



**St John's Methodist Church,
Whitchurch**

Newsletter

Dear Friends,

'Tis the season for plenty to be going on! We've got our Spring Concert Series, and as well we are looking forward to initiatives both Ecumenical and Methodist in the weeks that lie ahead.

At the end of May, the Churches Together are going to hold a Prayer Trail that will involve all the churches in the town that is linking in with "Thy Kingdom Come" - what's being described as a "Global Wave of prayer" focussed on praying that people in our communities will come to know Jesus Christ as Lord. As part of this, Mark Rylands - Anglican Bishop of Shrewsbury - is coming to speak at St. Johns following the Churches Together AGM. If you've not heard Bishop Mark speak before, then this is your opportunity - he's a very engaging speaker, and has a number of links to this area.

Then, as we move into June, we are going to be looking at the Letter of James, as part of the Methodist Church's Bible Month; an opportunity to look more in depth at a part of scripture. It will be the theme of each service that month, and also at Cafe Church; but if we want to have extra Study Groups for the month then there's plenty of resources to help us. So if it's something you'd like to learn more about and you might like to attend a Midweek Group - especially if you don't at the moment - let me know, and we'll see about putting together a Study Series to go alongside the Sunday Services!

God Bless

Rob

SERVICES AT ST JOHN'S

May 2017

7th May *Revd. David Westhead*
 (Church Anniversary)

14th May *Revd. Rob Weir*
 (Christian Aid Service)

21st May *Revd. Rob Weir*
 (Holy Communion)

28th May *Local Arrangement*



Steward's Rota for May

7th May Maurice Latham

14th May Rob Hewson

21st May Mike Nimmo

28th May Avril Bradfield

Network at Brown Knowl

On Tuesday May 9th, the Network group at Brown Knowl Methodist Church will be celebrating their Anniversary. There will be choir items from Mrs Ruth Parrott. Everyone from St John's is welcome, and there will be refreshments.

Stewards Letter

Dear Friends

It's Good Friday and I'm just back from The Walk of Witness in the town. It was heartening to see a fair turnout from all 4 churches and as we progressed some passers by stopped to listen and even joined in the singing. The prayers and readings were developed by Rob and so right for the occasion. Looking round at the people taking part, I was reminded of the sermon given by Reg's grandson, Peter, last week. It was very thought provoking and challenging – "Are you a Fan or a Follower?". After church I saw at least 3 groups discussing his message.

So perhaps the Walk of Witness met the "Follower" criteria – I felt more of a follower than a fan and pray that I can continue to be a follower into the rest of Easter and beyond.

Obviously by the time you read this Easter will have passed. I pray that we all experience the joy of our risen Lord.

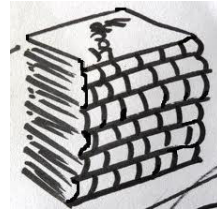
God Bless you all

Mike



Book Stewards for May

7th May Brenda Aumeer
14th May May Athern
21st May Nancy Millington
28th May Gwen Reeves



TEA & COFFEE ROTA for May



7th May Chapel Lunch (No Coffee)
14th May Sheila Latham, Dot Pearson & Dorothy Pearson
21st May Brenda Aumeer & Helen Trigg
28th May Eileen Grunner & Lynn Fowler

CHAPEL LUNCH -7th May

Very important announcement to be made. You cannot afford to miss this!

Refurbishment of the back room (Update)

You may remember that it is our intention to redecorate the back room. The preparations for this project are still going on. However, we did not want to interfere with the Toddlers Group on Monday mornings, nor did we feel that we should do it during May when the May Concerts were in progress.



So, consequently, we are thinking of doing the work during the school holidays.

So bear with us folks-Rome wasn't built in a day!
Just to remind you, of our intentions, this is repeated from the March Newsletter:

"Our plan is to thoroughly clean and paint the walls and ceiling. We are not too sure of the colour for the walls but, perhaps magnolia would fit the bill, We also intend to paint the toilets as well.

