

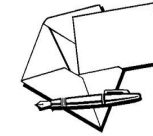


Gerbera

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

September 2018 Newsletter

Message from the Manse



Dear Friends,

September is often a month for the start of new things. The start of the Methodist Year; the start of the School Year; the start of thinking about plans for Christmas and beyond.

The next meeting of Pray Think Act, on Monday 10th September, is one of the places where we think about what we as a church want to start – particularly recently looking at fellowship and discipleship. Sometimes those might be words that might seem scary, but they don't need to be – really, what it's about is trying to work out what God is saying to us, what we should do about it, and sharing together.

When we talked about this at our last meeting, one of the things we wanted to look at was starting a new group – one that would be for absolutely anyone to come to, whether they've been attending Bible Studies since Sunday School, or have never been to one in their life! We've decided to call it "Taste and See", and the idea is to run different things in that slot throughout the year – so you're not committing to come to every session, and if this particular one isn't your thing – well, in a few weeks we'll be doing something different for you to try out. The first of these is going to be a set of four sessions, starting on Monday 17th September, at 7pm at Church. Why not come along and see for yourself?

I am also nearing the end of one thing myself: the Half Marathon is now just weeks away! If you'd like to sponsor me, there's a page at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/robweir2018 - all money raised will go to MacMillan.

God Bless

Rob

Circuit Prayer Days

Are gatherings across the Circuit PRAYING FOR A FAITHFUL AND FRUITFUL FUTURE over the 24 hours from 12 noon on Friday 21st September to 12 noon on Saturday 22nd September. To lament over what once was - Celebrate and give thanks for what we have and Trust in what is to come! Full details of places and times are on the poster on the circuit website at:

<http://www.cheshiresouth.org.uk/doc/D335997.pdf>

FORTHCOMING HARVEST WEEKEND

Timetable:

Friday 5th October - Decorating the Church
Saturday 6th October 10 – 12 noon - Coffee Morning
Saturday 6th October 7.30pm - Winterley Brass Band
Sunday 7th October 10.30am - Harvest Festival
Monday 8th October 9:30am - Parents & Toddlers Harvest
Monday 8th October 6.30pm - Harvest Supper

TEA & COFFEE ROTA for September

2nd Ruth Dawson & Einwen Kelly
9th Sheila Latham & Dot Charlesworth
16th Sue Davies & Jane Cliffe
23rd Hazel & Mike Nimmo
30th Wendy Proffitt, Beryl Posniak & Fiona Weir



Steward's Letter



Dear Friends,

I will bring you up to date with progress or otherwise with our **heating system**. Although nothing seems to be happening we have been working hard and have at last a new quite for the rebuilding of the pipework at approximately £1500 + VAT. The plumber who installed the boilers and heat exchanger pipework has sent us a long letter giving us many reasons as to why it was fitted the way it was. These I do not recognise and brings my temperature to boiling point but I think we must not let our emotions take over and instead get the best deal that we can under the circumstances. We can then look forward to a more comfortable winter and hopefully get more heat at less cost.

The Tower Clock is going again thanks to Mr. George Edge (who worked for Joyce's Clocks in Whitchurch for 23 years) - although he has some work to do on the mechanism later in the year when he has more time. We must thank Whitchurch Town Council for the grant that we were awarded this spring - and give NO THANKS to Scottish Power for the damage their fault under St. John's Street did to the clock and the blower motor in the organ, which cost us approximately £450.

2018 has been unusual to say the least from extreme cold and wet that lasted until the end of April, to the hottest and driest summer we have had since 1976 that followed.

Many trees and shrubs have gone into Autumn mode and many will not recover. I think the only advantage is that we have not had to turn our chapel heating system on, which has saved us many £s on our gas bill - the July account was only 59p!

August 8th was the first day I could do any work in the greenhouse without risk of suffocation since May of this year.

Did you know that each one of us consume or use an average of 37 gallons of water every day? It is no wonder reservoirs are almost empty!

Did you also know, with Brexit in mind, that if we did not import any food from the rest of the world, ours would have run out on August 16th this year?

