

THE METHODIST CHURCH
Opening of the new Methodist Church

IN WELL STREET, BUCKINGHAM

by

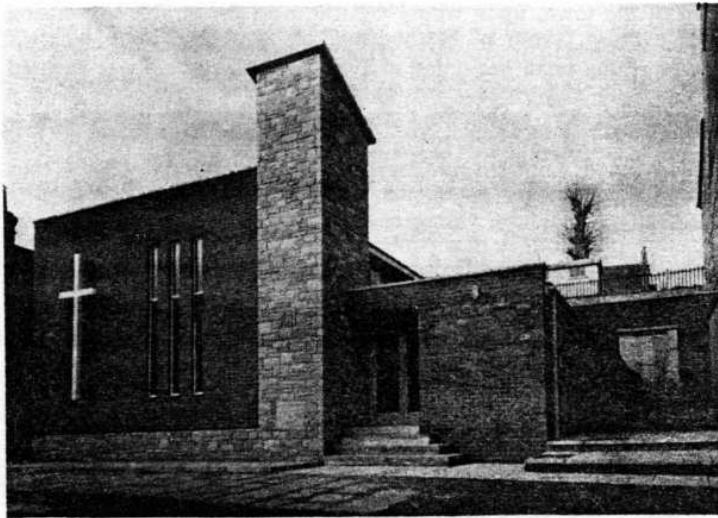
MR. PAUL BARTLETT LANG

(*Secretary of the Joseph Rank Benevolent Trust*)

on

Saturday, 24th February, 1968

at 3 p.m.



Architects:

CRIPPS & STEWART, Headington, Oxford

Contractors:

R. SHAYLER & SON, Finstock, Witney

Church Officials:

Trustees Secretary—MR. DOUGLAS STEWART

Treasurer—COUNCILLOR DEREK PULLEN

Appeals Secretary—MR. J. CARTER

Society Stewards—MESSRS. G. HEADY AND A. WOOTTON

METHODISM IN BUCKINGHAM

ALTHOUGH there seems to be no record of John Wesley having preached in Buckingham, he does record in his *Journal* that on the evening of 20th October, 1778, he preached at Maids Moreton, near Buckingham. Perhaps the inhabitants gave him no encouragement.

Nine years later, however, a Mr. Phillips, a Methodist preacher in the Northampton Circuit came to Buckingham. A group of people had been brought together by an Excise Officer who had come to live in the town and they periodically journeyed to Maids Moreton or Whittlebury to share in Methodist meetings. It was at their request that Mr. Phillips came to preach in Buckingham. There was no building for the meeting, so it was held in the open air in front of the house of a Mr. Kirby, "a very respectable tradesman of the town, upon whose mind a most favourable impression was made in favour of Methodism."

After this small beginning in 1787, a small cottage was licensed for worship and preaching took place once a fortnight. Soon a larger house was required as the numbers attending grew.

On the 2nd March, 1791, the day on which John Wesley died in City Road, London, the foundation of a Methodist Chapel was laid in Buckingham.

A larger building was erected on the same site in 1834. As this was the product of an interesting period in Methodist architecture, it had features which attracted widespread attention. Hence there was intense grief when, in May, 1964, an ominous crack appeared in the front wall and services had to be discontinued in the Chapel. For a year services were held in the Guild Room at the rear, but after a fall of masonry had warned of further danger, the premises had to be demolished. Since 23rd May, 1965, a morning service has been held each Sunday in the Oddfellows' Hall nearby.

An appeal for £6,000 to erect new premises on the same site was launched by the then Mayor of Buckingham, Mr. Jack Edmonds, and grants from the Rank Trust and the Chapel Affairs Department of £8,000 and £2,000 respectively held out the promise of a new suite of premises costing £16,000. There was an encouraging response. Plans were drawn up by the architect, approved after a long delay by the County Planning Authority, and on 20th March, 1967, the then Mayor of Buckingham, Alderman T. Lambourne, welcomed the architect and the contractor on the site and work on the new Church began.

A stone-laying ceremony was held on Saturday, 27th May, 1967, when a foundation stone was laid by Messrs. William H. Butcher and Leonard W. Hull, in the presence of Alderman Mrs. Diana Elkerton, Mayor of Buckingham, and the Rev. Arnold Bellwood, former Superintendent. Mr. Hull, unfortunately, did not live to see the opening.

ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH

The congregation will assemble inside the new Church and when all is ready Mr. Paul Bartlett Lang will cut the ribbon and lead the clergy and the Mayor of Buckingham to their places, the congregation standing. Then the Superintendent shall say :

SERVE the Lord with gladness, enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. O Come let us worship and bow down : let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For He is our God and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.

HYMN

O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING .. (Tune: *Richmond*)

O FOR a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace !

My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad
The honours of Thy name.

Jesus ! the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease ;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

He speaks, and, listening to His voice,
New life the dead receive,
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
The humble poor believe.

He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free ;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood availed for me.

See all your sins on Jesus laid :
The Lamb of God was slain,
His soul was once an offering made
For every soul of man.

Charles Wesley, 1707-88.

PRAYER

Rev. Frank Hargreaves (Bicester)

LESSON

Mr. Donald Crosland (Circuit Steward)

1, KINGS 8 : 22-30

ANTHEM BY THE CHOIR

NON NOBIS DOMINE

FINANCIAL STATEMENT : Acknowledgments and Reception of Gifts
(Rev. J. Arthur Hoyles, Superintendent Minister)

THE DEDICATION

By Rev. Wilfred Shepherd, Chairman of the District
(All standing)

Minister :

Beloved in the Lord, we rejoice that God has put into the hearts of His people to build this house to the glory of His name. We are now to consecrate it and set it apart for the worship of Almighty God. Let us therefore as we are assembled solemnly dedicate it to its proper and sacred uses.

