



**St. John's Methodist Church
Whitchurch
July/August 2021
Newsletter**

Message from the Manse



Dear Friends,

"And so, the end is near..." as after eight years we prepare to move away from Whitchurch and on to pastures new. Regrets? Yes, as the song goes, I've had a few, but then again too few to mention... I have never regretted saying that I wanted to move to a Rural Appointment, and it has definitely been the right thing to be in Whitchurch - even if now the right thing is to be moving on.

For eight years I have baptised, married and conducted funerals for those in this area, I have preached the word, and I have tried to share something of God's grace and love with those around me. In return, I've received encouragement, advice, and support from many. I will leave with many memories: conducting my first wedding, at which the happy couple walked out to a recording of "The Day Thou Gavest" played by a Pipe Band; running past St. Johns in Clerical Shirt and Collar while taking part in the Whitchurch 10K; the Carol Services, always a big occasion at St. Johns; the May Concerts, with their varied programmes; the commitment and work of so many, often behind the scenes and often unnoticed, but never unappreciated; and so much more.

I'll miss the amenities of a small town where everything is within walking distance; walking - and sometimes running - along the canal; being on first name terms with the photographer from the Whitchurch Herald, who seemed to be at every event going around the town. I will miss the people from my churches most of all. It will be strange, moving somewhere different and having to build new relationships with people - but it is time to move on.

It's been a time of growth, and of change, for me and my family in Whitchurch. We arrived as a family with two primary-age children, a wife working in School Nursing; we leave with a son who's looking forward to college, a daughter in her middle years of secondary school, and with Fiona having trained as a Local Preacher and now looking ahead to being stationed as a Probationer Minister herself in d with a dog that half of Whitchurch seems to smile at when they see him.

2022 - and with a dog that half of Whitchurch seems to smile at when they see him. You welcomed us, you have supported us, and we are thankful. "I did it my way" - I did it the only way I could do. Donna will be arriving in a few short weeks; I know that you will welcome her and her family, and support them too. And she will do things her way. But, as every Minister who has gone before, and every one that will follow me, what I hope I have done is not my work, but the work of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God Bless you all my friends, as the song goes, "God be with you 'til we meet again."

Rob

Stewards' Letters

Hello Friends ,



I'm so overwhelmed with your support for me during my few difficult months and your prayers for Margaret in her troubled struggle in life. But once more our God answered our prayers and let her into his kingdom. So thank you .

God bless,

Rob

And from Maurice

In 1949 L S Lowry painted a scene of the waiting room at Atherstone Hospital. 70+years on we have a similar situation in hospitals today. On Sunday morning we set off to Shrewsbury. It took much time to find the entrance to A-E as they have decided to put a new building in front of it.

Eventually we checked me in at the reception desk and proceeded to take our seats (steel) and wait to be called by the relevant department, with only eight patients in the waiting area, my name was soon called. A smart young lady looking remarkable fresh considering she was just completing her long night shift. She said they had a very rough night with so many injuries to deal with and waiting times had been up to 8 hours. She took all my details and did the usual health checks, I assume that is to be sure that I will live until I am called to the next stage of the process.

At this point we decided it was better Sheila go home and wait for news.

Sitting in the first seat was a young lad in short trousers with a sheet over his head and body. Just imagine the surprise we had when an angry old man emerges from under the sheet by the name of Geoffrey. He was not getting up and go for treatment he was being offered. Even the hospital security man fail to move him. I thought that all Geoffrey's were calm and pleasant people but apparently not.

As the morning went on Nurses, Porters, Doctors, Cleaners, Ambulance staff were walking back and to through the seating area. All shapes and sizes, all in different coloured uniforms denoting all various grades hence the colours of the rainbow. Some walk quickly, some slowly, no doubt their legs were tired. Others just glided through. With no cleaning of seats between them being sat on which was a surprise considering how careful they are with all other aspects of COVID control.

