

South Wigston Methodist Church

The Oracle



Mothering Sunday
22nd March 2021

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Our Mission Statement

The people of South Wigston Methodist Church are called to live the good news of God's love through open hearts, open minds and open doors.

We strive to be a place where understandings of Jesus Christ can flourish.

We're called to be good neighbours to people in need, to challenge injustice, and to meet regularly for prayers, singing and learning.

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One of the ways in which we seek to put this mission statement into practice is to ensure that our church is a safe place for all who use it by following the safeguarding policies and practices of the Methodist Church. Our church's safeguarding policy is on the noticeboard in the lounge. The Safeguarding contact is Helen 07500 180517.

South Wigston Methodist Church
Blaby Road, South Wigston LE18 4PB
www.swmchurch.org.uk

Minister: Rev. Fran Rhys 0116 257 1069

Senior Steward: Mary B. 0116 281 2625

Leicester Trinity Circuit, Charity registration number 1129943

Editor: Mary B. contact: pmmmbry@gmail.com 07891 917768
Contributions always welcome; deadline 20th of each month.

Worship in March

March & April services in our church have been cancelled.

Church Council met on 24th February and felt that, given the continuing pandemic, it would not be appropriate to open the church for worship. It is hoped to start worship on Sunday 16th May with Communion led by Rev. Fran.

Bishop Street Methodist Church is offering a Zoom service every Sunday 10.30am for 10.45am start. All from Cosby and South Wigston Methodist Churches are warmly welcomed to attend. There is the option of breakout groups at 11.30am for chat over your coffee. Zoom links will be published in the weekly newsletters or contact Fran.

Sunday 21st March 8.45 am Bible breakfast via Zoom. Link from Fran or Mary B. and will be in the newsletter.

Sunday Evening Circuit Services

Sunday evening Circuit online services start at 6pm and you are invited to join. The services last around 40 minutes, and there is the opportunity after the service to chat to people from around the Circuit. Please contact Mary B. or Fran for the Zoom link – this remains the same each week and is also sent out in the weekly newsletters.

World Day of Prayer 5th March online service from Bishop Street MC 10.30 for 10.45 start. Zoom link will be in the newsletter or from Brenda.

See the back page for worship during Holy Week



A message from our minister

A Methodist Way of Life?

Some of you may react to the title of this message with the thought: But I've been a Methodist all my life! Or at least for a big portion of my life – I know what it means to be a Methodist, and perhaps you may even refer to the 4 areas of 'Our Calling' on your membership card: worship, learning and caring, service, and evangelism. Or you may resonate with these thoughts of St Paul:

For we are what God has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. (Ephesians 2:10)

Some may find the idea of a way of life restricting, negative or life-denying? But the idea is for a signpost, a railing, something that gives me support as I move forward in my search for God.

Little booklets about the Methodist Way of Life (MWofL) are being delivered by pastoral visitors through your door for your use this Lent. To give you a flavour of this way of life, which is organised around the 4 areas of 'Our Calling', in week 3 about 'Learning and Caring' we're to reflect on these aspects:

- We will care for ourselves and those around us.
- We will learn more about our faith.
- We will practise hospitality and generosity.

The MWofL was first developed by the West Yorkshire District, and discussed and recommended by the Methodist Conference in 2018. To support learning this Lent for those online, Sunday morning preaching on Zoom for Cosby, South Wigston and Bishop Street churches will take place, as will a Circuit Lent study on Wednesdays 4-5pm (also on Zoom – link in newsletters), led by Michael Wadsworth of the Learning Network. But you could also talk and pray over one aspect of ‘Our Calling’ each week during Lent by yourself or with a friend from church over the ‘phone, perhaps writing down some of your reflections.

John Wesley believed that the purpose of Methodism was to “spread scriptural holiness throughout the land”, and that every Christian needed to grow in holiness. Early Methodists met together in ‘Societies’ in which they were accountable to one another, helping each other on the journey towards being what God wanted them to be. In other words, we’re to be on a journey of continuing and ongoing conversion, of growth and inner transformation which will go on as long as I live.