To the Glory of God the Father, who has called us by his grace : and of His Son, who loved us and gave Himself for us ; and of the Holy Spirit, who illumines and sanctifies us, we dedicate this House. Amen.

Mindful of the generous gifts made for the enrichment of this place, especially the organ, the communion table and the new hymn-books, we dedicate them also to their sacred use.

For the worship of God in prayer and praise ; For the preaching of the everlasting gospel ; For the celebration of the Holy Sacraments ; We dedicate this House. Amen.

For the comfort to all who mourn ; For strength to those who are tempted ; For light to those who seek the way ; We dedicate this House. Amen.

For the hallowing of family life ; For teaching and guiding the young ; For the perfecting of the Saints ; We dedicate this House. Amen.

For the conversion of sinners ; For the promotion of righteousness ; For the extension of the Kingdom of God ; We dedicate this House. Amen.

In the unity of faith ; In the bond of Christian brotherhood ; In charity and good will to all ; We dedicate this House. Amen.

In gratitude for the labours of all the saints ; In loving remembrance of those who have finished their courses ; In the hope of the blessed immortality through Jesus Christ our Lord ; We dedicate this House. Amen.

We now, the people of this Church and congregation compassed about by a great cloud of witnesses, grateful for our heritage, sensible of the sacrifice of our fathers in the faith, confessing that apart from us their work cannot be made perfect, do dedicate ourselves anew to the worship and service of Almighty God.

Accept O Lord this service at our hands, and bless it with such success as may most tend to Thy glory and the salvation of Thy people, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

All : Amen.

HYMN

WE LOVE THE PLACE, O GOD .. (Tune : *Quam Dilecta*)

WE love the place, O God,
Wherein Thine honour dwells ;
The joy of Thine abode
All earthly joy excels.

It is the house of prayer,
Wherein Thy servants meet ;
And Thou, O Lord, art there,
Thy chosen flock to greet.

We love the word of life,
The word that tells of peace,
Of comfort in the strife
And joys that never cease.

We love to sing below
Of mercies freely given;
But O we long to know
The triumph song of heaven !

Lord Jesus, give us grace,
On earth to love Thee more,
In heaven to see Thy face,
And with Thy saints adore.

Amen.

William Bullock, 1798-1874.

ADDRESS :

MR. PAUL BARTLETT LANG

GREETINGS BY

(a) THE MAYOR OF BUCKINGHAM
(Alderman Mrs. D. Elkerton)

(b) THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BUCKINGHAM COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
(Fr. Luke, O.F.M., R.C. Priest)

UNVEILING OF PLAQUE TO COMMEMORATE GENEROUS GIFTS

(Mrs. Clara Markham)

ADDRESS : REV. HERBERT SIMPSON

(General Secretary of Chapel Affairs Department)

HYMN

THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION (Tune : Aurelia)

THE Church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ her Lord:
She is His new creation
By water and the word;
From heaven He came and sought her,
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.

Elect from every nation,
Yet one o'er all the earth,
Her charter of salvation
One Lord, one faith, one birth,
One holy name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With every grace endued.

Mid toil and tribulation,
And tumult of her war,
She waits the consummation
Of peace for evermore,
Till with the vision glorious
Her longing eyes are blest,
And the great Church victorious
Shall be the Church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union
With God the Three in One,
And mystic sweet communion
With those whose rest is won.
O happy ones and holy !
Lord, give us grace that we,
Like them, the meek and lowly,
On high may dwell with Thee.

Amen.

Samuel John Stone, 1839-1900.

THE BLESSING

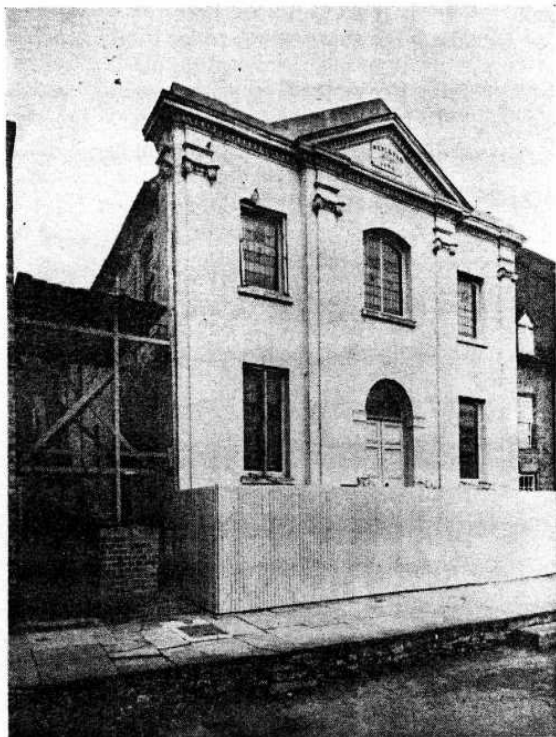
THE VICAR OF BUCKINGHAM

(*Rev. J. H. B. Elkerton*)

THE OLD CHAPEL

ERECTED IN 1834

DEMOLISHED IN 1966



A Plaque in the vestibule of the new Church reads :

THIS BUILDING WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY GENEROUS
GRANTS FROM THE JOSEPH RANK BENEVOLENT TRUST,
THE METHODIST CHAPEL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT AND
SACRIFICIAL GIVING BY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF
THE METHODIST CHURCH.

Other Gifts include The Organ by Mrs. May Hull (Bournemouth);
The Communion Table by Mr. W. H. Wootton (a Trustee) ; 50
Hymn Books by Mr. W. H. Butcher (another Trustee) ; and Hymn
Board by Mr. & Mrs. C. P. Fagg.