

South Wigston Methodist Church

The Oracle



December 2025

Cover picture: Gifted – the Methodist Church's Advent & Christmas theme.

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.

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. The 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

Revd Ian J K Hu (day off Monday)
ian.hu@methodist.org.uk 07546 474598

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

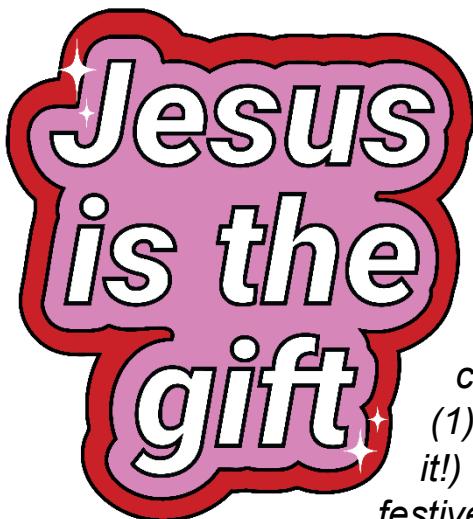
Editor: Mary B. contact: pmmbry@gmail.com 07891 917768
Contributions always welcome.

Worship in December

Sunday 7th 10.15 Rev'd Kim Alexander – Holy communion
Circuit online evening service 6pm Revd Andrew Farrington

Sunday 14th 10.15 Revd Tony Pick
Circuit online evening service 6pm Revd Derek McClean

Sunday 21st 10.15 Carols & Christingle
Circuit online evening service 6pm Revd Liam Dacre-Davis



*Wednesday 24th Christmas Eve
11.15 pm at Wigston Magna MC
led by Revd Ian Hu*

*Christmas Day
10.00 am led by Revd Ian Hu*

On Christmas Morning, you are invited to join our celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ by bringing one (1) unopened gift (please be sure that your name is on it!) to worship, and you are encouraged to don your festive Christmas jumpers and bright colours!

Sunday 28th 10.15 Revd Kate Cook. We will be joined by friends from Wigston Magna. **There will be a soup & mince pie lunch in aid of Action for Children.**
NO circuit online evening service.

Worship in January

Sunday 4th 10.15 Deacon Sharon Dilley
Circuit online evening service 6pm Revd Andrew Farrington

Sunday 11th 10.15 Jean Thornton
Circuit online evening service 6pm Revd Ian Hu

Sunday 18th 10.15 Local worship team
Circuit online evening service 6pm Revd Ivan Bennett

Sunday 25th 10.15 Revd Ian Hu – Holy communion
Circuit online evening service 6.30pm Live from Oadby Trinity for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.



A message from Rev'd Ian Hu

A voice cries out:

*"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God."
-Isaiah 40:3*

Dear South Wigston Methodist Church Friends,

Welcome to the season of Advent, which consists of four weeks including four Sundays. The term Advent is derived from the Latin *adventus*, which means 'coming.' This season proclaims the coming of Jesus Christ... whose birth we prepare to celebrate once again, who comes continually in Word and Spirit, and in whose return in final victory we anticipate. Every year, the season of Advent calls us to prepare for these coming: historically, the season was marked by fasts for preparation.

In general, each Sunday of Advent has a distinctive theme, which can typically be seen as Christ's coming in final victory (first Sunday in Advent); John the Baptist (second and third Sundays in Advent), and the events immediately prior to the birth of Jesus Christ (Fourth Sunday in Advent). These observations are intended to prepare each of us for the celebration of Christ's birth on Christmas Day.

This season is observed through emphasis of the colours purple and/or blue for paraments, stoles and banners. Visual images throughout this season can include an Advent wreath, which will typically encompass an evergreen wreath with four purple candles or three purple candles plus one rose coloured candle, with a central white Christ candle added on Christmas Eve/Christmas Day. In addition, a Chrismon tree, which is an evergreen tree covered with white monograms of Christ, and a Jesse tree, a tree with signs of the ancestors of Christ, can be used. Other symbols of the season typically include trumpets for Isaiah, a messianic rose, a star of Jacob and a fleur-de-lis.

