

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

## *Message from the Manse*

Hello friends,

A different point of view ...

I wonder if, like me, you watched the recent BBC drama “Ludwig”? - its on I player still if you didn’t. It was certainly a good watch and one we all at the manse enjoyed watching.

If you haven’t seen it, it’s about 2 identical twins; one a puzzler setter and the other a police officer. When the police officer James goes missing, the puzzle setter John secretly steps into his place in order to work out what has happened to his brother. He pretends to be a police detective and he turns out to be remarkably good at solving murders. Not because he has the same skills and experience as his missing brother but because his brain, used to solving puzzles of a more theoretical nature, looks at things a bit differently. The missing brother problem never does get solved so I’m pretty sure there’ll be a series two in the pipeline but in the meantime it’s the idea of looking at things differently that got me thinking.

In many ways routines are wonderful things - they keep us safe, they make us efficient, they get things done but there’s always the unfortunate possibility that we can get stuck in a bit of rut. How many times do you do the same supermarket shop to cook the same things? Or walk the dog on the same route through the same park? Or even do the same puzzle in the same paper? Sometimes these things are reassuring but sometimes it can suddenly feel a bit dull.

The same, I think, is true of faith - even though whatever He is or isn’t I’m certain that God is neither dull nor rou-

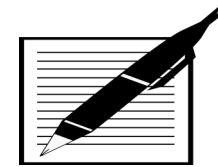
tine! Humans though, well we can get stuck in a rut when it comes to relating to Him. Just occasionally it helps to shake things up. To talk to someone whose spirituality or beliefs are different from our own. To read something that makes us stop and think. To pray in a different way or with different people. To pick up a new Bible translation. To listen to music that we would never normally choose. We may end up back with our familiar favourites in time but a slight meander off the path brings new life and freedom to them.

So, this November why not challenge yourself - read something different (I have bookshelves groaning with suggestions, available only if you swap for something you think I should read!) or have a coffee with someone you only know in passing or cook something different and invite someone different to share it and while you're at it, why not ask God to reveal something new to you about who he made you to be? Anything could happen if you risk looking at things a little differently.

As a church we too need to start thinking differently, and trying out new things. As we know plan making is becoming increasingly difficult, and most quarters we have two or three local arrangement services. These services though do give us an opportunity to do something different and for all of us take part in worship. Instead of searching for others to lead, or even avoid the service all together, lets embrace it and use it as an opportunity to try something new.

With blessings Rev. Donna

## *Steward's Letter*



At the recent Cafe Church, Donna asked some challenging questions. The first two asked what were the good things and bad things we had experienced during the previous week. Hazel and I were midway through a 19 day spell with no central heating and while it was not mid-winter it was not too good. Then I realised that we had experienced a wonderful example of good when our friends and neighbours gave us all sorts of assistance. Elaine and our neighbour loaned us heaters and Chris gave us an electric blanket and we had lots of other offers. The new system is in place and running well. It has revealed that our ancient boiler had been underperforming by quite a bit - much like ourselves!

St John's mission in the community is similar to our friends and neighbours response to our problem. BBT and More offer the community our Christian love and support. At the joint service last Sunday we considered where we are going as a church and as individuals and what we hoped to pass on to the next generation. Not an easy one to address but one thing that struck me was that our biggest challenge was finding the opportunity to bring our Christian faith to others. BBT and More are two real opportunities we have taken. Perhaps we should be looking for others?

They do not need always to be group efforts. Individually we can demonstrate concern for others by helping our "neighbour" when opportunity arises or merely by being seen trying to live our life as Jesus would wish.

This reminds me of why as a teenager I left the church for six years before joining another church. When asked my reasons I answered that "The elders at the door smiled at you on a Sunday and ignored you on a Monday". I'm glad to say this never happened again and St John's is to me a seven day welcoming church.

Mike

## *Services & Preachers*

- 3rd Nov. LA
- 10th Nov. Joint Remembrance Service 11.45 at St Alkmund's
- 17th Nov. Rev Donna HC
- 24th Nov. Jon Chesworth
- 1st Dec Rev Jenny Arthurs



## *TEA & COFFEE ROTA*

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

- 3rd Nov. Briony & Linda Weston
- 17th Nov Chris & Elaine
- 24th Nov Hazel & Mike
- 1st Dec Dot & Bronwen
- 8th Dec Elizabeth & Pete
- 15th Dec Hazel & Linda Jenkins
- 22nd Dec Avril & Nancy
- 29th Dec Brenda & Sarah



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

### **If we return (Rondeau)**

If we return, will England be  
Just England still to you and me?  
The place where we must earn our bread?  
We, who have walked among the dead.  
And watched the smile of agony,

And seen the price of liberty,  
Which we have taken carelessly  
From other hands. Nay, we shall dread,  
If we return,

Dread lest we hold blood -guiltily  
The things that men have died to free.  
Oh, English fields shall blossom red  
For all the blood that has been shed  
By men whose guardians are we,  
If we return.

### **Frederick William Harvey (1888-1957)**

(My thanks to Dot for sending me this poem which is most appropriate for Remembrance Sunday. Harvey fought in World War 1 and was captured in 1916. He is worth looking up on the internet.)

" I'm an old man now and have had a great many problems.  
Most of them never happened.

**- Mark Twain**

## **The Corrymeela Community**

When we lived in Formby on Merseyside we were members of the Methodist Church there and we became very friendly with the Minister, Rev Geoff Barnard, and his wife Audrey. They had met in South Africa where Geoff was ministering and Audrey was a missionary. After a period of time they decided to get married and return to Britain. Interestingly despite Geoff being a minister they had to pay back the cost of Audrey's fare out to South Africa as she had not quite been there the required length of time!

