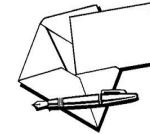




**St. John's Methodist Church  
Whitchurch**

**April 2018 Newsletter**

## Message from the Manse



Dear Friends,

A few weeks ago, I was asked a question - one that caused me to reflect on St. Johns. The question was from someone in another part of the circuit, who had noticed that, based on the Stats for Mission that we report in October, this and one other church in the circuit were the only ones growing. What, I was asked, was our secret?

The answer I came up with was long and varied. Some of it, it has to be said, is because of the closure of Higher Wych; not only did we welcome several people into membership from there, but we also did some asking around of people who were regularly attending, but for whatever reason not listed as members. As a result, over the last couple of years we have welcomed several people to St. Johns, sometimes who have been here for a long time already - if you're reading this and would like to know more about being a member, let me know!

Another part though is that we are a welcoming church. It's something we do well, and that means there have been a number of people over the last few years who have come, and stayed. That is certainly something to celebrate!

There's always more to do of course, but actually a recent Circuit Meeting showed that in some ways we are ahead of the curve: for example, one suggestion that was raised as a Mission Opportunity was to leaflet new houses - I'm going to take samples of what we're doing to the next Staff Meeting!

One thing that we need to be aware of though is that although we are in some ways successful, a big thing missing is about making new disciples. Almost all of the people who have come to us over the last few years have at least some church background - whether current or a little way in the past. The challenge for us is that the majority now don't really have any church background at all - so, as we look to progress, how do we reach out to them, in grace and love, to share the Good News of Christ Jesus?

God Bless

*Rob*

## *STEWARDS' LETTER*

Dear Friends,

This has certainly been a more severe winter than we have experienced for a number of years. I suspect quite a few youngsters saw snow for the first time. Our grandsons “down south” were at one point up in arms when all the country had it and they didn’t – it came! Thinking of weather and first experiences reminded me of my cousin, Penny. My uncle was an officer in the army and post war was stationed in Egypt/Sudan where Penny was born. When his tour finished instead of coming home to Blighty, as was the norm, he was posted to Singapore and off he went directly with my aunt and Penny. A few months later the monsoon arrived and suddenly the household realised that Penny was missing. Then she was discovered standing in the garden getting drenched but looking to the sky wondering where the water was coming from. She had only ever seen the Nile before as it flowed past!

Handling change is part and parcel of the modern world – things change nowadays with great speed. Our impact as Christians has had to change to meet the reality that our world and community is different. We have Cafe Church and Messy Church which seek to engage people in a very casual environment while proclaiming the Good News. These formats may not suit us all but I can see that they have greater potential with those not used to our formal services. When we realise our dream of changing the internal accommodation to release flexible space, then that potential can only increase. I hope then we can have the happy balance of being able to evangelise in the community and yet have the structured services which I cherish.

Change has come in other forms not least the fact that our minister has to divide his time among three churches. The shortage of clergy is all too apparent and led to the amalgamation of churches into a much larger circuit. As a result we no longer have as much contact and common “events”. Recognising this led Rob to organise a joint stewards meeting some time ago. It worked well and we were able to understand our strengths and weaknesses. We certainly agreed that Rob could only do so many services on a Sunday and while this could be managed at the major festivals some give and take would apply. Easter Sunday is an example. Rob will be taking our early morning communion service and will be at Brown Knowl for their 10.45 communion service. Some members might be disappointed with this but I’m sure over time it will all even out.

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April is the 10K Whitchurch Run and you will need to get to church by 10 o’clock if you are driving. The race starts at 10 o’clock and the runners should pass St John’s by approximately 10.25. Rob is taking part and I certainly intend to be outside to cheer him on. How about you? Rob has agreed to have sponsorship divided between Macmillan Care and St John’s and I have arranged for a sponsor form to be at the back of the church if you would like to give him support for both causes.

Finally, since this will be my last letter as a steward – I finish, this my second stint, at the end of April. I want to thank my fellow stewards for the way our team has functioned so well – it has certainly enabled me to get to know them better and appreciate their various talents. The team needs at least one, if not two, new Stewards and I would urge you to consider serving St John’s in this way.

