



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

**November 2020 Newsletter**

## **Message from the Manse**

Dear Friends,

One of the items discussed at our recent Church Council concerned the Circuit Vision document that has been produced by the Circuit Leadership Team. "A Faithful and Fruitful Future", as it is titled, sets priorities for the Circuit, but also challenges churches: where is our potential for mission? Where and how can we grow, both in numbers and spiritually? Are there things we need to stop doing? Where and how are we part of the community of the town?

There's an awful lot to think about in the document, and as part of our discussion at Church Council it soon became clear that we could really do with a session to discuss some of the issues it raises. So we're going to do exactly that, on the evening of Wednesday 18th November at 7:30pm. With the ongoing disruption due to COVID-19, it doesn't feel wise to meet in person - so instead we are going to use Zoom, including via phone line, and offer anyone who can't meet that way the opportunity to write to me so that their ideas can be included in the report that we're going to submit to the next Church Council.

Details of how to join will be sent via email to all those I have addresses for the week before, but the phone number to call will be 0203 481 5237 - you will then need to enter the Meeting ID 840 2257 8721.

We've included a copy of the document in the Newsletter this month, so have a look, pray, think, and help us answer the questions it poses - this is your opportunity to offer your thoughts on how our church responds to the challenges of the last few months, and seeks to come through them still sharing in worship, work and witness to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God Bless

Rob

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel  
of God's Love in Christ

**MISSION – OUR PRIORITIES:**

**Pruning**

Pay attention to Viability  
Celebrating 'Mission Complete'  
Ending well  
Discerning Revival and new growth

**Nurturing**

Growing faith, and new Christians through learning and caring  
New expressions of faith/Church  
Paying close attention to tradition where it is working

**Flourishing**

Reflecting on and learning from good news stories  
Celebrating what we believe  
People and values of the Kingdom over and above buildings

**Fertilising**

Facilitating lay leadership  
Encouraging Staff priorities  
A budgetary Strategy  
Outreach and visionary thinking  
Developing LMA vision and working  
Intentionality  
Music

**A**  
**Faithful**  
**And**  
**Fruitful**  
**Future**

## **-Circuit Vision**

The Role of the Circuit is to Resource and enable Mission

### **WHAT THIS MEANS FOR MISSION :**

#### **Local Churches**

Develop a growth plan or an end of life plan  
Do things differently  
Be honest  
Deepen your roots – Spirituality  
Believe, belong, behave as Christians!  
Belong to and serve your community

#### **At Circuit Level**

Bold decision making  
Changing the culture of decline & tradition  
Financial Wisdom and Strategy  
Initiative  
Strategic use of the Plan to encourage developments in  
Worship  
Supporting Preachers, and Worship Leaders  
Staffing and Stationing that embodies our vision

#### **Prayer:**

Help us Lord  
To see what you see  
When you look at our circuit:  
Imprint this vision deep within us,  
Where it can take root, grow and deepen  
And inspire all we do and how we do it  
In your name Amen.

*What about the Climate Emergency?*

## **Steward's Letter**

Dear all,

This month I am doing this newsletter on behalf of Rob Hewson who is not well. I am sure you will all join me in wishing him a speedy recovery.

At our last church council meeting we voted on the proposal to close the doors and put the heating on for church services. I am very much in favour of the open door policy but I must question the wisdom putting the heating on it is more a question of can we justify the cost at this difficult time?

I know that without heat it will be like being outdoors without the rain and wind. We must address this issue by getting our winter woolies out as I have! As winter draws on and the virus continues to spread through our towns and cities.

At least the autumn leaves in Newport Road, Whitchurch are really a sight to behold. This year with as lockdown continues Sheila and I have been doing more walking. Brown Moss is a good place to go and have a walk through the trees and wooded area's also Colemere Near Ellesmere. We can travel to Colemere without going into Wales by taking the Alkington Road to Northwood village. Colemere is a beautiful place to walk with it's footpath all around the lake. We also walk around our village of Tilstock.

Yesterday afternoon we walked through Mr Cope's farmyard. His man was feeding the extra calves with milk as the farm has been closed down with TB restrictions which means he can not sell any animals off the farm.

On the better days, weatherwise we take the car out for a ride, .Sheila gets the flask ready and off we go on our mystery tour .Last week after church we found ourselves in Church Stretton. We parked at the top of hill looking down over the town and surrounding hills for lunch. After a quick catnap we travelled along the top of Long Mynd ,looking down over Bishop's Castle as far as the welsh hills in the distance made it a well worth trip.

Perhaps you as a member of our congregation would like to write about what you have been doing during lockdown.

See you all next Sunday. God bless you all

Stay Safe

Maurice.