Every time a nurse came to the door to call the next patient my ears prick up but no it was not my name. The hours past slowly. Many young children came in with mum or dad soon after 8am with legs and arms in great pain to be fixed, ladies with ankle damage wearing welly boots-high heels no doubt and just after 11 o'clock my name was called I was taken by surprise

But once you enter the system they can not do enough for you.
The service was excellent.—Shrewsbury Hospital.

Maurice L.

Pathways



Recently we bought some prints to brighten up our walls in our new home. One is called 'Pathway through the bluebells' It shows a winding path going through a wood full of beautiful blue bells

This took me back in my memories from many years back when my father took my sister and I to the nearby woods awash with bluebells! I can still smell the scent of these pretty shy flowers wafting in the breeze. We picked a bunch of blue bells for our mother. We should not have taken the wildflowers, we now know it was wrong to do so, but as children it was the normal thing to do. Sadly, when we got home our blue bells had wilted after a very short time. It probably taught us a lesson to leave wild flowers growing wild and enjoy them in the woods where they belong!

The shades of blue which seemed to reflect the colour of my Father's eyes – I still miss him so today,,,,,,,,,

The path on my picture winds through the flowers and leads to wherever one would like it to lead in one's imagination.....

We have many paths to choose in our lives, right from the tottering steps of childhood to full adulthood.

What subjects suit our talents and what our career path will be.

Then choosing a life partner, sometimes for the better, sadly sometimes for the worse....

Becoming a parent and showing the paths that our children should take in life guiding them through their lives and hoping that they choose the right one!

We sometimes get lost on the pathways, and take a wrong turning and often regret our choices, then hopefully return to our original path and try to find our way forward.

The picture shows light and the shade throwing shadows on it. In life, when dark times come the path that we tread becomes a gloomy and foreboding place, but then opens out into brightness and sunshine lifting our spirits and heart and mind.

We must all choose our pathways in life, big decisions and new ways of looking at things.

We made a big choice in our latter years to move to the other side of the country - not knowing people apart from my family here. It is lovely being close to them, but it has not been an easy pathway for us, we are still find-

ing our feet on the path, still trying to meet new friends and getting used to a very different way of life.

Hopefully our path will become straight soon and we can see our future here in the flat lands.

May you all find your pathways and even if you stumble on the way and take a wrong turning our paths will cross and people will meet again and life will hopefully become normal as it was before.

It has been a terrible couple of years. We need to be kind to each other and show love to all as the centre of all things and a lasting reminder that we are all in this world no matter how many paths have led us here.

May God bless you all on your pathways in life.

Sheila Walwyn.

Action For Children

What a difficult period we've all come through and because of the various lockdowns the Action for Children charity, like many others, have not received their usual income, nor have I been able to collect and empty the home boxes, but their work has continued where required,



I now feel that as we are beginning to take small steps forward, it is appropriate to empty the collecting boxes and to this end, I shall be in church on as many Sundays as possible during July and August. So please bring your box to church, and should I not be there please leave it with a steward.

Thank you in anticipation

David Whiteley



'Taking the Fall' – on Thursday 22 July 2021

- that others may receive Fruit & Veg !

On 22 July a sponsored tandem Skydive will take place to raise funds for the Whitchurch Foodbank.

During COVID we had the benefit of receiving a grant to provide fruit and veg for a 3 month period. That grant has now been spent but we believe this provision has proved a vital addition to the service we provide. We would therefore wish to continue providing fresh fruit and veg together with bread and eggs in addition to the normal tinned and packaged food included in our food parcels.

As the cost of this extra provision is on average £100 / week we aim to raise £5000 so we can continue this provision for at least another 12 months.

To donate go to www.whitchurch.foodbank.org.uk and click on Skydive then Golden Giving – One-Off Gifts and leave us a message of support.

Remember if you are able to Gift Aid your donation, then courtesy of the Chancellor your gift will grow by 25%.

Those jumping are: Jamie Muir, Alan Scutt, Phil & Sam Berks, Barry Hughes, Robert Bailey, Ellie & Tracey Metcalf and Jane Shepherd

Justice & Peace: Praying for the Climate Emergency

*For the beauty of the earth
For the beauty of the skies
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies
Lord of all to thee we raise
This our joyful hymn of praise*

Thank you to everyone who continues to pray for those affected by the Climate Emergency.