Audrey originated from Northern Ireland and was always very concerned about the troubles as she still had family there. When they visited they usually spent some time at the Corrymeela community so when Geoff retired they decided to move to NI and work for a few years in Corrymeela. When we met up with them it was always interesting to hear about the work of the Community in a country where there was such hatred between the Catholic and Protestant people.

Corrymeela is Northern Ireland's oldest peace and reconciliation organisation. It was founded in 1965 as a way of building a more peaceful Northern Ireland. During the conflict known as "**The Troubles**" they welcomed people from different sides and provided a way for them to meet safely, have difficult conversations and support one another inspiring people around the world to live out reconciliation in their daily lives.

Each year Corrymeela still hosts thousands of people, from diverse backgrounds and experiences, at the Ballycastle Centre, giving support and encouraging people from different backgrounds to live well together.

### **Pray for Corrymeela**

For the work of reconciliation  
For the Community members, volunteers and workers

For the Groups who work in partnership with Corrymeela  
For all the men, women and children who participate in Corrymeela  
programmes  
For Corrymeela support groups everywhere.  
Lord, Grant that love may triumph and that your peace prevails in  
the hearts of all people. Amen

**Hazel**

## **QUIZ**

All the answer are names of London Underground stations. A  
prize to the first all correct answers submitted to me.

1. Where 1760 yards ceases.
2. Open air recreation area for the Ecology Party
3. Napoleon was here in 1815
4. Very pale church
5. The eighth might be a brother
6. Rabbit trap near a small river
7. Where a noble gets justice
8. Elevated Public School
9. Agricultural blackboard marker
10. Where the miner is in the trees
11. Stitched together a yashmak I hear
12. The way to Lloyd's Bank





# 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 have been looking at The Scarecrow Trail this Autumn and you can see what we have been doing as we update the display board in the Guild Room.

Rev Donna led a joyful harvest worship on 7<sup>th</sup> October and we looked around the colourful harvest displays in Church. We will be celebrating **Christmas on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December** and all are welcome to join us for a short service at 10am and look at the lovely decorations in the Church.

The Rota for November & December is below. :

	Leader	Open up	General & Craft	Kitchen
4 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Kathryn	Mike	Brenda/ Elaine	Hazel
11 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Kathryn	Briony	Chris	Sarah
18 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Kathryn	Mike	Brenda/Dot	Hazel
25 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Kathryn	Briony	Dot / Elaine	Sarah
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec	Briony	Briony	Brenda/ Elaine	Chris
9 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Kathryn/ Donna	Mike	Dot/Chris	Hazel
16 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Kathryn	Briony	Dot / Brenda	Sarah

If you would like to help or just want to come and say hello, please speak to someone on the rota.



## **A Thank you Message from Whitchurch Foodbank**

Please accept our sincere thanks to the members of **St. John's Methodist Church** for their support this Harvest, we are truly most appreciative!

The harvest donations from St John's weighed 37.7kg. Unfortunately, donations to Food Bank have dropped off a little these last few months, in spite of Food Bank being busier than ever, caring for young families and others who are at their wits end trying to cope so we are all the more grateful to all those Schools, Churches, and Chapels this year for their wonderful support this Harvest, which have helped to build up our stocks for the coming months.

### **Christmas Fair at St. John's on Saturday 7th December 10-2pm**

Our Christmas Fair this year will be here at St. John's once again and we will have, tombola, Bric-à-brac , Christmas Stall, Crafts and a raffle. We will also have refreshments , including warm mince pies, and a cake stall.

We are hoping to have a visit from Santa and Christmas songs from Whitchurch singers.

Please save the date and let me know how you can help.

**Dot**

## *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—most recently Valencia in Spain 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 and Thursday. Our Church Council as trustees have responsibilities in making decisions for our church.

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

Bringing all this to Jesus

# ***Jumble Sale***

At St John's Methodist Church  
On Saturday 9th November  
10am until 12 noon

***including:*** bric-a-brac,  
books,  
cake stall,  
refreshments  
Raffle

**Entry Free**

**(Pop in for a browse!)**

**Smile please!**

*Teacher:* “Johnny, name three inventions which helped Man get up in the world”.

*Johnny;* “The escalator, the lift and the alarm clock.”

Q. What’s the definition of an archaeologist?

A. A man whose career is in ruins.

**Taxi**

**For anyone requiring a lift to church please contact either Pete Shingler or Hazel and if they are able to one of them will bring you to church**



**Stewards**

3rd Nov.      Dot

17th Nov.     Andrew

24th Nov.     Hazel



**BENJAMIN'S CAFÉ &  
DELI**



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**December 2024/January 2025 Newsletter**

Please let Chris Crowther have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by Tuesday 19th November.

## **BARLOWS**

**Your local electrical  
store**



**High Street  
Whitchurch**

Call in and talk to one of  
the team.

## **Galaxy Computer Services**

**Your local computer  
experts**

Computer sales, support  
and repair



Call **Will or**  
Matt 01948 665855

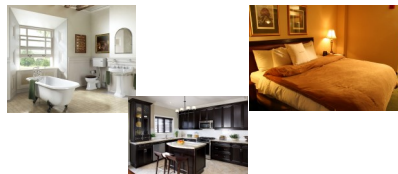
Top of the High Street  
Whitchurch

## **SPLISH SPLASH**

**“Olde Worlde Charm”**

A Family run  
Bathrooms Bedrooms &  
Kitchens Business based at 46a  
High Street Whitchurch

Speak to Vincent about your new  
project! Or re-vamp your existing  
kitchen, bathroom or bedroom



**The Most Famous  
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## **WALKERS**

