

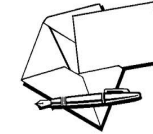
Newsletter



St. John's Methodist Church
Whitchurch
November 2023

Message from the Manse

November 2023



Dear friends,

As we enter November and the season of Remembrance, our hearts are heavy with the conflicts and struggles that persist in across the world. We are prompted to reflect on the sacrifices made by countless individuals in the past and to hold onto the hope for a more peaceful and just future.

The act of remembrance is a powerful and enduring tradition that binds us together as a community. It reminds us of the bravery and self-

lessness of those who have served and continue to serve in the armed forces, often in far-off and dangerous lands. We honour their dedication to preserving peace and safeguarding our freedoms, and we recognize the hardships they endure.

World War 1 was called the war to end all wars, and since the guns fell silent on the Western Front in 1918, conflicts around the world have continued. As I write this, there are 32 active wars across the world. These conflicts range from drug wars, terrorist insurgencies, ethnic conflicts, and civil wars.

The first-ever two-minute silence was observed on Armistice Day, on the 11th of November 1919. We have been observing a two-minute silence on the 11th of November for 104 years. During the silence, we are encouraged to remember those who have lost their lives in the theatre of war.

I find this moment in the Remembrance Service very poignant. I wonder, what do you think about during that moment of silence? We

Cont.,

In that moment, on Remembrance Sunday, I recall the stories of my own family; my great-grandfathers who served in the First World War, my grandfathers who served in the Second World War and those I have met with have served in various wars since. In the silence, this year, I'm sure my thought will include those still in places of war, Israel, Gaza, Ukraine and Russia. Underlying all these thoughts is a prayer for peace.

There is a wonderful, hope-filled, aspirational verse in Isaiah which says,

“They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”

Wouldn't this be wonderful? No more war, no more lives lost in conflicts, no more innocent civilians caught in the crossfire of ideological arguments. This is my prayer each Remembrance Sunday, that nations will not use weapons as a means to settle disputes and that we can teach our children to be peacemakers and not war-mongers. All these things will be going through my head as I stand at the memorial to observe the silence. I wonder what you will be thinking about.

In the silence, you can hear a pin drop.

In the silence, you can hear the birds sing.

In the silence, you can hear the leaves rustle.

For us, it is only the briefest of silences, just two short minutes

For many, in places of conflict, the silence is not long enough.

For the fallen, the silence is eternal.

With blessings Rev. Donna

Stewards Letter

I think I can say that broadly speaking I have fond memories of my school days, of course at a time that was very different to today.

For a few years I was at a boarding school where I had the privilege of meeting kids from overseas, and from very different backgrounds to my own. During the holiday period several of these such children would often stay at school since travelling home was impractical just for a few weeks. So when I asked Richard, who hailed from South Africa if he'd like to spend a couple of weeks of the holiday with me he jumped at the chance.

Now in my parents' household no food was ever EVER thrown away, and more often than not yesterday's leftovers was made into a soup or somehow blended in with the following day's meal often without anybody noticing.

One lunchtime just as we were about to be served our main meal my father emerged from the kitchen holding a plate of rather dubious looking sausages and exclaimed that they 'badly needed eating up.. ...so you can all have one!' They had quite obviously slipped through the net. I wondered why on earth my dad had to bring out those leftovers today of all days when I was desperately trying to make my friend feel relaxed and at home in a strange environment. Worse still was the look of horror on Richard's face when one finally met his plate.

Years later Richard would always reminisce over the story of the forgotten sausages and whether life would ever be the same after having eaten one.

Amusing as it is to look back on those events it always reminds me of what valuable lessons we were once taught over the true value of food and how, with a little improvisation nothing need ever be wasted.

We've just celebrated our harvest thanksgiving, and before long we'll all be indulging in fine food and drink for our Christmas celebrations. Perhaps we can take time to give thanks for all that we do have, and maybe even think about what we so readily discard. Spare a thought for those millions who have nothing close to their needs, let alone the privilege to throw away.

Andrew Fawcett

In aid of Macmillan Cancer Support

Gift-wrapped 4” Christmas cakes and individual puddings, and larger cakes and puddings made to order - 6”, 7”, 8”, round or square

Orders by mid- November please – tel: 01948 662448 or

email: gwynethrollins19@hotmail.com

Your continued support is appreciated.