**Having painted the room, we are going to put new carpets down. The children will then be able to play in safety!
Any help, whether with manpower or help in buying the decorating materials would be most welcome!**

Maurice & Pete

Don't miss the announcement at the Chapel lunch!

The joy of words.....



After a recent death in the family I got to thinking on the subject of death. Quite a morbid thought I agree, but it led me on to think of the wonderful words that are written for friends and family and help to ease the pain of bereavement.

As a child I was drawn to the parts of the newspapers that were reserved for memorials. Yes, I was indeed a very strange child, but on reading these I found a genuine love of words. Words of comfort and feelings of love as I read the tributes, which seemed to reach right into my heart.

I often find a lot of interest and comfort in walking around graveyards and reading the epitaphs there. People of all ages and from all walks of life. From the very old stones right up to modern day, each have a place and no doubt comfort the loved ones who belonged to them.

In the Potteries where my parents ashes lie there are many very old gravestones; indeed it is like a walk in the past, and is rich in the history of the area. Of course, many famous potters have their memorials there such as Josiah Wedgwood.

One of the stones speaks of the deceased receiving a 'pynte of poison' in the old English wording, obviously a rather suspicious death took place! Another speaks of the demise of a person after eating chewing gum saying it had obviously cost him his life! Some very strange happenings in that Potteries area!

Some very beautiful words and some very humorous too!

My own parents have a simple inscription – 'Together forever' which just seemed so apt for them somehow

Here are some examples of beautiful epitaphs.

'To live in the hearts of those we love is not to die'

'She concealed her tears but shared her smiles'

'Life is not forever – love is'

'He lived for those he loved, and those he loved remember'

'May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest'

One which touched me greatly was: 'Should we lose each other in the shadow of the evening trees I'll wait for you- and if I fall behind – wait for me.'

'He was one who followed dreams, stars and ships'

I think sometimes a little humour on gravestones can bring a smile when in a dark place.

Spike Milligan on his gravestone – 'I told you I was ill'

On the grave of an atheist ' All dressed up and nowhere to go'

Also an error on the stone She was thine - read 'She was thin'

One quote which I always liked was 'I just kept on dancing!' I so loved to dance when I was young but these days my dancing days are over!

Some of our worship songs hold a deep meaning for me and 'hit the spot' with a tear often shed...

The bible has words of comfort 'In my fathers house there are many mansions – I go to prepare a place for you'. John 14 v.1 -3

'He sets the time for birth and the time for death there is a time for everything.' Ecclesiastes 3 v 1-2

'Meanwhile these three remain faith, hope, and love; and the greatest of these is love.' Corinthians 13. v 13

'I have done my best in the race, I have run the full distance and I have kept the faith' Timothy 4 v 7

So many words- so many thoughts to help us, may we rejoice in our rich language and thank God for the gift of words that can touch our hearts and minds.

To finish with a bit more humour -I like the epitaph' He was alright him!'

Just sums it all up really! *Sheila Walwyn.*

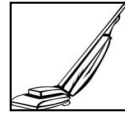


Flower Rota for May 2017

7th May	May Arthan
14th May	Sheila Walwyn
21st May	Jane Cliffe
28th May	Joan Morgan

CHAPEL LUNCH You can't miss this announcement!

Spick and Spanners for May 2017



4th May Joan & Gordon Davidson & Eileen Grunner

18th May Jane Cliffe, Ros Rawson & Sue Davies

Night of Worship May2017

Our next Night of Worship will be later than usual on 18th May at 7.30pm. The Prayer Meeting which would have normally taken place then, has been moved to 11th May at 7.30pm. Hope to see as many of you as possible supporting these evenings. Refreshments afterwards!

CHAPEL ANNIVERSARY LUNCH

There will be a Sunday Lunch on 7th May to celebrate our Chapel Anniversary

The menu will be Turkey & Beef Salad, followed by a selection of sweets. The cost will be £7.50. Please put your name on the list at the back of church if you would like to come, or ring Dorothy on 664898.