*May God bless us with wonder at creation's glory.
May God bless us with fury at creation's spoiling.
May God bless us with courage at this critical hour.
Amen*

Christian Aid: Call to Action

The crisis has already arrived in the lives of millions of people around the world, hurting those who have done the least to cause it. Time is running out to limit the worst impacts of climate breakdown for millions more. We must make our voices heard.

From now on, every moment matters and every action counts in the fight for climate justice.

To sign the petition, go to the Christian Aid website by clicking on the link below or following the link on our church website or facebook page.

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/climate-justice-2021>

If you do not have access to a computer but would like to sign the petition then please speak to Helen or Briony and we will add your name on your behalf.

Justice & Peace: *Walking with Micah*



Act Justly Love as God Loves Walk humbly with God

The Methodist Church have launched a new project called **Walking with Micah**: to help the Methodist Church focus on our principles and priorities for justice and so increase our ability to seek God's justice, as a Church and in our own Christian lives.

We live at a time of huge change when domestic and global injustices are being revealed and intensified. How can our world be renewed so that all God's creation, people and planet, can flourish?

Our Calling as Methodists means we long for God's justice in the world. Around the globe and in their own local communities, Methodists are working for justice through responding to needs and campaigning for change.

The prophet Micah reminded people that the worship God wants is for us **to act justly, to love as God loves, and to walk humbly with God**. Justice-seeking has always been integral to our relationship with God.

The [Walking with Micah](#): project will involve:

Drawing on our Methodist heritage of challenging injustice and learning from the insights and challenges of others within and beyond the Christian faith.

- Consulting widely within the Methodist Church and listening to what matters to Methodist people at this time.
- Working with others to resource individuals, churches and leaders, to speak and act for justice both individually and in the name of the Methodist Church in Britain.

Notes from Fourth Mission Meeting 8/6/21

.The **Walking with Micah** Project was launched on Sunday 13th June with a lecture by former Prime Minister Gordon Brown entitled Justice and Hope. You can watch it on the Methodist website by visiting this link.

www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/social-and-climate-justice/walking-with-micah/

WHAT'S ON! - AUGUST 22ND !



Churches Together are planning an event in the Park to celebrate coming out of Lockdown and remembering those who were lost to the pandemic.

We aim to start at 2 o'clock with a variety of activities for the kids (and the young at heart) together with some music. At 3.30pm we will have a thanksgiving service led by Jamie Muir. Finally at 4 o'clock we are laying on some more musical items while those attending have a picnic.

The whole town will be invited but it is important that the churches support this outreach into the community. So come to all or part of the event; bring any youngsters from your family or from your neighbours; bring your friends and neighbours but most of all come yourself.

I'll keep you informed on the emerging detail through church notices and our website. Also keep an eye out for our hoped for publicity in the Whitchurch Herald.

See you there!

Mike (Nimmo)

Present: Rob Weir, Briony Myles-Hook, Brian Faulkner, Dorothy Faulkner, Mike Nimmo, Hazel Nimmo, Chris Crowther, Lyn Fowler, , Helen Trigg, Vic Trigg, Sarah Lunt, Maurice Latham
Apologies: Rachel Dimelow Copied in: Pete Shingler, Andrew Fawcett

1 Update on Mission Planning Process

Step 2: Do a Community Audit

Mike has spoken to the Beacon to see which gaps in the community they have identified but they have received very little feedback and so are planning to follow their own path.

Mike, Vic & Chris have met and felt that it would be difficult to proceed with identifying areas where St John's could help until they knew the resources available from the church and the level of commitment from members to deliver any scheme. **Brian** pointed out that we still need to clarify what we see as the needs of the community in Whitchurch.

