



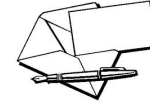
Silver Sorbet Dahlias

St. John's Methodist Church

Whitchurch

September 2023 Newsletter

Message from the Manse



Hello friends,

A Time for Everything

There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,
a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,
a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,
a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,
a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

What do workers gain from their toil? I have seen the burden
God has laid on the human race. He has made everything
beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human
heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from begin-
ning to end. I know that there is nothing better for people
than to be happy and to do good while they live. That each of
them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—

this is the gift of God. I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. - Ecclesiastes 3

September often marks a new start, a new beginning as well as a new season. The Methodist church year begins in September; the new school year starts, the farming calendar has begun again after the harvest and we begin to move into a new season; Autumn.

It looks like this summer has been a bit of a wet one to say the least. We can't control what the weather is going to do and we can't control the changing of the seasons. We can't slow time down and despite all the creams and potions we can't stop ageing.

This scripture passage from Ecclesiastes reminds us of this but also reminds us that God is the one in control and that time is a gift from God, and we are to enjoy it as much as we can. Which is probably why this reading is often used at funerals, because it reminds us to live life to the full and to enjoy each moment of life, but also its reminds us of the stark reality that life is precious and limited - and there will be a time to mourn and die, and there will be times of difficulties as well as joys. However, in it all God will be present.

The seasons of time at St. John's have seen times of joy and laughter with busy church calendars, a Sunday School full, weddings, baptism and funerals. Many happy and good memories have been made. And of course many new memories, happy and fun times, lie ahead, and we do have baptisms, funerals and weddings all in the diary. We might not

have a Sunday school but we have a full Babies, Bumps and Toddlers group, and we have various church and non-church groups using our building. And we are a place where God's love is shown and shared not only in the church but in the community too.

None of us really like change, but change is inevitable. Things do and will change.

The building is a real drain on our resources. It's expensive to run and heat, and the available space isn't always ideal with the activities that we would like to run. Like all churches, we are smaller in number, so it's harder to do everything we would like to do, and there is only so much we can do.

So things are going to have to change... BUT CHANGE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE NEGATIVE!

I say that, shout that even, because change can also be an opportunity to discover something exciting, it can be life-giving and encouraging. Change could mean that we discover more about God and his call on us in the community of Whitchurch. Change could be a real turning point and a positive thing.

The problem is, I guess, that we don't know the outcome yet, we don't know what the final plan is going to look like, and that's the scary part. But we have to trust that God knows the fuller picture and will enable us to discover what the next "season of time" for St. John's is. In a way we are in a time of discovery, a time of searching and a time of growth.

In September we will be starting the thinking process of what our future could look like and how we are going to move forward as a church. There are already conversations happening with other people and groups who might wish to share the use of our building which would help us care and manage it. And there are people within the district who are being invited to come and talk to us about our mission and ministry in Whitchurch. When these meetings are set up we will let you know, and I invite you to come along and join in with the conversations.

All of this, though, will be rooted in prayer. Our relationship with God and sharing his love with our community is why we are here. To reflect this, our covenant service* will take place on Sunday 24th September, and a house group will be starting at the manse to meet to gather for food, prayer and conversation.

As we step forward in faith, into a new season of time, may God continue to bless you and stir up a passion in your heart to share his love with others.

With blessings

Rev Donna

*A Covenant Service is when we reaffirm our commitment to follow Christ and commit to serve God as a community of Christians. Following Christ is no easy task alone, the words of the covenant prayer remind us of that, but we say these collectively, remembering that we are not alone, and support each other on our Christian journey.

Shropshire Historic Churches Trust Ride & Stride Event

Ride & Stride Day - Saturday 9th September - is fast approaching. As promised, here is some more information about it. There will be a display of our heritage information in church and we are listed as a place to visit from 9am to 6pm.

Several of us are planning to drive round churches in the area and there is a sponsor form at the back of church for you to sign your support. If you would like to drive round yourselves, I can provide you with a sponsor sheet to collect sponsors other than church members. I can also give you a list of churches open in Shropshire. You can find this on the computer if you google SHCT Ride & Stride.

As usual we are also planning to hold a coffee morning between 10am and 12 noon. As we could have more visitors than usual it would be helpful to have volunteers on a rota to steward the Church. Again, there is a form at the back of church for you to volunteer help.

After the event, all the Sponsor money needs to be collected up and given to me along with sponsor sheets to be sent to the SHCT. The treasurer will then send 50% back to the nominated church/chapel i.e. St. John's.

“September is dressing herself in showy dahlias and splendid marigolds and starry zinnias.”

— Oliver Wendell Holmes 1841-1935 American jurist and legal scholar

House Group @the manse

Meeting together for
food, friendship and fellowship!

A light-hearted time to share prayer and food, some bible
study and conversation.
But mostly, to support each other on our Christian Journey.

