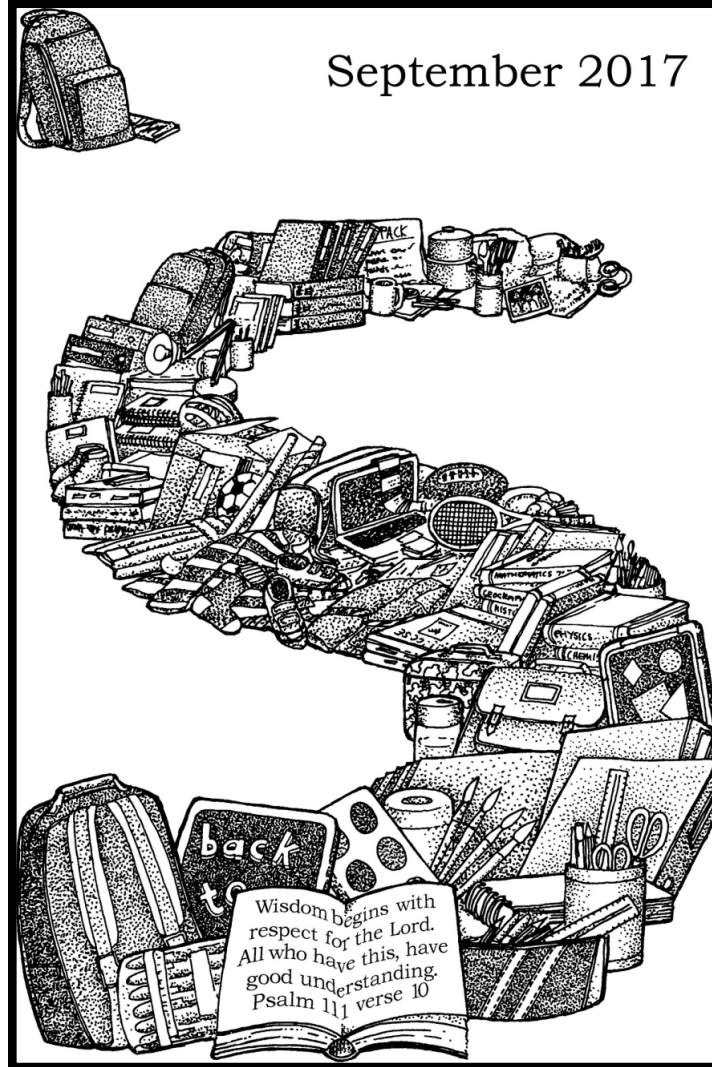


September 2017



**St John's Methodist Church,
Whitchurch
September 2017
Newsletter**

Dear Friends

One of the things about going on holiday in the UK is that you can never be certain of the weather. And so our two weeks in the Highlands of Scotland were marked not so much by bright sunshine as by clouds and attempts to dodge the rain! Then again, you have to count your blessings - for one thing it kept the dreaded Highland Midge at bay; for another, Continental Europe was suffering from the sort of heatwave that meant most people were taking refuge anywhere with air conditioning.....

It wasn't all rain of course, and it didn't stop us getting out and doing some walking; and on the days that were clearer we were confronted with seemingly endless vistas of high rocky peaks, lochs, and hills. We're used to the Lake District - but when we drove through the edges of it on the motorway on the way home, the comparison was striking - in comparison to Glencoe, Fort William, or the scenic train trip to Mallaig, it seemed the hills and mountains were somehow diminished - smaller and more tame. Scotland retains places that seem wilder, and are certainly more remote - had we waned we could have taken a boat trip to Inverarie, a mainland village so remote that it's either a boat trip or a twenty mile hike from the nearest road to reach it.....

More than ever I found my thoughts slipping to the words of Psalm 121 - which in the NIV starts, "I lift up my eyes to the mountains - where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." And yet again, I find myself astonished: that one so powerful that the fashioning of these peaks is the merest trifle, is nevertheless not only aware of us - of me - but wants to help and guide us, wants us to know Him, and calls us - every one of us - to be His people.

God Bless,

Rob



A FREEDOM SERVICE

**6.30 pm on SUNDAY, 17TH SEPTEMBER,
2017, AT CHESTER CATHEDRAL**

A service to remember and pray for those caught up in the tragedy of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. It is arranged by Chester Cathedral, Churches Together in Cheshire and the Cheshire Anti-Slavery Network.

