

South Wigston Methodist Church

# *The Oracle*



*Lent: Unbounded love*

*February 2024*

**Cover picture:** The Methodist Church's Lent theme is unbounded love

## **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 officer is Margaret Edwards, with Mary Bryceland.

**South Wigston Methodist Church**  
Blaby Road, South Wigston LE18 4PB  
[www.swmchurch.org.uk](http://www.swmchurch.org.uk)

**Minister:** Rev. Frances Ballantyne  
Currently on sick leave

Deacon Sharon Dilley (Day off Friday)  
0116 277 0317 [sharondilley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sharondilley@hotmail.co.uk)

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Contributions always welcome.

## *Worship in February*

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> 10.15 Susan Alexander and Audrey Baker

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> 10.15 Moleen Chikumba

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> 10.15 Rev. Kate Cook – Holy communion

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> 10.15 Café-style worship with the local worship team

### **Rev. Frances**

We are pleased to hear from our minister. She has been undergoing treatment but is not likely to return to work until the end of March. We send her our prayers and best wishes for a full recovery. She and David welcome visitors but please telephone to make an appointment 0116 277 3631.

Deacon Sharon and Rev. Derek McLean are providing pastoral support for our church.



### **World Day Of Prayer**

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2.00pm at The United Reformed Church**

Choir practices, Thursday February 22nd and Tuesday February 27th, both at the Congregational Church at 7.30 pm.

More details on page 8.

### **Circuit news**

It is with great pleasure, that the Leicester Trinity Circuit Leadership team, can now confirm that we have been matched with a presbyter to take on the role of our Superintendent minister, starting in September 2024.

The Rev'd Andrew Farrington & his wife Fiona will be joining us from Andrew's current circuit, the East Mercia circuit of the Methodist Church. (*The East Mercia circuit comprises the former Market Harborough, Daventry & Rugby, and Kettering & Corby circuits*).

As part of Andrew's overall duties as Superintendent minister, he will have direct pastoral responsibility for Christchurch, Great Glen & Houghton churches.



## *A message from Deacon Sharon*

Here we are already in February; people tell me that time goes quicker as you get older but it certainly seems to be going fairly quickly already. However, there is some good news, with this year being a leap year, we have an extra day before March.

How are you going to spend your extra day? I don't suppose it will be any different to any other Thursday for many, although for some people they will get to celebrate their birthday on the proper date, and I'm sure there will be some ladies who will take advantage of the old Irish legend where St Brigid struck a deal with St Patrick to allow women to propose to men.

February also sees the start of Lent, the time within the Church year when we begin thinking ahead to Easter, traditionally a sombre time. In some Anglican churches all the silverware is removed, there are no flowers and no hymns which include the word Hallelujah are sung.

Lent is a time for people to give up things like chocolate, alcohol, crisps and biscuits and lots of these people make sure that everyone knows that is what they are doing!

Perhaps though it is better to take something up for Lent, we could commit ourselves to spend more time with God, as we read the bible and pray. It could be that we need to extend the scope of our prayers, to include times of thanking God or we may feel we need to extend the people and situations we bring to God in prayer, to include world situations as well as the concerns for those closest to us. As we pray, we may feel spurred into action, to be the answer to our own prayers.

Whatever action we do this Lent, giving up or taking up, I hope throughout this time we may each draw closer to God and so are more prepared as we come to Easter to remember and celebrate all that was achieved by Jesus' death and resurrection, and can then more fully enter into the new life that is God's promise to all who believe.

## *The Church family in February*

*Happy Birthday* to Mary Pole who celebrates on 27<sup>th</sup>

*Congratulations to*

**Pat's granddaughter** Rebecca who got engaged to Ben at Christmas.

**Catriona** who was awarded a Masters in Advanced Clinical Practice (Critical Care) from Warwick University on 18th January.

*Church Flowers* If you would like to have flowers in church to celebrate a special occasion, or in memory of someone, please fill in the calendar in the lounge or contact Margaret E. 0116 278 6616.

4<sup>th</sup> Sue & the girls in memory of Nanny      11<sup>th</sup>

21<sup>st</sup>

25<sup>th</sup> Margaret D. for John

**Thank you for your donations for Mariam and her family in Burkina Faso.**

We support them via Compassion.

Mariam's latest letter is on the noticeboard.

The translation from French includes a bit about the "church's wife" – this refers to my letter when I wrote about the Knit & natter group.

Mariam thanks us for our mid-year extra donation which purchased rice, oil, soap, tomato paste and sugar. You can see them in the photo – the original photo isn't very clear.

Her father is working away from home at the moment.