Here at South Wigston Methodist Church, I am looking forward to experiencing my very first 'Christmas Capers' on Saturday 6 December 2025, along with the light switch scheduled for 5 pm. Many people throughout our church and the community have filled me in on this tradition and I'm looking forward to experiencing it! I am also looking forward to leading worship at South Wigston on Christmas Day at 10 am (please note the change of time!)

On Christmas Morning, you are invited to join our celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ by bringing one (1) unopened gift (please be sure that your name is on it!) to worship, and you are encouraged to don your festive Christmas jumpers and bright colours!

May we continue to experience the seasons of the Christian year in our worship, our service and our daily lives as the family of Christ. And thank you all for being the Church!

Peace and grace,
Ian

A Christmas message from Deacon Sharon

I have just enjoyed/endured the annual Christmas shopping trip with Mum and my two sisters. This is something we have done every year since I learnt to drive and had a car, so over 30 years.



But it has changed over the years, initially it was just Mum and me as my sisters were still at school, then as the years went by and they were free they joined us. We used to leave early and not get home till late, I think the longest time was 7 hours, with barely a stop for lunch or coffee. A lot of the time was spent by my sisters looking in clothes shops, not really Christmas shopping but apparently it counted because they were for outfits for work Christmas dos!

This year we went to three shops, stopped for lunch and then finished with a coffee stop. Some presents were purchased but not many, but we came away knowing what most people wanted and especially since covid, what we would order on-line.

I'm sure other traditions have changed over the years for our family, as we have lost people and new people have arrived. There will have been changes for your family, for this country and the world. When I was young, I don't remember Christmas starting in November, for some people as soon as Halloween was

over the Christmas decorations went up! There was no social media, so we didn't see the endless "hauls" of decorations, presents and food people were buying and with that the added pressure of an image to live up to. The country and the world situation have also changed dramatically and as we watch the news things can seem very bleak.

But the good news of Christmas doesn't change. Over two thousand years ago a special baby was born in Bethlehem his birth would mean the world would never be the same again. This baby, Jesus, God's Son would bring closer the promise that everything would be as God intended, and we could see and know for ourselves and the world God's love, plan and peace, how we and the world need to know more of God's peace today. So, as we prepare, throughout Advent, to celebrate the birth of Jesus may we know more of God's peace and love in our lives and come to Christmas morning with joy and hope for ourselves, our families and the world, the story continues, God is still involved with his creation and we are part of his plan.

*Hark the Herald Angels Sing
Glory to the Newborn King*

Charles Wesley's famous carol

but that is not what Wesley wrote, what he did write was

*Hark How all the Welkin Rings,
Glory to the King of Kings.*

When it was published, George Whitfield, the publisher, changed it, without consulting Wesley, who was incensed. I prefer the published version, Brenda

Action for Children

4.5 million UK children now live in poverty.
That's 31% of all children.

Collections at the Carols & Christingle, and Christmas Day services go to [Action for Children](#). Also, donations for the soup & mince pie lunch after worship on 28th December.



The Church family

Congratulations to Jess and Dan on the birth of Elsie Amelia who was born on 13th November weighing 8lb 5oz. A first great-granddaughter for Brenda.

Happy Birthday to

December 3rd Emily F 29th Donna 31st Mary M

January 15th Margaret E 23rd Janice 24th Helen D'A

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.



Thank you for your donations for Mariam and her family in Burkina Faso. We have supported them via Compassion for 10 years.

Hello South Wigston Methodist Church, I am in great joy to thank you for the gift I received. Thank you for the 25 kg of rice, 3 litres of cooking oil, and the biscuits. Thank you for everything you do for our family. Mariam

A new photo with her gifts.