The Preacher is Major Anne Read, Director of Anti-Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery at the Salvation Army. Church and Civic leaders have been invited

The order of service will also be available to download from the Diocesan website for use by any churches wishing to mark Anti-Slavery Day in October, or on any other appropriate occasion.

TEA & COFFEE ROTA for September



3rd September Hazel & Mike Nimmo

10th September Ruth Dawson & Einwen Kelly

17th September Nancy Millington & Chis Crowther

24th September Mary Scott, Gwen Reeves & Dorothy Faulkner

Refurbishment of the back room (Update)

Maurice has already written at length about this!

We have completed the decoration of the Guild



Room. We had tremendous fun and camaraderie doing it. Just the carpet to complete now! I want to place on the record my thanks, on behalf of the church to everyone who helped in any way. The main movers and bosses were Pete Shingler & Maurice Latham, whilst the other workers were Brian, Vic, Elizabeth, Rob Langley, Dot & Jim. As we think about the colour of the carpet, there are so many different suggestions! So don't shoot the messenger if I get it wrong!
JRW

REV. ROB HILTON

On Sunday 3rd September, there is a Welcome Service for the Rev. Rob Hilton, who is the new Superintendent of our Circuit. This service is at Alsager at 4pm.

Rob has come from Christchurch, Ilkley. He came to the notice of the wider Methodist fellowship after building a Shepherd's Hut while on sabbatical. He named the Shepherd's Hut Hilda, after Saint Hilda of Whitby.

He says "having built an ordinary shed dedicated to prayer, I decided to build a mobile one that I can take with me. As a Minister ordained 23 years ago, I found myself reflecting on what shepherding means. Jesus was described as the Good Shepherd and Ministers are shepherds of a flock".

Read more on the notice board in the Long Room.

Brian Faulkner

SERVICES AT ST JOHN'S

September 2017

3rd September Rev Jenny Arthurs

*10th September Rev Rob Weir
(Baptism)*

17th September Raymond Griffiths

24th September Rev Rob Weir



Steward's Rota for September

3rd September Maurice Latham

10th September Pete Shingler

17th September Avril Bradfield

24th September Rob Hewson

“Autumn has always been my favourite season. The time when everything bursts with its last beauty, as if nature had been saving up all year for the grand finale.”

– from ‘Wither’ by Lauren DeStefano

Steward's Letter

Monday 7th August

Decorating the Guildroom has begun in earnest, but the more we look, the more jobs there are to be done. For example, lots of plaster has come away from the walls revealing damp patches, so, with the help of Peter, Elizabeth, Jim, Brian, Vic and Dot, we set about repairing the cracks in the ceiling.

Peter and myself were the Air Crew, charged with repairing and repairing the ceiling. Jim and the others were not allowed up The Big Ladder. The Ground Crew, Jim Brian and Dot were only allowed to paint at ground level, whilst Vic renovated the notice board. The ceiling boys gave the ceiling a good clean and three coats of paint, whilst the ground boys began by sanding down all the paint work ready for painting. Our 13 step wooden ladder was wobbly to say the least – it made me very nervous, and I'm sure it would not pass any Health & Safety Regulations!

Tuesday 8th August

Today I washed down the walls in readiness for the fresh paintwork. I also washed the large window down – all 486 panes of glass! Sheila said if I can clean all those panes, there is no excuse for not doing our's! Just as we were finishing off for the day, three ladies came into the Long Room. The oldest lady said she was an evacuee from Liverpool during the 2nd World War. She said she had received lessons at our church – which room? Eventually we decided that it must have been in the toilets!

Wednesday 9th August

We have given ourselves the day off today. My legs are so tired from going up and down that step ladder!

Thursday 10th August

I am busy painting the ceiling, taking it in turns with Peter to go up and down those steps! Jim & Brian are undercoating the woodwork and Elizabeth is busy cleaning the loos and the kitchen.

Friday 11th August

We all put in a full day's painting today. When I was at the top of the ladder, I thought perhaps that we were such a good team that we should start a decorating company called St John's P&D Co. Ltd, but the idea was met with resounding No Thanks!

Monday 14th August

Another full day today. Ceiling finished. Walls to do next. The walls have had two coats and we have started to gloss the paintwork.

Later in the week Vic arrived to start work on the notice board and Dot came to give a hand with the glossing. The curtains have been cleaned and are ready to go up. The new carpet has to be fitted.

I have never painted such a large area in all my life! I am sure that my arms are longer and that my legs are shorter!

