

South Wigston Methodist Church

The Oracle



March 2026

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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.

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 Tuesday)
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Contributions always welcome.

Worship in March

Sunday 1st No service at South Wigston. Worship at Wigston Magna MC at 10.30 - Rev'd Ian Hu – Holy communion

Circuit online evening service 6pm Rev'd Andrew Farrington – Lent series

Sunday 8th 10.15 Jo Kay

Circuit online evening service 6pm Rev'd Andrew Farrington – Lent series

Mothing Sunday 15th 10.15 Rev'd Ian Hu – Holy communion

Circuit online evening service 6pm Rev'd Andrew Farrington – Lent series

Sunday 22nd 10.15 Michael Mays

Circuit online evening service 6pm Rev'd Ivan Bennett Rev'd Andrew Farrington – Lent series

Clocks change overnight on Saturday 28th March

Palm Sunday 29th 10.15 Local worship team

Circuit online evening service 6pm Rev'd Liam Dacre-Davis

Contact trinityeveningservice@leicestertrinitycircuit.org.uk for the Zoom link for Circuit services



World Day of Prayer Friday 6th 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 a second choir practice at the Congregational Church at 2pm on Tuesday 3rd March.

If you are putting aside money for charity during Lent our church's chosen charity is **All We can** - the Methodist Church's relief and development charity.

A copy of their Lent prayer book can be downloaded from

www.allwecan.org.uk/resources/justiceandjoy

Please give donations to Mary B or Sue H by 5th April, thank you.





A message from Rev'd Ian Hu

Dear Friends,

The season of Lent began in mid-February on Ash Wednesday, 18 February 2026. The season of Lent consists of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes on Holy Saturday (i.e., the Saturday before Easter Sunday). The term *Lent* is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, which means 'spring.' The season of Lent is a time of preparation for celebrating Easter. Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts to Christianity. It would later evolve into a time for penance by all Christians. The First Sunday describes Jesus' temptation by Satan; and the Sixth Sunday (Passion / Palm Sunday) marks Jesus Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and his subsequent passion and death. Because Sundays are always little Easters, the spirit of penitence throughout Lent should be tempered with the joyful expectation of the Resurrection.

The Great Three Days – sometimes referred to as the Triduum or Pasch – takes place from sunset on Maundy Thursday through sunset on Easter Day. The Triduum serves as the climax of Lent (and of the entire Christian year) and a bridge into the Easter Season, or Eastertide. These days proclaim the mystery of Jesus Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. During the Triduum, we travel with Jesus from the upper room, to the cross, to the tomb, and to the garden. These three days should be seen as a great unified service beginning with a service of Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday and concluding with the services of Easter Day. Some churches will connect these services with a prayer vigil lasting from Holy Thursday evening or on Good Friday, until the services of Easter Sunday. Some denominations will accompany this period with fasting.

My wish for our church community is a contemplative and reflective Lenten experience as we approach the wonder and joy of the reality of the empty tomb

at Easter! **During Holy Week, South Wigston Methodist Church is very warmly invited to join Wigston Magna Methodist Church on Good Friday, 3 April for a Good Friday Vigil from 2 pm onward, with Good Friday Worship beginning at 3 pm.**

The Easter Season, or Eastertide, is also referred to as the Great Fifty Days. This season begins on Easter Eve at sunset and continues through the Day of Pentecost, which this year will take place on Sunday 24 May 2026. Eastertide is a joyful season in our Christian year, and focuses upon Jesus Christ's resurrection and ascension, along with the givings of the Holy Spirit on the first Easter (depicted in John 20: 22-23) and on the Day of Pentecost as depicted in Acts 2.

As we move through the rhythms of Lent, Eastertide and Pentecost, may we continue to support one another, offer a listening ear and a smile, and continue to be examples of the love of God through Jesus Christ in the world...

...and thank you all for being the Church!

With every blessing always,

Rev. Ian J. K. Hu

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

The Church family

A service to celebrate the life of Janet Leddington

All are invited to this service which will be held at our church on Thursday 5th March at 12 noon, and will be followed by refreshments in the lounge.

Happy Birthday to Gaynor who celebrates her 60th birthday on 3rd March.

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 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.

Clocks change overnight on Saturday 28th March



<https://www.publicdomainpictures.net/>

Fantastic amount raised for Ride + Stride 2025

The LeicesterShire Historic Churches Trust is delighted to announce that £40,461.67 was raised.

This is a wonderful tribute to everyone who opened their church or chapel on the day – 317 in all – and to all riders, striders, welcomers, and their sponsors. Ride + Stride 2026 will place on Saturday 12th September.

Full report <https://www.leicester.anglican.org/news/2025-ridestride-raised-over-40000.php>

Bible Society Coffee morning 21st March 10 till 12 noon at the Congregational Church.



Action for Children also has a Lent resource: *Count your blessings*

You can sign up to weekly activity sheets at <https://tinyurl.com/2wcrb6u9>



A prayer from the All we can prayer handbook for Lent

Lord God, may we, like All We Can, be willing to walk alongside others in partnership, in trust and not in control, so that others may thrive. Amen.

Adolescent girls' literacy (Malawi) is just one example of the work supported by All We Can.

