



**St. John's Methodist Church
Whitchurch
May 2022
Newsletter**

Message from the Manse



Hello friends,

This month many children will be sitting their SATS and preparing for the more formal exams in June and July. It's a time of challenge and nervousness for both children and parents, as we all hope our children do the best that they can and get the grades that they need. There is a sense that there is more pressure this year though after the pandemic. As a parent we all want the best for our children, we want them to reach their fullest potential; we want them to achieve. But most of all, we want them to know that they are loved for who they are and they will always have our support.

As a little girl I loved the Beatrix Potter stories, especially the story of Peter Rabbit. Peter is mischievous and has a determined character. He knows what he wants and will stop at nothing to get it. Over the Easter holidays we ventured up to the Lake District and to Windermere; to the beautiful landscape that Beatrix loved so much. We enjoyed a day out visiting Hill Top farm, where she lived and wrote her famous stories, and we snuggled down one evening to watch the Peter Rabbit movie that came out a few years ago. If you haven't seen it yet, then I recommend it for children and adults alike. In the movie Peter is up to his usual tricks trying to get vegetables from Mr McGregor's garden, and there are moments we think he might end up in the cooking pot, but despite electric fences, and even bombs, Peter escapes unharmed and has the determination to keep trying to get some vegetables.

I doubt Peter Rabbit did well at school, his sisters seem much more sensible and academic but Peter had different skills that the school system wouldn't have graded. His gifting was in problem solving, risk management, and leadership but most importantly he walked with confidence because he knew he had his family behind him; he was loved. My prayer is that all children, no matter what their

grades will know this.

I often wonder how determined we are, and how much confidence we have in our own abilities. Often we criticise ourselves too often, and struggle to believe that we can achieve things. Often we resort to keeping things how they have always been – despite the floors! – because we know what to expect, there are no surprises. It can be a real challenge to take that leap of faith and to do something differently for the first time and to do it confidently.

I'm sure the first disciples would have felt the same, but with determination, confidence and encouraging each other they achieved what Jesus had commissioned them to do, and they did so with the knowledge that God loved them, no matter what. Sometimes they achieved great things; other times they didn't. Yet they never gave up and kept going.

Whatever challenges we all face in life, may we be like Peter Rabbit... walking with confidence, knowing that we are loved and have the determination to keep going when the going gets tough.
.... although I don't advocate stealing from one another, perhaps we just need to learn to share a bit better– like Mr McGregor and Peter had to learn in the movie.

With blessings this spring time,

Rev Donna



Steward's Letter



Spring and Easter is a joyous time, with the hope and promise of new life that it brings, and the remembrance of Christ's resurrection and how this reminds us that we can have peace even in the most troubling of times. We remember how our Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins and gave hope that we too who live and believe in him shall never die.

Martin Luther once said "Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in the books alone, but in every leaf in springtime." And this took me back to the other year when I brought in the goose egg to hatch in the Church for the children to see and watch new life emerge from the egg just as the promise of new beginnings was given to us by Christ when he rose from the tomb.

And with this we must rejoice and be thankful for the gift of life.

Rob

BBTs at St Johns



Bumps Babies and Toddlers resumes after Easter on Monday 25th April. Any mums, dads, nanas, grandpas and other carers and their children are welcome to join us for craft, toys and coffee in the long room and guild room and singing, stories and prayers in the church. Last month we decorated vases for mothers day and made Easter cards as well as enjoying an egg hunt around the church. If you would like to help or just want to come and say hello, please speak to Briony. There will be no BBT on Monday 2nd May or Monday 30th May.

Services & Preachers



1st Rev. Michael Parrott , Chapel Anniversary

8th Rev. Donna Broadbent-Kelly

15th Rev. Biseker, United Christian Aid Service

22nd Sue Tyson

29th Pat Maidment

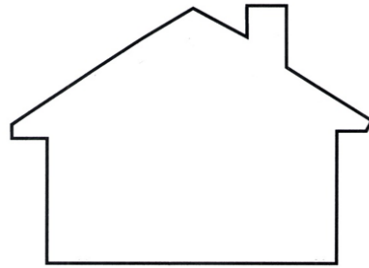
CHAPEL ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY LUNCH

We are holding a Chapel Anniversary Sunday Lunch
after the service on Sunday 1st May.
On the menu will be Quiche & Turkey Salad
followed by a selection of sweets.
Please put your name on the list, if you intend to come.