I must close this letter now because I promised the Editor that I would deliver my letter before the deadline day!

Maurice Latham

Shropshire Historic Churches Trust Ride & Stride Event

Once again, we have registered St John's with the SHCT fund raising event, **Ride & Stride** which this year takes place on **Saturday 9th September**, as part of Heritage Weekend.

This is a 3-pronged event.

- 1.) The church opens to visitors from 10am to 6pm with people manning it through the day. Visitors will come from across the county (and neighbouring ones) either walking, cycling, or riding horses or in a car, to as many churches/chapels as they can manage.
- 2.) Members of the church can Ride or Stride between as many churches/chapels as they are able in the time.
- 3.) Participants (Riders, Striders and church sitters etc.) obtain as much sponsorship as possible. It is possible to Gift Aid which is a valued extra.

As usual we are also planning to hold a coffee morning between 10am and 12 noon and hopefully a sponsored Hymn sing between 2 and 3pm. There will be a display of our heritage information and we are listed as a place to visit. As we could have more visitors than usual it would be helpful to have volunteers on a rota to steward the Church.

The organisers have now agreed that people **can use cars** to help them visit churches as the ones that are participating are often scattered. So, if you would like a morning or afternoon driving round beautiful Shropshire countryside, and raising funds from sponsorship at the same time, then this is your chance. After the event, all the Sponsor money is collected up and sent to the SHCT. The treasurer will then send 50% back to the nominated church/chapel ie. St. John's.

Anyone who is interested in being sponsored for walking or riding (a bike, a horse or in a car) round as many open churches/chapels as they can, please ask Chris Crowther for more information either at church or on 667282. You can also access information on which Churches are open by going on the Shropshire Historic Churches website and following the link.

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.



St John's

Give thanks for all those serving St John's on the various committees/Church Council and pray that, as they meet during the near future (the Worship Committee meets on 26th September), they will seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit

Pray for the Pray-Think-Act meeting on 5th September, that decisions will be made that are in line with God's will and purpose for St John's

Pray for our children and young people as they begin a new academic year, that they will be helped to fulfil their God-given potential

Ask God to bless the various groups that meet at St John's – Parents and Toddlers, Network, the Music Group, the Tuesday Fellowship Group, the prayer meeting

Pray for a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit to help us become a praying church, a church that seeks God's will and purpose

Our nation

Give thanks for God's mercy and provision in sustaining our nation
Give thanks for the many individuals, small groups and churches who are earnestly praying for our nation and pray for the Day of Prayer for our nation, to be held in London on 8th September – that as many Christians as are able will attend, and that the day will bear fruit in the life of our nation

Pray for the protection of family life in our nation and that each individual child becomes fully, without interference, what he or she is intended by the Lord to be what

Pray for wisdom for our national leaders as they make decisions on our behalf

Continue to uphold in prayer all those who have been affected by the recent tragedies in our nation

Our world

Pray for those parts of our world where there is conflict, that the Holy Spirit will enable world leaders to 'hear' each other and come together in a spirit of openness. Pray the truth and righteousness will prevail

Ask God to encourage and strengthen Christians who are being persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ

Give thanks for the work of Aid Agencies as they seek to help those suffering from the effects of natural disasters and pray especially for the people of Sierra Leone

Pray for those affected by the terrorist attacks in Spain and Finland

Pray for revelation, restraint and wise action for Donald Trump. Ask God to grant him the humility to listen to wise advice

Tuesday Fellowship Group

This group usually meets on the first and third Tuesday in each month – although it will not be meeting on 5th September, so that people will be free to attend the Pray-Think- Act meeting.

On 19th September we shall be starting a new study on DVD called ‘Sister Religions?’ which discusses the relationship between Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The study comprises a series of 6 interviews, each lasting about half an hour. Former bishop Michael Nazir-Ali introduces the subject by discussing the belief that Jews, Christians and Muslims share a common ancestry in Abraham. He also gives a brief overview of the stormy relationship between the three religions.

The next four sessions, led by Dr Mark Durie (an Australian theologian, pastor and researcher) approach the subject from slightly different angles and include the historic foundation of Islam, its colonial expansion, the classic Muslim response to non-Muslims and interfaith dialogue.