South Wigston is doubly blessed with opportunities this Lent, as there is also a Tuesday morning (10-11am) Lent discussion group online, which will be discussing this year’s York Course, ‘Caring for Creation’. This course has given rise to fruitful discussion in past years and I look forward to it again.

The Zoom link for this course is published in the weekly newsletter or contact Fran

What is a Love Feast?

The Love Feast, or Agape, is a Christian fellowship meal recalling the meals Jesus shared with disciples during his ministry. The service expresses the koinonia or sharing, belonging and fellowship enjoyed within the body of Christ.

The Love Feast, in common with other acts of worship includes prayer, praise, scripture, preaching and mutual fellowship and an offering, but in addition the Love Feast contains a time of Prepared Testimony and the sharing of the Love Feast cake and the Loving Cup.

During an online Love Feast people will use their own food and drink – often cake or bread and tea or water. It's helpful to get them ready before you start.

A traditional Love Feast cake recipe adapted from the Middlesmoor Lovefeast Bread used in the Yorkshire Dales at the time of John Wesley (From the Methodist Church website)

1lb (400g) plain flour

1oz (25g) baking powder

5oz (125g) butter

8oz (200g) sugar

2oz (50g) mixed peel

4oz (100g) sultanas

2 eggs

about half a pint (280ml) of milk

Mix the flour and baking powder together, rub in the butter, then add the sugar, sultanas and peel. Beat the eggs together with a little milk and add to the dry ingredients.

Add the rest of the milk to make a soft consistency.

Pour the mixture into two loaf tins or a large cake tin.

Cook at 180°C (350°F) or gas mark 4 for at least 45 minutes for the loaf tins, or 1 hour for the large cake tin.

From www.methodist.org.uk

Church family

We wish a Happy Birthday to everyone who celebrates in March

3rd Gaynor and Lisa

*and a Happy Anniversary to
Ann and Arthur who celebrate on 30th*

If your special day is missing please let Mary B. know

A message from the church treasurer

It is now one year since the COVID 19 Pandemic reached the British Isles, and its effects began to be felt in ways that none of us could possibly have foreseen. In order to combat the virus the Government introduced draconian measures that effectively closed down the day-to-day workings of the country, with society being brought to a virtual standstill.

Our Sunday services were cancelled from 22nd March, 2020, and it seemed that South Wigston Methodist Church would be faced with a situation of no income for the foreseeable future.

How wrong could I be!

Thanks to the generosity of the Church congregation throughout “lockdown”, payments of weekly and monthly collection has continued by way of bank standing orders, cheques and cash, to such an extent that for the current financial year offerings so far are higher than when services were being held!

For such kindness I must say a very sincere thank you to you all, in supporting our Church, and it’s presence in our community, through such a difficult time.

With grateful thanks, in our Lord’s name,

Trevor.

CAN'T BUY ME LOVE (Matthew ch 18 vv 12-14)

The Beatles were so talented. They wrote so many wonderful songs, and I guess we all have our favourites. Mine is “Can’t buy me love”, and there is a wonderful recording of this song by my favourite singer – Ella Fitzgerald – WOW

If only we could buy love. Some years ago Ann and I went on a coaching holiday to Italy. One of our “stops” was to Verona. It was a special time for they had decorated the town square with the sets from *Aida*. Our guides led us down some narrow streets and there was the statue of Juliet! Just above it was the balcony. You could pay to stand there looking down for Romeo! The fact that the balcony was built in 1936 didn’t seem to put people off! The discovery I made at this scene was rather sad. Stuck in the cracks of the brickwork were little rolls of paper, I reached in and read a few of them. All of them were appeals for love! Some for lost loves. Some were rather pathetic. Some were tragic. All of them were a cry from the heart for LOVE! What we all need to search for. Human nature is strange though, because sometimes we run away from the very thing we want and need.

As I write these words I’m looking out of the window for the first signs of spring – the snowdrops, the crocuses, and of course the daffodils. BUT there is something Ann and I love to see more than anything. We love to drive through Wistow Park and see the baby lambs skipping and running in the fields! Then we know that spring has really come at last! Sometimes you will see a lamb skipping away from its mother, and then bleating because it is lost. Mum makes a grunt and comes to find the lamb. I just love to think that that scene would be familiar to my Saviour! That it was the same scene for Him and his followers, so that He could share the most profound truth with people who could see in a field, love in action.

