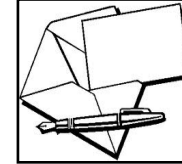


***St. John's Methodist Church
Whitchurch***

February 2019
Newsletter

Message from the Manse



Dear Friends

At long last we've seen the diggers move in, and I understand the tent in the Long Room has already been attracting comment - I don't want to think about how many years it's taken to reach this point, but we now have things very visibly happening.

Having attended the first Site Meeting, one of the things that came up was about publicity - Ian Lucas, the Architect, was even talking about Stone Edge offering some Hi-Vis and Helmets to Junior Church and seeing if the Herald would be interested in a few pictures! In so many ways, this chimes with some of my own thinking about how to turn this into a Mission Opportunity.

With work very visibly going on, we can talk about what and why - and, ultimately, the why is because we want to make our church one that is open and welcoming by making it possible for anyone - regardless of physical ability, or age (don't forget this makes it easier for those arriving in buggies pushed by parents!) to come into the building. And that's about enabling people to come and worship.

In the meantime, we're also engaging in the wider community by going out to different venues. When I spoke to the Manager in Costa about holding Cafe Church there (dates to be confirmed!) she already knew we were doing things because one or two other church groups had already asked about meeting there - and I know that's not the only place people are going to! All this can be seen as part of our mission - engaging people in the wider community and sharing the Good News.

So please, do talk to people, tell them about what we're doing - and why. We have an opportunity to use our bricks and mortar to talk about more spiritual things - let's use it!

God Bless

Rob

Steward's Letter



By now we should all have recovered from the excitement & excess of Christmas. What a wonderful time we had in St John's, a large attendance for our Carol Service in a beautifully decorated Church - thank you ladies for your hard work. Christmas day saw us with a well-attended early service as we invited The Beacon Church to join us. Hopefully we will see this again in the years to come.

You will notice now that Maurice and I have completed the replacement of the Halogen lights with LED lighting. This will save around 80% of our electric cost for lighting. A big thank you to all those who contributed to the appeal.

It's a sad day when a Chapel has to close due reducing congregation, but with the closure of Barrbridge Methodist Church we have been able to benefit, by receiving upholstered chairs in the Guild Room and blue pew cushions. I trust you are finding it more comfortable.

I have been looking back at old Property Committee minutes and quote the following extract from 1 Feb 1993 "Mrs Wilkinson reported that the Notice Boards had been damaged by strong winds and would need to be repaired." Well here we go again after the strong winds in early December. Also in October 1993 the Sky Light in the long room was leaking. We now need to replace it as it has been patched up too many times. By time you read this the 'access for all' project will have started. It has been a very long time coming - over 20 years - and taken a lot of hard work by many people, but may I thank Jim Walwyn for all his hard work in bringing the project to fruition. This will make St John's easily accessible to all and aid us in our Mission of spreading the Lord's word in Whitchurch.

As the days lengthen, we can start to plan our gardens for the spring and dream of where we shall go for our holidays in 2019. Sweet Dreams!

Pete

Preachers for February

3rd	Rev. Rob Weir (hc)
10th	Rev. Rob Weir (bap)
17th	Mrs. F. Weir
24th	Mr. R. Williams

Stewards Rota for February

3rd	Maurice Latham
10th	Avril Bradfield
17th	Rob Hewson
24th	Brian Faulkner

Worship leaders for February

3rd	-
10th	-
17th	Lucy Chidlow

Junior Church Rota

Date		Leader	Assistant
Feb	3rd	Briony Myles-Hook	Janet Lees
	10 th	Helen Trigg	Chris Crowther
	17 th	Half term holiday	No JC
	24 th	Half term Holiday	No JC
March	3rd	Helen Trigg	Dot Charlesworth



Margerie Bush

I was saddened to hear that Margerie Bush had passed away. I came to St John's nearly ten years ago. The church had just experienced some very difficult times, and was just beginning to get back on it's feet again. I remember the Stewards at that time when I first joined the church, names like Ros Rawson, Andrew Fawcett, David Green and Gwyneth Rollins as well as Margerie. These lovely people worked so hard to turn things around.

David Green (Nancy's husband) died suddenly and I replaced him as a Steward at St John's. Margerie took me under her wing and taught me all I needed to know about stewarding! No detail was missed, from checking that all the lights were out to locking up securely. Margerie and her husband Allen worked tirelessly for the church – Margerie was usually to be found on the Bric-a-Brac stall at church fayres and she also started a fellowship group at St John's Park when our Minister would be invited for tea.

Ros Rawson tells of the time when she and Margerie were stewarding a wedding. They had very carefully arranged flowers down the aisle; down came the wedding procession, headed by a little girl throwing flowers with gay abandon all over the church. Margerie was not best pleased!