Gwyneth Rollins

Tools With A Mission,

I am a tool collector for Tools With A Mission, a Christian charity helping people in Africa to become independent by teaching them skills and providing the tools. I find this volunteering most rewarding and am contacting your church to see if anyone would like to help in your area. It need not be very time consuming, occasionally collecting tools and keeping your church informed of the latest news from TWAM. For more information on volunteering go to

<https://twamuk.goassemble.com/opportunities>

or for details about the charity go to twam.uk

Thank you

God Bless

Gordon Degg

Quiz and Fish & Chip Supper on Friday 10th November—Don't miss it!

We are holding another Quiz evening with a fish & chip supper on Friday 10th November here at church. It will start at 7pm. The cost is £10 per head, and will include nibbles on the tables and supper. Don't be put off if you don't have a team - just turn up on the night and teams will be created. Friends and neighbours are welcome. A list is now on the table in the long room for you to sign up and indicate which 'supper' choice you would like. Choices are: fish & chips box, chicken box, burger box and a vegetarian burger box with salad. Mushy peas and/or baked beans with any choice. Pay on the night. The quiz is being organised by Mike Nimmo.

Chris Crowther & Dot Charlesworth

Preachers for November

November 5th—Mr. Peter Robertshaw

November 12th—Joint Remembrance service at St. Alkmunds led by Rev. Donna. (NO SERVICE AT ST. JOHN'S)

November 19th—Mrs Sue Tyson

November 26th— Joint Local Mission Area Service at Broomhall (NO SERVICE AT ST. JOHN'S)

Thomas Pearson (1913-1968)

It seems appropriate in this, the November newsletter, to include a short tribute to my dad.

I am the youngest of 5 siblings and it seems that we didn't really know much about dad's war record, where he went and what he did in the second world war, so during the pandemic I did a little research. He was born in 1913 and married my mother in 1938. In 1939 my eldest brother was born and in 1940 my eldest sister was born. In 1941 dad was called up to fight in the second world war. We all knew he'd fought in Burma and we knew from my mother how on V.E. Day when everyone locally was celebrating the end of the war dad was still fighting.

Dad wasn't a tall man and I remember as we all overtook him in height we'd ask, 'how tall are you dad?' He'd stand tall and say 'I'm 5 ft. 5 and a half.' That half an inch was important.

It took nearly 2 years before I finally got some information about dad's record from the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow but I was delighted when it came through in July last year. The first thing I noticed was his height and weight, I smiled as I read he was measured at 5 ft 4 and a half, a full inch shorter than he claimed, and weighed 107 lbs. Although I was shocked at the thought of my dad going to fight in the war at 28 years old and with a young family at home when he was only 5 ft 4 and a half and just over seven and a half stone.



Cont.,

He wasn't one of the big burly professional soldiers we see today but I expect he was fairly typical of the young soldiers going to fight for their country at that time. Not because they'd volunteered but because they'd been called up and answered the call to fight for their country.

Dad served in the Border Regiment for five and a half years, with three and three quarter years of that in India and Burma. He was awarded the Burma star and the Burma Defence Medal and he was injured twice. He was one of the lucky ones who came home, or else I wouldn't be here.

His Military Conduct was listed as exemplary and I cried when I read the senior officers description of his service. It reads;

"This man has served for five and a half years and has an excellent record of three and three quarter years overseas service in India and Burma during which time he was twice wounded. He has proved himself a hardworking and conscientious man, always willing and thoroughly trustworthy and sober."

I knew my dad as a quiet, peaceful man who enjoyed reading and introduced me to the library. He always gave good advice and liked nothing more than a quiet life. I was only 18 when dad died in 1968 (at only 55 years) and I so wish I'd had more time to get to know him better. I was always proud of my dad but I'm even more proud of my lovely brave dad now.

Dorothy Charlesworth

House Group @ The Manse.
Meeting together for food, friendship & fellowship

Naan, Natter and Nightout is coming up on Wednesday 22nd November.

