



**St. John's Methodist Church
Whitchurch
February 2024
Newsletter**

Message from the Manse

Dear Friends,

As I write this I am tucked up under the covers, resting my laptop on my knees, and my favourite mug in my hand. If you know me well, then you know I don't drink tea or coffee, I prefer a hot chocolate and with temperatures around -3 outside, needs must.

My favourite mug is one that was bought for me by my best friend Cindy. We have been friends for over 22 years. We met when we were both expecting our first babies, and we instantly struck up a friendship over comparing the size of our ankles, morning sickness that lasted the whole way through and tips on how to get your shoes on when you have a large baby bump in the way. Our boys, Joseph and Jamie were born just 4 days apart.

The mug is an Emma Bridgewater one (I love them!). On the outside of the mug it reads...

Peace, Love and Friendship. Where would I be without you?

And in the inside....

Love makes the world go round.

Cindy and I have certainly had our challenges in life and we have leaned on each other to help get us through the hard times. I'm sure you all have friends that have seen you through the difficult times and ones who you wouldn't be without. The 3am friends, know you can call in a crisis and who will be there for you in an instant, because they love you and you love them. This month is often renowned for being the month of love. I'm not sure what St Valentine would have made of the event that has grown up around his name, but behind all the cardboard cut-out hearts and chocolates is a message of love that translates beyond the decorated shop windows and romantic dinners for two that we're encouraged to buy into.

There is the love that family members share.
There is the love between friends
There is romantic love...the burning pulsing of a new love and the slow and steady heat of a love that has matured over the decades.
There is a love that you can feel to the depths of your core when you are standing on a mountain top watching the sun rise on a new day

Valentine's Day can help to shine a light on what is deep in our hearts...a desire to be loved.

It's hardwired into our very creation... "God saw what he created, and it was good" ... we were created to love one another, to love creation and also to love God. We are able to love because we are loved first.

When we look at Valentine's Day through the lens of our Christian faith, we can see the bone deep human desire to love and to be loved and in its best examples,, that love really does show selflessness that puts the good of the other first. It encourages the flourishing of a human in our entirety...mind, body and soul. We should never be embarrassed, ashamed or afraid for those words to come from our lips... I love you...because it's a reflection of the relationship God has with us...and the reality is that God IS love, and a special day isn't needed for us to hear that. So, whether you've heard the words I love you today (for valentines) or not...know that God is saying "I love you, today and for all eternity".

This February, lets us celebrate God's love for us, for the family, friends and relationships we have and for the love we share.

With blessings Donna

Steward's Letter



I always find January difficult, as I know many people do. The cold dark days are such a contrast to the bright lights and decorations of Christmas. I'm writing this on the 17th January so the month is over halfway through and the daffodils are beginning to shoot in the garden thank goodness reminding us all that spring isn't too far away. I'm looking out of the window at a beautiful blue sky but I know it's below freezing outside.

We had a Jumble Sale last Saturday at church and it was lovely to see people coming in, having a cup of tea and chatting with friends, some of them found a bargain or two. And we made some money for church. It's really good to see the community coming into our church and we hope to have many other occasions like this during the year.

Community and fellowship are so important to us all, not only for us in church but for the town community, and it's really good that we've provided a meeting place for some groups who would normally meet in the Civic. It's very worrying that we find ourselves without many of the facilities we should have due to the ongoing problems with our civic centre. The library, toilets, advice centre and theatre venue to mention just a few. I was at the meeting last Saturday in the market hall and I was pleased to see it was such a good turnout with many people asking questions and having their say. There is a petition to sign both on Facebook and for those who prefer to sign a paper copy there are petitions in some of the high street shops I understand.

It's also good to see that our MP, Helen Morgan, is working on our behalf. She says,

Whether the current building can be repaired and re-opened, or whether a new building replaces it, Whitchurch needs a Civic Centre to remain at the heart of the town.

I've launched a petition to take to the Levelling Up Minister when I meet him later this month, asking him to intervene and work with Shropshire Council if need be.'

Let's all be proactive for the sake of our community and work with Helen and our Town Council to protect our facilities and hope and pray for the best outcome for our town.

Dot Charlesworth

Small Community Grant Programme



Warm Hub at St Johns (Mondays & Thursdays)

We are delighted that St Johns has been awarded a grant for £500 from Whitchurch Town Council towards the heating costs and refreshments provided at MORE plus and MORE on a Monday and Thursday afternoons. This will enable us to continue to open as a warm hub for the community for another year, providing fellowship, activities, refreshments and access to our Clothing Hub.

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

Services & Preachers

February

- 4th Local Arrangement (Edna Perry)
11th Joint Service at Tallarn Green (10.45am)
18th Rev Donna (Communion)
25th John Chesworth



TEA & COFFEE ROTA

- 4th Feb Linda Jenkins & Dot
11th Feb Hazel & Mike
18th Feb Brenda & Sarah
25th Feb Briony & Linda Weston
3rd March Chris & Elaine
10th March Hazel & Mike
17th March Avril & Nancy
24th March Elizabeth & Pete
31st March Linda Jenkins & Dot



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 either by email (hazel@heritagewalk.co.uk) or by telephone (01948 667857)

Looking Back on Fundraising last year 2023

Sue Acty and I started our fundraising team in 2023, and with a lot of help from many people in church we had a very successful year last year and I do think we have put St. John's on the map. It's easy for Sue and I to get together to organise events as we live across the road from each other and get on well together too.