**A VERY IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT
WILL BE MADE AT THIS LUNCH!**

**We are very proud to once again provide our
Wednesday Concerts here at St John's
Please come and support us if you can.**

Wednesday 3rd May: Elaine Gollins with her
Orchestral Ensemble: Christopher Jones (piano)
John Gunton (violin) Catherine Redfern (bassoon)
Elaine Gollins (oboe)

Wednesday 10th May: Trixi Field (Singer & Pi-
anist - gentle jazz)

Wednesday 17th May: Clare Clowes (mezzo so-
prano) Christine Wilson (mezzo soprano)

Accompanist: Jackie Dawson

Wednesday 24th May: The White House Choir
(With Helen & David Clark)

Wednesday 31st May: The St John's Performers,
Comprising:

Maurice Posniak (Baritone, Pianist & Organist),
Lucy Chidlow (Mezzo Soprano)
Sheila Walwyn, Wendy Proffitt and Bob
Charlesworth (Resident Poets)

Zen and the Art of Shed Building

It arrived, flat-packed, on a very large wood pallet. Dot and I began construction on a cold and wet Thursday in January, starting with the concrete pads on which we laid the flagstones. Next we built the wooden foundation out of the pre-treated lengths of 6" x 6" timber. Then came the complicated but enjoyable task of assembling the walls from the stout planks supplied, and the erection of the door and windows.



The roof was 'interesting' to do for someone who is not fond of ladders and heights, and is well into his seventies, but that part thankfully got finished without mishap. Lots of wood preservative and paint finished the job, apart from kitting out the cabin/studio with worktops, shelves and cupboards, recycled from surplus wardrobes, in early April.

I have never erected a wooden building like this before, and am unlikely to have the chance to do so again. I held that thought in my mind often while building the cabin, and it helped a lot.

We all live busy lives, too often thinking about what's next, or what's just happened, forgetting to concentrate on living 'in the moment' and relishing the task at hand. Robert M. Pirsig wrote a book, titled 'Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance' in 1974, which dealt with just that subject. Not trying to get something done as quickly as possible, but trying instead to do something as well as you possibly can, even down to the way a simple screw might be fixed into a piece of wood.

R. S. Thomas. The Welsh poet/priest, touched on a similar point in his poem 'The Bright Field', which I have attached to the end of this article.

In our hurrying forwards to the future, or our thinking

backwards to the past, we run the danger of missing the magic that might exist in the present moment, that treasure that lives in the way that a few seconds of sunlight illuminates a distant small field,

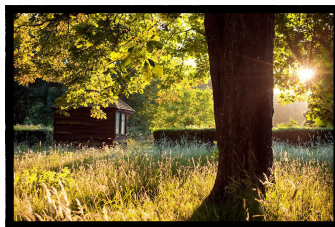
Life sometimes seems to becoming busier, faster, noisier and more superficial by the minute. Maybe the true point of life is being missed amid all the hustle, perhaps a rethink is overdue?

Bob Charlesworth

The Bright Field

I have seen the sun break through
to illuminate a small field
for a while, and gone my way
and forgotten it. But that was the pearl
of great price, the one field that had
treasure in it. I realize now
that I must give all that I have
to possess it. Life is not hurrying
on to a receding future, nor hankering after
an imagined past. It is the turning
aside like Moses to the miracle
of the lit bush, to a brightness
that seemed as transitory as your youth
once, but is the eternity that awaits you.

R. S. Thomas



Another grand night at the Doddy!

Wednesday 17th May

Roast Ham

Cauliflower Cheese

Peas, Carrots & Potatoes

Apple Pie & Custard

This is the **BIG** one!
Charity is St John's Methodist
Church Refurbishment Fund



Come and support us!

