

Dear Friends

Many of you will look at the date on the top of this letter and realise it's significance. 285 years ago, on 24th May 1738, the founder of Methodism, John Wesley, attended a religious society meeting at Nettleton Court in Aldersgate Street, London. There he heard someone read an extract from Martin Luther's commentary on St Paul's letter to the Romans. This is how Wesley later recorded what happened next:

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.

After this Wesley became one of the main leaders in the burgeoning evangelical revival and oversaw the growth of Methodist societies till his death in 1791. John's life became legendary. Over the course of his ministry he traveled 250,000 miles (largely on horseback), preached over 40,000 sermons and along with his brother Charles published over 400 works on nearly every conceivable subject. Though only five feet three inches in height, his stature as an evangelist, organiser, theologian, and spiritual father is widely recognised today across the theological spectrum. In 2002 he was placed at number 50 in the BBC's poll of the 100 Greatest Britons. On social issues, he opposed slavery, promoted prison reform, encouraged thrift and the value of work. He was active in helping the poor and supported education for all classes of people.

John's brother, Charles, is mostly remembered as the poet-laureate of Methodism. Over his lifetime Charles authored more than 6,000 hymns, including the Christmas classic "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing." His hymns are noted for their theological depth and their exposition of the Gospel in all its fullness.

This is based on a prayer by John Wesley:

*Holy God whose nature and name is Love...
through Jesus may we all receive grace upon grace;
grace to pardon our sins and subdue our iniquities;
grace to bring us your salvation;
grace to renew our hearts so we may become more and more like Christ.*

Blessings Allan

Rev.J.Allan Taylor

Resources/Good News

Stroke Awareness Month takes place in May 2023.

Stroke strikes every five minutes in the UK. It can happen to anyone, of any age, at any time.

To support Stroke Awareness Month, the Stroke Association is inviting people to get involved in their spring campaign "Let's talk aphasia" in May 2023.

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As part of the campaign, a film will be released on 26 May: When the Words Away Went. The film follows a group of stroke survivors with aphasia as they embark on a journey to find their voice and rebuild their lives. [Watch the film trailer now](#)

Pershore Abbey's New Pipe Organ

A new pipe organ is being described as a "work of art" by staff at Pershore Abbey where it has been installed. Read more about it here [Pershore Abbey's Pipe Organ](#)

Life on the Basingstoke Canal

This picture was taken a few days ago on the Basingstoke Canal in Woking. A heart-warming sight, I'm sure you'll agree.