The final session features an interview with religious liberty advocate, Elizabeth Kendal. As the DVD progresses, viewers get a decent potted history of the relationship between Judaism, Christianity and Islam, which at times makes for sobering viewing. If you would like to have some understanding of the troubled times in which we live (possibly to inform your prayers?), then please think about joining us at Elizabeth’s house in Queen’s Road. We shall watch one interview each time and discuss it over coffee and biscuits.

Janet Lees

Swimming.

As many of you will know I've had some difficulties in my life due to deafness and swimming is one of them. When I went to Greece on honeymoon this year I hadn't been swimming for over 25 year due to operations and ear infections over the years. Two years ago I asked the consultant about swimming again and he said you can pack your ears with cotton wool, seal them with Vaseline, and try it! If it causes problems we can sort it out for you but try to keep your head above water. By our apartment in Greece there was a small quiet pool and, very tentatively, and with Bob's support, I swam! I swam every day of the holiday after, with no ill effects, and it was wonderful! I was so delighted I wrote this poem;

Swimming

*I push back the water and I'm propelled forward, frog legs behind,
The sun sparkles on the gently lapping blue/green water,
There's no one else in the pool and the peace is delicious,
The sky is blue, the sun beats down and it's hot, hot, hot!,
But the water is cool and soft against my skin,
I'm swimming again and it's a small miracle.*



Where? Oh There!

These are clues to places within a 15 mile radius of Whitchurch. There is a prize for the best submitted set of answers (it might not be all of them!) given to me (Mike Nimmo, 2 Heritage Walk, Whitchurch SY13 1JF – mike@heritagewalk.co.uk) by 29th July. There were several correct entries but the winner was Kath Valentine. Suggested donation £2 - The proceeds were for St John's Methodist Church's Disabled Access Fund. Thanks to all who entered

Shiver & Model T. (9) SHAKEFORD
Used by Bricklayer & Trawler man. (6) HODNET
Rumble day about. (9) BURLEY DAM
Farthing bird & inter. (8) WRENBURY
Sounds Friendly. (12) CHOLMON
ELEY
Is the otter home?. (4) HOLT
No back on baby's bed. (5) COTON
Chivalry with HSBC. (9,4) GALLANTRY
BANK
Head off right to the meadow. (9) IGHFIELD
It's a worry to change. (6) AROWRY
Sounds as if you're in bed. (5) SLEAP
With a park added you get the code breaker place
BLETCHLEY
In Lancs. You'd get the biscuit. (7) CHORLEY
Cutting down a heavy weight. (10) LOPPING
TON

Welly over turned. (9) WOLVER LEY
Equestrian's colour! (9,5) HORSEMANS GREEN
Scarlet babbler. (8) RED BROOK
Bessemer treated iron leads the PM in 1972. (5,5)
STEEL HEATH
Are the dogs eco- friendly? (7,5) BARKERS GREEN
Mauled mauled! (6) AUDLEM
Is this common land? (11) NOMANSHEATH
Quadruple meeting point. (4,4,4) FOUR LANE
ENDS
Taffy stop. (5,3) WELSH END
Does Jacob from A Christmas Carol play bowls here?
(6,5)MARLEY GREEN
An extended Ka or Focus. (8) LONGFORD

Editor:

Many thanks for a great quiz Mike

Notes from Pray Think Act

The "Think Pray Act" Meeting took place on 18th July, and one of the first things we did was decide to call it "Pray Think Act"! There were wide-ranging discussions, and ideas included having a Midweek Afternoon Fellowship, maybe a Bring and Share Lunch after a service once a quarter, ideas about Mission, and reviewing our Vision Statement - and how to act upon it. As a direct result, we will be starting a Midweek Bible Study, initially once a month, starting on Thursday 14th September at 2pm; if people would prefer a different day, let Rob Weir know. Our next meeting will take place on Tuesday 5th September at 7:30pm.

CIRPLANOLOGISTS

Many groups and organisations have words that only they use and not everyone else understands. As a long standing member of the Methodist Church, I recently came across something new - 'The Society of Cirplanologists'.

This group have 'hard facts' about people and places of Methodism via old Circuit Plans. These are not plans for the future but show the activity of Methodism many years ago. This is not just about people 'at the top' but those at the grass roots of the Circuits and Societies (churches). The vital people.

Circuit plans from Whitchurch, going back to 1819 are in the process of being deposited in Shropshire County Archives.

Brian Faulkner.