I Love to Live

(Author Unknown)

Today, dear Lord, I'm 80, and there's much I haven't done.
I hope, dear Lord, you'll let me live until I'm 81.
But then, if I haven't finished all I want to do,
Would you please let me stay awhile, till I'm 82?
So many places I want to go, so very much to see,
Do You think You could manage to make it 83?
The world is changing very fast, there is so much more in
store,
I'd like it very much to live until I'm 84.
And if by then I'm still alive, I'd like to stay till 85!
More planes will be in the air, so I'd really like to stick
And see what happens to the world when I turn 86.
I know, dear Lord it's much to ask,
(and it must be nice in heaven)
But I'd really like to stay, until I'm 87.
I know by then I won't be fast, and sometimes will be late,
But I would be so pleasant to be around at 88.
I will have seen so many things, and had a wonderful time.
So, I'm just sure I'll be willing to leave at the age of 89 ...
Maybe.
Just one more thing I'd like to say, dear Lord, I thank you
kindly
But if it's okay with You, I'd love to live past 90.

Refurbishment Committee

I last reported the work of the Refurbishment Committee in the March Edition of the Newsletter. If you remember, we had just had some very good news about our Phase 1 Project to provide Disabled Access, so that people could actually have access to our building. The Methodist Authorities in Manchester, had, at long last, been passed. Our last meeting was on April 3rd, so now is an opportunity to update you on our progress.

Sadly, progress has been slow. Slow but steady I think. Having gained permission from Manchester, our architect immediately submitted our plans to Shropshire County Council and to Historic England. This is when the fun began! Shropshire CC wanted to examine the most obscure details of our plans – things you would never have dreamt of! They wanted a site meeting to investigate everything, but eventually the architect managed to convince them that all was well.

The next stumbling block was Historic England, They were not happy with the handrails. Were they in the right place? Were they made of the correct materials? Were they the right colour? Eventually, we have agreed to their proposals so that we can press on.

The next event of note was the arrival of the cost of Phase 1. I hope you are sitting down. The estimated cost of Phase 1 will be £108,000 plus £23,000 (VAT) (Which we will reclaim).

We can all make a start by supporting the meal at the Dodington Hotel on Wednesday 17th May. Every meal means another £5 towards the Disabled Access , so do come along-support your church, raise some money, have great fellowship-Oh! And have some lovely food! Can you really afford not come and join us?

We intend to have further meetings with our architect as well as Sally Graham from the Circuit, very shortly. We need to assess where we are at the moment, how much money we have of our own, how much the Circuit is willing to give us and how much money we will have to raise ourselves and how much we will have to seek from grants.

Don't lose heart folks!

We can do this!

JRW



There is the story of a minister who got up one Sunday and announced to his congregation: 'I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building programme. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets.'

Taxi!



The following drivers are available during May to transport you to the services. Please 'phone before 9:30am.

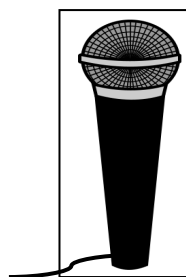
May 2017

7th May	Hazel Nimmo	667857
14th May	Brian Faulkner	664898
21st May	Jim Walwyn	662778
28th May	Sheila Latham	880218

Sound System Operators

May 2017

7th	Gordon Davidson
14th	Mike Nimmo
21st	Wendy Proffitt
28th	Jim Walwyn



Christian Aid Week: standing with refugees like Nejebar

Nejebar's husband Noor, was a teacher in Afghanistan. Imagine the horror the family felt when the Taliban announced they would kill anyone, like Noor, who worked for the government. Imagine how they felt when the Taliban carried out that threat on another family member.



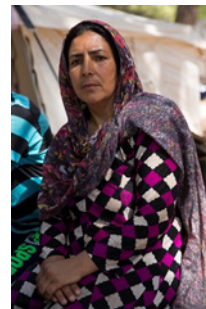
But, now they've arrived in Greece, all they have is a tent. They have no other protection against wind and rain and there's no school for their five children. They have no certainty or clear idea of what will happen to them now. They thought they would stay here for 10 days, but it's already been six months and there's no end in sight.

Nejebar's husband Noor describes their initial reaction to arriving in the camp in Greece: 'It was like suicide for us but we took the decision that it is better to die here than to die there from war.'
Nejebar's strength and steadiness make her the rock at the centre of her family, holding them together in this difficult and uncertain situation. But she hasn't stopped there. Despite her circumstances, she has welcomed two brothers, Faraidoon and Farzad, into her home. They don't know where their parents are, or if they're even alive. Nejebar has welcomed them into her family, giving them refuge as they wait for news.