Wednesday 27th September – Crackers, Cheese and Chuck-
les 7-9pm

Wednesday 18th October – Pumpkins and Prayers 7-9pm

Wednesday 23rd November – A Naan and a Natter

(time to be confirmed—curry night out at a local Indian restaurant)

Wednesday 20th December – Merry Mince Pies at the
Manse 7pm

@the manse –

For more information, contact Rev. Donna
All are welcome, it would be lovely to see you!

PRAYER REQUESTS



Pray for those known to us who are ill, housebound, in care, lonely, bereaved or in any other kind of need.

St John's

Pray for the people who hold responsibility for the running of St. John's.

Pray for the success of the House Group @ The Manse.

Pray for the Heritage Open Day and those who may enter St. John's for the first time on 9th September.

Remember BBT and MORE as they meet each week.

Our Town

Pray for pupils who have received their examination results and need to make important life decisions. Pray for teachers and the challenges they face starting another academic year.

Give thanks for the work of Churches Together in Whitchurch and pray for the joint work.

Our nation

Give thanks for the wonderful examples of heroism, kindness and care we see all around us in what often seems a dark world.

Pray for agreement on pay in our NHS

Pray for those hardest hit by the cost of living rises and inflation

Pray for those caught in the record asylum numbers backlog.

Our world

Pray for those caught up in the results of global warming

Pray for the people of Ukraine as they continue to try to live amongst the chaos and heartbreak of invasion by Russia. Pray for all who grieve the loss of loved ones there.

Pray for a change of heart for Vladimir Putin.

Steward's Rota for September

3rd: Andrew Fawcett
10th: Dot Charlesworth
17th: Avril Bradfield
24th: Mike Nimmo

Fundraising

Sue and I are still busy planning fundraising, with your support. We are organising our stall for the car boot sale at Alderford Lake at the moment. Thank-you for all your donations and support. I will post an update in Pew News after the event. The next event will be our Art Exhibition and Recycled Fashion Show on BlackBerry Fair Day the 7th of October. Going into the Autumn we will have the traditional Quiz and Fish & Chip Supper at the end of October/early November. The last Event of the year will be our Christmas Fair (date to be announced).

Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

Dot & Sue

*All the months are crude experiments, out of
which the perfect September is made.*

– Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) English Novelist

Sunday Services for September



3rd	Local Arrangement
10th	Rev. Donna Broadbent-Kelly
17th	Rev. Jenny Arthurs
24th	Rev. Donna Broadbent-Kelly (Communion)

Art Exhibition & Recycled Fashion Show

This years Art Exhibition & Recycled Fashion Show will be on Saturday the 7th of October, Blackberry Fair Day, from 12-4pm with the Fashion show taking place at 2pm. We will be serving tea and cake, so donations of cake and help with refreshments will be much appreciated. If you are a local artist or know of anyone who may like to exhibit please let me know. There is no charge but we ask for 20 percent of sales for church funds.

Dot

Zoom Service

You are warmly invited to share in our zoom services, which take place on one Sunday afternoon per month at 4pm. Please contact Avril for the time, date and the link in September



You are warmly invited to attend

**The Welcome Service for
The Revd Carolyn Lawrance
Sunday 3 September 2023 at
6:30pm at The Wesley Centre,
Sandbach, CW11 1DG**

The service will be led by the Revd Rob Hilton, Superintendent Minister of the Cheshire South Methodist Circuit and the preacher is the Revd Helen Kirk, Chair of the Chester & Stoke-on-Trent Methodist District.

Music will be led by the Contemporary Worship Band



BBT@St Johns

Monday from 9.30-11.30am in term time

Please join us for coffee, chat, craft, songs & stories

Bumps Babies and Toddlers is back again after the Summer Holidays. We look forward to seeing familiar faces and welcoming new Mums, Dads, Grandparents and Carers with their Babies and Toddlers.

The Rota for September is below. :

	Leader	Setting up	General & Craft	Tea	Open up
11 th Sept	Kathryn	Brenda	Chris	Sarah	Brenda
18 th Sept	Kathryn	Mike/ Avril	Brenda	Avril	Mike
25 th Sept	Kathryn	Mike/ Avril	Dot	Avril	Mike
2 nd Oct	Kathryn	Briony	Brenda	Sarah	Briony

Heritage Open Day

Below is a link to the St. John's Heritage Open Day web page. (Left click for those of you reading from an email attachment)

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/visiting/event/st-johns-methodist-church-stained-glass-windows>

A Note from the Treasurer.....

Circuit Assessment

Each month we pay the Circuit a financial contribution to fund the stipends and housing for our ministers, the salaries for our lay workers and contribute towards the District Assessment.

In our Circuit, this assessment is based on 25% previous year's collections and 75% current membership numbers and is approximately £460 per member.

For St Johns this will be £25,016 for the new financial year which runs from September 23rd to August 22nd.