Step 3: Carry out a Review of our Church

Hazel circulated the draft questionnaire she prepared with **Briony and Dorothy**. She will incorporate the comments so that it can be reviewed at the Church Council Meeting on 23rd June and approved for distribution to church members and community members. There will be an article in the newsletter and pastoral visitors will encourage people to complete paper copies and return them to Hazel by 25th July.

Questions to consider:

Do we have the people at St John's to reach out to young people in Whitchurch?

Could we form a partnership with anyone?

*Could we rebrand **Network** to encourage lonely people outside the church? Could we relaunch with a "Come & Meet the new minister session?"*

*Could we ask a lay worker from the Circuit to relaunch **Parents and Toddlers** with a rota of helpers from St Johns? Vic reported that there were 117 hits on our website last month and 56 were for Parents and Toddlers. Could this lead to another group for children who struggle to access regular playgroups? **Briony** will approach the Circuit about costs.*

Briony had received 3 responses from people in this group to the **“What makes a Mission Shaped Church”** document produced by the Circuit, and included in the **Mission in Love Unites Us** webinar. It will now be circulated at Church Council and they will be asked to score our Church on the scale 1 to 10 to encourage discussion.

2 Sharing the Mission Planning Process

Rob was thanked for his letter in the **June Newsletter** about the Mission Planning Process and it's importance to the future of St John's so that everyone knows what we are doing and why we need to do it. Hopefully this will encourage everyone to return their questionnaires and take part in the reviews. The Mission Group will share the process and its intentions with **Church Council on 23rd June** so that everyone is behind it.

3 Mission in Love Unites Us (Update from Circuit Meeting on 16/6/21)

This webinar is available as a powerpoint with a script if we would like to deliver it to more members in our church building. As a next step, the Circuit are planning a series of sessions over the next 12 months when churches can explore possible options for the future. They are also planning to create an area on the circuit website to bring together information and share resources which churches find helpful.

4 Eco Church

Helen is going to meet with Rachel and Briony to discuss this before the next Church Council Meeting. If anyone else would like to be involved at this stage, please get in touch.

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 18th August at 7.30pm** on zoom and **All are Welcome** .

MISSION GROUP

As outlined in Rob's letter in the June edition of the Church Newsletter, we are seeking views from our congregation as to how St John's Church can "put ourselves at the heart of our community" and become a more Mission focussed church. We are also seeking to find out what skills, abilities and commitments people within St John's have and are prepared to give towards that end.

We have prepared a pack containing the following items which will either be emailed to you, if you have provided the church with your email address, or which will be available for you in hard copy either at Church or delivered to you:-

- 1 A list of the activities/events which our Church has organised over the last few years involving members of St John's in the community.
- 2 A questionnaire to find out what skills, abilities and commitments there is within the congregation.

If you have received this by email please return the questionnaire to **hazel@heritagewalk.co.uk** . Otherwise, please complete and return it via any Steward or directly to myself by the end of July to enable the Mission Group to collate the information in readiness for discussion with our new minister.

Hazel (on behalf of the Mission Group)

HOT NEWS!

We have just received news that the Circuit has agreed to support and fund a lay worker for 3 hours per week for a period of one year to lead a revived Toddlers Group at St John's. Members of our church will be needed to work on a rota alongside the Lay Worker. Please consider volunteering for this community endeavour when completing the questionnaire.

Ruth Mulliner

I first came across the Mulliner family in the late 60's when the Circuit Youth, of which I was a member, held a Summer Fayre at Moor Hall, Aston where Ruth & Michael were farming at the time. Ruth would occasionally play at a service that I would be taking at Aston. That is, when George Lawrence allowed someone else to play! Ruth and Michael moved to Whitchurch over forty years ago and became members of St. John's. In those early days, Ruth had a lot of responsibility with the farm, running a Bed & Breakfast and with family still at home.