## Lent resources from the Methodist Church



### Unbounded Love: God's love doesn't stay in the lines

Charles Wesley's famous hymn *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* (*Singing the Faith* 503) talks about Jesus as 'unbounded love' – a kind of love that cannot be contained, that works in our lives and in our world to free us and heal us. *Unbounded Love* is the theme of the Lent campaign of the Methodist Church in 2024 – holding together our commitments to be a justice-seeking church, and a people who experience and proclaim the good news of God's uncontainable love.

**Sign up for our daily reflection emails during Lent:** Throughout Lent we are sharing daily email reflections that explore the theme of *Unbounded Love*. Sign up to receive these each day, beginning on Wednesday 14 February and discover a rhythm of reflection over Lent. You'll also be signed up to future reflection series.

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/lent-and-easter/unbounded-love/>

**Every Friday (7pm) throughout Lent, Rev Liam will be hosting a Zoom conversation** to explore the resources found within these emails. Everyone and anyone is welcome to be part of these conversations. Please mail Liam who will make the details available for you to join the Zoom meetings, which will run from Fri 16th Feb to Fri 29th March.

[Liam.dacre-davis@methodist.org.uk](mailto:Liam.dacre-davis@methodist.org.uk)

There is a range of resources that connect the Gospel readings from the Sunday lectionary throughout Lent to weekly themes, each one a line lifted from "Love divine, all loves excelling". The themes are:

- **Week 1** - "Unbounded love": Jesus' baptism and wilderness experience – God's love bursts the barriers of heaven, and then bursts into the realms of darkness.
- **Week 2** - "Visit us with thy salvation": Losing our life (psyche) to find it – the ways we attempt to insulate ourselves from God's love.
- **Week 3** - "Pure and spotless let us be": Turning the tables in the Temple – corporate religious attempts to boundary God's love.
- **Week 4** - "Finish then thy new creation": God's unbounded love for the cosmos.



- **Week 5** - “Changed from glory into glory”: Like a seed that has to die before it bears fruit, death is no barrier to God’s love.
- **Week 6** - “Till we cast our crowns before thee”: As Jesus entered Jerusalem the people responded by taking off their cloaks. What’s our equivalent?
- **Holy Week** - “Lost in wonder, love, and praise!”: As Jesus becomes bound by his opponents, will God’s love stay bound?

## QUIZ

The Quiz on “PLACES in the UK” raised £125 for Church funds, thank you to all who took part. The winner was Mrs Ruth Cawthorn.

I did 4 quizzes last year and raised £570 in total.

My next quiz is on “CLOTHING and MATERIALS,” this is now available, at the usual price of £1 a copy plus £1 if you would like the answers. The quiz is in aid of the Residents’ Amenity Fund at Aigburth Methodist Home.

*Brenda*

## Snowdrops!

### **Framework Knitters Museum Reopening 2024 - Snowdrop Weekend.**

The museum is currently closed for the Winter period. We plan to reopen for the Snowdrop Weekend, which will be Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th February 2024 between 2pm-5pm. Those of you who have been to this event before will know what a splendid weekend this can be. Refreshments should be available for a small charge.

**MHA Aigburth** (Manor Road, Oadby) **Snowdrop Stroll** Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February 10.30 -12.30 with garden tours, coffee morning and various stalls.

### **Greater Wigston Historical Society talk** Thursday 22 February

Talks start at 3pm at the Heritage Centre (by Wigston swimming pool) – access from 2.30pm - £4 per person

"ON STICKY WICKETS", the story of an outrageous aristocrat (with famous ancestry) who fought in and survived the Great War and went on to captain England at cricket.

By David Humberston, Chairman Of Leics & Rutland Western Front Association

Places are limited and must be booked

[bookings@wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk](mailto:bookings@wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk)

