

St John's Methodist Church Whitchurch

November Newsletter 2026

WELCOME!

We offer a special welcome to all visitors. Please stay for refreshments after the service.

Advent Carol Service

with

The Border Singers

Seasonal choral music, readings and traditional Advent carols



Monday 30th November

7:30 pm

St John's Church

Whitchurch

SY13 1QT

ALL WELCOME

FREE CONCERT

Retiring collection split between The Border Singers and St John's Church

Message from the Manse

Hello friends,

November is a month that invites us to pause for a moment. As the nights draw in and the days become colder, our thoughts often turn to remembering, to those we have loved and lost, and to the hope that helps us keep looking forward.

Over recent weeks, I have had the privilege of conducting a number of funerals. Funeral ministry is something I truly love, although I know that might sound a little strange! It is a privilege to journey alongside families at such an important and often difficult time in their lives. Funerals are places of sadness, loss and grief, but they are also places of joy and celebration: opportunities to give thanks for a life well lived, to share stories, to smile at happy memories, and to recognise the precious gift of having known someone, whether that is for 97 years or only a short time.

There is something very special about these moments. Sometimes, it feels as though we are standing in a thin place between heaven and earth, where the things we cannot see or fully understand seem a little closer. In the midst of tears, memories and love, I often feel God's presence in a very real way. Losing someone we love is never easy. Grief can catch us unexpectedly, and even when time passes, there may still be moments when we long to see or speak to the person who is no longer with us.

Yet the hope we find in God, and the love that remains, help us to take each day as it comes. We do not have to have all the answers, or feel strong all the time. We simply take one step at a time, holding on to the love we shared and trusting that we are not alone.

At the beginning of November, many people mark All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, remembering those

who have made a difference in their lives. For some, this brings happy memories and a smile; for others, it can be a time when grief feels particularly close. Whatever our circumstances, remembering is a way of keeping love alive. The people who have shaped us, encouraged us and walked alongside us remain part of who we are. November also brings Remembrance Sunday, when we come together to honour those who have given their lives in war and conflict, and to remember all those who continue to live with the consequences. As we wear our poppies and observe the two minutes' silence, we remember not only the courage and sacrifice of previous generations, but also the importance of working for peace in our own time. Remembrance asks something of us: that we do not take freedom for granted, that we show compassion to those who suffer, and that we do what we can to build a kinder and more peaceful world.

Of course, November also brings the excitement of Bonfire Night and fireworks! There is something wonderful about standing outside on a dark evening, wrapped up against the cold, watching the sky burst into colour. The bright flashes and sparkling trails remind us that even in the darkest moments, there can be light, beauty and joy. Of course, fireworks can also be frightening for some people and animals, so it is worth remembering our neighbours and taking care as we celebrate.

Perhaps there is a connection between all these November moments. We remember the past, we acknowledge the sadness and sacrifice that life can bring, and we look for the light that helps us move forward. As a Christian, I find hope in the promise that darkness never has the final word. The Bible speaks of God as a light in the darkness, a presence that stays with us through both joyful and difficult times. Hope does not mean pretending that everything is easy or

that we never feel sadness. It means trusting that love is stronger than hatred, that kindness matters, and that even small acts of goodness can make a difference. Sometimes that light is found in the simplest things: a neighbour checking in on someone who lives alone, a friendly conversation over a cup of tea, a helping hand when someone is struggling, or a community coming together to support one another. As we move through November towards the winter months, may we make time to remember those who have gone before us, cherish the people around us, and look for opportunities to bring a little light into someone else's life. And perhaps, as you watch the fireworks light up the November sky, you might take a moment to think of someone you miss, someone who has brought light into your life, or someone who could do with a little extra hope just now.
May we be people who remember with gratitude, live with compassion, and share hope wherever we can.

With blessings

Rev'd Donna

Weather Lore

When October and November are warm and rainy, January and February will be frosty and cold; but if October and November be snow and frost, then January and February will be open and mild.

If there's ice in November
That will bear a duck,
There'll be nothing later
But sludge and muck.