Disabled Access

This week the Refurbishment Committee and Church Council will each have to make a decision on the over-budget quote we have received for the proposed disabled access work. The two lowest quotes are 30% over budget, and the others 100% or more over! The choice is either to raise more money or trim the job to suit our budget - which is my favoured solution. What would your choice be? Please come and talk to me about it. Whatever decision we make, we must not end up in debt.

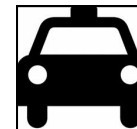
God Bless

Maurice

Taxi!

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

2nd	Sheila Latham
9th	David Whiteley
16th	Hazel Nimmo
23rd	Brian Faulkner
30th	Jim Walwyn



Gift Aid – Don't miss the opportunity

We all know that the envelope system and the Gift Day allow us to gift aid our collections and donations to St John's. I think there are other occasions when we are at church events when giving a voluntary or suggested donation could be "gift aided". The May Concerts are a prime example and all we need to do is ensure that Gift Aid envelopes are readily available. I am going to leave a supply in the guild room in addition to those in the pews. I leave those organising anything which attracts donations to do the business on the day and not just with our attending members!

Remember we get 25% more in addition to the donation from HMRC!

Mike Nimmo (Gift Aid Secretary)

(And what can be better than getting money from the Tax Man! Ed)

Spick and Spanners for September 2018

6th Joan & Gordon Davidson & Eileen
Grunner



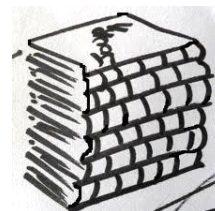
20th Jane Cliffe, Ros Rawson & Sue Davies

*"My dog looks up to me
My cat looks down on me
Pigs are my equal"*

Winston Churchill (1874-1965) British politician, army officer, and
writer, UK Prime Minister 1940-5 and 1951-5
(Submitted by Maurice Latham)

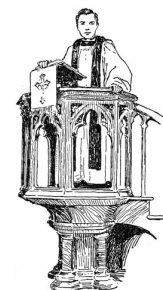
Book Stewards for September

2nd Sheila Walwyn
9th May Arthan
16th Beryl Posniak
23rd Sue Davies
30th Nancy Millington



SEPTEMBER SERVICES AT ST JOHN'S

2nd Rev. Rob Weir
9th Fiona Weir
16th Ms Gifty Asamoah
23rd Brian Faulkner
30th Rev. Rob Weir (Communion)



"September's Baccalaureate
A combination is Of Crickets -- Crows -- and Retrospects
And a dissembling Breeze
That hints without assuming --
An Innuendo sear
That makes the Heart put up its Fun
And turn Philosopher."

'September's Baccalaureate' - Emily Dickinson, American poet
(1830-66)

Book Review – Celebration of Discipline:

The Path to Spiritual Growth

Further to my article in the last newsletter, I'm very pleased that a number of people are joining me in reading a book by Richard Foster called Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth. I have read Part 1 (of 3) and, as promised, I am sharing my reflections on what I have read so far.

The book begins by saying that “superficiality is the curse of our age.” The Disciplines of the spiritual life call us to move beyond surface living into the depths. The world around us wants to get on with *real* business in the *real* world, but we need to be encouraged to move beyond the prejudice of our age and affirm with our best scientists that more than the material world exists.

At the beginning, the book lists several pitfall which it warns readers against, such as treating the Disciplines as soul-killing laws, and the temptation to study the Disciplines without experiencing them.

Part 1 of the book focuses on the inward Disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting and study.

Meditation – Christian meditation, very simply, is the ability to hear God's voice and obey his word. The truth of the matter is that the great God of the universe, the Creator of all things desires our fellowship. We need to pray for the desire to meditate and the grace to do so. My favourite place to be alone and silent, to think, pray and reflect is looking out of my bedroom window at the fields, the cows and sheep! The beauty of God's creation.

Prayer – Of all the Disciplines, prayer is the most central because it ushers us into perpetual communication with the Father. Real prayer is something we learn. To understand that the work of prayer involves a learning process saves us from arrogantly dismissing it as false or unreal.

At the same time we should never make prayer too complicated
– Jesus taught us to come like children to a father. Openness, honesty and trust mark the communication of children with their father.

