



**St. John's Methodist Church  
Whitchurch  
October 2023  
Newsletter**

## *Message from the Manse*

October 2023

Dear Friends,

There are many things to commend about getting in the car and taking a break somewhere in our wonderful British Isles, but being stuck in traffic on the motorway is not one of them!

It can feel really frustrating. Actually if you have been driving around Whitchurch lately there seems to be no end of road works.



I'm sure you all have stories of sitting in traffic jams, sandwiched between lorries for what seems like hours with 'roadworks ahead' signs all around and miles and miles of cones. And when you finally reach the roadworks the site seems deserted with no sign of active construction going on at all - diggers seemingly abandoned, and no sign of life!

On our recent trip to Northumbria we got caught up in roadworks and a sign caught my eye that I had never seen before. It read '*We are working out of sight, so you may not see us*'. I wondered if this had been created in response to all those grumbles from the general public about just such experiences.

Construction work on motorways is incredibly complex. What we see and experience once the work is completed in the new intersections, widened motorways, new bridg-

es etc. is the result of the keen minds and skills of a myriad of people from all sorts of disciplines from planners to architects, from civil engineers to ground workers, often working out of sight, always working to a masterplan but all **we** experience is the upheaval as change takes place- and all this takes time.

Change often causes upheaval, always takes time, but may bring with it significant benefits.

My experience of seeing God at work is not dissimilar to my experience of motorway roadworks. Life can be hugely frustrating. We try to find a way through the obstacles that get in the way of what we want to do or where we want to be, or we get 'stuck in traffic' in a rut that we can't see a way out of. Perhaps we look around for those who can help us and we see no-one.

But God is working, often working hardest in the most difficult and challenging times we encounter. God may be working out of sight, and you may not see him, but he is there, patiently waiting for each one of us to accept that changing our ways, turning towards him and asking to be part of his masterplan is the only way to bring about the change that leads to life in all its fullness.

Perhaps the motorway sign that God writes might say this: 'We are working out of sight so you may not see us, but you will definitely know where we have been'

I also wonder what people think when they drive past our churches. Do they see us at work? Do they know what we are about and what we are doing? Do they know we would like them to join in with what we are doing? And most

importantly do they see and recognise God at work? I do think people know that if they are looking, seeking and searching for God that coming to a church is probably the best place to find God, or at least find people who are trying really hard to show others the love of God.

Yet I do think we need to be more present in our communities and in our churches. When people drive past our church do we really want the impression to be that we are working out of sight and hidden from view; or would we want them to see us being and doing our work in place that they can see, that we visible to them and furthermore inviting them to join us?

As we navigate our way into October may we discover ways to be more visible in our communities sharing the love of God.

With blessings

Rev Donna

### **Sunday 22nd October**

On Sunday 29th October we are having a Joint Local Mission Service at Brown Knowl . Tallarn Green will also be there. Recently I was commenting on how we seemed to have lost contact with our friends nearby. This is a golden opportunity for worship and fellowship.

### ***Services & Preachers***



October

- |      |                                      |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| 1st  | Local Arrangement                    |
| 8th  | Rev Donna Broadbent—Kelly            |
| 15th | Graham Dimelow                       |
| 22nd | No Service at St John's (See page 5) |
| 29th | Local Arrangement                    |

### ***TEA & COFFEE ROTA***



October

- |      |                         |
|------|-------------------------|
| 1st  | Elizabeth and Pete      |
| 8th  | Briony and Linda Weston |
| 15th | Chris and Elaine        |
| 29th | Sarah and Nancy         |

Please could you provide milk and biscuits, taking the biscuits home if they are not needed.  
Tea and coffee are provided.

**Please also take the tea towels and towel home, wash and return.  
If the dates above are not convenient, please let me know.  
Hazel**

# **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 18th October-Pumpkins and prayer 7-9pm

Wednesday 23rd November– A Naan and a Natter  
(time to be confirmed– curry night at a local Indian Restaurant)

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

The Manse—24 Greenfields Rise, Whitchurch SY13 1EP  
For more information contact Rev Donna

All are welcome, it would be lovely to see you!