Steward's Letter

A few weeks ago, Hazel and I joined a group of Rotarians and Inner Wheel members on a visit to Aquabox, a Rotary Partnership Charity, to learn about the work they do in response to disasters across the world. When I signed up to go, I clearly didn't check where we were going and offered to drive. It was all the way to Wirksworth near Matlock, Derbyshire but I am pleased to say it was well worth the two-hour journey each way. One of the trustees gave us a brief explanation of how from modest beginnings they have grown into an organisation which has over 70 volunteers coming into their premises every week and not surprisingly received The Queens Award for Voluntary Service in 2016. The core of the material sent in response to any disaster is the Aquabox Family Filter which filters water filled with all sorts of potential diseases into clean, safe water at a litre per minute. They gave us a demonstration which blew us away. Over the years the filter has been enhanced to be more effective and designed to be more easily assembled. We then entered the "Works" and the first thing we saw was a stack of pallets shrink wrapped and destined for Nepal. Each family container has 30 items including the filter to alleviate the problems encountered under 6 headings – Essential items (e.g. Cooking Pot, Tarpaulin); Hygiene (Carbolic Soap); General (e.g. Torch); Children (e.g. Ponchos, Paper and Pencils); Shelter (e.g. Hammer and nails, Shovel); Kitchen (e.g. Bamboo bowls, cups and plates). Next, we saw the actual assembling of the filters. We each had one person demonstrating the assembly and we had an opportunity to ask questions. The Aquabox Family Filter is based on sub-micron membranes which are impenetrable to bacteria and most viruses, like typhoid, cholera and dysentery. With a quick simple back-flush process to get rid of accumulated contamination they go on working day after day, month after month, year after year.

As we left, we were all chattering about how impressed we were with what we had seen.

What a great day out!

Mike

(PS. I'll leave a couple of leaflets and a Recommended Packing List in the Guild room.)

Extract from Kilvert's Diary

Wednesday 28th October

This morning we held a family conclave and indignation meeting about the church singing. At last, we resolved that as Mr Ashe (*Squire)* has practically dismissed George Jeffries from his post as leader of the singing and rendering it impossible for the singing to go upon the old footing, we must rather than give up singing in the service have a harmonium or some instrument in the Church, whether he likes it or not. We are prepared to give up the living and leave the place should we be obliged to do so rather than submit any longer to this tyranny. I don't' think it will come to this. No such luck as to leave Langley. We should all be better off and happier elsewhere, more independent and what is most important of all we should have more self-respect. For my own part I should for many reasons be glad and thankful to go. I don't know how it will end. I suppose I shall stay here as long as my Father lives, no longer.

Thursday 29th October

At 8.30 this morning we sent the harmonium to the Church on the trucks with John and George and soon after 10 o'clock Fanny *(sister)* and I followed to see where it ought to be placed and hear how it sounded. Though a small instrument it quite filled the Church with sound. We placed it in the Baptistry close by the Font. This morning was an epoch in the history of Langley Church and the first sound of an instrument within the old walls and event and sensation not soon to be forgotten. How this innovation, necessary though it has become will be received by the Squire no one can tell. He has forced us to do it himself and opened the way for change by dismissing George Jeffries, the chief singer, from his post as leader of the Church singing, but we expect some violence of language at least.
Carried Annie Savine a rice pudding and some old linen to bind up her face and Elizabeth Bourchier's leg.

Sunday, Allhallowmass Day 1874

All has gone off well. Fanny played the harmonium nicely and the singing was capital. The congregation were delighted and some of them could hardly believe their ears and the Squire said nothing for or against, but he came to Church twice.

Kilvert was at this time acting as curate for his father who was Rector of Hardenhuish and Langley Burrell in Wiltshire

Action Aid for Children.

I would like to thank all those who kindly contributed to Action for Children through the boxes they used throughout the year. £180 was the final total sent to this vital work done by the Methodist Church. Vital because it helps save children and young people from neglect, abuse of many kinds and pain. Children have no voice in families that harm them and this can lead, in the worst cases to death.

Work with children or ministry were the choices which presented themselves to me when I was younger. I taught infants but that wasn't what I was thinking of but work socially with the Methodist Church on behalf of children and young people. God's call to me, however, was for full-time ministry even though I was already a local preacher. When I read in my Barnabas prayer magazine of the struggle of women and children throughout the world and see the news items on our TV screens involving the hurt of the hurt of children and young people, my heart bleeds. This little task I do in collecting Action Aid boxes annually is a small token to help this fine work done by the Methodist and other groups to remove the pain. So, thank you all again for your kindness and if anyone else would like a box, see me at church any Sunday and God bless you all.

Edna

News from Tallarn Green

David Paton has sent information about the following event.

On 30th October my Community Bus colleagues and I have arranged a Music Night to be held at The Coronation Hall, Bickley starting at 7.30pm. We ran this fundraising event last year for the first time and it was such a success all round that we have decided to repeat it again this year!! Two of our drivers/trustees belong to a male voice choir (barbershop style) and a small jazz group (which you may have seen at Penley?) and between them they provide the entertainment for the evening. Tickets are £10 and are selling quickly - I believe only 17 left as of Thursday!

Doreen Manning has sent this advert.

COME AND ENJOY

A Concert of Popular Songs and Music
With the Fauls Singers and Guest Artists
Friday,13th Nov at 7.30p.m.
at The Maelor School, Penley
Admission £10 Inc. Glass of wine/juice. (Can pay on door)
Proceeds for Tallarn Green Methodist Church.



