

Cardiff Methodist Circuit Prayer Month 24th May, 2020

**Today's thoughts and prayers in Cardiff Circuit's Month of Prayer are provided by Rev. Delyth Liddell,
Coordinating Chaplain at Cardiff University.**

"I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope;
My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning,
More than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
And within is great power to redeem."
(Psalm 130: 5-7)

Today is Aldersgate Sunday, the day when we remember that John Wesley's heart was strangely warmed, as he experienced God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

John and Charles Wesley, as young priests had been enthused to take the gospel to America, but John had been challenged in his faith, particularly during a strong storm at sea as they made their journey to America. While all the passengers feared for their lives including John himself, a group of Moravian Christians sat quietly praying and singing hymns, at peace with God and unfearful of death. He was amazed at their faith, and this experience stayed with him. On his return from America he was aware that he was unhappy and disillusioned by his faith. He went one evening, rather reluctantly, to a gathering of Christians in Aldersgate Street, London. He recorded this pivotal event in his faith in his Journal for 24 May 1738:

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine and saved me from the law of sin and death."

This realisation of God's love and assurance of salvation inspired John and his brother Charles (who after his own conversion went on to write over 6000 hymns, some of which we still sing today). From their faith and ministry flowed a movement that changed millions of lives and became the Methodist Church.

As the Methodist Church in Wales we are coming to the end of a year of prayer, marked by this final month of prayer in the Cardiff Circuit. Some of us may be feeling, like John, disillusioned and unhappy in our faith and our prayers for the Wales Synod. Let us pray that our hearts may be 'strangely warmed' and we too will sense something of the Amazing Grace and love of God for us and for the Wales Synod.

This evening (and next Sunday evening), Methodists from all over Wales will be meeting together virtually to pray and mark the drawing to a close of this year of prayer for the Wales Synod. You can join in with them by contacting your minister for details.

Almighty God, in a time of great need
you raised up your servants John and Charles Wesley,
and by your Spirit inspired them to kindle a flame of sacred love

which leaped and ran, an inextinguishable blaze.

Grant that all those whose hearts have been warmed at these altar fires,
being continually refreshed by your grace, may be so devoted
to the increase of scriptural holiness throughout the land
that in this our time of great need,
your will may fully and effectively be done on earth as it is in heaven;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(FRED D. GEALY, U.S.A., 20TH CENT., ALT.)