Flower Rota for September 2017

3rd September Audrey Holland

10th September Hazel Burlton

17th September Nancy Millington

24th September Sarah Lunt



The Miracle of Dunkirk

I saw this article in the online Prophecy Today magazine and thought I would share a summary of the article with you all:



“In July a new film about Dunkirk was released, to rave reviews. But as might have been expected, the film fails completely to do justice to what the whole nation agreed was a miraculous answer to prayer that saved Britain in one of her darkest hours.

The early days of the WWII threatened to bring the whole of Europe under the dark cloud of Nazi oppression. France had fallen to the rapidly advancing German Panzer divisions, leaving the British army stranded on the continent and desperate to return across the Channel to defend their homeland from what appeared to be inevitable invasion. It was a desperate situation and on 27 May 1940 the German High Command announced – “The British army is encircled and our troops are proceeding to its annihilation.”

The dire plight of the situation had already been recognised in Britain. The day before the German announcement, Sunday 26 May, King George VI had called the nation to a day of prayer. In a stirring broadcast, the King had called the people of Britain and the Empire to commit their cause to God.

The whole nation responded. Large crowds went to Westminster Abbey. Unable to find seats, they stood outside listening to the service and joining in prayer. Churches across the land were filled - and this day of prayer proved to be the first victory of the war. A great spiritual battle was fought in the heavenlies against the forces of darkness.

A series of miracles followed:

A spirit of confusion clouded the German High Command. Irrationally, Hitler ordered his generals to halt the advance towards the west coast of France. This gave the British army time to make their way to Dunkirk. A storm of extraordinary fury grounded the German Luftwaffe on 28 May, allowing the British forces to reach

the beaches.

A great calm followed which settled over the English Channel for several days with low cloud cover allowing the armada of little ships to cross the Channel and ferry the waiting soldiers from the beaches out to the Royal Navy warships for their return to Dover.

Amazingly 338,226 Allied soldiers were evacuated from Dunkirk in those few momentous days which would prove to be a turning point in world history. This was seen at the time as a direct response from God to the whole nation coming in humility before him in prayer. Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, told the nation that he believed this to be a miracle – an answer to prayer.

The safe return of so many men did not guarantee the survival of Britain. The army had to leave its weapons and equipment in France. Now it had to re-group, re-arm, and re-position itself to face the threat of imminent invasion. But the spirit of confusion in the German High Command continued to affect Hitler's judgment.

Amazingly, he did not follow across the Channel immediately after Dunkirk when Britain was at his mercy. He continued to hesitate throughout June to August 1940. This gave Britain a breathing space and an opportunity to re-group and prepare for the coming battle.



It was at this point that Field Marshal Goering, head of Germany's Air Force, told his commanders that before Germany could invade Britain they had to destroy the Royal Air Force. On 30 August 1940, 800 enemy aircraft darkened the skies over southern Britain aiming to destroy the RAF's airfields. The Battle of Britain had begun!

The King again called for a National Day of Prayer on Sunday, 8 September 1940. This was to have been a day to give thanks to Almighty God for the miracle of Dunkirk. But the prayers of thanksgiving also turned to crying out to the Lord for the Battle of Britain in the air.

This became the next miracle when RAF Spitfires and Hurricanes,

although greatly outnumbered, took a tremendous toll of the enemy bombers. By mid-September the Germans had sustained such heavy losses that they called off the mass attacks. On 17 September 1940, the German Supreme Command issued another order – “the invasion of England is postponed until further notice.”

Once again Churchill addressed the nation and acknowledged the ‘miracle of deliverance’ in his famous speech, “Never in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few”. But everyone knew that it was not just ‘the few’ who had given the victory: it was God who had answered the prayers of the nation.

As a nation we have departed from our great biblical heritage and embraced the values of secular humanism – to our own destruction. This is why it is sad, but not surprising, that the new Dunkirk film focuses only on human bravery, failing to mention faith, prayer or even belief in the existence of God.

If we try to erase God from the testament of Britain’s history, we erase him from her present and future. Christians should recognise the true nature of this spiritual battle for the soul of the nation, whether it takes place in our Parliament or in our cinemas, but should also take heart that our God is a God who answers prayer.

If ever there were a time for Christians to come before God in prayer, confessing the nation’s unfaithfulness and interceding for people to turn in repentance, it is surely today. If we were to put our trust in the Lord and call upon him to heal the land, he would undoubtedly answer prayer today as he has done in the past.”