God Bless - Mike

## Flower Rota for April 2018

1st EASTER

8th May Arthan

15th Audrey Holland

22nd Lynn Fowler

29th Jean Craddock

(6th May Joan Morgan)



A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story.

From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek.

She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again. Finally she spoke up, "Grandpa, did God make you?"

"Yes, sweetheart," he answered, "God made me a long time ago"

"Oh," she paused, "Grandpa, did God make me too?"

"Yes, indeed, honey," he said, "God made you just a little while ago."

Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, "God's getting better at it, isn't he?"

### **Action for Children.**

This year's efforts for the Action for Children charity, including with the annual emptying of the collecting boxes has resulted in our church family donating a total of £808/.04p to the charity.

This is made up of:

Collecting boxes	£324.17
Christmas day collection	£116.27
Coffee mornings and donations	
£214.20	
July 2017 Action for children Collection	<u>£153.40</u>

Total 2017/2018  
**£808.04**

A sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed in any way to enable this support to grow.

If anyone would like to take up saving via a collecting box, please let me know and I will be pleased to provide you with one. Just remember £0.50 per week results in £26.00 being collected over the year. – Less than the price of one newspaper per week.

Thank you all again  
Yours in faith

David Whiteley

## *Have a Smile!*

A little girl became restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on.  
Finally, she leaned over to her mother and whispered,  
"Mummy, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"

Ms. Terri asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favourite Bible stories.  
She was puzzled by Kyle's picture, which showed four people on an airplane, So she asked him which story it was meant to represent.  
"The Flight to Egypt ," was his reply.  
Pointing at each figure, Ms. Terri said, "That must be Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus.  
But who's the fourth person?"  
"Oh, that's Pontius - the pilot!"

The Sunday School Teacher asks,  
"Now, Johnny, tell me frankly do you say prayers before eating?"  
"No ma'am," little Johnny replies, I don't have to.  
My mom is a good cook.

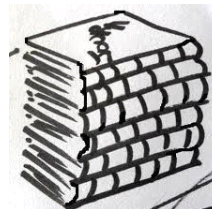
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## **The organ is well— Hooray!**

In Thomas The Tank Engine and Friends the saying is that "They are all really useful because they work together."  
So our thanks go to Pete & Maurice our really useful stewards.  
How wonderful to have the organ in working order with 2 spot-lights added. We organists appreciate all the work done by Pete and Maurice ably assisted by Elizabeth and Sheila.  
As Mr Grace says in "Are You Being Served" "You've all done very well!  
Thanks from Gwen

## ***Book Stewards for April 2018***

1st May Arthan  
8th Sue Davies  
15th Beryl Posniak  
22nd Gwen Reeves  
29th Nancy Millington  
(6th May Mary Scott)

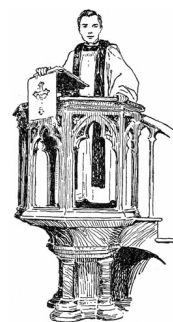


### ***Spick and Spanners for April 2018***

April 5th Elizabeth Shingler &  
Briony Myles-Hook  
  
19th Mike Nimmo, Vic Trigg  
& Dorothy Faulkner

### ***APRIL SERVICES AT ST JOHN'S***

April 1st (8.30am) Rob Weir  
(10.30am) Pat Maidment  
  
8th Local Arrangement  
15th Rev. Rob Weir  
22nd Mr. Williams  
29th Elizabeth Jennings





## **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 they will seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit as they make decisions on our behalf

Pray for Rob Weir, that God will bless and encourage him, and give him the wisdom he needs to minister at St John's and in the wider circuit

Continue to pray for the Pray-Think-Act group, that they will seek to discern where God is already at work in our church, so that we can pray and work alongside Him, instead of pursuing our own 'good ideas'

Continue to pray for our children and young people, 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, Junior Church, Network, the Music Group, the Tuesday Fellowship Group, the prayer meeting – that they may continue to enrich our church family.

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, a church that becomes increasingly more mission minded

### **Our nation**

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

Pray for those affected by recent attack in Salisbury -  
God of all comfort will comfort them

Pray for wisdom for Theresa May and those charged with seeking the truth and protecting our people.