MORE

The afternoon More sessions for May are on 9th, 16th &
30th

2nd May is the Early May Bank Holiday and No More on
that day!



House Groups

Are you interested in joining a house group?

House groups are places where we can gather together as the Christian family for support, prayer, bible study, fellowship and so much more!

This is not a new idea, early Methodist gatherings were called 'societies'. John Wesley encouraged people to meet together in their homes so that both leaders and members of the societies could receive support and challenge in their faith. These groups, called 'classes' and 'bands' met regularly, and the idea was to be accountable to each other about how each person was living the Christian life. Supportive house groups have been found to be one of the most powerful ways for people to feel that they belong and to learn and grow.

House groups are for everyone, whether you are new on your Christian journey or have walked it a long time. It can be a bit daunting going to your first house group as you aren't sure of what to expect or what's going to happen. Please be reassured, there are no expectations, just come as you are.

The worship committee felt that they would like to explore further the idea of setting up a house group and to explore what this might look for us at St Johns.

You are all invited to 24 Greenfields Rise, Whitchurch SY13 1EP for a very informal gathering of those who would be interested in joining a house group or who would just like to find out more.

Saturday 14th May at 3pm

If you are interested in joining us please let me know so I can ensure I have enough cake, but if not don't worry, just turn up!

You will be made most welcome.

With blessings, Rev. Donna

From Maurice Posniak

Hi all my very dear friends at St John's,

I was thinking about it the other day, and it struck me what a wonderful difference it makes in my life to know you and all the other lovely people of St John's. I still remember my first visit to St John's all those years ago. My mum had wanted to try out St John's and I thought I'd come along so that she felt more comfortable in new surroundings. I wasn't planning to come a second time. After all, I wasn't (and am still not) into a lot of church teaching. I tend to think 'love others as you love yourself' is the important part, and I don't focus that much on the rest. So why did I come again? Well, because everyone at St John's was (as you are now) so so lovely and friendly. When I attend a church service, everywhere I look, I see very valued friends and really lovely people.

I also think that you guys have had a lovely impact in the life of my mum. I know that she really values wonderful friendships with so many St John's people. I hope she doesn't mind my saying so, but my mum has always tended to be the sort of person who gives and gives, but tends to keep quiet about herself. It has been so so wonderful to see that there are several people in the church who my mum is comfortable being very open with. That says such a lot about how sensitive and lovely you guys are. Thank you for being there for her.

It has also been utterly amazing to see the incredibly positive impact of St John's in the community. For instance, I've popped in when I can to MORE (the games day St John's has been having every few weeks). It has been so lovely to see amongst people who sometimes come along,

people who are not connected with St John's who have various challenges, who find that the session really helps them. How brilliant to see how St John's is touching lives. Incidentally, Pete and Maurice also got me to come up the church tower at a recent MORE (see the photos). For someone like me who is not at all relaxed about heights, this was one of the scariest things I've ever done, but it's always fabulous to face fears!

Again, thank you! Thank you! Thank you! St John's is a really lovely community and you are a really lovely person!

Maurice

Today Tomorrow Always He Is There

In sickness or health,
In suffering and pain,
In storm laden skies,
In sunshine and rain,
God always is there
To lighten your way
And lead you into
A much brighter day

by Helen Steiner Rice

(Thanks to Beryl Posniak for this contribution)

The Rotary & Inner Wheel Clubs
of Whitchurch present

Sing out for Cancer

*a fun evening with Cor Bach
and local youth musicians*

a choral concert of traditional and modern classics
aiding local prostate and breast cancer initiatives



7.30pm Saturday 7th May 2022 at St Alkmunds Church

Tickets £10 available from
Gallery Flowers, The Card Market
or Peggy Mullock 07968 583208



BaCorh



CHORAL CLASSICS & ROCK FOR CHARITY!