Service details	**Preacher**	**Steward**
Nov. 1st	Mrs. Sue Tyson	Mike Nimmo
Nov.8th	At St. Alkmund's 11.30am Remembrance	
Nov.15th	Rev. R. Hilton HC	Andrew Fawcett
Nov.22nd	Rev Donna	Dot Charlesworth
Nov.29	Mrs. J M Jackson	Mike Nimmo

Coffee Rota

Nov 1st	Pete & Elizabeth Shingler
Nov.8th	At St. Alkmund's
Nov. 15th	Brenda & Sarah
Nov. 22nd	Chris & Elaine
Nov.29th	Hazel & Mike
Dec 6th	Avril & Linda J.

Taxi

For anyone requiring a lift to church please contact Either Peter Shingler or Hazel and if they are able to one of them will bring you to church. (NB Hazel is not available on 15th and 22nd)

Zoom Service

The next Zoom Service will be on Sunday 22nd November at 4pm. Please contact Avril for the zoom details.

"Where two or three are gathered together…"

Prayer Meeting

At the last Church Council, it was decided that we needed to seek prayerful guidance on the way ahead with our church. It was thought that it might be helpful to hold a brief prayer meeting before the service at 10 o'clock each Sunday at which everyone is welcome. This will mainly be a time of quiet reflection listening for God's guidance with our ongoing work. The first one will be on Sunday 1st November at 10am.

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BBT@St Johns

Monday from 9.30-11.30am in term time as from 9th November. Please join us for coffee, chat, craft, songs & stories.

Welcome back to BBT! We have refreshed our toys and brought some new crates to help us tidy them away. We will also be drinking hot drinks from cups with lids so please bring one from home if you have one. This month we will be putting the finishing touches to our harvest picture using the scraps of clothing you brought in and then getting ready for Christmas. If you would like to help or just want to come and say hello, please speak to someone on the Rota.

The Rota for November is below:

	Leader	Open up	General & Craft	Kitchen
9th Nov	Kathryn	Chris	Brenda/Dot	Sarah
16th Nov	Kathryn	Briony	Briony/Sarah	Elaine
23rd Nov	Kathryn	Briony	Chris/ Dot	Elaine
30th Nov	Rev Donna	Mike	Brenda/Sarah	Hazel

November

November comes
And November goes,
With the last red berries
And the first white snows.
With night coming early,
And dawn coming late,
And ice in the bucket
And frost by the gate.
The fires burn
And the kettles sing
And earth sinks to rest
Until next spring.

Clyde Watson

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Briony has received a letter of thanks from the Whitchurch Food Bank for the *super* donation on the 9th October, from **ST. JOHN'S METHODIST CHURCH** following our Harvest Festival, weighing **52 kgs!**

“Please, will you pass on our sincere thanks to the Rev. Donna and all your people at St. John's for their wonderful support - we *truly* are so grateful!!

It is wonderful the way we are supported by *all* our Schools, Churches, and Chapels at Harvest these days - what would we do without all this support from you wonderful people, I ask myself - the answer, I fear, would be unthinkable!

We do have a motto at the Food Bank - **"Never forget, that *every* item we receive makes a world of difference to someone in despair" - So, THANK YOU ST. JOHN'S for your support, enabling us to help those families, when they are in despair - *Bless you All!!***

With All Good Wishes
Pauline Stokes - Secretary to Whitchurch Food Bank



Rev Donna and our Food Bank donations



Jim & Sheila Walwyn came from Norfolk to visit us a couple of weeks ago. It was good to see them again.

December/January 2027 Newsletter

Please let Mike Nimmo have all your submissions for the next Newsletter by Tuesday 23rd November.

Dates for your Diary

Regular

Monday: 9.30 – 11.30 BBT (termtime)
Mon/Thurs 12/1 to 4pm MORE
Thurs. 10 – 12.30pm Art Group fortnightly

Other

Sun 8th 2.30pm Bradley Remembering Service
Fri 13th 7.30pm Tallarn Green Penley Concert
Weds 25th 10am Events Group
Mon 30th 7.30pm Advent Concert
November Quiz +Fish & Chips Supper: date t.b.a.
Thurs 3rd December 9am – 12noon Hope Journey

Bookings of church premises

Tues. weekly 1-5pm Stitch Club
Weds weekly 12noon – 2pm Daily Reflections
Last Sat. monthly: 12noon -4pm Sewing Bee
Sat 21st 1-5pm Whitchurch Art & Craft group
Sat 5th Dec 1-5pm Whitchurch Art & Craft Group

Help shape the future of transport in Shropshire

Last Thursday there was a display of information at St. Alkmund's concerning this project. It wasn't well advertised as we have no Civic Centre so you may have missed it. You can express your opinions any time between 5th October and 16th November by going onto the website https://getinvolved.shropshire.gov.uk/consultations/shropshire-local-transport-plan/
Or email: ShropshireLTP@shropshire.gov.uk
Or phone 345 678 9000