“What I did on my holidays”

When I was at school I was always stumped when the teacher asked us to write about this subject after the summer holidays and I struggled to come up with just a short paragraph. I remember it so well after all these years.

Bob and I had a lovely holiday in Anglesey this September to celebrate his eightieth birthday and it was perfect for us. It isn't too far to drive and Moelfre, where we stayed, reminded me of Cornwall and the holidays I had when I was younger. It's a fishing village, or had been in days gone by, they still fish there now but on a smaller scale I think. The sign going into the village calls it a Maritime Village. It's a very pretty place, if you haven't been, and we had a lovely relaxing holiday.

The weather was mixed but most days we were able to walk the coastal path. It leads passed the bay, through a little path by a field of rabbits, stop and see how many there are today, passed the Lifeboat station and shop where we'd stop to look for seals and saw two (or was that the same one twice?) Then on around the coast as far as you'd care to walk. Back in the village there's an ice cream shop by the car park with a very convenient form, to sit and eat your ice cream, overlooking the bay. My mother would turn in her grave at the price of ice cream these days, and there are so many flavours to choose from, but we enjoyed it just the same.

There are few shops in Moelfre now but the village shop is very convenient and they have lovely bread. There is also a very good wool shop, painted green (or was it blue?) and shaped like a beach hut. It sits overlooking the bay. I bought some wool there for my winter knitting project and whilst I'm knitting I'll be thinking of Moelfre.

I wonder what my teacher would think?

Dot Charlesworth

### **Ride & Stride Update**

Many thanks to all who participated in Ride & Stride Day -Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September. Sarah and Chris drove round 11 churches/chapels and were warmly welcomed at most although one or two had only left drinks and snacks. Dot and her friend, Madge, walked from Whitchurch to Ash, Ightfield and Calverhall - we passed them on the way! Tom Kelly cycled first round local churches and then went into Shrewsbury on the train and cycled round when he got there, visiting 16 churches. All the sponsor money hasn't been collected in yet, but we anticipate being able to send over £400 to Shropshire Historic Churches Trust and in due course we will get half the amount back for St. John's. Thank you to sponsors and participants.

### **More on - Mondays**

The lunch-time start at 12 noon every Monday with soup, toast and drinks followed by a variety of games and a chat continues.

### **More on - Thursday**

Runs every Thursday from 1.00pm to 4.00pm misses out the lunch but with coffee/tea and biscuits and the games etc.

Come along for the chat and remember if you know anyone who lives alone and would enjoy the fellowship invite them along!!



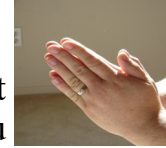
## BBT@St Johns



Bumps Babies and Toddlers will take place each Monday in October from 9.30-11.30am. 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. We are keen for more people in church to join our rota of helpers so if you would like to help or just want to come and say hello, please speak to someone on the rota.

	Leader	Setting up	General & Craft	Tea	Open up
2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	Kathryn	Briony	Brenda	Sarah	Briony
9 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Kathryn	Mike / Avril	Dot	Avril	Mike
16 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Kathryn	Briony	Brenda	Chris	Briony
23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	Kathryn	Briony	Dot	Sarah	Briony
31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	<i>No BBT – Half Term</i>				

## **Prayers**



We all pray in different ways and at different times. Rather than produce set words which you may not find fits with your thoughts, I am highlighting events and situations across the spectrum from global to local and personal which reflection and prayer.

The war in Ukraine rumbles on with millions affected and thousands dying

Natural disasters such as flooding and earthquakes bring devastation and loss of life to so many places and people across our world. Remember the aid workers in these situations. Think of climate change and the governments who need to respond to tackling it in time

Across the world there is so much repression and fighting—some situations we rarely hear about

In our own country many are struggling to make ends meet and there is considerable industrial unrest. Solutions need to be found.