You see, never mind US looking for LOVE, GOD is looking for US to share HIS LOVE. All we have to do is let that love into our lives. It's so SIMPLE BUT IT'S OH SO VERY DIFFICULT, SO VERY DIFFICULT.



Circuit gains a Deacon

The Leicester Trinity Methodist Circuit will be enriched from 1st September by the presence of a deacon within the staff team: Deacon Sharon Dilley from the Aire and Calder Circuit.

'A deacon's role focusses on bridging the gap between the church and the world'. Sharon's role will involve two projects

1. Working with three village church congregations (Cosby, Countesthorpe and Blaby) to identify and implement strategies to build community links and develop the outreach of these churches.
2. Working with a small group to initiate a new project in Belgrave, establishing a new community of witnessing, serving, worshipping people.

Our new and remaining presbyters:

Rev. Liam Dacre-Davis, his wife Holly and two young children, moving to Leicester from the Walsall Circuit. Liam will have pastoral charge of Bishop Street and **South Wigston**.

Rev. Dr. Israel Selvanayagam with his wife Leela from the South Worcester Circuit. Israel will have pastoral charge of Mayflower, Uppingham Road, and Wesley Hall.

Rev. Paula Hunt will continue to have responsibility for Birstall and Rothley, as well as her role as Superintendent Minister of the Circuit.

Rev. Derek McLean will continue to have pastoral charge of Oadby, Great Glen and Houghton.

Rev. Daniel Yovan will have pastoral charge of Syston, Cosby, Countesthorpe and Blaby.

Rev. Debra Chidakwa-Akue will have pastoral charge of Nativity, Christchurch and Wigston Magna.



We are continuing to support Mariam and her family who live in Burkina Faso.

News from the Compassion website
www.compassionuk.org/

Compassion Projects offering limited programme activity

Active COVID-19 cases in Burkina Faso rose in December 2020. The country is also facing a devastating humanitarian crisis. Escalating instability and violence have led to the internal displacement of more than 1 million people – at least half of whom are children in need of education assistance. Many are without clean water, food, shelter or medical care. Famine-like conditions have been reported, and aid workers say half a million children under age 5 are acutely malnourished. As the situation continues to develop, women and children are especially vulnerable to exploitation, violence and malnutrition.

Depending on the region, many projects are allowing children to return in small groups for activities and classes. Some projects remain closed for safety and staff members there continue to make home visits and phone calls to check on families. The churches have distributed about 511,000 food

packs and 376,000 hygiene kits to families and continue to work to raise awareness of COVID-19 preventive measures. They also have helped 80,000 individuals obtain medical care.

The project at EAC Dogona Secteur - Mariam is able to attend project activities in small groups.

World Day of Prayer Friday 5th March

Build on a strong foundation

Prepared by the women of Vanuatu

Although the Service at our church will not take place, there will be many services that will be held around the world.

You are invited to join a virtual service on Friday 5th March at 2.00 pm as we read through the booklet.

The World Day of Prayer National Committee has released a video of the service, which is available to view on WDPIC YouTube channel. Full details are available on the World Day of Prayer website www.wwdp.org.uk.

As the services are virtually the only means of income for the World Day of Prayer Organisation any donations in lieu of the offering you would make at the service will be greatly appreciated. These can be made at:

A) By cheque, made payable to WDP and sent to WDP, Commercial Road Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2RR

B) By online donation via the WDP website

www.wwdp.org.uk

C) By TEXT message from your mobile phone. TEXT 2021WDP 5 to 70085 to donate £5 (Any amount can be

donated up to £40, just amend the 5 after 2021WDP to the amount you wish to donate.

Thank you.

A Prayer for Vanuatu by *Elizabeth Burroughs*

Holy God Creator of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them.

We join with the Christian women of Vanuatu in praise to you,

For the fertile land and fresh air.