Nejebar says: We only want a peaceful life. We want our children to have an education, to go to school. The most important thing is for our children.'

You've helped us be there for refugees since 1945

Christian Aid was set up by British churches in 1945 to support the hundreds of thousands of refugees who had lost their homes and possessions in the Second



World War. We launched Christian Aid Week in 1957 to raise funds for vital work like this that was still continuing in the long running aftermath of the war.

For 60 years, tens of thousands of dedicated volunteers have come together for Christian Aid Week each May to raise vital money for those most in need. Thanks to you, we've been there for refugees, providing essential food, shelter and legal assistance.

Your support is more vital this year than ever. Let's not turn our backs on refugees now.

This Christian Aid Week, 14-20 May, St John's is continuing to walk with refugees by taking part in the house to house collection in Whitchurch. If you can help with either delivering envelopes or collecting them in, or both, please contact :

Helen Trigg

Fairtrade Fortnight

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who supported 'The Big Brew' in Fairtrade Fortnight. As a result of donations and sale of Fairtrade goods we were able to send £250 off to Fairtrade Exchange. This will enable more of the poorest in our world to begin getting a fair price for the things they grow and make.

Helen Trigg (Chair of Whitchurch Fairtrade)

LENT LUNCHESES

Thank you to everyone who supported our Lent Lunches this year. We raised £138 at the lunch at St John's on 23rd March and £131-58 at the lunch on 6th April. Everyone involved enjoyed the opportunity to come together in fellowship and the churches in Whitchurch raised a total of £641 to send to Christian Aid.



Briony Myles-Hook (Treasurer for Whitchurch Christian Aid Group.)

PRAYER REQUESTS

Thank God for the many ways He continues to bless and encourage us at St John's. Give thanks that we can bring our prayers to Him, knowing that He will hear our prayers and answer them according to His great love and mercy. Pray for those known to us personally who are in any kind of need: particularly members of St John's who are ill, housebound, in care, lonely or bereaved.

Our nation

By the time this newsletter is printed and distributed, the General Election will be only a matter of weeks away. Our nation needs our continuing prayers and, as Christians, we need to lay aside party politics and self-interest in order to wait on God and discern His will for our nation.

Give thanks for God's mercy and provision in sustaining our nation

Give thanks for our democratic freedom to vote

Give thanks for the many individuals, small groups and churches who are earnestly praying for our nation

Pray for reconciliation across the whole of the UK, as people come to terms with an election outcome that may not be what they hoped for

Pray for wisdom for national leaders as they make any necessary decisions following the election

Pray for Christians to continue to commit our nation to God for its security, its prosperity and ultimately its return to Jesus Christ

Our children

Those of us who attend the Thursday Prayer Meeting are becoming increasingly concerned about the well being of the children in our nation. We believe that God is drawing our attention to the needs of children so that we can pray for them.

The 'sexualisation' of young children is of growing concern to parents, grandparents and professionals. Pray against those who seek to introduce young children to ideas and behaviours that they are not yet intellectually and emotionally ready to understand

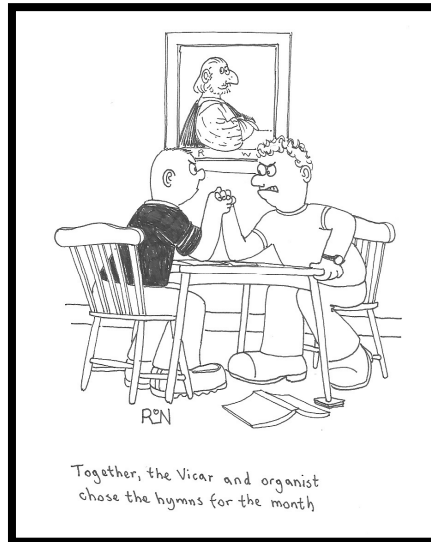


Pray that the government and ISPs will have the will and determination to monitor the internet and put checks in place to safeguard children when they access the internet

Pray for young people preparing to take GCSEs and A levels, as they cope with what can be very stressful times

Pray that children and young people suffering with mental health issues will receive the help that they need

Give thanks for Christians in Doncaster who have been going primary schools with 'Journey into Easter' – a presentation that explains the meaning of Easter. Thank God that teachers and children have responded enthusiastically and that there is a waiting list of schools to take part next year!



