

A Lententide letter from the Superintendent: February, 2026.

*'He bids us build each other up; And, gathered into one,
to our high calling's glorious hope we hand in hand go on.'*

As we proceed through Lent and after a winter that has thoroughly drenched us, we are in real need of being 'built up' as Charles Wesley puts it. For so many, particularly here in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset this winter has been particularly challenging.

The Mint held its annual pantomime and this year it was *Shrek*. One of the joys of watching a company of players is observing the least confident being 'built up' by other more experienced members of the cast. Fluffing one's lines, costume malfunctions, really do not matter – 'Oh yes they do' – No they don't, it's the corporate effort and end product which audience and players experience as a joyful gift that's important.

Together we engage in a Lenten experience. '*Our high calling's glorious hope*' is that enduring refrain, a golden thread if you like, that is a fellow pilgrim with us through Lent, Holy Week and finds glorious expression in the fullness of Easter acclamation and joy.

'We hand in hand go on' This is so important. As Methodists and as Christians, no matter our theological and ecclesial differences, we move ahead together. I was invited in January, to St James' in Exeter, to fulfil a pulpit swap. The singing, music and liturgy were very moving indeed. It reminded me that we have a common thread and that is we are disciples of Christ: Methodist, Anglican, Lutheran, Baptist, Roman Catholic, it is our common calling to move ahead in Christ which enables us '*hand in hand to go on*'

As Easter approaches, I find myself again knowing that the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit, is to build us all in faith and the love of God. The '*Alpha Course*' at Wonford reminds me again of how the Holy Spirit builds up the people of God in our present age. It is a place of exploration, grace, shared experiences; a place of hope and encouragement for those searching for faith and those leading the course, who have long experienced the Christian life.

The Christ crucified is the Christ of Easter Day. Our Christian lives are not immune from sadness, misfortune or many other calamities, however, together we conquer all these things in that '*glorious hope*' which relies not on self, but on our faith in Christ, his example and our common service of God.

Peace and Grace to One and All this Lententide,

Simon.

Revd Dr. Simon H Leigh.