

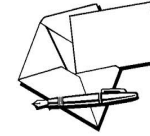


**St. John's Methodist Church-
Whitchurch**

March 2020 Newsletter

Message from the Manse

Dear Friends,



In Colossians 3:12, Paul writes, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." (NIV).

Over the last few weeks, as people have reacted to the news of the death of Caroline Flack, something she posted on Social Media has taken on a life of it's own that links very much with those words: "Be kind". There have even been T-Shirts produced with that on them. Sadly, it seems that there are many who don't hear those words: just before writing this, I was reading about how the makers of Yorkshire Tea have had people criticising them on Social Media because Rishi Sunak, the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, had dared to pose for a photo of him making tea for his colleagues using their product. Part of their response was to remind those having a go that there were real people on the end of those Social Media accounts, people who could be hurt by their words.

"Be kind" applies as much in church as anywhere else. And I hope it will be part of what we seek to be - along with compassionate, showing humility, gentleness, and patience - as we have the opportunity to discuss the "God in Love Unites Us" report on the afternoon of Saturday 28th March at St. Johns. We will not all agree, and we may well hear views that we find hard to accept; but regardless of what we may think, we need to be kind; we need to remember that a view on one subject does not define us; that we are all human beings, doing our best to live in God's world. Let us be kind in our disagreements, and show our world that it is possible to disagree - without that being a reason to cease being kind, compassionate, gentle, patient, and filled with humility.

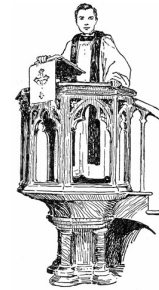
God Bless

Rob

(Amen: Ed)

SERVICES AT ST. JOHN'S MARCH 2020

1st	Rev. Rob Weir (Communion)
8th	Heather Staniland
15th	Graham Dimelow
22nd	Brian Faulkner
29th	Rev. Rob Weir



Thank-you to everyone who gave to the Christian Aid pew and screen Christmas card collection. £190 was raised.



TEA & COFFEE ROTA for March 2020

1st	Ruth & Einwen
8th	Sheila L & Dot
15th	Sue D & Dorothy
22nd	Hazel & Mike
29th	Linda J and Sarah



STEWARD'S LETTER

The new year began with an unexpected phone call from Matt of Stone Edge Ltd., who was their site foreman and stonemason by trade, and who constructed our new doorway. He said the company had gone into receivership.



We did the snagging list at the end of December and sent it to our architect Ian Lucas. This was a list of jobs that did not come up to the standard we expected. As these jobs have not been addressed it means that our contract with stone edge was not complete and signed off.

On January 23rd we celebrated the 100th birthday of our regular attender Reg Hall, and not many churches can say they have had someone reach 100. To mark the occasion we planted a weeping cherry tree in the garden. I hope Reg will be pleased with it. On Sunday 19th Reg cut his cake and shared it around. The following Sunday, Sheila and I were honoured to be invited to his birthday celebrations at Fauls Village Hall, which was very enjoyable, meeting many people whom I have not seen for years.

January this year, Sheila and I were invited to go to the Manchester Arena to see our grandson William take part in the Young Voices Choir. What an experience it was – our first visit to this 21,000 seat arena – the largest in the UK. An audience of approximately 10,000 mums, dads and grandparents, together with a choir of 7,826 10 year-old primary school children. The volume of noise had to be heard to be believed!

The choir was made up of choirs from NW Midlands, NW England and N Wales. The show was complete with singer Tony Hadley of Spandau ballet and a dance troupe.

After reading Dot's column in the February newsletter about climate change/global warming, it's fair to say that the reason Donald Trump says it's a myth is because he was put into office with funds supplied by the petroleum industry and gun lobby in America. I have no doubt that other politicians are in the same position in various countries around the world. This must change. As for climate change, I cannot remember a longer, wetter period of time. The rain began in August 2019 and it continued in February with storm Ciara, which descended on us on 9th February, and was closely followed by Dennis the Menace, who will be next? Thankfully, neither have done much damage to our church roof.