The Christmas Post box is now available for you to "post" cards to your church friends. It will be opened and sorted on Saturday 20th December. We will deliver to those who are housebound.

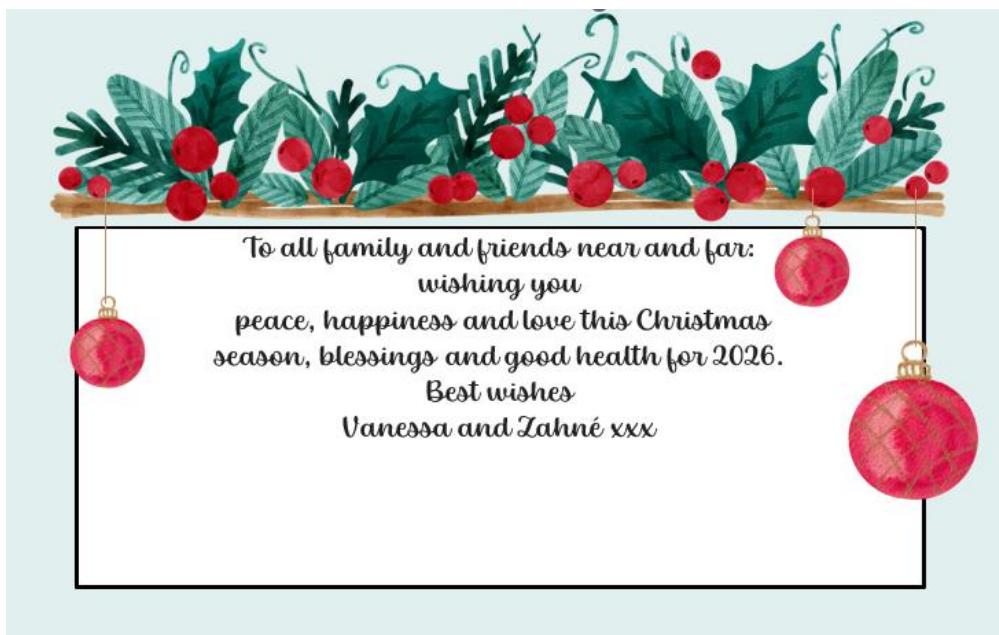
Christmas

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing,
Glory to the Newborn King”.

Wishing all of our Church friends a Joyous Christmas & a Peaceful New Year,
with our love, from Trevor and Tricia.

Merry Christmas and a Peaceful New Year to one and all, love Pat xx

Greetings to everyone from Aigburth Care Home.
A Blessed Christmas and A Happy and Peaceful New Year.
with Love Brenda



“Jesus is the heart of Christmas, welcome him with love and praise.” Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year. Mary B and family.

Christmas greetings to our Church family & friends, from the Cockfields.

May you all have a wonderful and peaceful Christmas. God’s blessings on you all. Margaret D.

Happy Christmas to all our church friends. Love from Debbie and Margaret.

Wishing everyone a Happy Christmas, & special thanks to those church members for their continued support over the years for my work, now that I’m going into semi-retirement from Stuart.

Greetings

May the peace of God be in the world and may the light of God be with you all, this Christmas and always. Love and God bless, Gerald & Patricia Grudgings.

Mary M says "Wishing everyone happiness and a long and happy life." Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Mewis & Merry families. x

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone, Janice & David.

Best wishes to all my church friends at South Wigston MC. Love from Beryl and family in Porthcawl, Wales.

Happy Christmas to all of you, from Steve B.

Merry Christmas to everyone, Lots of love Julie & Mick Hall.

Hope you all have a Happy Christmas. Thinking of you all, love June xx

May love, hope, and happiness be yours at Christmas and always, from Margaret and Tony.

Merry Christmas to everyone. Lots of love from The Creeds.

Christmas and New Year greetings from Wigston & District Male Voice Choir.
May you time be happy and peaceful

Wishing everyone a blessed and happy Christmas and a peaceful 2026 - love Sue H.





