

South Wigston Methodist Church

The Oracle



Easter Sunday

31st March 2024

Cover picture: Designed by Wannapik.com

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

Minister: Rev. Frances Ballantyne
Currently on sick leave

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

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.

Worship in March

Sunday 3rd 10.15 Rev. Gordon Webb ~ Holy communion

Sunday 10th 10.15 Deacon Sharon Dilley ~ Mothering Sunday

Sunday 17th 10.15 Colin Rodway, with Andy Biggins

Holy Week

Palm Sunday 25th 10.15 Led by the local worship team

Maundy Thursday 28th 7.30 at the United Reformed Church in the College

Good Friday 29th 12.00 Act of Witness outside Tesco followed by soup & hot cross buns at our church

7.30 Service led by Deacon Sharon Dilley

Easter Sunday

9.30 Holy communion led by Rev. Liam Dacre-Davis

On Friday 1st March we celebrate Word Day of Prayer with a service prepared by the Christian women of Palestine. The theme of the service is, "I beg you bear with one another in love."

Thinking of all women in the Holy Land,

We cry out to God in the words of the Rt Rev Hosam, Archbishop of Jerusalem:

God of all justice and peace, we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and the trauma of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land.

Be with those who need you in these days of suffering.

We pray for people of all faiths, Jews, Muslims and Christians.

While we pray to you, O Lord. for an end to the violence and the establishment of peace, we also call for you to bring justice and equity to all people.

Guide us into your kingdom, where all people are treated with dignity and honoured as your children.

For all of us, you are our Heavenly Father.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Rev. Frances is not due to return to work just yet. 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.

Circuit news

You should already have heard that Rev. Andrew Farrington is joining us from the West Mercia Circuit as our new Superintendent with pastoral charge of Christchurch, Great Glen, and Houghton.

At the end of this week we had the good news that two more ministers will be joining the circuit in September. Both these ministers are from Methodist Conferences in other countries but now wish to belong to the Methodist Church of Britain.

Rev. Kim Alexander will be full-time with pastoral charge of Birstall, Syston and Rothley.

Rev. Christopher Andam will be part-time, with pastoral charge of Uppingham Road and Wesley Hall.

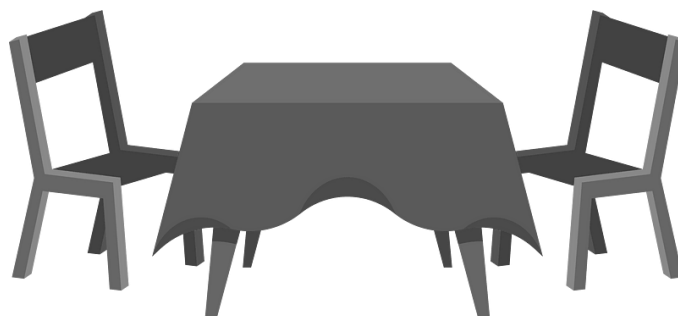
Arrangements for Mayflower and Edgehill are still to be confirmed.

Request for furniture and household items

The two ministers mentioned above will be joining us in the summer and will be moving here from Ghana and South Africa. They will be moving to the Exeter Close (Syston) and Crossways (Birstall) manses. They will need furniture and other items such as crockery and kitchen utensils.

If anyone in the Circuit has any surplus items they are able to pass on this would be greatly appreciated. These should be in good condition - things you would be happy to have in your own home but do not need. Ideally items would be available for collection from May 1st, when the tenant moves out of Exeter Close.

If you are able to help please contact Charles Hilton chashilton@me.com or 07828 349276.





A message from Deacon Sharon

How do you choose a sweet from a box of Quality Street? Are you drawn to your favourite colour wrapper? Do you know what type of chocolate each wrapper contains? Do you search through in the hope of finding your favourite (but guessing in my family at least, that all the purple ones have already gone)? Is there a discontinued flavour you still miss? Are there some sweets you avoid, but will eat them once they are the only ones left?

