

South Wigston Methodist Church

# *The Oracle*

THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD

*February 2026*

Cover picture: [https://freesvg.org/heart-3-16\\_scamb09](https://freesvg.org/heart-3-16_scamb09)

## 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:pmmbry@gmail.com) 07891 917768  
Contributions always welcome.

## *Worship in February*

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> 10.15 Deacon Sharon Dilley – Christening of Frankie Joseph Harris who is nearly 1. We welcome his parents, Chloe Dennahey and Matheu Harris, together with Godparents Callum, Daniel, Becky and Melanie. Frankie's sister Maisie was Christened by Rev'd Fran Rhys when she was our minister.

*Circuit online evening service 6pm Rev'd Kim Alexander*

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> 10.15 James Blackhall and Deacon Sharon Dilley – dedication of hymnbooks in memory of Janet Harrison and Eric Mewis. The service will be held in the lounge.

*Circuit online evening service 6pm Rev'd Derek McLean*

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> 10.15 Rev'd Ian Hu – Holy communion and dedication of a hymnbook in memory of Charles Gilfillan

*Circuit online evening service 6pm Rev'd Andrew Farrington*

***Pause. Breathe. Make space for God – this is the Methodist Church's theme for Lent in 2026.***

*First Sunday in Lent 22<sup>nd</sup> 10.15 Local worship team - theme: Let go of idols, make room for God*

*Circuit online evening service 6pm Rev'd Ivan Bennett*



### **Action for Children**

Your donations over the Christmas period raised £168 – *thank you!*

**World Day of Prayer** Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2pm. The service will be at our church.

This year's service has been prepared by Christian women from Nigeria and is entitled "I will give you rest, come".

You can read more about Nigeria at:

<https://www.wwdp.org.uk/2026-theme-and-country-nigeria/>

**There will be choir practices** at the Congregational Church at 2pm on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February and Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March.





*A message from Rev'd Ian Hu*

***O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer...***

***When I call, answer me...***

***O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer...***

***Come and listen to me.***

***-Taize Community***

Dear South Wigston Methodist Church,

Have you ever heard someone ask for the truth 'off the record?' News reporters say this all the time when they want to bypass the 'official story,' or 'the party line,' and they want to get closer to the actual truth. A news reporter would say, 'Okay, now you can tell me honestly, strictly off the record.'

In other words, in confidence. I won't repeat anything you tell me. This is just between you and me. What you're saying is just within these four walls. We naturally feel more comfortable saying things to other people in private. We naturally don't feel comfortable saying things publicly, out loud.

This is what it's like with prayer. Many people feel they don't need to pray. 'I don't have time for it,' or 'It's a waste of time' are some common responses to prayer. But prayer can be a valuable tool in helping to understand how we feel about what we are experiencing in life. Prayer takes practice, and what's nice about the practice is it very quickly becomes easy!

Prayer takes cutting through the first layers of truth in order to get to the bare bones. In this way, we can 'level' with God and with ourselves. In this way, we can speak the truth about our thoughts, our feelings, our actions and our desires.

When I'm preaching on Sunday mornings at our circuit churches, most of our churches have a tradition of prayer together in the Vestry prior to the start of the service. Once a Steward finishes his or her prayer, I like to respond with a prayer of my own, to lift up to God the person who is with me in the Vestry and to affirm before God the individual gifts and contributions the individual

makes to God's kingdom! After years of doing this I still sometimes get the feeling that people are surprised when I respond this way in prayer!

Whether it is bad news or good news, God is always there to receive us - all of us - in prayer. And when we give ourselves openly, honestly and fully, opening ourselves to God in prayer, we realize that promises come true. As we approach the season of Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday, we continue to recognize that we are accepted by God, healed, comforted and loved. Don't be afraid to practice prayer on the 'level.' God will meet us wherever we are, however we are, and whoever we are!

Thank you for being the Church!

Every blessing,

Ian

### *The Lent Cross*

This year we will have two crosses:

The large cross with the traditional elements.

A smaller cross with 'different' symbols from this year's Methodist liturgy.

As with our Advent wreath the symbols are designed to make us think differently about this solemn season.

#### **Weekly themes**

- **22 February, Lent 1:** Let go of idols, make room for God
- **1 March, Lent 2:** Let go of the form, embrace the spirit
- **8 March, Lent 3:** Let go of scarcity, embrace abundance
- **15 March, Lent 4:** Let go of appearances, and embrace what's inside
- **22 March, Lent 5:** Let go of despair, embrace 'respair'
- **29 March, Palm Sunday:** Let go of violence, embrace gentleness
- **3 April, Good Friday:** Let go of certainty, embrace mystery
- **5 April, Easter Day:** Let go of fear, embrace joy – we will decorate our large cross with flowers as usual.

## *The Church family*

### *In memoriam*

We remember Janet Leddington who died on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January. Before she became housebound, Janet was an active church member including the roles of Pastoral Secretary and Boys' Brigade leader. Our prayers and condolences go to her son Adam.

We give thanks for the life of Lillian Brookes who died, in hospital, on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January. Lillian was a Boys Brigade leader and helped at church events. Our prayers and condolences go to her family.

*Happy Birthday* to Mary P who celebrates on 27<sup>th</sup> February.

*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.

1<sup>st</sup> Sue & the girls for Mum & Nanny, 8<sup>th</sup> Margaret  
15<sup>th</sup> Rev. Ian in memory of Charles Gilfillan

### **News from MHA Aigburth**

The calendar of monthly fund-raising events is now on the noticeboard.