Jenny Marston



Messy Church 2017

On Monday 24th July from 9.30am twenty nine children ranging in age from a few months to Year 6 of primary school, gradually began to arrive with their parents and grandparents at St John's, for Messy Church! We had invited our 'Parent and Toddler' group and their brothers and sisters, and children who had been christened in our church during the last 2 years.

The babies went to play in the guild room while the older children were introduced to the craft activities which were all based around the theme of 'Building' – building houses out of marshmallow wafers and chocolate biscuits with icing cement; making houses from playdough; cutting and sticking using cardboard boxes and paper to make houses; and decorating house shaped biscuits. They all then chose what they wanted to do first.



After a very happy hour the children, adults and some of the babies went into the children's corner in church and listened to Nick Butterworth's version of 'The wise and foolish builders' with pictures from the story on the screen and sang 'The wise man built his house upon the rock' with actions!

After this it was back into the long room for squash and biscuits and cups of tea for the adults. Afterwards everyone had a chance to try another craft. All of the children were able to do all of the crafts and some came back again and again to their favourite one. It was a busy, relaxed and happy morning and enjoyed by all who came as well as all of the leaders and helpers (Junior Church). We heard that one of the marshmallow buildings was going home to be a surprise birthday cake for a much loved mum and there were many lovely thank-yous and comments as the children, parents and grandparents said goodbye.

You can see lots more photos of the morning up on the long room wall and also on the church website. Helen Trigg

The Healing.

To heal: Have you ever stopped to think about this small but powerful word?

It can have many meanings and connotations - the same word but with different outcomes.

Recently as most of you know, I have had double surgery on my toes in the last few months, the healing period after foot surgery is particularly long as there are so many delicate bones in toes and feet of course.



So it is still an ongoing wait until all damaged skin, bones and nerves knit together again. I am sure all of us who have undergone any surgery feel that the recovery period requires patience – something I am afraid I do not possess!

The healing of relationships: another form of this word. Angry words, bitter feelings and heartache until the final wound begins to heal – if ever it does of course.

Music can be a healing to the soul as our thoughts are transported on to another plane by the melodies that awaken our innermost emotions.

Art: It is a recognised fact when treating psychological disorders that painting can relieve the tensions of a troubled mind and bring calmness and peace.

I am a great believer in nature and all natural products

as far as possible, and it can work alongside conventional medicine really well.



The aloe Vera plant and marigold ,alongside many other plants can be soothing to many problems. The wonderful aromas of essential oils are also great aids to healing - together with many different therapies - all these things can help we need to remember Mother nature as well as our modern chemical remedies!

I would recommend a wonderful magazine which is issued four times a year at the start of every season. It is called 'Grace' - Michael Mulliner introduced me to this valuable little treasure of a book, it is delivered straight to your door and is really something to look forward to!

It has a religious theme and contains poetry, stories, healthy recipes , lovely art works and hints and tips on all types of health concerns too. Do try it I think it is a little gem of a book!

Human touch too can be so very healing. In this world of ours so full of technology and 'instant fixes' we should not forget that contact with another human is so very important. Holding some ones hand or giving them a hug can be a source of healing for the mind and body.

The bible has many instances of healing of course and

the rubbing on of oils and touch can be found in many of the stories . I believe that nothing is more powerful than human touch – sadly in this world sometimes it is seen as not the 'correct' thing to do unfortunately.

Babies respond to touch from birth, and the practice of placing the baby immediately 'skin to skin' with it's mother is so very important and so very lovely too!

Healing comes in many ways and the power of prayer tops this list. A survey found that when people prayed and understood that they are loved and forgiven their symptoms improved dramatically.!

In this modern world there is so much evil - let us hope one day there will be a healing of the nations so that peace and love can prevail for all!

Sheila Walwyn.

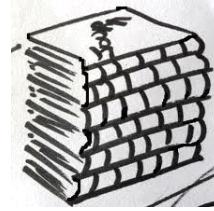
Book Stewards for September

3rd September Gwen Reeves

10th September Mary Scott

17th September Sheila Walwyn

24th September May Arthan



Spick & Spanners for September

7th September Eileen Grunner +



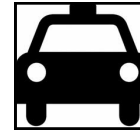
21st September Jane Cliffe, Ros Rawson & Sue
Davies

Taxi!