Even so, they invited St. John's up to look round at the birds and provide hospitality. As her responsibilities become less, retirement to Tarporley Road, Ruth's involvement in the Church became much greater. She served in many areas of the church life, Parents and Toddlers, Pastoral Visitor, Baptismal Roll Secretary, Steward, Network, Family Committee and Worship Committee Secretary and therefore a member of Church Council for many years. For most people reading this, Ruth is remembered for her contribution in music, standing in for Derek Morris and playing at nearly every evening service, when we had these every week. Ruth started the Midday May Concerts that spanned into June, arranging the artist, food and helpers to serve. This lasted for about 11 years, stopped by Covid and brought many people into our church. Ruth played for the musicals conducted by Ruth Parrott. Playing for the Music Group, enabling the church to move towards more modern songs.

Ruth always wished that she would be fit enough to play the organ again at church and as a church we have failed to acknowledge the 60 plus years of music service to the Methodist Church.

I could write much more but I will sum up with three words, Hospitality, Service and Music— Even with reduced mobility, Ruth made the effort to wander down the church prior to the service starting with a greeting to all.

Ruth attended her final service at St. John's just 10 days before she suddenly died.

Brian Faulkner. (Church Steward)

Give us a Break!



An American minister tells how one night at a Session meeting (a bit like our church council) , he sought to clear his holiday dates with the office bearers. He was speechless when one of them suddenly said, “I think three weeks vacation is a lot to ask for someone who works only one hour a week”. There was a moment of embarrassing silence before another office bearer said, “I move we give the pastor three hours off!”. The motion was carried with one abstention.

Ride & Stride

This year's event will take place on the second Saturday in September, the 11th. Depending on the restrictions that may be in place at the time, we shall either have the usual coffee morning and then I am hoping to be sponsored to drive round as many chapels as I can during the afternoon, or there will be no coffee morning and I will drive round during the day. Other people are welcome to do the same. It is a lovely way to spend a Saturday, particularly if it is a nice day. However, the Church will need stewarding for any visitors who make it to our door. Hopefully, several of you will be able to volunteer to give an hour (or two) of your time to do this. More information will be given out nearer the time.

Chris Crowther

Margaret Hewson Ruth Mulliner

The church acknowledges with thanks the donations received at the funerals of Margaret and Ruth that will be used for the church.



Please keep remembering Rob and Michael in your prayers.

Services & Preachers

4th July	Nick Cutts
11th July	Rev Rob Weir
18th July	Rev Rob Weir
25th July	Rev Rob Hilton
1st August	Brian Faulkner
8th August	Rev Brian Acty
15th August	Local Arrangement
22nd August	Rev John Chesworth
29th August	Local Arrangement



Stewards

July	4th Peter Shingler
	11th. Robert Hewson
	18th Brian Faulkner
	25th. Andrew Fawcett
August	1st Maurice Latham
	8th. Brian Faulkner
	15th. Peter Shingler
	22th. Robert Hewson
	29 th. Andrew Fawcett



Taxi

The following drivers are willing to provide a lift to church. Please telephone before 9.30am on that day.



Please note also that trying to predict in advance is not easy, so some changes may be necessary.

4 th July	Hazel
11 th July	Pete
18 th July	David
25 th July	Sheila
1 st August	Brian
8 th August	Hazel
15 th August	David
22 nd August	Sheila

Sound

4th July	Andrew Fawcett
11th July	Norman Gollins
18th July	Sarah Lunt
25th July	Mike Nimmo
1st August	Andrew Fawcett
8th August	Brian Acty
15th August	Norman Gollins
22nd August	Sarah Lunt
29th August.	Mike Nimmo



SPICK & SPANNERS

July 1st Elizabeth Shingler, Briony Myles-Hook & Linda Jenkins

July 15th Mike Nimmo, Vic Trigg & Dorothy Faulkner

August 5th Sue & Ken Davies

August 19th Chris Crowther, Dot Charlesworth & Lynn Fowler



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September 2021 Newsletter

Please let Dot Charlesworth have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by Sunday 22nd August.

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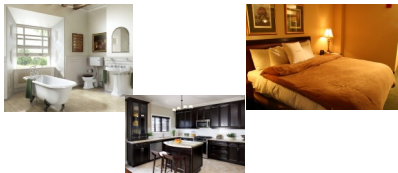
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WALKERS