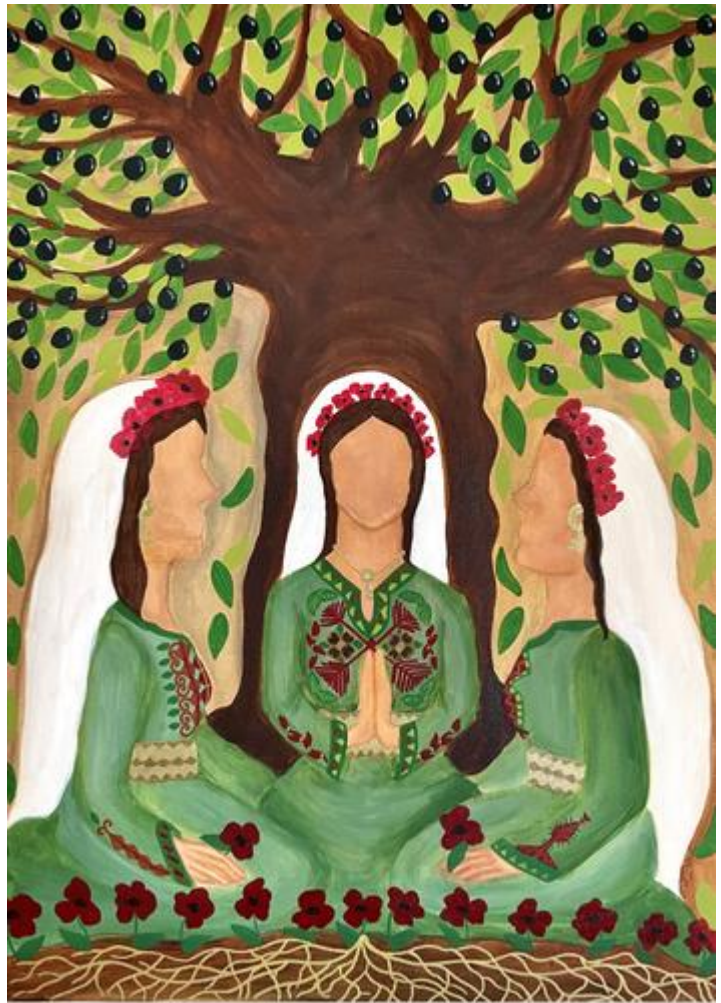
## World Day of Prayer

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2.00pm at the  
United Reformed Church**

The World Day of Prayer is an ecumenical movement inspired by the motto “Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action.” It follows the example of Jesus, who prayed for the care of the world.

We are part of a huge wave of prayer, as each year on the first Friday in March, this wave of prayer for the world begins at dawn in Western Samoa and Tonga in the Pacific Ocean and ends at dusk in American Samoa, at least 38 hours later.

This year’s service has been prepared by the Christian women of Palestine, the theme is.



**“I beg you, bear with one another in love.”** Bible reading Ephesians 4 :1-6 (NRVS)

Historically, Palestine includes Bethlehem, Nazareth, the river Jordan and Jerusalem. Christians recognize this land as the place where Jesus was born, where he ministered and was crucified, and where he was resurrected.

Each of our six local churches will be taking part in the service.

During the service the Palestinian women have invited us to pray for peace, justice and freedom of religion.

The service calls us to bear with each other in love, despite all difficulties and oppressions, it shares the stories of three Palestinian Christian women, from different generations, who witness to the power of bearing together in love. It calls us, the global church, to be united in treating all with justice and love.



When the local World Day of Prayer committee met last October to plan the service for South Wigston, it was the beginning of the conflict between Israel and Palestine. None of the committee imagined that the war would still be waging six months later.

The situation does make this year's service very poignant.

Please pray for the innocent people caught up in this conflict.

### **Prayer for Peace by Maureen Colbert**

Dear Lord Jesus

Today we pray for the women of Palestine, whose ancestors walked with you in the desert,

shared bread and fish with you on the hillside, waved palms for your entry into Jerusalem and touched the hem of your cloak to receive healing.

Palestinian women today face many difficulties which curtail their freedoms as human beings and make living often dangerous and fearful.

We pray for peace.

Peace between beliefs,

Peace between heritages,

Peace between political affiliations and

Peace between nations.

You have the power to open the eyes of those in authority and make them see that bombs and bullets bring destruction and never harmony.

In the country of your birth, boyhood, ministry and death many are calling out for your intervention, to bring your peace into their troubled lives and make all things new, Amen

**Luck by Madeleine McGivern from Cardiff, a trustee of the Amos Trust.**

Luck.

So light a word, so heavy a meaning.

I woke up in a warm bed, cosy and calm.

Not in a tent, freezing, rain dripping in, the sound of war above my head.

Just luck, just chance. I was born here, not there.

(Continued overleaf)

My baby daughter called her morning hello. She fed like in the moments after her birth.

I did not have to drag my exhausted body off the labour ward bed, still bleeding, walk hours, knowing she had not fed.

The sound of war above my head.

Just luck, just chance, she was born here, not there.

My son is singing in the next room. Last night we made jam and painted a sign for today.

He wrote peace and love and drew watermelon on it.

He is awake this morning. He is alive. He is chatting in his bed.

No sound of war above his head.

Just luck, just chance, he was born here, not there.

We will all drink clear Welsh water from our taps when we get up.

Not dirty, salty seawater that will only add to our thirst.

We will all eat breakfast together when we get up.

Not a few chunks of raw onion to stay alive.

I remember breakfast in Gaza.

Hummus, falafel, salty omelettes, warm pillowy pockets of bread, crunchy cucumbers, steaming sage tea.

The sun already warming my back

The Mediterranean blue and sparkling.

My friends

Azzam and Majeda.

Always laughing, always teasing.

Despite the siege they lived under.

Live under.

Just.

As long as my WhatsApp messages have two ticks, I kid myself this means they are ok.