A group of choral singers, who took the Internet by storm, is giving a charity performance at St Alkmund's Church (see flyer aside).

'Cor Bach' - who scored nearly five million hits on social media—will be supported by two of the town's most talented young musicians at a special 'Sing out for Cancer' programme in Whitchurch, on 7th May, in aid of the town's Rotary prostate cancer testing and Inner Wheel's breast cancer initiatives. 'Cor Bach' is an acapella spin-off of nine members from the acclaimed Staffordshire-based 'Daleian Singers' who have sung with celebrities such as Joan Sutherland and Alfie Boe and whose awards include 'Best UK Choir' at the 2019 Cornwall International Festival of Male Voices.

The singers have been Internet superstars since an impromptu video of them, singing acapella in a pub after choir practice, went viral on social media and attracted 'likes' from fans including Piers Morgan and Boris Johnson. Since then they have posted a series of videos—featuring choral treatments as carried as 'Mary's Boy Child' and 'What Shall We Do with a Drunken Sailor' for nearly 300 'You Tube' subscribers alone.

Cathedral concerts and the local BBC radio performances have added to their fan base with a catalogue of music including traditional classics as well as Electric Light Orchestra, Queen and Billy Joel compositions.

Supporting 'Cor Bach' will be performances by two rising musical talents from the Whitchurch area. Saxophonist Oliver Pritchard Jones, a jazz and classical music student at Leeds Conservatoire, was the 2018 Rotary regional musician of the year and his appearances include the prestigious London venue Ronnie Scott's. And Oliver Smith, a flautist who studied music at Chester, has sung and played at St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, several overseas tours and sings in the church choir at St Oswald's, Malpas.

(Ed. This is a great opportunity to fun evening while supporting local cancer charity initiatives)



Christian Aid Week May 15th – 21st

Hope in times of Crisis

The theme for Christian Aid Week this year is Hope in Times of Crisis and the focus is on stories of bringing hope to people around the world through our prayers, gifts and actions.

We have all seen the news of the devastating war in Ukraine. We've heard heartbreaking stories of people fleeing violence, and we've seen the climate crisis causing aching hunger for families in Zimbabwe. Even though they are 7,000 miles apart, these catastrophes are linked as the war in Ukraine will drive up food prices in Zimbabwe and around the globe. Without the wheat, sunflower oil and fertiliser produced by Ukraine and Russia vulnerable families will be pushed even deeper into hunger.

This year, Christian Aid is sharing stories of Hope. Of Janet, a 70 year old Grandmother in Zimbabwe who can feed her family thanks to drought-resistant seeds and has built a storeroom to keep her harvest safe. She says *My heart was a painful thinking that my family would die. By God's grace we did not die. We soldiered on. Now my life is changing and I am thankful.*

Of Jessica is a young mum in Zimbabwe who struggles to feed her children with the threat of drought. *'My children give me the power to go ahead,'* she says. *'I pray they have a better future.'* This Christian Aid Week, as you sit down for a meal, please pray for Jessica and her family. Your gifts and prayers could fill families like hers with hope. This year we have again decided not to hold our house to house collections due to the risk of Covid and the energy of our volunteers. Many

Your gifts will bring hope to people around the world in times of crisis.

If you would like to help with the coffee morning by tending a stall, making a cake or donating a raffle prize or if you would be willing to shake a collecting bucket outside the Civic Centre please let us know.

A Joint Service for Christian Aid Week led by Rev Frances Biseker with members of St Alkmunds, St Georges and the Beacon Church at **St Johns** on **Sunday 15th May**.