For the past Financial Year, all Churches in our Circuit have benefitted from a reduction of 25% in our assessment. This reduction was for one year only to help churches recover from the loss of income due to Covid and to enable them to focus on Mission.

From this month, our monthly Assessment payments to the Circuit will increase from £1580 to £2,085 per month. This is an extra £505 per month.

Please prayerfully consider if you are able to increase your weekly or monthly donations to contribute to this additional expense. If you would like to join the envelope scheme please speak to Mike Nimmo.

Many thanks

Briony Myles-Hook
Treasurer

Fundraising for Action for Children (formerly National Children's Home).



If you would like a collecting box for your loose change at home, please speak to Briony.

If you have a box at home that is getting full, please hand it in to one of the stewards after a service.

Many thanks for supporting the work of this charity.

"It was a lovely afternoon—such an afternoon as only September can produce when summer has stolen back for one more day of dream and glamour."

Lucy Maud Montgomery (1874-1942)
Canadian Author



*Oh, it's a long, long while from May to December
But the days grow short when you reach September
When the autumn weather turns the leaves to flame
One hasn't got time for the waiting game
Oh, the days dwindle down to a precious few
September, November
And these few precious days I'll spend with you*

*From 'September Song' by Kurt Weill & Maxwell Anderson
(Featured in Knickerbocker Holiday 1938)*

Steward's Letter



As September brings in the autumn, I'm often a bit sad to see the end of summer but I don't feel like that this year. I feel ready for the change of season. I'm looking forward to the events Sue and are planning for the autumn and I'm presently planning a few get togethers with family and friends as well. It's always good to catch up with family and friends, old and new. The book I'm reading at the moment is beautifully written and I wanted to share with you this lovely description of the new season at Oxford;

'Everywhere, on cobble and gravel and lawn, the leaves were falling and, in the college gardens, the smoke of the bonfires joined the wet river mist, drifting across the grey walls; the flags were oily underfoot and as, one by one, the lamps were lit in the windows round the quad, the golden lights were diffuse and remote, new figures in new gowns wandered through the twilight under the arches and the familiar bells now spoke of a year's memories.'

(From Brideshead Revisited by Evelyn Waugh)

Looking back over the summer, although the weather has been mixed, I thank the Lord that Bob and I have been able to enjoy another busy bowling season, with the fresh air, friendship, and exercise it brings. Our Summer Fair at St. John's went well and it was lovely to see the Morris Dancing at the front of the church. Looking forward, we have the Art Exhibition and Recycled Fashion Show on Blackberry Fair Day (7th October), followed by the Quiz and Fish & Chip Supper (date to be announced) and then the Christmas Fair. Also, truth be told, I'm looking forward to cosy morning services and fellowship with you all in the Guild Room.

Bob and I had a lovely walk at Prees Heath last week and all the Heather was in bloom - I can recommend it. I'm not sad to see the end of the summer this year, I'm ready for the change of season and I'm looking forward to it. I hope you are looking forward with me.

Forward in Fellowship

Dot Charlesworth

“My favourite poem is the one that starts ‘Thirty days hath September’ because it actually tells you something.”

– Groucho Marx (1890-1977)

Comedian, actor, writer, & singer



Sound System Operators for September

3rd Andrew Fawcett

10th Peter Shingler

17th Sarah Lunt

24th Brian Acty



If your date doesn't fit give me a ring to sort it out (Mike Nimmo 667857)

“September days have the warmth of summer in their briefer hours, but in their lengthening evenings a prophetic breath of autumn.”

Rowland E. Robinson (1833-1900) - American farmer, artist, and author.

September Dates for your Diary:

BBT Mondays 9:30-11am (not on 4th September)

MORE+ every Monday 1-4pm

Sunday 3rd September—Welcome service for Rev. Carolyn Lawrance at the Wesley Centre Sandbach 6:30pm

Saturday 9th September—Heritage Open Day at St. John's 9am—6pm

Thursday 21st 2pm - Ladies' Coffee at Jones's

Wednesday 27th September – Crackers, Cheese and Chuckles 7-9pm at The Manse

Advance Notice

October 7th: 12-4pm Art Exhibition and Fashion Show

Quiz & Fish and Chips Night TBA

October Newsletter

Please let Mike Nimmo have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by 24th September.

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*"September! I never tire of turning it over and over
in my mind. It has warmth, depth, and colour. It
glows like old amber."*

Patience Strong (1907-1990)
Poet, author and lyricist

*"There is a clarity about September... the sun seems bright-
er, the sky more blue, the white clouds take on marvellous
shapes; the moon is a wonderful apparition, rising gold,
cooling to silver; and the stars are so big."*

Faith Baldwin (1893-1978) Novelist

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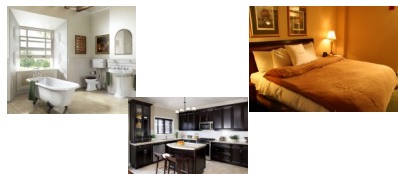
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