The Letter of James - At Market Drayton Methodist Church

Peter Davis will be holding a series of talks on the Letter of James, every Tuesday in June, starting on the first Tuesday starting at 1.00pm as well as a repeat at 7.30pm.. The Letter of James has been chosen the Methodist Connection as the theme for each service in June, and also at Café Church.

If we would like to have a mid-week group, we could always arrange one.

Prayer Trail - Churches Together

At the end of May, the Churches Together are going to hold a Prayer Trail that will involve all the churches in the town that is linking in with "Thy Kingdom Come" - what's being described as a "Global Wave of prayer" focussed on praying that people in our communities will come to know Jesus Christ as Lord.

The AGM of Churches Together is being held on 30th May at St John's with the business starting at 7.00pm followed by our speaker Bishop Mark Rylands. This promises to be an excellent evening and will be a suitable "Launch " for a prayer initiative "Thy Kingdom Come" (based on the Lord's Prayer) the next day 31st May. A prayer trail from church to church is planned. The detail and St John's part will be published later via Pew News.

So why not come to the AGM and mark your diary for both Dates

Dear Friends

We are contacting you on behalf of Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum to tell you of an exhibition we are having of Quilts and Banners entitled 'Sew Spiritual' from 11th to 14th May. This event is being put on jointly with the Chapel and Methodist Women in Britain.

We are anxious to use this occasion as an opportunity to reach out into the community . So we are asking for some help in contacting individuals and groups who may be interested. Please could you pass on the attached poster to groups like Knit and Natter, Sewing Guilds, Quilting Groups, Banner makers etc.

Car parking is available, admission is free and simple refreshments will be available.

Any help that you can give in promoting the event will be appreciated.

With thanks

Michael and Ruth Parrott



Three elderly ministers, all hard of hearing, were playing golf one sunny spring morning. The Methodist minister observed, 'Windy, isn't it?' 'No', the Baptist pastor said, 'It's Thursday.' The Anglican vicar agreed: 'So am I! Let's go and get a pint.'

Waiting

(Acts 1:1-11)

He told us to wait,
then went away.
After all the excitement,
all the joy of having Him back,
He has gone again.
Yet this time there is hope,
This time there is His promise
Of power, of His Spirit,
Of a new dimension of His presence.
This leaving is different
Now we know He's forever alive.
And we wait in confidence and anticipation
to witness to the world...

and we wait
for His Spirit to come...

CHAPEL LUNCH

**Please try and come!
Important announcement to be made today!**

Regular Church Activities

Mondays 9:30-11:30am Parents & Toddlers (Term time)
1st Tuesday in the month: Fellowship at 7 Queen's Road
Thursdays 7pm: Music Group Practice
1st Thursday at 7:30pm Book Club Prayer Meeting
2nd Thursday at 7:30pm Music and Muffins/Night of Worship
3rd Thursday at 7:30pm Book Club

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 7th May	Chapel Anniversary Do not miss this!
Wednesday 17th May	Refurbishment meal at Dodington
Thursday 18th May	Night of Worship
Tuesday 23rd May	Network
Thursday 25th May	Café Church at 7.30pm
Tuesday 30th May	AGM of Churches Together with Bishop Mark Ryland
Wednesday 31st May	Churches Together Prayer Trail
Tuesday 7th June	Talk on letter of James

June 2017 Newsletter

Please let Vic Trigg have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by 18th May.

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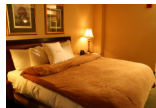
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Speak
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your



new pro-
re-vamp
existing
kitchen,

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Makers in Whitchurch!**

WALKERS

