer support.

This is more of a grassroots movement than an organised co-ordinated effort to persuade church leaders, denominations, and chief executives to take the lead in supporting Christianity Month. Indeed, sometimes those with great responsibility have to act a little like a gatekeeper for their own organisations as they have their own priorities and strategies to focus on. My sense is that in many places those on the ground will be the ones that push and promote Christianity Month.

I hope you might be one of those. If you need ideas of what to do, if you would like to be on an information mailing list, if you would like to discover more than the email address to use for that is chris@briggsworld.co.uk

Christianity Month is not prescriptive. It is an opportunity for Christians to invite the Holy Spirit to show them what to do in their own situation. Why not start the prayer and conversation now? Do let me know how you get on.



Good News People
GAVIN CALVER & PHIL KNOX

IVP, 2025
ISBN: 978-1-78974-566-5
pp: 224
£9.99

In a world where identity crises abound and the cult of the individual prevails, Gavin Calver and Phil Knox use a creative and rich mix of story, testimony, history and an underpinning of theology to enable evangelicals and others to understand their identity in a world that can be hostile and a church that can be confused.

This book is challenging, joyful, sad, stimulating, motivating, humbling, and always Christ centred. In our present age, and particularly in the west, where some seek to redefine evangelicalism, the authors helpfully revisit core definitions of what it means to be an evangelical.

In addition to giving helpful background to the Evangelical Alliance and its growth, the book provides a firm and full basis leading to a recognition of how evangelicals might fit into the 'Missio Dei'.

GAVIN CALVER

Good News People



Hopeful evangelicals yesterday,
today and tomorrow

PHIL KNOX

Part of this is the recognition that the evangelical cause is not just about theology and doctrine, but instead has a practical effect on the wellbeing of people. To illustrate this, the authors make sure they cover the social impact of the Evangelical Alliance since its origins and also cover the relationship with The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund (TEAR Fund). There are good chapters on evangelism and unity helpfully written from an evangelical perspective.

Does the book seek to cover too much ground in too many directions? That could be one possible criticism, but in fact, Gavin and Phil manage to make it work. It is not a difficult book to read, but it is

not simplistic, and it remains interesting throughout.

There are small group resources at the end of each chapter and suggestions of further reading relating to the chapters. I heartily commend this book to you.

Reviewed by Rev Chris Briggs, Chair, MET:Revive

New Testament Christianity – A View of Revival

MARK PELLOW

Mark Pellow shares a picture of the Lord's work in his church which inspires us to pray, 'Lord, do it again!'

The New Testament introduces us to Jesus of Nazareth and claims that he is the long-awaited Jewish Messiah (the Anointed One).

A Christian is one who has read these things and, through repentance and faith, has personally encountered this Jesus of history: crucified, risen, exalted, and now dwelling within the believing heart by the Holy Spirit. The New Testament church therefore, was composed of all those who had personally been changed – born again – through this experience.

In the twenty-first century, the church ('ekklesia' – called out ones) continues to be a growing worldwide body. The late David Pawson commented that scripture gives six pictures of the church: a body, a building, a bride, a field, a family and a flock. Jesus clearly said: 'I will build my church'. We need to

ask ourselves: is it the Lord that is really in charge, or have we taken it over? In Revelation 1, Jesus is in the midst of the churches, but in Revelation 3 he is outside the door, seeking admission. This passage in Revelation 3, and in various others in the New Testament, show us that the early church clearly had its faults, but the book of Acts shows that there was an anointing of the Spirit that often seems to be absent today. I believe that Jesus is saying 'I want my church back!'

Down through the centuries, various attempts were made to restore the church back to its New Testament roots. We think particularly of the Reformation and the recovery of the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone.

In the eighteenth-century, John Wesley was convinced that

Methodism was returning to primitive Christianity. It is worth noting the description by Francis Asbury (the first bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the USA) of his introduction to Methodism. He commented: 'I soon found this was not the church, but it was better. The people were so devout, men and women kneeling down, saying 'Amen'. How behold they were singing hymns, sweet and sound! Why strange to tell! The preacher had no prayer book and yet he prayed wonderfully! What was yet more extraordinary, the man took his text and had no sermon book. Thought I, this is wonderful indeed! It is certainly a strange way, but the best way. He talked about confidence, assurance etc. of which all my flights and hopes fell short'. Asbury goes on to tell how he obtained a clear witness of his acceptance with God, free from guilt and fear and received power over sin.

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Lord, take your church back to New Testament Christianity!

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In the twentieth-century there was, of course, the Welsh Revival followed by the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California – both witnessed the gifts of the Spirit, particularly healing and tongues released in the church. Unfortunately, there was much division among believers as a result of these things, but through the Charismatic Movement, the gifts of the Spirit have become more acceptable. However, I believe that there are some areas where we have not yet returned to the New Testament pattern. There is still a lack of the miraculous in most of our gatherings. In the church at Corinth, yes they were rather disorderly, which is why Paul wrote his first letter to them, but I do note some things of importance that I would love to see restored to the church. In the meetings at Corinth, there was informality, participation

and spontaneity. Lord, take your church back to New Testament Christianity!

When I was seeking the Lord in my teens, I read several books about revival, particularly about the Bible Christians. One of these was a story about John Maynard, a Bible Christian minister. He tells about a Sunday morning service at Lanner in Cornwall in 1844. He was preaching from the text: 'save others by snatching them from the fire' (Jude 1:23). He describes how a heavy sense of responsibility was upon him; when the glory of God flashed upon him and he could not continue. He said: 'Friends, heaven is open, the glory has come, you can have as much as you will'. He goes on to say, 'I sat down in the pulpit and began to laugh; while I was thus, filled with light and crowned with glory, the people too

were baptised with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Some were shouting, some fell off their seats, some ran out of the chapel. I left the pulpit and turned the preaching service into a prayer meeting. What a scene it was: praying, singing, crying, shouting all over the place. Thus we continued until 3 o'clock in the afternoon.' The revival continued for nearly three months. More than a hundred persons professed conversion at that time.

I am sure that the response from all of us is 'Lord, do it again'.

MARK PELLOW

Mark is a MET member and has been a Local Preacher since 1965, currently preaching most Sundays in neighbouring circuits to his home in Gunnislake, Cornwall.



RE:VIVE

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Chair: The Rev Chris Briggs
chair@metrevive.uk

Administrator and RE:VIVE Editor: Marian Izzard
01823 765975
admin@metrevive.uk

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