Together, all districts, circuits, local churches and fellowships of the Methodist Church are invited to remind people of their inherent worth and beauty – not because of what they've done, or what they can give – but because of who they are.

Gifted:

- is for everyone in our churches and beyond: both believers rejoicing at God's gift of Jesus, and those who might find the season more wearying than wonderful.
- reaches out to people longing for transformation but feeling stuck. For those searching for something more, something real – but unsure where to look.

***Gifted* is the Methodist Church's open invitation, speaking the good news to people that they matter. That they are Beloved. Created with infinite care. A gift to the world, just as they are.**



At South Wigston the *Gifted* liturgy will be used when the Advent candles are lit at the start of worship and on Christmas Day.

Stand with Refugees

At a time when we are witnessing increasing anti-migrant sentiment in some local communities and in politics, it is more important than ever to show that not only are refugees welcome here, but that our communities stand wholeheartedly together.

The 'Communities Together with Refugees' campaign is a cross-community moment which aims to demonstrate unignorable public support for refugees and people seeking asylum. Coordinated by the Together with Refugees coalition, in which the **JPIT denominations** are founding members, it will show that our communities stand together with refugees and against those who would seek to sow division and hate.



Focused on the first weekend of December (5-7 December 2025), the idea is to have public displays of orange hearts – a symbol of compassion for people fleeing war and persecution – in thousands of different ways, from posters in community spaces, to giant Christmas decorations on town centre trees or orange heart-shaped biscuits given out at community events. All these gestures of care and solidarity will show that we stand together and in community with refugees.

The Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) is a partnership between the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church. The purpose of JPIT is to help the Churches to work together for peace and justice through listening, learning, praying, speaking and acting on public policy issues.

The BIG GIVE Christmas Challenge 2025

From 12pm (midday) 2nd December to 12pm (midday) 9th December, your Christmas donations can be doubled. Whatever your passion, whatever your cause - double the difference this Christmas.

<https://donate.biggive.org/christmas-challenge-2025>

Includes small local charities as well as larger well-known charities.

Befriending service from MHA



Loneliness is a daily reality for around one million older people in the UK. Too many spend their days in silence, with no one to talk to and no one to share their memories with. It does not have to be this way.

Our befriending service brings companionship, warmth and renewed confidence to older people who would otherwise face long days alone. What began during the pandemic has become a lifeline that continues to grow in demand.

Help share a memory today – donate online at
<https://mha.org.uk/loneliness>

That is why we are proud to launch our Share a Memory appeal. We are aiming to raise £128,377 the amount needed to run this service for a full year and ensure more older people have someone they can talk to.

Any gift you can give, large or small, helps create real moments of connection for someone who needs it.

Dear friends

November 2025

The results of our National Churches Survey are in. We surveyed thousands of churches, chapels and meeting houses across nations and denominations, from medieval churches and Nonconformist chapels to Catholic parishes and vibrant Pentecostal spaces. We asked about everything from community activities, services and volunteers to repairs, facilities and hopes for the future, and the results are enlightening.

We launched the survey results at the recent Great Expectations event at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, where voices from across the church and heritage sector came together to explore the future of the UK's churches, chapels and meeting houses, informed by the new insights we've uncovered.

What we've learned is that churches are more vulnerable than ever, but they are still playing a vital role at the heart of local communities. One in ten churches need urgent repairs to their roofs and guttering in the next 12 months, and only two-thirds believe their church will 'definitely' be open in five years' time. But over half are involved with distributing food to the community, and 82% now have fully accessible entrances, up from 63% in 2010. You can read the results at <https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/survey>

While the survey results highlight the challenges facing churches, they also make visible the incredible work churches are doing and the potential for renewal. We will continue doing all we can to help keep churches open and in use, and we are very grateful for your ongoing support.

Best wishes,

Claire Walker
Chief Executive

(Mary B filled in the survey on your behalf.)

What does the Trust do?