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

September 2017

3rd September Jim Walwyn



10th September Hazel Nimmo

17th September Sheila Latham

24th September Brian Faulkner

Sound System Operators

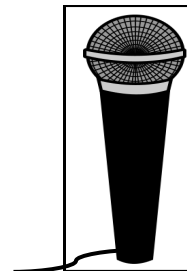
September 2017

3rd Wendy Proffitt

10th Mike Nimmo

17th David Whiteley

27th Jim Walwyn



Dear All (Submitted by Hazel Nimmo)

November 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day. Whitchurch is keen to commemorate the occasion with an afternoon WW1 themed tea party or such like on Sunday 11th November 2018. This event will be in addition to the annual Short Act of Remembrance at the town's Cenotaph and Remembrance Day Service at St Alkmund's Church on the morning of Sunday 11th November

The first planning meeting for this event has been scheduled to take place on Wednesday 11th October, 6pm in the Edward German Room of the Civic Centre.

On Armistice Day back in 1918 there were celebrations in public places, church services and church bells were rung throughout the country. We would very much like to work closely with local community groups and organisations in the town with this event, including the local schools, local nursing homes, the Town Band as well as rural towns and villages. We hope the Heritage Centre/Museum & Archives team will join forces with us by hosting a themed display.

Please feel free to pass this message onto any other group/individual who you feel may be interested in getting involved with this project.

I will be in touch again nearer the time but early expressions of interest would be appreciated.

With many thanks.

Kind Regards

**Zoë Dean
Town Centre Manager/Assistant Town Clerk
Whitchurch Town Council
Civic Centre, High Street
Whitchurch Shropshire
SY13 1AX - Tel: 01948 665761**



**St John's Methodist Church
Proudly present**

**The Newport Male Voice Choir
On
Saturday 9th September**



**All proceeds towards the St John's Disabled Access Project
Donations only please
Refreshments included**

Disabled Access

We seem to have had a very busy Summer.



In particular our Talents Project has kept many people very busy! Unfortunately we will not have the final total of money raised until after this Newsletter is published, but we could be looking at something approaching £8,000 which will be magnificent!

That will mean that we will be able to carry forward a very healthy total towards our Disabled Access Project.

On 14th September we will be making a presentation to the Circuit at the Circuit Meeting in Nantwich where we ask for help and support, so we are hoping that they will listen to our case sympathetically as we ask for help.

Sally Graham is working very hard on our behalf as she seeks grants for our project, so perhaps we will, at long last, see some action towards our Disabled Access.

It's getting closer!

In the Boat – or out?

I'm going to find this very hard to write.

On Sunday 13th August, Janet Lees gave a very challenging sermon, or perhaps I should say that I found it very challenging! She told us that she had intended to ask one or two people to come forward to share their testimonies during the service, but had changed her mind. Now, I have heard many testimonies in my time; I had always admired people who could get up and share their faith in public, because I had always thought that faith was such a private matter and something which you kept to yourself. So when Janet invited people to write about their faith in the Newsletter, well that was a very different matter, and I felt that she was speaking directly to me. Janet used the analogy of a boat, based on the story of the storm when the disciples were told by Jesus to walk on the water. Where am I in this story? In the boat, frightened to get out is probably the answer.

Last week when we went to Llandudno, I enjoyed listening to the Mission on the beach. All those young Christians speaking to total strangers about their faith – so why couldn't I do it? You see, I don't think I'm a very good Christian. I don't read the bible and I don't pray very often – so what's up? I went to a Billy Graham Crusade years ago but couldn't "come on down!" You see, I haven't had that flash of light, that pivotal moment when I saw the light and became a Christian. So what's wrong with me? I absolutely love the music in church – the old Methodist hymns move me. But I don't always understand the words to some of the old hymns – but I think the words of the modern songs (?) are very moving. I somehow think that God wants me to show my faith by the things I DO – being a steward, being a treasurer, decorating rooms or even trying to make the Refurbishment of the church happen.. So is that what God

has in store for me? Is that what he wants me to do? But, spiritually I'm a non - starter

My Faith Story, for what it is worth goes something like this. I was always fascinated by church from an early age and sang in my local church, St John's (yes, honestly!) in Wolstanton in Newcastle, Staffs. when I was sixteen. I sang next to Harry Goodwin who knew every hymn off by heart. I was in the Boy's Brigade where we had bible study with Ashley Cooper's dad, Bob. I became Gift Aid Secretary

I joined the Youth Club which was affiliated to the Methodist church at Bradwell. Every session of the Youth club ended at 10 o'clock with the Epilogue just before we went home.