Our community reflects the national picture and its response through the various agencies and charities should be remembered. We know people of Whitchurch prove to be ever generous through the FOODBANK

Our church has a mission in Whitchurch and all our activities are centred on being in the community through BBT, More+ on Monday which continue for the present.

Lastly ourselves, families and friends - whether joyful or sad we are aware of our needs and those of others.

Bringing all this to Jesus .

My Favourite Hymn - Over the years there have been a number of hymns, people and occasions within church life which have had an impact on me. However I am constantly brought back to the hymn which has had the most impact on my faith and that is Dear Lord and Father of Mankind.

As a child, and until I got married, I attended the Congregational Church in a town called Dumbarton, 15 miles north of Glasgow.

I grew up in difficult family circumstances as my father was an alcoholic, who just happened to work as a manager in the local distillery. Anyone who knows anything about alcoholism will know the effects on a family can be devastating.

When I was 11 years old, the Rev Robert Lawson came to be the minister at our Church. He was a wonderful pastoral minister. He was very down to earth and practical with a lovely sense of humour and his faith and trust in God came through to everyone whose lives he touched. He very quickly became aware of my situation and he took me under his wing. I was welcomed into the manse and to his family and could go there whenever I felt the pressure at home was too great. The Rev Lawson's favourite hymn was Dear Lord and Father of Mankind and it made a regular appearance in our services. Our crowd of youngsters in the choir used to give each other a wry smile when we went into the services and looked at the hymns and saw the number 245 on the board,

The more I sang this hymn the more I came to appreciate it for a number of reasons—firstly the link to Rev Lawson; secondly the tune of Repton is a lovely one and finally as I matured both as a person and in faith, I understood how apt the words are and there is, certainly for me, a strong message in every verse.. How appropriate is the second line “Forgive our foolish ways”

We do not generally intend to sin; to let God down, to upset our families or offend people we come into contact with but silly words and foolish thoughtless mistakes happen. I find that on a daily basis to need to ask God to “Forgive my Foolish Ways and ask him to re-order my mind.

The second verse urges us to follow the example of the disciples to simply accept Jesus without putting up obstacles

and complications of life as a barrier. I often wish I could take that second verse literally.

During the last 10 years of my working life I commuted to Liverpool and also travelled around the country driving over 30,000 miles a year. At times my life seemed frenetic. While driving I would think of the words in verse 5 which talks about all the rushing about we do and urges us to recognise and acknowledge the peace which only God can bring to us.

For me, the totality of this hymn epitomises what a life of disciple ship should be all about. Hazel.

**[Have you a special hymn you would like to share with us? Ed.]**

## **Harvest**

We celebrate Harvest over the weekend of 7th/8th October with a coffee morning on Saturday and the service on the Sunday led by Rev Donna.

The plan is to decorate the church on Friday 6th and volunteers are required to decorate the church and help with the coffee morning

Please let Dot know if you can help.

## **Action for Children**

Edna Perry has taken over as St John's representative for Action for Children. The collection boxes have been gathered in and the final total of £127.83 was realised.

Edna plans to empty the boxes annually in August in line with the Methodist year which starts in September.

If you are interested in having a collection box please have a word with Edna

## **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.

1st Oct	Hazel Nimmo
8th Oct	Sorry no driver available
15th Oct	Mike Nimmo
29th Oct	Pete Shingler

## **Stewards**

1st Oct	Andrew
8th Oct	Avril
15th Oct	Hazel
29th Oct	Dot



## **Sound**

1st Oct	Andrew Fawcett
8th Oct	Sarah Lunt
15th Oct	Mike Nimmo
29th Oct	Brian Acty



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**November 2023 Newsletter**

Please let Dot Charlesworth have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by Tuesday 21st October

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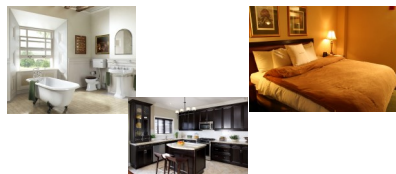
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