Every year we help hundreds of churches, chapels and meeting houses to stay open, helping to save precious heritage and keeping churches at the beating heart of local communities.

Churches are impressive, exciting and surprising places.

We believe they should be loved and supported.

Working together with churches in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, we help to keep these historic buildings thriving today, and tomorrow.

Christmas Capers

South Wigston

Saturday 6th December

LIGHT SWITCH ON 5.30 PM
SANTAS GROTTO @ ELLIOTT HALL

60 CRAFT & GIFT STALLS

STREET ENTERTAINMENT

BILLY BATES FUNFAIR

STEAM ENGINE/MUSIC ORGAN

TRANSFORMERS

POLICE/FIRE DISPLAY

MUSIC & DANCE

BIRDS OF PREY

HOT FOOD

, LATE NIGHT SHOPPING

& MUCH MORE!

FREE PARKING

STARTS 1 PM



We will be holding our own Christmas Fair on the same day starting at 10 am. Gaynor is collecting for her popular tombola stall. Donations of cakes, mince pies, books, toys, etc will also be very welcome.

Crib Festival



Trinity Methodist Church Oadby

Sunday 14th December	<i>2pm - 4pm</i>
Monday 15th December	<i>10am - 4pm</i>
Tuesday 16th December	<i>10am - 4pm</i>
Wednesday 17th December	<i>10am - 4pm & 6pm - 8pm</i>
Thursday 18th December	<i>10am - 4pm</i>
Friday 19th December	<i>3pm - 6pm</i>
Saturday 20th December	<i>10am - 4pm</i>

*Come and see a wide variety of Christmas Cribs!
All are welcome. Come, look and see how the Christmas
Nativity has been depicted in assorted ways..*

Mary's New Year memories

My English/Welsh family didn't celebrate New Year – Christmas was much more important – so when I met my future husband and his Scottish family it was a real culture shock.

His parents had a tall Victorian house in High Wycombe and together with two of his sisters we cleaned the house from top to bottom – it was said that the state of your house at New Year would be reflected for the rest of the year.

Food was laid out, including “oor” Margaret’s famous steak pie, and black bun. The radio was turned on ready for *The Bells* at midnight when glasses were raised and *Auld Lang Syne* was sung. There was much hugging and kissing. Someone would arrive to First Foot with symbols such as coal, bread and a dram. It might have been one of the dark-haired men who was sent outside before midnight.

Neighbours were all invited and teenagers who had been out with their friends would turn up. Babies and young children were snuggled in the big beds.

After the food came the singing – everyone had to perform their party piece – an ordeal for this shy teenager. My husband always sang *The Wild Rover*.

By about 4am I was happy to disappear to the kitchen to do the washing up. We didn't get much sleep. By 9 am my mother-in-law was queen of the kitchen dishing up a wonderful breakfast with black pudding and square (Lorne) sausage as the bleary-eyed members of the family surfaced.

Another happy memory was attending one of the New Year's Eve barn dances held at our church.



My Scottish family always added this if said in advance!

Wikimedia Commons

South 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 fee of £2. 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:** 8th & 22nd December, 5th & 19th January **Time** 9.45 to 10.30

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. **Please save your Christmas stamps.**

Newspapers are being collected for Leicestershire Animal Aid where they are used for bedding. Please put them in the storeroom off the prayer chapel.

Regular events

Knit & natter

The group meets twice a month. The first Tuesday is at Brenda's (address on request), and the third Tuesday at church. Both run from 2 to 4 pm. everyone welcome, even if you don't knit or craft. Good company 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 686824
gaynor.merry@ntlworld.com

Friday coffee morning 9.00 – 10.30 - a *warm space*, free drinks & 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 50p per week. Mary B. and Sue C. are regular walkers – please ask them for more details.

Christmas services & events

Christmas Fair

Saturday 6th 10.00 – 5.30

Carols and Christingle

Sunday 21st 10.15

Christmas Day

Thursday 25th 10.00

Celebrate the Saviour's birth