Last year we started off with a splendid Valentines afternoon tea in February. It was well attended and popular and of course made some money for the church. We got our best china out, had flowers on the tables, and we had sandwiches, dainties and cream scones, enough to share and take home afterwards. To welcome our guests, we also had a champagne flute of fizz (non-alcoholic of course!) We hope to repeat the event this year.

Our next event of the year was the ever-popular quiz & fish & chip supper. We had decided that the autumn quiz was so popular that we would try to repeat it in the spring and held it in March. Mike Nimmo was an excellent quizmaster and the quiz and supper were enjoyed by all.

We held a coffee morning at the civic in April, always a good community event, making more funds for church.

Our summer Fayre with Strawberry teas in June was well attended and popular. We had Whitchurch Singers singing outside at the front of the church, followed by Green Man Morris dancers. We had face painting, all our usual stalls, and of course the ever-popular strawberry teas.

On one of the hottest days of the year, in September, we did our first car boot sale at Alderford. It was hard work and hot but well worth it. Well done to all who helped.

We once again staged an Art Show and Recycled Fashion Show on Blackberry Fair Day in October and we had Cellist James playing solo in our lovely church, whilst people were looking at the exhibits, which was truly delightful.

In November we had our Autumn quiz and fish & chip supper with

Mike once again as quiz master. Thank you to Mike and all who helped.

We held the Christmas Fayre in church in December this year with our usual stalls, hot mince pies, Whitchurch Singers and Father Christmas.

Didn't we all do well!

Thank you to all who helped and let's look forward to another good fundraising year.

Dot Charlesworth

Some Quotes

There is only two things requisite so far as the public is concerned for a good performance. That is for the orchestra to begin together and end together. In between it doesn't matter much
(Sir Thomas Beecham)

Who wants to go out and see a bad movie when they can stay at home and see a bad one free on TV

(unknown Scot I think)

F Scott Fitzgerald: "The rich are different from us."

Ernest Hemmingway: "Yes, they have more money."

BBT@St Johns

Please join us at Bumps Babies & Toddlers from 9.30-11.30am for craft, toys, singing, stories coffee and chat. A children's clothing hub is also available so come and find some new outfits for your growing children. We are keen for more people 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.



BBT Rota for February & March.

	Leader	Open up	General & Craft	Tea
29 th Jan	Kathryn	Mike	Elaine Hazel	Chris
5 th Feb	Kathryn	Briony	Dot	Chris
12 th Feb	<i>No BBT Half Term Holidays</i>			
19 th Feb	Briony/Donna	Briony	Brenda Dot	Sarah
26 th Feb	Kathryn	Mike	Chris Elaine	Hazel
4 th Mar	Kathryn	Briony	Dot	Sarah
11 th Mar	Kathryn	Chris	Brenda	Elaine
18 th Mar	Kathryn	Briony	Dot	Sarah
25 th Mar	<i>No BBT Easter Holidays</i>			

Hope Journey for Easter

Following the success of our Hope Journey in December when children from Year 3 at Whitchurch Junior Academy came to St Johns to learn more about the Christmas story, Kathryn is planning a **Hope Journey about the Easter Story** for a group of Y4 children at the end of March. The provisional date is **Friday 15th March**. If you are interested in being involved by telling the Easter Story, serving refreshments, helping with a craft or welcoming children and guiding them around our Church, please speak to someone on the BBT Rota and come along to a meeting on **Monday 12th February at 9.15am** to find out more.

Additional dates for your diary

28th Feb - Church Council

25th Feb - Zoom Meeting led by Avril

24th March - Zoom Meeting led by Avril (Palm Sunday)

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 and Gaza , Israel and Yemen are other areas of great concern.

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 FOOD-BANK

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. Our Church Council as trustees have responsibilities in making decisions for our church.

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

Bringing all this to Jesus



Lent Lunches for Christian Aid

[This Photo](#) by Unknown

This year, the Lent Lunches will all be held at the **Watergate Centre** from **12 to 2pm** each **Wednesday** during **Lent**..

Churches will take it in turns to host:

Feb. 21 St John's to host

Feb. 28 St. George's to host



March 6 Beacon to host

March 13 St Alkmund's to host

March 20 Christian Aid
Committee to host

There will be homemade soup, a roll, tea & coffee and fruit with a suggested donation of "£5 or give what you can" for Christian Aid.

If you are able to help on Wed February 21st when St John's are hosting the lunch, please speak to Briony or Brenda.

Many thanks.

We hope as many as possible of you will be able to attend

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.

4th Feb	Pete Shingler
11th Feb	Hazel Nimmo
18th Feb	Pete Shingler
25th Feb	Hazel Nimmo
3rd March	Hazel Nimmo
10th March	Hazel Nimmo
17th March	Hazel Nimmo
24th March	Pete Shingler
31st March	Petee Shingler

Stewards

4th Feb	Andrew
11th Feb	Hazel
18th Feb	Dot
25th Feb	Mike



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February 2024 Newsletter

Please let Chris Crowther have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by Tuesday 20th February

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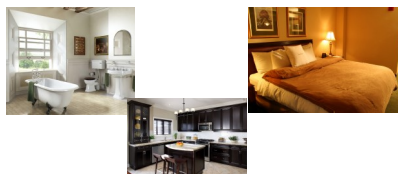
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