Pray for all overseeing the Brexit negotiations

### **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 that 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 and churches as they seek to help those suffering from the effects of natural disasters and continue to pray for the people around the world, who are no longer the focus of media attention but who are still suffering greatly. May they know that they are not forgotten

Pray for wisdom for world leaders as they try to deal with the ongoing situation in Syria, Turkey and Yemen

### *Happy 100th Birthday!*

Congratulations to Lucy Hockenhull who will celebrate her 100th Birthday on April 7th. Lucy is a longstanding member who in the past attended with her sister who also passed the 100 mark.

Having only recently had a carer come in the morning, it is wonderful that she still lives at home. Although not very fast on her pins she gets around well and is very cheerful.

Well done Lucy!

### *Disabled Access*

Our amended plans were accepted by the Methodist Authorities last week. We are now waiting for Shropshire County Council to give us permission to go ahead, but this should be a formality.

We have one final hurdle to clear. The Methodist District have yet to pass our plans. They are meeting in July, and once that is done, we can start work on our ramp.

Forward in Faith!

Jim Walwyn

### *Meanwhile—Property Matters*

Following our 5 yearly electrical tests of the Church we had a bad report, several items needing work. As a large number of these have been outstanding for a few years the Church Council decided to bite the bullet and get them all done. This has cost us £1684.00.

Unfortunately we now have another problem as boiler number 2 has stopped working, hopefully we will have this repaired soon.

Pete

# May Lunchtime Concerts

**Wednesday 2nd May:** Claire Clowes (singer), Christine (singer) and Jackie Dawson (pianist)

\*\*\*\*\*



**Wednesday 9th May:** Trixi Field (Singer & Pianist)

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**Wednesday 16th May:** Elaine Gollins (cor anglais) with her Orchestral Ensemble, who are Christopher Jones (piano), John Gunton (violin) and Catherine Redfern (flute)

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**Wednesday 23rd May:** Helen & Vic Trigg (singer & guitar), Rachel Dimelow (singer), plus Wendy Proffitt, Sheila Walwyn and Bob Charlesworth (our resident St John Poets)



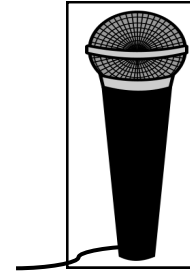
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**Wednesday 30th May:** Maurice Posniak (Baritone, Pianist & Organist), Lucy Chidlow (Mezzo Soprano) and Olivia Field-Williams



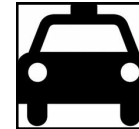
## ***Sound System Operators for April***

1st	Jim Walwyn
8th	Wendy Proffitt
15th	Andrew Fawcett
22nd	David Whiteley
29th	Mike Nimmo



## **TAXI**

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



April	1st	Sheila Latham
	8th	David Whiteley
	15th	Brian Faulkner
	22nd	Hazel Nimmo
	29th	Jim Walwyn



## **TEA & COFFEE ROTA**

April	1st	Sue Davies & Jane Cliffe
	8th	Sheila Latham & Dot Charlesworth
	15th	Wendy Proffitt, Beryl Posniak & Fiona Weir
	22nd	Sunday Lunch - No Coffee
	29th	Nancy Millington & Chris Crowther

### **Regular Church Activities**

Mondays 9:30-11:30am Parents & Toddlers (Term time)

Thursdays 7pm: Music Group Practice

1st/3rd Tuesdays at 7.30pm: Bible Study at 7 Queen's Road

1st/3rd Thursdays at 7:30pm - Prayer Meeting at St. John's

### **APRIL DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

9th Messy Church 9.30 to 11.30

Sunday 15th April - All Age Worship, including the baptism of William Prince

Midweek Bible Study - due to Easter Holidays, the Bible Study will take place on **Wednesday 18th April** at 2pm.

Thursday 26th April 7:30pm - Cafe Church

### **May Newsletter**

Please let Vic Trigg have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by 22nd April.

## **BARLOWS**

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the team.

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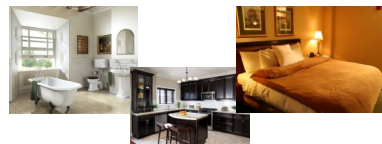
Top of the High Street  
Whitchurch

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Kitchens Business based at 46a  
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## **WALKERS**