AGLIT+'s aim is to ensure students acquire literacy skills, gain improved health knowledge, identify strategies to overcome obstacles to health, and to address the causes of school dropout rates amongst girls. Pressure to wed early or leave school prematurely to help with household duties has a detrimental effect on girls' education. Working in communities that are difficult to reach, AGLIT+ have scheduled classes around girls' domestic chores and ensured that childcare facilities are enabled, helping to remove barriers to learning for girls with young children. Girls are trained in business management so that they are able to establish and manage their own small businesses and secure their livelihoods after the literacy course. The girls are encouraged to embrace their own unique strengths and build confidence in their own abilities.

PRAYER POINTS - GIVE THANKS WITH JOY

- For All We Can's partner AGLIT+ and the communities being transformed through literacy and health programmes.
- For girls being equipped with the skills needed to follow their own entrepreneurial desires.

SEEK JUSTICE

- For the gender imbalance in literacy rates in Malawi and many other countries where All We Can's partners work.
- For the contributing factors towards illiteracy rates for women including poverty as well as early pregnancy

PRAY NOW

Loving God, Thank you for AGLIT+ and their determination to remove barriers to education for girls. We ask that their literacy programmes will flourish and the girls creating their own businesses will be successful. Amen.

The Lent Cross

This year we 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

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

News from MHA Aigburth

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

Spring festival

Saturday 28th March 10.30 to 12.00 coffee morning and open garden. All welcome!

Despite the very wet weather the volunteer gardeners have been working hard to keep the garden well-maintained. In February there were cyclamen, early daffodils, primroses, Daphne odorata, catkins and lots of Hellebores. The flowers in the photo were picked on 23rd February.

Residents, relatives, staff and volunteers took part in the Big Garden Birdwatch at the end of January.



Two prayers from the World Day of Prayer resource book

When you are feeling overwhelmed, there is so much to do and so little time.

Take a moment to pause, to breath in and out,
Jesus says I will give you rest.

Lay all your cares and burdens on him.

He understands your anxieties and fears.

Be still and lift your eyes to the heavens and know

That Jesus can give you rest.

Surrender all to Him and pray out your worries.

He listens to every word, He shows you a better way to live.

He takes your burdens to give you rest.

By Vix Daniell

Heavenly Father,

We all have burdens to carry, some heavy, some light,
Some which threaten to overwhelm us.

For those whose burdens bring fear we pray for peace.

For those whose burden is to fight against poverty.

We pray for provision.

For those whose burden is past or present abuse. We pray for
freedom.

May the power of your Holy Spirit lighten the weight of the burdens
we carry.

And empower us to help ease the weight of others' burdens.

In Jesus' name

Amen

By Jennifer Haggar



From 9 to 15 March, count every piece of plastic packaging you throw away – in the bin, the recycling, and out and about.

You can count as you go, or collect your plastic and count it at the end of the day or week – whatever works for you.

Once the week's up, it's time to submit your count online by **Sunday 22 March**.

After you've submitted, you'll receive your own plastic profile which will reveal how much you threw away and what happened to it

Thank you for taking part – every single count helps to reveal what really happens to our plastic waste. <https://thebigplasticcount.com/how-it-works>

News from Link to Hope – shoebox appeal

In our Shoebox Month of Heat & Light you helped send an Eco Heater to a mother and baby unit (and grandmothers) in Kharkiv, Ukraine.

Due to the recent bombings there have been many power cuts and the weather in Ukraine is especially freezing.

“Exactly” during the time our team were helping me buy goods from supermarkets etc... I met Mariya, our latest member of our team, she was outside a shop and holding a kettle. I joked, “ahh now I’ll come visit and you can make me a cup of tea”.

My casual question uncovered something very important. With tears in her eyes, she explained the kettle was to be posted to Kharkiv for a project, she’s been supporting for some time, Kharkiv being her home town before fleeing the bombing six months ago.

I discovered this centre for mothers with babies, rarely receives Government funding because all local Governments focus on front line support for military, especially constant development of drones. Then Mariya told me, the most urgent need was for an “eco heater” because power supplies were being destroyed. These mums and babies (and grandmothers) were trying to survive in freezing cold conditions.

A footnote to this story. You will see the picture of the Eco Heater after it was collected from the Post Office. Sadly, the very next day, that same post office in Kharkiv was bombed with four members of staff killed, so it was a miracle it was collected just in time, but VERY sad for the Post office staff killed & families involved.



<https://linktohope.co.uk/eco-heater-for-ukraine/>

The Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal 2026 brings practical help, dignity, and hope to families and elderly people living in poverty across Ukraine and Eastern Europe — not just children. Each shoebox supports an entire household or an elderly person facing isolation or hardship.

Every shoebox contains a carefully selected mix of practical and thoughtful items for all family members, including toiletries, stationery, family games, gifts for mum and dad, sweets, soft toys, and seasonal essentials such as hats and scarves — each one a message of care and compassion.

Running since 1992, the Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal has sent over 1.1 million shoeboxes to hundreds of locations, supporting communities affected by poverty, conflict, and economic hardship.

We will be running the appeal again in 2026.

Regular events

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:** 2nd, 16th & 30th March **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. Sheets, pillowcases and towels can also be donated.

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

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. Walk at your own pace. Cost 50p per week. Mary B. and Sue C. are regular walkers – please ask them for more details.