Although Margerie wasn't well enough to come to church in these latter years, I shall always remember her as a "fun" lady – always with a glint in her eye! I will miss her and I was disappointed that I didn't have the chance to say goodbye to her properly as I would have liked. But, apparently, that was her wish.

Jim Walwyn

From Maurice Pozniac:

I was fortunate to get to know Margerie at Kingsway Court's Age UK. A lovely lady with a great sense of humour. She will be much missed. Deepest condolences to her friends and family.

Our Treasurer

To all the members of St John's

I'm sure that most of you will know that our Treasurer is ill and is unable to continue as our Treasurer. We thank Jane Cliffe for all the hard work she has done on our behalf in the past.

For the last two months our church has functioned without a Treasurer. Money has been paid in and important bills have been paid, but we cannot go on much longer like this.

The Stewards and the Minister have tried, and are trying, very hard to find someone to fill this role, but so far they have failed to find someone.

So, I am asking you to pray and think about our situation. Do you know of someone who could fill this role? Can you think of a solution to our problem? If you can help, please tell our Senior Steward, Maurice Latham.

Action For Children

We will be holding a coffee morning at St John's church in aid of "Action for Children", on

Saturday, 23rd February 2019 from 10am to 12 noon.

Please come and support this worthy cause - Everyone is welcome.

I am now emptying the collection boxes, and if I have not yet received your box, please pass it to me as soon as possible.

David Whiteley

CANCER RESEARCH UK & THE LONDON MARATHON

The Family Committee are organising a Hotpot and Apple Pie Lunch at Church, which they hope will take place within the next two months, after morning service, raising funds for Cancer Research UK.

Cancer is something which touches almost every family. I lost my sister to cancer four years ago and it is devastating. How I wish she was still here. Brian lost both his parents to the disease too. They say that 1 in every 2/3 people will get cancer at some point in their lives. These are shocking statistics. Within our Church family, we are very conscious of cancer at the moment and our helplessness to be able to do anything about it but this is a way of doing something positive and showing that we care.

Our son Andrew, who grew up coming to this church and going through the Sunday School, will be running in the London Marathon on the 28th April. Andrew will be running in aid of Cancer Research UK and hopes to raise £2,000 in sponsorship for the charity. He has completed the Chester Half Marathon and is in regular training pounding the streets of Whitchurch!

The London Marathon is apparently quite difficult to get into, as despite thousands running in it, there are thousands more who want to and can't get in.

The proceeds from the Hotpot and Apple Pie Lunch will be given to Cancer Research UK through Andrew's Just Giving page.

Please support and put your name down for the Hotpot and Apple Pie Lunch and let's do something practical and positive to show that **WE CARE**

Thank you.

Dorothy Faulkner.

“The Son of God”
by Jeffrey Archer

(This was printed on the inside of a Christmas card I received, sold in aid of Cancer Research UK—story donated by Jeffrey Archer)

He was born in a barn, his father a carpenter, and his mother a decent woman, but they were of no significance, and certainly couldn't have afforded to give the boy a private education. And yet, as a teenager, he was arguing the toss with his elders and betters in the council chambers. He never got a proper job, just roamed around the countryside, unshaven, and living off bread and water and the occasional fish, while offering his opinions to those who cared to listen.

He became manager of a football team known as The Disciples, not one of them a star, in fact the twelfth man rather let the side down by accepting a transfer fee of thirty pieces of silver to play for the opposition.

The authorities eventually arrested him as a rabble-rouser, but couldn't decide what to charge him with, other than the fact he claimed he was the Son of God. They strung him up with a couple of criminals, and when he finally gave up the ghost, rather assumed that would be the last they would hear of him.

The Disciples were relegated at the end of the season, in fact the captain denied on more than one occasion that he'd ever been a member of His team.

When He died at the age of thirty-three, there were no obituaries in the local press reporting his achievements, no glossy supplements highlighting his colourful career, no radio programmes to discuss his legacy, and no box sets recording any of his miracles.

But then, He'd never relied on focus groups to advise him on current trends, or advertising gurus to spend millions promoting his brand, or spin doctors to sharpen his image, and he didn't require social media to keep his followers up to date, so you could be forgiven for assuming he'd be forgotten in a few days.

**So how can one explain that over two thousand years later, Jesus
Christ is still the best-known celebrity on earth?
Could it just be that He was the Son of God?**

*Please support the Hotpot and Apple Pie Supper being organised by the
Family Committee in aid of Cancer Research UK*

PRAYER REQUESTS



St John's

Thank God for the many ways He continues to bless and encourage us at St John's.

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.