Fasting – This is something which has fallen out of favour over the years, but the book reminds us that Scripture has much to say about fasting. Throughout Scripture, fasting refers to abstaining from food for spiritual purposes. Fasting must forever centre on God. It must be God-initiated and God-ordained. Fasting reminds us that we are sustained: ‘by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God’ (Matt 4:4).

Study – Of the inward Disciplines, this is the one which resonated most with me. We are called to be transformed by the renewing of our minds and study helps us into ‘right-thinking’. The book states that many Christians are faithful in church attendance and earnest in fulfilling their religious duties yet still they are not changed. Why? Because they have never taken up one of the central ways God uses to change us: study. Both verbal and non-verbal fields of study are explained with the assertion that one of the greatest needs amongst Christians today is reading large portions of Scripture (rather than fragmentary and sporadic reading).

Well I have to say that I am enjoying reading the book. At times I have found it hard going, and often I don’t *feel* like reading it, but I have made myself, and it has been a revelation and a joy. The whole experience has taught me that you really do need to be intentional about discipleship – it doesn’t just happen – you have to make the effort!

The most important thing for me is that I don’t just read it and then go back to life as it was before. It is my prayer that God will use the book to challenge me, teach me and change me. I recognise that the inner transformation I need is God’s work, not mine. My responsibility is to make the effort!

In many ways I believe that the depth of our relationship with God comes down to one word – time. Like any friendship or relationship we have to devote time to it and I believe it's exactly the same in our relationship with God. We are so distracted by the things of this world, maybe our first prayer needs to be asking for a *desire* to spend time with God.

Here is a prayer from another Richard Foster book on prayer which is very apt for me!

Dear Jesus, how desperately I need to learn to pray. And yet, when I am honest I know that I often do not even want to pray.

I am distracted!

I am stubborn!

I am self-centred!

In your mercy, Jesus, bring my want-er more in line with my need-er so that can come to want what I need.

In your name and for your sake, I pray. Amen

In the October newsletter I will share my reflections on Part 2 of the book, which explores the outward Disciplines of simplicity, solitude, submission and service.

Jenny Marston

Flowers Rota for September 2018

2nd: Nancy Millington

9th: Jane Cliffe

16th: Hazel Nimmo

23rd: Beryl Posniak

30th May Arthan

7th October: Harvest Festival



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 8th 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.

St. Paul's Sunday Forum

www.stpauls.co.uk/sunday-forum-films

Every month St. Paul's Cathedral hosts its Sunday Forum, an hour-long session where a noted spiritual writer or theologian talks, often about a book they have written, and then answers questions about it. The topics are many and varied; the speakers are all enthusiasts with a real depth of knowledge. It's a very gentle way to broaden understanding of the many different aspects of our Christian life and the way we work it out.

I have enjoyed listening to Megan Daffern talking about the Psalms, 'Songs of the Spirit' and her translation of some of them and was much surprised to find myself riveted by Krish Kandiah talking about 'Paradoxology' – I had only intended looking at it for five minutes to confirm it was the rubbish the title seemed to indicate! I haven't yet got round to watching 'Was Jesus political?' and coming up are 'Buying God: consumerism a theology' and 'Jesus and the promise of peace'.

It's like a library where I can go and browse, dip in, and sometimes settle down to a good read. It's well worth dipping into. Like me, you may have a very pleasant surprise.

Avril Bradfield

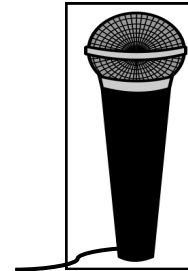
Sign at a local Market Garden:

Trespassers will be re-potted, pruned or weeded

(Submitted by Maurice Latham)

Sound System Operators for September

2nd	Jim Walwyn
9th	David Whiteley
16th	Mike Nimmo
23rd	Gordon Davidson
30th	Andrew Fawcett



CHRISTIAN AID

At the Christian Aid united service in May we heard about Marcelin Abellard who is living in Haiti with his daughters Ketia, Linda and Keshna. They had lost their home a year ago during Hurricane Matthew, were living in a 2x2m windowless concrete block and didn't think they would survive if another hurricane came. But now thanks to the generous giving during Christian Aid week they have a new home which is hurricane proof.

In Whitchurch we raised £3,031.05 during Christian Aid Week. A big 'THANK YOU' to everyone who delivered, collected and gave.