Oh what joys, playing table tennis and drinking Seven-Ups! I wasn't particularly interested in the girls and dancing, but I did like one girl. She had purple hair and when she "bopped" she held her short skirt down to hide her modesty. Her name was Sheila Brindley, and I am proud to say that after 52 years she is still my wife! The leader of the club was Jeff Oxborrow who was a local preacher. He gave me a bible when I left for College.

When we left Wolstanton we went to live in Elworth in Sandbach. We joined Elworth Parish church and here again I became involved with doing what I could to help the church. I was in the choir (I looked very nice in my cassock!) and helped out with the money. I went to Spring Harvest for the first time. Rev David Page taught me such a lot and we had many deep theological discussions.

When we came Whitchurch, we were in a kind of Spiritual Wilderness as we sought to join a church. We enjoyed our time at Wem Baptist and we thought Pastor Phil Wright was a wonderful, inspiring preacher. We tried St Alkmunds (too formal) and the

Beacon (too happy clappy), and so eventually we returned to our roots, St John's Methodist Church in Whitchurch.

There are, of course many things that I don't understand. Why does our loving, caring God allow all the bad things to happen in our world? Famines, when the world has enough to eat? Wars? Evil people? Why are good people taken from us so young? My brother died when he was only 44. I was pretty angry with God about that as felt my faith tested.

As I approach my mid-seventies, I'm sure that my faith will be sorely tested. In the years to come. What will the Final Great Mystery be like at the end of my life? I'm quite naïve in my beliefs. I believe in Heaven (hopefully I'll go there!) and I'm really looking forward to looking to meeting all the wonderful friends I've known in this world again. Oh, the joy in meeting my Dad again! And Sheila's Dad! Wonderful people! Sheila says Heaven must be a very crowded place.

Janet challenged us to think about where we were in relation to our faith and the Boat – the Boat of life. Where indeed. I still don't know. I rather think I'm still well and truly still inside the boat, frightened to get out, clinging on with white knuckles. It's safe in the Boat. If I came out of the Boat I'm sure I would drown!

“We thank you Lord, that you have fed us in this sacrament

And given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet prepared for all people. Amen.”



JRW

St John's Methodist Church

Proudly Present The Whitchurch Town Brass Band

Saturday 23rd September



Saturday 23rd September

At 7.30pm

Submitted by Maurice Latham

Jesus allegedly declared "The poor will always be with us"

Those words have been debated for the past 2,000 years and interpreted in all manner of ways. When the Joseph Rowntree Foundation reported this week that 3.8 million British workers are in poverty, we should be aware that "poverty" is defined as having less than 60% of the average income. So if the average wage rose to £100,000 a year, you could be poor on £60,000. It is a mad way to measure poverty and as long as we use it, the poor will indeed always be with us.

Heaven

An elderly Anglican Archbishop and an elderly Roman Catholic Cardinal died within minutes of each other. They arrived at the Pearly Gates together and St Peter ushered them into a waiting room.

An hour or so later, they heard someone else arrive at the gates, and looked out to see a very young man wander in, looking rather surprised. But St Peter welcomed him with open arms, and ushered him straight on through into Heaven. When the Archbishop and Cardinal protested that they should have precedence, St Peter explained, 'That young man has only been driving for six months, but in that short time he has put the fear of God into more people than both of your Graces have, in your whole lives.'

Oldest computer

The oldest computer can be traced back to Adam and Eve. Not surprisingly, it was an Apple. But it had an extremely limited memory: just one byte, and everything crashed.

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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 3rd Sept Welcome service for Rev. Rob Hilton, our new Superintendent Minister. At Alsager @ 4pm.

Tuesday 5th Sept Pray, Think, Act Meeting. All welcome as we prayfully consider our mission and where God is leading us at St John's. 7.30pm

Saturday 9th Sept Ride & Stride

Saturday 9th Sept Newport Male Voice Choir

Thursday 14th Sept New! Monthly Midweek Bible Study at Church

Wednesday 20th Sept Property & Finance Committee

Saturday 23rd Sept Whitchurch Town Brass Band

Tuesday 26th Sept Network @ 2pm

Tuesday 26th Sept Worship Committee

Wednesday 27th Sept Refurbishment Committee

Thursday 28th Sept Café Church & 7.30pm. All welcome for coffee, cake & chat

October 2017 Newsletter

Please let Vic Trigg have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by 21st September. Send material to:

Vic Trigg,

This magazine costs 25p to produce. Contributions towards this expense would be gratefully received