I'm going to book a table at Blue Water Indian Restaurant in Whitchurch for 6.30pm. They are doing a special banquet offer which includes a Starter, main course, side dish, poppadoms, and a tea/coffee for around £14.00 per person - (I will double check the cost when I book the table). Please can you let me know by 10th November if you would like to come along. Partners and children are welcome too!

and there's more...

Manse Merry Mince Pies with carols 7pm Wednesday 20th December . - An evening of mince pies, mulled wine and carol singing.

with blessings Donna

Action For Children

The new total for Action for Children is £52 - 94 extra which makes new total amount £231 - 48. Many thanks to all box Holders.

Edna Perry

Stewards Rota for November

November 5th—Andrew Fawcett

**November 12th—Joint Remembrance service at St. Alkmunds
led by Rev. Donna. (NO SERVICE AT ST. JOHN'S)**

November 19th—Dot Charlesworth

**November 26th— Joint Local Mission Area Service at
Broomhall (NO SERVICE AT ST. JOHN'S)**

Lifts available from Hazel & Mike

November Rotas.

The rest of the November rota's will be given out at the beginning of the service and included in Pew News.



BBT@St Johns



Monday from 9.30-11.30am in term time
Please join us for coffee chat craft songs & stories

The Rota for November and December is below.

	Leader	Setting up	General & Craft	Tea	Open up
6 th Nov	Kathryn	Briony	Chris	Sarah	Briony
13 th Nov	Kathryn	Briony	Elaine	Brenda	Briony
20 th Nov	Kathryn	Mike/Brenda	Dot	Hazel	Mike
27 th Nov	Kathryn	Briony	Brenda	Chris	Briony
4 th Dec	Kathryn	Mike / Avril	Dot	Sarah	Mike
11 th Dec	Kathryn	Briony	Elaine	Chris	Briony
18 th Dec	Kathryn	Mike/Brenda	Dot	Sarah	Mike
	<i>No BBT – Christmas Holidays</i>				
8 th Jan 2024	Kathryn	Briony	Dot	Sarah	Briony



New Date for Concert

COME AND ENJOY
A Concert of Popular Songs and Music
With the Fauls Singers and Guest Artists

Friday, 10th Nov. at 7.30p.m.
at The Maelor School Penley

Admission £10 incl. glass of wine/juice.

Proceeds for Tallarn Green Methodist Church.

Fundraising

We had a very successful event on Blackberry Fair Day this year. Our Art exhibition and Recycled Fashion show was well received and supported and we made some money for church funds. We had a cellist playing in the church during the exhibition which made it extra special.

The winner of the peoples favourite picture was our very own Sue Acty and the winner of the favourite recycled outfit was Stephen Price. Well done to both.

Our next event is the Quiz and Fish & chip Supper on Friday 10th November so make sure you get your name down for this popular event.

Dot Charlesworth



Christmas Fayre Saturday 9th December 12-4 pm

We need your help and support to make our Christmas Fayre a success again this year. We need Cakes, Tombola items and raffle prizes. We also need help for the following stalls,

Cakes
Tombola
Raffle
Bric a brac
Christmas

We also need kitchen helpers please.

If you can help please speak to Dot or Sue.

We are hoping Whitchurch Singers will sing for us and we may have a visit from Father Christmas?? Watch this space in Pew News for further details.

Dot Charlesworth

Thank You

Sheila and Jim thank all for the little party we had when we came back to Whitchurch. Jim celebrated his 80th late September and it was a memorable occasion for him.

We often think of the happy times we had in Whitchurch, and although our life has taken a different direction now we will never forget you all.

Sheila and Jim Walwyn

December/January Newsletter

Please let Vic Trigg have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by Friday 24th November

Send material to:

The Soldier

**If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign
field
That is for ever England. There shall
be
In that rich earth a richer dust con-
cealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped,
made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her
ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.**

**And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thought by
England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.**

Rupert Brooke



Autumn

*Yellow the bracken,
Golden the sheaves,
Rosy the apples,
Crimson the leaves;
Mist on the hillside,
Clouds grey and white.
Autumn, good morning!
Summer, Good night!*

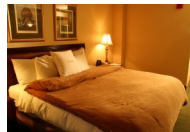
Florence Hoatson

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***“people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did,
but people will never forget how you made them feel.”***

May Angelou

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