These are important questions as we approach the celebration of chocolate at the end of the month!

Once we have made our choice of chocolate, what do we do with the wrapper? We screw it up and throw it away, it is no longer needed, the important bit is the sweet, not the wrapper.

I remember as I was considering candidating to be a Deacon, one particular sermon really spoke to me. I can't remember the Bible verse or anything else about the sermon apart from the phrase "all that glitters isn't gold". At the time, I felt called to explore becoming a Deacon but I kept coming back to the things I thought I would have to give up and was struggling with that. That phrase really spoke to me, all the things I thought were important weren't, as a Christian I had committed my life to follow God and being a Deacon was just the way I was being asked to work that out, and there may be things I would "miss" out on but they weren't the important things. I came back to a verse John 10:10 - I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

A sweet wrapper can represent the parts of us that we need to lose in order that our true self can be revealed. We all like to keep our wrappers on, stopping others and God seeing the "real" us, we all have defence mechanisms. We attempt to place boundaries between ourselves and God's love; we have ideas, attitudes and practices that distract us and insulate us from God. When we let

go of all the things that get in the way, we will be astounded by God's abundant and unbounded love.

However, have you seen a box of Quality Street recently? They have replaced most of the old wrappers with paper ones, the colours are the same but they don't look like bright shiny jewels as you open the box.

We are to live in a way that draws others to Jesus, how as a Church can we do that without our bright shiny wrappers? It is easy to look back and see how things used to be - when we had a big Sunday School, when more people attended worship, when the building needed less maintenance, when the offerings were bigger, when less people were ill or housebound, when there were more people to take on tasks - the days of bright shiny jewel like wrappers. But God is still with us, we may feel tired and jaded but God is still with us! Perhaps as we look at ourselves and the Church, we feel more like the new Quality Street Wrappers, just a bit duller but the new wrappers fulfill a new purpose, they can now be recycled, which is good for the environment, they have changed to meet the new needs and demands.

As we journey to Easter may we each know and experience more of God's love for us, so clearly shown on the cross on Good Friday. As a Church may we clearly see the way God continues to lead and guide us, discovering our purpose is the same but finding new ways to meet the changing needs and demands that face us and those around us.

I finish with some words from a report that recently came to Church Council: "the Church has the will and the faith to go forward to carry out the work of God in the community of South Wigston." And Easter shows us that God is still with us so I say AMEN to that.



The Church family in March

Happy Birthday to Gaynor who celebrates on 3rd

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.

3rd Sue and the girls in memory of Anna

10th Margaret E for Dad 31st Janice for Eric and Norah

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.



Drop in at the URC (in the College) on the 4th Wednesday of each month (except July & August) 10.00 to 11.30. Tea & coffee available.

27th March Easter cooking – all welcome.



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.

A Few Words from the Church Treasurer

From time to time, I feel it is important that I bring to the notice of the Congregation any matters of concern that I have. Now is a moment when I must share with you a couple of items that potentially might bring me a few sleepless nights!

Firstly, over the last year or so, it has become noticeable that the weekly Offerings have begun to fall. There may be a number of reasons why this is happening, but of course the main one is probably the fact that we are all living through a Cost of Living Crisis, which affects everyone. I am well aware of the strains that this can put upon family budgets. I want to stress that the Church remains incredibly grateful for the Offerings which are already being made by the Congregation, either weekly or monthly, but I would ask that if it were sometime since you looked at your giving to the Church, and only if it were within your means to increase that amount, then it would be very much appreciated. The Church would be extremely grateful.

Secondly, a matter which is closely related to my first point of concern, is that as from the end of September this year the Church's energy costs will double. Until then the price of Gas and Electricity will have been regulated by a fixed price three year contract, which is coming to an end. During that period we have been shielded from the worst effects of the energy price increases. Unfortunately, it seems that all good things come to an end, and the new contract will see a doubling of the price we have to pay. Consequently you will see my reason for being concerned, and why I am asking that where possible you give some thought to your continued financial support of the Church – and for that I say a very sincere Thank-you.