Spring is not far away, the birds are singing, Brexit is done and HS2 has been given the go-ahead and is expected to complete by the mid-2030s. Why has nobody said this is a project that will last for maybe 150 years, so the cost can be spread long-term? Did we older people not say at the time of building the M1 and the M6 that the cost was more than we could afford or indeed needed? What a good job they were built when they were as today's traffic would overwhelm our roads.

And finally, I must thank Janet, Katie and Jenny for everything they have done for our church in the various roles they have carried out over the last 27 years. You will all be greatly missed – and not forgetting the children!

God bless you all

Maurice

Posy Making Coffee Morning



There will be a posy making coffee morning at Church on Friday 20th March 10am till 12 noon.

Please come along for a coffee or tea and a chat and, if you would like to, help us make some posies. These will be handed out to all the ladies in church on Mothering Sunday.

SING, SING, SING!



There will be a concert by Whitchurch Community Choir on Friday 27th March 2020 at 7:30pm.

It is being performed in aid of Shropshire ME Group and Tickets cost £10, concessions £8
(see *Jim Walwyn* for tickets)

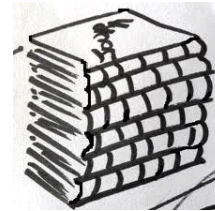
- Raffle
- Refreshments included.

The concert is called Sing, Sing, Sing and comprises songs from the 50s, 60s & 70s, and is being held in our church with a number of St John's members taking part.

Please come along.

Book Stewards for March 2020

1st May Arthan
8th Sheila Walwyn
15th Sue Davies
22nd Nancy Millington
29th Sarah Lunt



Stewards Rota for March 2020

1st. Maurice Latham
8th. Brian Faulkner
15th. Avril Bradfield
22th. Maurice Latham
29th. Peter Shingler

Spick and Spanners for March 2020

5th Einwen, Ruth & Sheila L
19th Nancy, Brenda D & Gwen



Saturday 14th March

10am –12 noon: Call in at St. John's for coffee/tea and a chat. It's an opportunity to:

- Bring a donation for St. John's
 - Ask questions on finance
 - Respond to our minister's letter
- See you there!

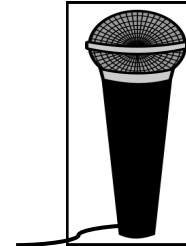
Flowers Rota for March 2020

1st. Dorothy Faulkner
8th. Nancy Millington
15th. Hazel Nimmo
22th. Lynn Fowler
29th. Sarah Lunt.



Sound System Operators for March 2020

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



Junior Church Rota

Sun 1st March No Junior Church
Sun 8th March Briony & Dot
Sun 15th March Brenda & Helen
Sun 22nd March Briony & Chris
Sun 29th March Helen & Brenda

*Indoors or out, no one relaxes in March, that month of wind
and taxes, the wind will presently disappear, the taxes last us
all the year.*

Ogden Nash (1902–1971), American Poet

Lent Lunches

Our first event in 2020 will be the Christian Aid Lent Lunches. This year we are trying something new by keeping the venue the same each week – at St John’s, apart from the final one. Come along for a tasty bowl of homemade soup, bread, cheese and fruit for a suggested donation of at least £4. A time to eat, meet friends and raise funds for the poorest in our world.



Thursday March 5th 12.00 – 2.00pm
Lent Lunch at St John’s hosted by St John’s

Thursday March 12th 12.00- 2.00pm
Lent Lunch at St John’s hosted by Beacon

Thursday March 19th 12.00- 2.00pm
Lent Lunch at St John’s hosted by St Alkmund’s

Thursday March 26th 12.00- 2.00pm
Lent Lunch at St John’s hosted by St George’s

Thursday April 2nd 12.00- 2.00pm
Lent Lunch at The Civic Centre hosted by the Committee

“It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade.”

- From Great Expectations by Charles Dickens



A christening was proceeding apace, and the minister asked the mother,

“What name have you chosen for this child?”

The mother pointed to a label she had placed on the baby to help the minister, and replied,

“It’s pinned on her”

The minister nodded and continued,

“I name this child Pindona”

We will never know what name had been chosen!