### **REPORT OF CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING – 8<sup>th</sup> Oct 2020**

A Church Council meeting was held in Church on 8<sup>th</sup> October with 12 people present and an additional 4 people attending via a pow wow now link. A copy of the minutes from this meeting can be seen on the noticeboard in the vestry. At the meeting, **Brenda Aumeer, Lynn Fowler and Sarah Lunt** were approved as additional **Church representatives** and **Andrew Fawcett and Rob Hewson** were reappointed as **Church Stewards**. Avril Bradfield was thanked for her years of service as Church Steward and **Mike Nimmo** volunteered to take over from her as our **representative on Churches Together in Whitchurch**. Rob Weir introduced the **Vision for Cheshire South Circuit** and its implications for St Johns and he has written about this elsewhere in the newsletter. We discussed plans for St Johns this **Christmas** in view of likely restrictions due to Covid 19. If you have any suggestions as to how we can **Shine a Light in Whitchurch** this year, please contact one of the worship committee (Rob Weir, Rachel Dimelow, Helen Trigg, Brian Faulkner or Michael Mulliner).

The next Church Council meeting will be held in February and all are welcome to attend.

*Briony Myles-Hook Church Council Secretary*

## *A Prayer*

Father God, There are many people in this world, and here in our community and surrounding villages, who need to be supported, particularly so at this time when the world is in the throes of a pandemic which is attacking young and old alike. Lord – tend those that are laid low by the Virus, those who are in hospital; those finding it difficult to recover; those suffering the pain of loneliness or isolation; whose way of life has been curtailed because of the current circumstances and the effects this has on their mental well-being.

Lord - we give thanks for the medical staff working in hospitals tending the sick. For the skill of surgeons and anaesthetists in the operating theatre; for the knowledge doctors and consultants build up in identifying health issues and making the right decisions to cure people; for the care and concern of the nursing staff.

Lord, we thank you for the food that you have provided us with and we ask that you will give us the will and the compassion to feed the hungry. We remember that there are children who go to school hungry, who are too tired to learn, who are unable to concentrate – all through no fault of their own. God of Grace, we ask you to give compassion, wisdom and courage to leaders of our country, and countries throughout the world, that they may defend those who suffer and work to bring relief

We give thanks for those people who are giving their time, their skills and their efforts to keep the Foodbank running here in Whitchurch during this very trying period. We ask that they will feel your support and encouragement in the work they do in their community in your Name.

We pray that we, here in St John's in Whitchurch, can fling open our doors wide and welcome in members of our community – giving an invitation to all in our locality to know you. Christ - Help us to accept that our paths may not always be smooth and grant us the faith that will protect us from despair and pour into our hearts such love for You, and all your peoples, that we can say with confidence - God is with us. **Amen**

### **Update on Ride & Stride**

Last week I sent into Shropshire Historic Churches Trust a cheque for their share of the money raised by your sponsorship of my car journey on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September. I also sent the report of the day which was in last month's newsletter along with the photos of the churches which I displayed in the long room. Two days later I received an email from Rev. Preb. David Crowhurst (treasurer) saying thank you so much for the cheque and that he was passing the report and photos on to Roger Hughes, county organiser. The next day I had a phone call from Roger, again thanking us for our contribution, and asking if he could put the report and photos (or some) onto their page on Facebook.

Thank you to everybody who contributed in any way.

Chris Crowther

### **Lockdown**

When is this lockdown going to end  
It makes me want to weep  
I miss the little coffee mornings  
I used to go to every week  
No monthly silver dinners  
Or afternoons of games  
Nothing to look forward to  
It's such a crying shame  
I would love to go out shopping  
And pick things off the shelf  
Fill my trolley to the top  
And make a pig of myself  
But that isn't going to happen  
I will just have to wait  
For the little man in the delivery van  
To bring my shopping through the gate

By Mary— who, during lockdown, has found a previously undiscovered talent for writing humorous verse.



## *Christian Aid*

We hope that some of you are making time to join us in prayer each Monday to pray for Climate Justice.

Brian Faulkner recently preached about compassion and chose the hymn God of the Poor (Beauty for Brokenness). Some of you may have taken away the hymn sheet to reflect on the words.

This month, we invite you to use the words of the following verse and chorus as a focus of your prayers

Rest for the ravaged earth, Oceans and streams  
Plundered and poisoned, Our futures, our dreams.  
Lord, end our madness, carelessness, greed.  
Make us content with the things that we need.

*God of the poor, Friend of the weak,  
Give us Compassion we pray  
Melt our cold hearts, let tears fall like rain.  
Come, change our love, from a spark to a flame.*

We pray that as we approach the winter and enter a new period of lockdown restrictions, we will take the opportunity to give thanks for the wonderful world beyond our doorsteps and reflect on how we can best look after it for future generations.