For the sweet melody of the birds,

For land animals and the mysterious creatures of the deep,

And for sounds of children playing.

We thank you for the example of the Christian women of Vanuatu,

For their trust in you, for their fortitude as they struggle to provide food for their families,

and education for their children – things that we in this country so often take for granted.

We ask your forgiveness for our thoughtlessness, our carelessness and our lack of foresight,

Which has led to the pollution of the environment and the current climate change emergency.

Which is causing irrevocable damage to Vanuatu and to other low-lying Pacific Islands.

We pray that you will help us to listen more carefully to you and to your Word, to build our homes and communities on its strong foundations and to work together towards a world where resources are used more sustainably.

Where justice and peace reign, and where all your creatures can live in safety and harmony.

We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen

Meditation

Sit quietly.

Imagine you are on the beach,

The sun is shining and you feel its warmth.

On the horizon you can see some dark clouds –

You are aware that a storm may not be too far away.

Walk along the beach and pick up a pebble,

Keep it in your hand.

As you walk a little farther, bend down and pick up some sand.

Hold that in your other hand.

Keep walking and enjoy the sound of the waves.

Now stop, stand still, open your hand and let the pebble drop.

Now open your other hand and let the sand fall.

Was it still there or had some already slipped through your fingers?

Pick up your sand again.....

You can't, you cannot recognise the sand you had been holding.

Sand gets "lost."

It does not give you support.

Now pick up your pebble.

You can recognise it.

It is firm.

Feel its "Strength."

Thank you, God that we are called and encouraged to build on the firm foundations

He provides and to move forward in His strength.

Muriel Stonehewer

census 2021

Census 2021 will provide a snapshot of modern society

Households across the UK will soon be asked to take part in Census 2021.

The census is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every decade since 1801, with the exception of 1941.

It will be the first run predominantly online, with households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets.

“A successful census will ensure everyone from local government to charities can put services and funding in the places where they are most needed,” Iain Bell, deputy national statistician at the Office for National Statistics, said.

“This could mean things like doctors’ surgeries, schools and new transport routes. That’s why it is so important everyone takes part and we have made it easier for people to do so online on any device, with help and **paper questionnaires for those that need them.**”

Census day will be on **March 21**, but households across the country will receive letters with online codes allowing them to take part from early March.

The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary

questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations. For more information, visit [census.gov.uk](https://www.census.gov.uk). There are also field jobs available at <https://www.censusjobs.co.uk/>

Are you thinking about when you can go on holiday again? Well, how about these holidays. Looking through some papers I came across these booking details from 1953 at Penzance.

“3 ½ guineas each per week, with £2 to cover reservation. Please can you be kind enough to bring either ration books or emergency cards along with you.”

Then in 1955 for Poole in Dorset we went in a “caravan situated on good site near sea & shops. Accommodation 2 single beds, 1 double bed, with Dunlopillo mattresses. Calor gas cooker (with oven). The furnishings in excellent condition. All found except linen & cutlery . Canteen & shops on site. Water & toilets near to van & room for car. Terms 3 gns per week during August. Deposit £2 per week.”

We always went on the train as Dad worked on the railway so he got a free pass to travel. Mum used to pack a trunk with all of our clothes and anything else we needed. This was sent by the train and delivered to the camp site ready for when we got there.

Lovely memories. Will we be able to go on holiday this year?
Margaret E.

“Halleluiah” did you say? Came the reply,
“This bell is for Hell not Heaven, try the next floor up.”
Confused, I did just that, but then a note upon the door
crossed my sight.
From the E U it seemed, vaccine two was not for us.
At least not without a wait – our membership had been
withdrawn.
“Glory, Glory.” it may be, but “Halleluiah,” no, not yet.
Join the queue !!!