(Submitted by Maurice Latham)

March bustles in on windy feet
And sweeps my doorstep and my street.
She washes and cleans with pounding rains,
Scrubbing the earth of winter stains.
She shakes the grime from carpet green
Till naught but fresh new blades are seen.
Then, house in order, all neat as a pin,
She ushers gentle springtime in.

- Susan Reiner, *Spring Cleaning*

A Reflection on Disney Pixar's Film "Up"

Life started out as one great big adventure for Carl Fredricksen, a character from the Disney Pixar's animation film "Up" (2009). As a young child, he wanted to be an explorer but, while life showed him lots of adventures, there was always one adventure he promised his childhood sweetheart that never materialised, in her lifetime at least. Some things happened in his life that didn't quite go to plan. After marrying, they lose their first child and don't have any more children. Saving up for this big promised adventure was often met with other bills to pay. As old age approached, his wife sadly passed away and he begins to feel the aches and pains of old age. Carl is persuaded to leave the home he spent most of his life in, because developers want his land and see him as an easy target to exploit. Becoming angry at the way life has and is still treating him makes him lash out physically at someone, leaving that person with an injury and him with a court summons. He is labelled a menace and in need of a retirement home where his independence would be taken from him. At breaking point, having now reached the place where he is forced out of house and home to enter a retirement village, he decides to attach his house with thousands of colourful helium balloons to prevent his home from being bulldozed and "up" goes the house on the adventure he promised his late wife: to take the house and live on top of Paradise Falls.



On his journey he meets an eight-year-old boy, Russell, who is trying to earn an "assisting to elderly" badge to complete his collection, which will allow him to move on to becoming a Senior Wilderness Explorer. At first, all this young boy wants to do is finish a simple task that will enable him to complete his badge collection but, as the film unfolds, he goes on an adventure and explores a wilderness bigger than his back garden!

Some of the best made plans don't always go as expected, and Carl and Russell encounter different problems along the way. Despite this, they finally make it to Paradise Falls. When there, Carl opens his late wife's adventure scrapbook, which she started when she was a child. Inside the book is a page with the title: "The Stuff I'm Going To Do". When she was young, those pages would have been filled with the adventure of going to Paradise Falls, but, for the first time, Carl discovers that his late wife completed the scrap book, despite never personally going there. Instead, she filled her pages with pictures of them getting married, laughing and having fun, growing old and reading together, taking picnics in the park and enjoying a nice cup of tea. At the end of her book she wrote, "Thanks for the adventure - now go have a new one! Love Ellie." She was telling him to live his life to the full and embrace all of life's adventures, even if they are not quite what he originally had in mind. Carl set out on this adventure to try and finish what he thought she would have wanted. In the end, he discovers that Ellie had already found her own paradise in just being with Carl. By the end of the film, Carl's house and possessions fall away from him, but what is left are new friends and new adventures.

How does this film relate to contemporary Christian living? Well, as Christians, we experience the wilderness on the way to our "paradise falls", or our dreams being fulfilled. We don't always get to the destination in the way we want, or when we want, and, other times, we get to a different destination altogether from the one we planned! On the reverse of the DVD box are these words: "life's biggest adventures aren't the ones you set out looking for". Perhaps it should continue to say: "because God has something better in mind".

We should hold loosely to the things of this world and hold on to the things which are eternal. Yes, live your life to the full, but don't search for fulfilment in the things of this world, which inevitably come to an end. Instead search for the things which last and are eternal. Sometimes, it's the fact of whether we've got enough faith to trust ALL things into God's hand, such as our dreams and desires, or are we going to keep some of them? Are we willing to let go of the things we hold onto and instead hold onto God and the plans of a hope and a future He wants to give us? (Jeremiah 29 v 11).

What is interesting about this film isn't the way in which Carl fights through the problems he faces but how, through those problems, he realises a different, yet better, adventure from the one he originally planned. So, rather than focusing on the adventures you've always wanted to do but never done, try looking at the ones you've already been on and be excited about those God has planned for you instead. Don't think you are too old to have any more adventures and don't think you are too young not to have any yet.