In this way South Wigston Methodist Church will be able to continue to go forward to proclaim the Gospel within our community.

Trevor Mildred (Church Treasurer).

Hands Together, Eyes Closed

Hallowed be thy name.

Have you noticed that some celebrities are so well known that they are often referred to by their first name only? In the world of cooking, we find Nigella and Jamie. Music gives us, Beyonce, Kylie, Adele and Elvis. Not many people need to be told that John, Paul, George and Ringo made up the Beatles.

In their field of expertise, those people are so successful that their first name is all that is needed for us to know who they are. Their names also carry a level of authority. If we want to know how to make an omelette, we are more likely to follow the instructions if we are told: "This is the way Nigella says to do it."

In the Lord's Prayer we are told that there is a name that carries ultimate authority. The prayer says that God's name is to be hallowed, which means it should be honoured and respected. It also means we should take notice when we are told: "This is the way God says to do it."

However, there are times when God's name is used in a way that is not hallowed. It is used as an expression of shock, as in "Oh my God!" (OMG) Or in frustration, when people say, "For God's sake!

Or even "God Almighty!" which He really is, but I'm sure that is not what the person using the expression was thinking.

If we misuse God's name, it devalues him in our minds. We may begin to see God as no more than a figure of speech or an insult. He is so much more than that. God is our creator, and he longs to be involved in our lives.

Through the Bible, God teaches us the best way to handle any situation. Through his offer of forgiveness, he gives us the chance to put past mistakes behind us. You name it – God can make a difference in any part of our lives.

Andrew Stone

*Originally published in the Salvation Army magazine "War Cry"
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Welcome Aboard

Did you miss the “Welcome to Flight 2024” on the 1st of January?

Were you left behind at the checkout with all the others who were not ready for a new and better life? Have your New Year resolutions all been forgotten?

Do not worry, there is a second flight leaving now, for those who wish to make a new start, so, having left all your BAGGAGE behind, as it is not allowed on this flight:

Welcome Aboard

Destination JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE AND LOVE.

We have been cleared for take-off into the rest of the year.

Please make sure your Positive Attitude, Gratitude and Blessings are secure and locked in the upright position.

All self-destruct devices, pity, anger, selfishness, and resentment should be turned OFF. All negativity, hurt and discouragement should be put away.

Should you lose your Positive Attitude under pressure during this flight, please reach up and pull down a prayer. Prayers will automatically be activated by Faith. Once your own Faith is activated you can assist other passengers who have little faith.

As we reach our destination may the rest of your year be filled with NEW HOPE AND PEACE.

All Blessings to you.

A prayer from the 2023/4 Methodist prayer handbook.

Wherever-God, lead us to those for whom your light shines.

Whatever-God, open our eyes to all that you yearn to do.

Whenever-God, you call us to shine the light of your love into the darkness, remind us that we are never alone, but you always go with us.

Whoever-God, link us with all those who strive for justice, equality, well-being, wholeness, peace and life; that we may work as partners, for your people, in your world. Amen.

Foundry Project, Trinity Methodist Church, Woking, Wey valley Circuit.




Nearly 100 billion pieces of plastic packaging are thrown away by UK households every year, and just 12% is recycled in the UK. It's time the government got serious about tackling the plastic crisis. You can help by taking part in The Big Plastic Count!

For one week in March, thousands of schools, households, community groups and businesses will be coming together to count their plastic waste. And we want you to join them.

Almost a quarter of a million people took part in The Big Plastic Count in 2022. Together we revealed that almost two billion pieces of plastic packaging are being thrown away a week. This year you can help build even more evidence to convince UK ministers to lead the way at the global talks that could finally phase out plastic pollution for good.


You can sign up at <https://thebigplasticcount.com/sign-up>


I did this last year and it included my big shop so I had a horrifying amount of plastic once I'd emptied items like pasta into storage containers. Mary B.

 **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

 **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:** March 4th & 18th

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.