**Aigburth's Got Talent!** Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February 3.00 to 4.30. Songs, poems, monologues and other entertainment from residents, staff and volunteers.

Last year Mary performed "*Always look under the bed*" a monologue performed at the Old Time Music Halls by our very own Beryl Loweth.

*The cast of this year's panto "Snow White" with Mary as the wicked queen.*

*The dwarves were replaced with other characters including Dorothy & Toto, and one Ugly Sister.*



**Pause. Breathe. Make space for God – this is the Methodist Church’s theme for Lent in 2026.**

**Lent** starts on Ash Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February

From the Methodist Church website for Lent 2026:

Lent is a season of invitation. It calls us to loosen our grip on what holds us back – habits, assumptions, fears – and to open ourselves to the transforming presence of God. Each week in this worship pack, we explore a different mindset shift: letting go of something that limits us, and becoming open to something that brings life. This journey is not linear or easy. It echoes the experience of the disciples who again and again had to let go of what was familiar in order to follow Jesus more deeply. As the Revd Dr Roger Walton writes:

“And in this relationship they [the disciples] kept having to return to that very first experience of leaving things behind. Mark tells that Simon and Andrew ‘left everything’ to follow. But this was only the beginning. The symbolic leaving behind of boats and nets is met again and again in their experience of travelling with Jesus. They have to leave places where they have been popular (Mark 6:45) or had divine illumination (9:8), and exchange territories of relative safety for places of danger (10:32). **Most of all they have to let go of established ideas that have formed their world view up to this point:** that the wealthy were blessed by God; that greatness lies in power over others; that men rather than women and children were the ones to show the way to God; that victory would never involve humiliation and suffering. All these notions would be challenged along the way, and the disciples would be invited over and over again to let go and follow.”

*Roger Walton, Disciples Together: Discipleship, Formation and Small Groups (SCM Press, London, 2014), p. 14.*

**Wigston Framework Knitters Museum.** The museum will reopen for the Snowdrop Festival, which is due to take place on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

**Thank you for your donations for Mariam and her family in Burkina Faso.** We have supported them via Compassion for 11 years.

Your donations can be placed in the pink box on the coffee bar – we send £30 per month plus money for birthday and Christmas presents.



**World Day of Prayer** Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2pm at South Wigston Methodist Church.

*Gift Amarachi Ottah*, a final-year Mass Communication student at Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike in Ebonyi State, draws inspiration from her home state of Abia in Nigeria.



Following her family's tradition in creative arts and printing, Gift has developed a unique artistic voice that speaks to the struggles and strength of Nigerian women.

She was motivated to design this artwork for the 2026 World Day of Prayer programme because

of the burdens that Nigerian women are facing. She hopes that her art will help to amplify their voices.

*Gift writes:* My artwork depicts the daily reality of rural Nigerian women whose lives are marked by endless labour from sunrise to sunset. These women traverse treacherous paths to their farms, often carrying both their harvest and their children – a toddler strapped to their back, a heavy load balanced on their head while guiding other children along unmaintained roads through thick bush.

The artwork also shows three women sitting together, their different traditional attire representing Nigeria's diverse cultures. Though they come from different ethnic groups, their shared experiences unite them. To meet their basic survival needs, these women carry burdens and traumas that are physical, emotional and spiritual.

Yet there is hope for the many burdens these people are carrying. These burdens become bearable when we respond to Jesus' invitation in Matthew 11:28, *'Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest'*. When we bring our weariness to Christ and support one another in community, we find rest and strength to continue our journey.

*Brenda writes:* This is the first year since 1958 that I haven't been involved with the planning of the service for South Wigston. The service was originally called "The Women's World Day of Prayer" When it was decided to drop the word "Women's" from the title, Christian women from several countries were concerned that the men would take over, fortunately that didn't happen.

I will be joining the service from Aigburth Care Home with Christian women from 146 other countries around the world.

### **Dates for your diary**

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July 6.30 at Oadby Trinity Circuit farewell service for Revd Derek McLean who is retiring.

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July 10.45 at Bishop Street MC Circuit farewell service for Revd Liam Dacre-Davis who is moving to Warwickshire. Liam was our minister from 2021 to 2023.

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August 10.45 at Bishop Street MC Circuit welcome service for Revd Shirlyn Toppin (new Superintendent minister) and Deacon Karen McBride who will be at Bishop Street.

**The Greater Wigston Historical Society** covers Wigston Magna and South Wigston. The Society is now based at Wigston URC in Long Street. The Society runs a series of daytime and evening talks which are listed on the noticeboard. <https://www.wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk/>

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February** 9.30 for 10am. In the Peace Park Memorial Pavilion in Wigston Magna. "A corner of Flanders Field – Ypres' second war memorial" by David Humberstone. £4 Donation per person - Book on 07702 127313 or Email: [bookings@wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk](mailto:bookings@wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk)

*"In the aftermath of the Great War, the ruined city of Ypres and its surrounds became the home of many Great War veterans, who returned to create and maintain the Military War Cemeteries in which their fallen comrades lay. This unique "British" community had in due course its own Anglican Church and its own School in which to educate their children. This is the story of that Church and School and some of the veterans and children strongly associated with them".*

**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026** 6.45 for 7.15 at Little Hill Primary School. Free to members, £4 for visitors. Booking not required.

Talk: Enduring Legacy – The Story of Hinckley by Philip Yorke

**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:** 2<sup>nd</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> February **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.

**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**

**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](mailto: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.