Lucy Chidlow

March is the month God created to show people who don't drink what a hangover is like.

Garrison Keillor: 1942– American writer and broadcaster

After 20 minutes on the phone to a call centre, the young person on the other end wished me well and ended with what is becoming the standard line:

“Now is there anything else I can help you with today?”

I suggested it would be great if she could pop round and mow the lawn. Kids today, absolutely no sense of humour!

(submitted by Maurice Latham)

PRAYER REQUESTS

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

Pray for Janet Lees, Katie Johnson, Jenny Marston and their children as they shape a new life at The Beacon. Pray that we at St. John's can be as positive as we can about this loss to our church family.

Give thanks for all those serving St John's on the various committees/Church Council and pray that, as they meet they will seek to be guided by the Holy Spirit

Pray for our Junior Church and our remaining children, that they will adjust to life without Anna, Harriet, Tom, Beth and Catherine.

Ask God to guide and support those who might come forward to run Parents and Toddlers despite possible existing responsibilities.

Give thanks for our access-friendly building and ask that we may find ways to use it well in our town

Our Town

Pray that we will become a force for good in Whitchurch.

Give thanks for the work of the Food Bank.

Our nation

Pray for wisdom for our leaders as they make decisions on our behalf, particularly in the continuing Brexit negotiations.

Our world

Pray for those parts of our world where there is conflict and famine, and for the work of aid agencies.

Pray that the coronavirus will be controlled

Churches Together Lent Course

This year our Lent Course is going to be akin to a Book Group. Each person will be asked to read a couple of chapters before each meeting and then there will be some led discussion. The book is Andrew Smith's "Vibrant Christianity in Multifaith Britain". Andrew is Director of Interfaith Relations for the Bishop of Birmingham and we hope that he will come to speak and answer questions at a joint session towards the end of Lent. He led the initiative to create the Ethical Guidelines for Witness, produced by the National Christian Muslim Forum 2006-2011. The book is accessible & thought-provoking and encourages us to think seriously about how we live as Christians in an increasingly multifaith society. Whether we meet people of different faiths day to day or mainly hear about them in the media, this book will give us confidence to express our faith in a religiously diverse world. Drawing on Scripture and years of experience, the author both challenges preconceptions and offers practical advice.

Do come and join with fellow Christians to discuss this interesting book.

The groups will be meeting from 2nd March on:

Monday afternoons at 2.00pm

Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm

Thursday afternoons at 2.30pm

Thursday evenings at 7.30pm

If you would like to join a group and have not yet signed up, please contact Rev. Judy Hunt 01948 667253. revjudyhunt@gmail.com

Brown Knowl Methodist Church

Spring Fayre

Saturday 14th March

10.30-12.30

Cakes, Gifts, Books,
Tea Cakes and Coffee/Tea



EVERYONE WELCOME

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

2nd/4th Thursdays at 7:30pm - Prayer Meeting at 7 Queen's Rd.

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

MARCH DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

24th February—8th March: Fairtrade Fortnight

Monday 2nd: Lent Course starts—see p15 for more details

Thursday 5th: Lent Lunch 12-2pm at St. John's

Thursday 12th: Lent Lunch 12-2pm at St. John's
7pm Circuit Meeting at St. John's.

Saturday 14th: Brown Knowl Spring Fair 10:30-12:30pm

Thursday 19th: Lent Lunch 12-2 at St. John's

Friday 20th 10-12pm Posy Making at St. John's

Thursday 26th: Lent Lunch 12-2 at St. John's

Friday 27th 7:30pm Whitchurch Community Choir at St. John's

April 2020 Newsletter

Please let Mike Nimmo have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by 25th March. Send material to:

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Taxi!

The following drivers are available during March
2020 to transport you to the services. Please 'phone
before 9:30am.

1st	Brian
8th	Jim
15th	Sheila
22nd	Hazel
29th	David



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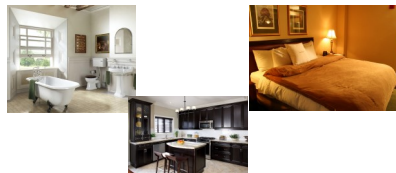
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