Briony Myles-Hook

## **Our Autumn Appeal for Christian Aid - Can you help us raise £100?**

Love never fails. In times of crisis, love unites us all. Let's love our global neighbour so they too can come together in crisis. In Nicaragua, the farming community of Santa Rosa has grown coffee for generations. Now they could be the last. The crop is struggling to grow as the climate crisis rages on.

**But there is hope.**

With your support, farming communities are coming together to share tools and knowledge. United, this community can make the urgent changes needed to help their family farms last for generations. Let's help to bring our global neighbours good harvests in the future with our Autumn Appeal.

You can send a donation to Briony, Helen or Brenda, or click on the link on the St John's website under 'Christian Aid Autumn Appeal' and give on line.

Churches Together in Whitchurch supporting Christian Aid

### ***A Couple of Scottish Smiles—I hope!***

A Scottish preacher is said to have prayed after a particularly unproductive collection “We thank you Lord that the plate was returned safely”

When the minister asked the wee boy what his cat's name was, he was told it was Ben Hur. When the minister expressed the view that it seemed an unusual name for a cat, the wee lad said “Well, we used to just call him Ben, but then he had kittens .”

(I can relate to this one. Our grand daughter got a very small kitten a couple of years ago—the gender was in doubt. So it was called “Evie” on the understanding if they had got it wrong it would become “Stevie”. It remained “Evie” Ed.)

### **Christmas Angels!**

Last year, as part of our mission in Whitchurch, we looked into knitting little angels to then be handed out within the community. This generated some interest and, although not many were brought in, those that were knitted were beautifully displayed on our Prayer Tree as part of the Christmas Tree Festival instead.

As the nights are drawing in and we are spending more time at home than we may like due to the current circumstances we wondered if this was a good opportunity to ask once again if anyone would like to take part in this. In these times, which are particularly difficult for some, the gift of a little angel at Christmas may be just what is needed to lift spirits. I will supply you with a sample pattern and the colour scheme is up to you - you may have lots of bits of leftover wool that could be used to great effect. If you would like to join in then please do let me know and I'll send you the pattern—all contributions will, I'm sure, be very much appreciated.

Many thanks,

*Rachel*

### **Situations Vacant.!**

No.1 Taxi Drivers----- For when return to normal Sunday service.

No. 2 Projectionist.

No. 3 Newsletter Editor.- To join the other monthly editors

If you are able to volunteer for any of these roles please contact me.

Stay safe

Maurice.

### **Preachers for November.**

1st. November	Rev Rob Weir.
8th. November	Rev Brian Acty.
15th. November	Nick Cutts.
22th November.	Brian Faulkner.
29th. November.	Rev Rob Weir.

### **Know Your Films! – The Answers**

1. Honest Gravel?	True Grit
2. Blown away	Gone With The Wind
3. Exceptional chap	Superman
4. Wasp's defence	The Sting
5. Stormy sphere	Thunderball
6. Crossing well away	A Bridge Too Far
7. Huge territory	The Big Country
8. King's gambling place	Casino Royale
9. High hopes	Great Expectations
10. Valuable pointer	Goldfinger
11. Young Deer	Bambi
12. Torso protector	The Bodyguard
13. Deadly fancy	Fatal Attraction
14. Down near the docks	On The Waterfront
15. Heated carts	Chariots Of Fire
16. Courageous body pump	Brave Heart
17. American state	Oklahoma
18. Celestial conflict	Star Wars
19. Both ends of the hostilities	War And Peace
20. Roman arena fighter	Gladiator

### **Stewards Rota for November.**

November 1st. Peter Shingler.

November 8th. Brian Faulkner.

November 15th. Maurice Latham.

November 22 nd Robert Hewson.

November 29th. Maurice Latham or Andrew Fawcett.

### **SPICK & SPANNERS ROTA**

November 5th Einwen Kelly, Ruth Dawson & Sheila Latham

19th Nancy Millington & Gwen Reeves

### **Taxi Service**

The taxi service is not running in the usual way. However, if you require a lift to church, then please ring Brian Faulkner and a lift will be provided.

### **Sound**

November 1st Chris Crowther

8th Sarah Lunt

15th Mike Nimmo

22nd Norman Gollins

29th Brian Acty

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**December/January Newsletter**

Please let Mike Nimmo have all your submissions for the both month's Newsletter by Friday 20th November.

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the team.

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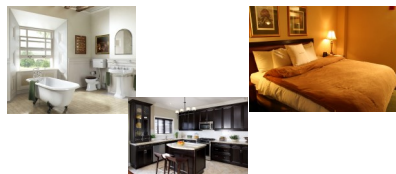
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## **SPLISH SPLASH**

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## **WALKERS**

