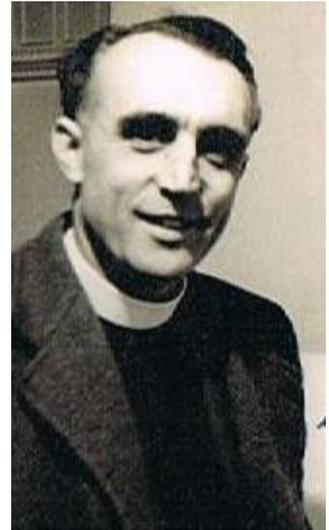


Methodist Meeting Places in Kirkham and Wesham

In 1811 a small group of Methodists was formed but the earliest meeting places recorded were in a mill behind the Town End shops on Station Road, then in a private house in Freckleton Street and in 1844, a chapel was built in the same road. In 1887, the year of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, the present site was made available, and the Wesleyan Church (now the church hall) was built at a cost of £562.10s. The former Primitive Methodist Chapel at Wesham dates from 1895. In the mid 1950's, the minister, Revd. Clifford Chesworth, through his energy and foresight, saw that the premises at that time were not 'fit for purpose' and the process of planning and funding the new building was set in motion.



Rev Clifford Chesworth

The New Building

The work of building the new church was carried out under the direction of the Architect, Mr Fred Howarth & Son, L.R.I.B.A, B.Eng.



Sod Cutting
7th Feb. 1959

The main building contractors were Messrs. Wm. Eaves of Blackpool. At the opening, the Church Trustees, the body responsible for making the arrangements for the project, recorded their thanks to the Department of Chapel Affairs, the Joseph Rank Benevolent Trust and to the churches and friends in the Lytham St. Annes Circuit for their advice and generous assistance.



Miss Barbara Kelly, Rose Queen, lays a stone on behalf of the Youth of the Church



Stone Laying
4th April 1959

The Opening and Dedication Service

The Lancashire Evening Post, Monday 7th December 1959 reported that there had been a 'big demand for seats at the Service of Dedication', which was by ticket only. More than 500 people applied for seats in the 130-place church. The service was relayed to the church hall. The cost of the building was £15,000. Those of us who were present recall that it was all very formal. The choir and congregation were in place by 2.55pm on Saturday, 5th December 1959. The door was locked and at 3pm, Mr Joseph Hollas, generous friend and benefactor, having been handed the key by the Architect, Mr Fred Howarth, knocked, then unlocked the door.



The building was declared open with these words:

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit I declare this church open. I pray you now to dedicate it for the use of the Methodist Church in the worship and service of Almighty God.

Joseph Hollas

Next, the Chairman of the North Lancashire District, Revd. Gordon A. Maland, who entered the church first said:

Peace be on this house and on all who worship therein. Peace be to those who enter, and to those who go there from. Peace be to those who love it, and who love the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord.



The service which followed was conducted jointly by the Superintendent Minister, Revd. G. Geoffrey Pinder, Revd. Gordon A. Maland and Revd. Clifford Chesworth. The sermon was preached by Revd. C. Leonard Tudor, the General Secretary of the Home Missions Department of the Methodist Church.

The memorial plaque in the Crush Hall was unveiled, reminding us of many people named and unnamed *who by their gifts of service, their sacrifice and their prayers, made possible the building of the new church.*

Rev G.A. Maland