Give thanks for all those serving on the the various committees/Church Council and pray that, as they meet in the coming weeks, they will seek God's will for St John's and make wise decisions on our behalf

Ask that the Pray, Think, Act Group will be instrumental in moving us forward spiritually, according to God's will and purpose, and not according to our 'good ideas'

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, Junior Church, cafe church

Pray that the building work proceeds as smoothly and as quickly as possible – give thanks for all those who have worked so hard over the years to get us this far.

Our nation

At this time of confusion and turmoil let us bring our nation before God in prayer:

Pray that MPs be given fresh vision and unity that they may work together for the good of our nation rather than from selfish ambition or other motives.

Pray that God will guard our freedom of speech and freedom of belief, and that Christians will be given understanding, perseverance and courage to stand up for, and defend our faith.

Ask God to bless the Day of Prayer in Westminster on Friday 29th March (Brexit Day) – that as many Christians as possible attend the event and that God's plans and purposes for our nation will prevail.

Give thanks that Jeremy Hunt has called for a report on the persecution of Christians. According to our foreign office, 250 Christians are killed each month because of their faith in Jesus Christ. Pray that the report will help ease the plight of these people.

A Prayer from the Community of Aidan and Hilda:

Circle us, Lord

Keep strife without, keep peace within

Keep fear without, keep hope within

Keep pride without, keep trust within

Keep evil out, keep good within

May we walk in the hope of Your kingdom

Fill us with Your light and love

Be with us all through this day

Father, Son and Holy Spirit Amen

Rotas for February

Book Stewards

3rd	Mary Scott
10th	Sue Davies
17th	Nancy Millington
24th	May Arthan
March 3rd	Sheila Walwyn



Tea & Coffee

3rd	Ruth Dawson & Einwen Kelly
10th	Fiona Weir & Rachel Dimelow
17th	Elizabeth & Peter Shingler
24th	Sue Davies & Dorothy Faulker



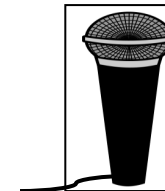
Flower Rota

3rd	Hazel Burlton
10th	Sheila Jones
17th	Gwen Reeves
24th	Brenda Aumeer
March 3rd	Dorothy Faulkner



Sound System Operators

3rd	Mike Nimmo
10th	Gordon Davidson
17th	Andrew Fawcett
24th	David Whiteley
March 3rd	Jim Walwyn



Accessibility Building Project

At long last the work has started! At the time of writing (19/01/19) we have some unusual buildings on our lawn – a storage cabin, a workman's cabin as well as a toilet. We also have a skip near the back entrance, a tent in the Long Room and an organ which is shrouded in plastic sheeting.



Strange times here at St John's!

We are expecting the outside work to start very soon – let's hope there is-



n't too much mess! There will probably be a lot more workmen here then – but please don't forget that it is normal service (joke!) every Sunday.

Work is due to start on the new doorway this week. Hence our efforts to keep dust away from the organ.

The foreman is a very pleasant young chap called Matt. We will be able to hold an "Afternoon Tea" sometime soon, where church members can meet with Matt and talk to him about how the project is going.

There is an important site meeting very soon, attended by the architect, the builders and representatives from St John's, so we are likely to know a lot more about how things are really going!

We are going to be inconvenienced more and more as time goes on. The ground workers have started in earnest so we can expect a bit of mud around the church. Please try not to bring it inside! It will all be worth it!

For your diary: Special Concert to celebrate the work being completed: Farndon Brass Band and Whitchurch Community Choir on Saturday 18th May.

We will keep you updated each week in Pew News.

JRW

Regular Church Activities

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

1st & 3rd Tues. 7.30pm: Fellowship at 7 Queen's Rd.

2nd & 4th Thurs. 7.30pm: Prayer Group 7 Queen's Rd. (*note
new days and venue*)

Music Group Practice—date and venue by arrangement

Dates For Your February Diary

Fri. 1st 9.30-12 Coffee morning at the Civic—please
come and support this

Weds. 13th 10.30-12 Ladies Coffee at Caru Coffi

7pm Church Council—date to be confirmed

Mon 25th—March 10th Fairtrade Fortnight

Café Church—date to be confirmed in Pew News

Future events

Lent lunches—dates to be announced

March Newsletter

Please let **Vic Trigg** have all your submissions for the March
2018 Newsletter by 21st February.

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7th Chris Crowther, Dot Charlesworth & Lynn Fowler
21st Helen Trigg & Brenda Aumeer

Taxi!

The following drivers are available to transport you to the
Sunday morning service. Please 'phone before 9:30am.

3rd	Sheila Latham
10th	Brian Faulkner
17th	Hazel Nimmo
24th	Jim Walwyn

**The Most Famous Bread & Cake
Makers in Whitchurch!**

WALKERS

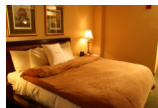


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