A Coffee Morning at the Civic Centre on Friday 20th May

Street Collections on the High Street from 10am to 2pm on Friday 20th May and Saturday 21st May

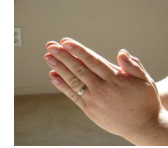


Christian Aid week envelopes in the pews in Church

An **e-envelope** where you can donate online. Click on the link <https://envelope.christianaid.org.uk/envelope/whitchurch-shropshire?channel=copy> (use this if you are viewing the newsletter online)

There is also a **Just Giving Page** if you would like to **sponsor** Rev Donna and her son as they walk 10,000 d her son as they walk 10,000 steps each day in May to raise money for Christian Aid week.

Prayers for ourselves and our World



Our world is rarely free from conflict, fear and suffering , but events in Ukraine have brought so much anguish into focus. We pray for the people of that suffering country and fervently hope that the conflict can be stopped.

The following “Prayer for Peace” was written by Alan Paton a South African who objected to the apartheid regime and founded the South African Liberal Party to oppose it. He was noted for his peaceful opposition and wrote novels including “Cry the Beloved Country” , dealing with the racial situation in his country.

O Lord, open our eyes
That we may see the needs of others,
Open our ears that we may hear their cries,
Open our hearts so that they need not be without success.
Let us not be afraid to defend the weak
Because of the anger of the strong,
Nor afraid to defend the poor
Because of the anger of the rich.
Show us where love and hope and faith are needed
And use us to bring them to those places.
Open our eyes and ears that we may, these coming days,
Be able to do some work of peace for thee.

Keep it Short!

A speaker, famous for his long speeches, went on and on. His audience could stand no more, and gradually began to drift quietly away. The speaker finally looked up and saw there was only one man left in the hall. Regardless, he was determined to finish his prepared speech. When at last he came to the end he went up to the lone man and thanked him for being polite enough to stay to the end.

“Oh no,” said the man. “I’m only the caretaker, and I have to wait to lock up.”

Ditto!

A bishop had a bad reputation in his diocese for preaching long and very boring sermons. His reputation spread rapidly, because each Sunday he used to visit a different parish to preach. One day he arrived at five to eleven at a small country church and was welcomed by the vicar who was looking a bit flustered. He led the bishop into the church and, to the bishop’s surprise and annoyance, there were only three people in the congregation.

“Didn’t you warn them that I was coming?” he asked the vicar angrily

“I certainly did not, bishop,” replied the vicar. “But I shall do my very best to find out who did!”.

Regular Giving

The supply of envelopes for the next year beginning at the start of June have arrived and will be issued to those currently in the scheme. If you are not using envelopes and would like some please let me know.

Regular giving is the backbone of our finances –with old adage that we should remember “the church is there every week even if we can’t be”.

Another method of regular giving is directly through your bank. It has the benefits of happening automatically and saving you scrabbling around on a Sunday morning looking for the right amount. Linda Weston will happily give you the relevant info to set things up

Putting on my other hat as Gift Aid Secretary, please, if you are a UK taxpayer, consider Gift Aiding your collection and any other donations to the church. It is painless as it costs you nothing and the church gains 25% more from HMRC.

If you have any questions please get in touch with me. And I’ll allay any concerns you may have.

Mike Nimmo

Stewards



May 1st Brian Faulkner,

May 8th Robert Hewson,

May 15th Peter Shingler,

May 22nd Maurice Latham,

May 29th Andrew Fawcett.

TEA & COFFEE ROTA



May 1st Sunday Lunch – no Coffee

8th Hazel & Mike Nimmo

15th Lynn Fowler & Helen Thompson

22nd Elizabeth & Pete Shingler

29th Rachel Dimelow & Linda Weston

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.

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

SPICK & SPANNERS

May 5th Nancy & Gwen

19th Elizabeth Shingler, Briony Myles-
Hook & Linda Jenkins



Sound

1st May Andrew Fawcett

8th May Norman Gollins

15th May Sarah Lunt

22nd May Brian Acty

29th May Mike Nimmo



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May 2022 Newsletter

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

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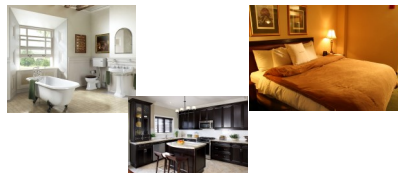
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WALKERS