We stood with them in Christian Aid Week. We helped them build a home that will weather the next storm. We have made a difference and we can go on making a difference.

Our next fund raising event is a coffee morning at Briony Myles-Hook's home on Thursday October 11th from 2 – 4 pm. If you would like to go but haven't got transport please contact Helen Trigg or Brenda Aumeer.

In November there will be the usual Christmas Cards coffee morning at Bargates and in December the pew collection.

Helen Trigg

MINISTERS

I know I should refer to Ministers, e.g. Rev. Rob Weir as Presbyters but a recent report said only 3% of Methodists recognized the word Presbyters.

A report to the Methodist Conference, reported in the Methodist Recorder, provided some alarming facts. These I thought, ought to be brought to your attention.

This year 90 Ministers retired (sat down)
only 38 Ministers were Ordained.

This means that in this new Methodist year we have 52 less Ministers in full time work!

Added to this alarming figure, is that only 20 people have been accepted for Initial Training to become future Ministers. That is 18 less than have been Ordained in 2018.

Looking at facts and figures based on one year can be misleading. However, the Stationing Committee predicts that in 2 years time there will be 189 less Ministers in active work!

What does this mean for you reading these figures?

The Ministers we have at present, will be spread over more churches, meaning:-

Ministers will be less available to lead our Sunday Services.

Ministers will have less time for Pastoral Care.

Ministers will have less time to be a Leader in our churches.

For us at St. John's this will not have an immediate effect, as no changes are imminent, however be warned! The Methodist Church has relied heavily on lay people, Local Preachers, Church Stewards and Pastoral Visitors.

As a church, we need lay people like you to ask yourselves: Is God calling me to work in the church and in so doing, assist in ministering to others?

Brian Faulkner

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, house-bound, 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 25th September and the Church Council on 3rd October), they will seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Pray for the Pray-Think-Act meeting on 10th September, that ideas and resources will be discussed that will help us all to be more intentional in our discipleship.

Pray for all those people who are reading Richard Foster's book 'The Celebration of Discipline' that their studies may enrich their spiritual lives and help them to walk even more closely with God.

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, Cafe Church – many of which will be starting up again after the summer break.

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 ask God to help them persevere in faith so that their prayers 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.

Pray for wisdom for our national leaders as they make decisions on our behalf, especially in regard to Brexit.

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, righteousness and justice 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.

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

Give thanks for the links beginning to open up between North and South Korea.

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

2nd Wednesday of the month - 2pm: Bible Study at St. John's

4th Thursday of the month - 7:30pm: Cafe Church

SEPTEMBER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 2nd 3-5pm Circuit Open Air Celebration

Monday 3rd 3pm Events Committee

Saturday 8th 10am – 6pm Ride & Stride

Monday 10th Think, Pray, Act

Tuesday 11th 7pm Property & Finance Committee

Thursday 13th 7pm Circuit Meeting @ Brown Knowl

Monday 17th 7pm Taste and See

Tuesday 18th 10.30am Pastoral Committee

Noon Fri. 21st to noon Sat. 22nd Circuit Prayer Days

Tuesday 25th 2pm Network

Tuesday 25th 7.30pm Worship Committee

Thursday 27th 7:30pm Cafe Church

October 2018 Newsletter

Please let Chris Crowther have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by 23rd September.

The proceeds from advertising in this magazine will be used solely for 'Access for All' improvements to our church. Inclusion of an advertisement in this magazine does not imply an endorsement of the products or services of the advertiser by St. John's.

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*Departing summer hath assumed
An aspect tenderly illumed,
The gentlest look of spring;
That calls from yonder leafy shade
Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,
A timely carolling.*

- William Wordsworth (1770-1850) 'September'

BARLOWS

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Call Will or Matt 01948 665855

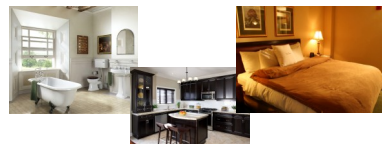
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SPLISH SPLASH

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Kitchens Business based at 46a
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project! Or re-vamp your existing
kitchen, bathroom or bedroom



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WALKERS