Now strident notes reach our ears,
As discord in the tune appears.
From Afric’s horn another strain is born.
Medics heroically strive to give
Succour to those in care.
When at last there is a break
And deprivation is no more
Then to our knees we will fall
Halleluiah and twice more
A O K

Well done Eric for sharing your memories with us. (Feb
Oracle)
They were indeed “dark” days we lived through, as many
learned to their cost.
Fortunately, this area saw little, until that fateful evening in
November 1941 when Leicester was bombed.
I walked into school the next day and was disappointed to
find my school, the City Boys, still standing, whereas the
Freeman, Hardy and Willis shoe factory opposite had been
hit by a high incendiary bomb and was burnt out.
A O K

Age UK Oadby & Wigston

It is with great sadness that we learn of the closure of Age UK Oadby and Wigston.

It all began with Wigston Old People's Welfare Association in 1965. Margaret Edwards and I were appointed as our church representatives to the committee of the Association. Alan joined later and became an active member. He took over as chairman in 1970 from the late Curtis Weston, a member of the Church of Christ, (now the URC) a local and County Councillor and a tireless worker for the people of South Wigston.

The Association became Age Concern in 1971.

Through Alan, a Contact Centre for the elderly was started at our church in 1971, serving drinks and biscuits on Tuesday and Thursday morning; this was staffed by volunteers from our church and the other churches in South Wigston.

A Saturday luncheon club was held at church, catering for 25 plus men and women each week, again staffed by the ladies of the church on a rota basis, with the men providing the transport. Janet H. arranged the menus and bought the food. These activities continued until they were transferred to the Basset Centre, where, as well as the coffee mornings, lunches were served during the week.

An office above the Oadby and Wigston Advertiser newspaper on Long Street was leased for 2 hours on a Wednesday afternoon, for the elderly to call in with any problems they had, this was staffed by volunteers. Later a liaison officer was appointed to do this work, this was Age Concern's first paid helper. Paid for with a grant from the local authority.

The dream was for a Centre where people could drop in for tea and coffee every day, and the committee was working hard to achieve this. Several sites had been looked at , and in

1974 a site in Paddock Street was earmarked for the Day Centre.

Fundraising began in earnest with coffee mornings, street collections and some very generous donations. The Local Council made an interest free loan of £12,000.

A highlight was the "Buy a Brick" appeal, which was started off by Larry Grayson of TV fame.

Building began in 1977 with Alan as the architect and R C Weston the builders. Work was completed by December and the volunteers moved in doing internal work.

The Day Centre opened in 1978, the dream had become a reality. There were drinks and snacks, help was available, later lunches were served, and there was a room for hire.

Through Help the Aged the first mini- bus was purchased to bring people into the Centre.

Things went from strength to strength and the building was extended in 1981 and has been extended again since then.

The Association became Age UK Oadby and Wigston in 2012.

Throughout the years the Association has grown from the first drop-in coffee morning centre based in our church and expanded to accommodate the needs of the local community in a purpose-built building. Facilities have broadened, and residents have benefited from a restaurant, coffee bar, education, exercise and keep fit, socialising, free information and advice, the shop and many other activities and services.

Alan was awarded an MBE in 1998 in recognition of his work with Age Concern.

Age UK Oadby and Wigston will be sadly missed.

Brenda



Methodist Women
in Britain

For women, for justice, for Christ

Sisters in Christ!

**The Rev'd Helen Cameron and
the Northampton District
MWIB**



warmly welcome you to

ZOOM COFFEE & CHAT MORNING

**On Saturday 13th March 2021 10:30am -
12.00pm**

**An opportunity to get together with
women across the Northampton
district, share and laugh and enjoy
fellowship.**

**ALL are welcome, young and old and
those in the middle!**

To register please email
northampton.distoffice@gmail.com and we will
send you the Zoom link

Holy week

All services will be held via Zoom and links will be given in the weekly newsletters.

The services will be for members of South Wigston, Cosby and Bishop Street churches and will be led by Rev. Fran Rhys

Palm Sunday 28th March Love Feast 10.30 for 10.45

Maundy Thursday 1st April 7.30 pm Love Feast

Good Friday 2nd April 10am Reading of Mark's Passion with images.

Easter Sunday 4th April 10.30 for 10.45 led by Rev. Fran and Miriam Stevenson



Eastern Orthodox fresco in Nativity of the Theotokos Church, Bitola, Republic of North Macedonia by Petar Milošević - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=62451753>