I cannot understand

Why people do not understand

how much of this is luck, is chance.

We could all have been born there, not here.

And then it would be me, be us, be you

In freezing tents

Drinking seawater

Eating raw onion

If we were the "lucky ones" not crushed under the rubble.



A prayer for LGBT+ History Month 2024

Shared with us by Pam Gold, coordinator for the [Methodist LGBT+ Solidarity Circle](#).



Let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

We praise you creator God for creating all in your image, an image of pure love.

God of love, we pray for your forgiveness where we have fallen short of your call to mirror your love to others.

God of Love, as we prepare to celebrate LGBT History Month we hold before you those who bear the scars of rejection, isolation, and feelings of unworthiness.

We pray for your healing touch.

God of Love, we give thanks for all the work undertaken in “God, in love unites us.” We give thanks for the courage of those from the LGBT community who have shared their stories, their lives, and their ministries within the Church.

We give thanks for those who have been open to change as the Church took the journey of discovery, culminating in the decision to be fully inclusive. We give you thanks for the grace shown by all.

God of love, we pray for the continuing work of the Church as we encourage all to fully embrace the diversity of our siblings.

God of all          God for all          God within all,          We praise you.          Amen

Fundraise for WaterAid this Lent and together, we can help those hit hardest by climate change to prepare for a more certain future – whatever the weather.

We all need clean water and decent toilets. But around the world, millions of people are still without these essentials – and, as climate change brings more extreme weather, things are only getting worse.

Wells are running dry. Floods are polluting water sources. And extreme weather is washing away taps and toilets, right where they're needed the most.

It's often the most vulnerable communities who are hit hardest by climate change, despite treating the lightest on this planet. But together, we can do something about this injustice.

**Can you give something up for Lent, then collect the money you save and donate it to WaterAid?** Labels for your jars are available from the coffee bar.



20-year-old Shama knows all too well just how destructive climate change can be. When unprecedented rains in 2022 caused widespread flooding across Badin, southeastern Pakistan, she and her young family were forced to flee their home and take shelter at a temporary roadside camp. With no toilets, Shama had no choice but to wait until nightfall to go in the bushes. The nearest source of drinking water was several kilometres' walk away; for



everything else, including bathing her three-year-old daughter, stagnant floodwater was her only option.

The floods had a devastating impact on 50-year-old Khateeja Ali Nawaz's village too: heavy rains destroyed water supplies, washed away toilets, and left many families homeless. But thanks to new hand pumps installed by our local partner, residents here are building back stronger – and Khateeja's leading the way. As a dedicated member of the local WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) committee, she's passionate about making life better for her community.




Khateeja and her husband, Ali, at one of Bokhi's new hand pumps – a simple solution that's providing people here with a reliable source of clean water.

*Image: WaterAid/ Kamran Mohyudin*

<https://www.wateraid.org/uk/get-involved/fundraising/lent-appeal-jars-of-change>




 **Tuesdays 2 to 4 Knit & natter** ~ everyone welcome, even if you don't knit. Good company, a *warm space* and a cuppa.

**Tuesday evenings Wigston & District Male Voice Choir rehearsal.** New members welcome – just drop in. <https://wigstonmalechoir.org>

**Wednesdays 6.00pm Gaynor Merry's weight loss group** 07977 868824  
[gaynor.merry@ntlworld.com](mailto:gaynor.merry@ntlworld.com)

 **Friday coffee morning 9.00 – 10.30** a *warm space*, free drinks, s & toast

 **Saturday morning coffee 9.30 - 11.30** come along to this *warm space* and have a bit of company. Home-made cakes are usually served.

**Saturday morning Walking group** (non-church) The group meets at 9.15 and sets off at 9.30 for a walk of up to 1 hour returning to church for coffee and chat.

Cost 40p per week. Mary B. and Sue C. are regular walkers – please ask them for more details.

 Warm spaces where free hot drinks will be available – although donations are welcomed. Flame logo: AntonLandao, CC BY-SA 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

**Wigston Food Bank (SW Congregational Church)** Organised by the Lions Clubs International (Oadby & Wigston branch), this is a self referral food bank. If you need help, you can just turn up, bring photo ID, proof of address, your own shopping bags (or trolley), and the suggested donation of £1.20. You will be provided with two bags of food for you and your family. **Donations are always required** especially tinned vegetables, fruit etc. and dried goods. There is a box in the lounge with further information. **Dates:** February 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>

**Newspaper collection** – just a reminder that the Male Voice Choir is still collecting newspapers which are sold to raise money for various charities. Please put your papers in the room off the prayer chapel.

**Stamps for RNIB** – please trim your stamps leaving 1 cm gap all round and divide into UK and foreign stamps. There is a box in the lounge.