

# The Beacon



Quarterly Newsletter

[www.leicestertrinitycircuit.org.uk](http://www.leicestertrinitycircuit.org.uk)



# LEICESTER TRINITY CIRCUIT

## The Beacon

Summer 2019

### Superintendent's letter



We had been walking for quite a while when we saw the sign on the stile:

#### **Path Diverted Follow signs**

We stood still for a minute, and looked at each other.

The sign was quite plain, and the instruction quite simple. But we discovered long ago that the things that seem plain and simple are rarely plain, and almost never simple.

Was it really necessary? We'd walked too far to turn back. We had no idea how many extra miles this diversion would add to our walk, or how difficult the new route might be, and the "real" path looked very inviting, straight and clear in front of us.

Well, we made our choice. We turned right, and followed a faint track up the hill

The diversion signs were plentiful at first, but after a quarter of a mile or so, they stopped appearing. We found ourselves following a faint line in the grass, one that had been trodden by very few feet before us. We had a map, and we knew where we were, but that wasn't much help because we didn't know where we were meant to go.

We kept on, trusting that the way would become clear, and after a while, our trail swung left to re-join the original path. When we saw the size of the bull in

the field with the cows, we were really pleased that we'd been sent on a large loop around him!

Looking back, we quite enjoyed our little diversion - we saw a beautiful view that we couldn't have seen from the original path - and, of course, avoided a danger we couldn't foresee.

I expect that you think I'm going to write something now about life's diversions, and the situations that don't turn out the way we expect. You know all about that, though, so I'm not going to waste paper by repeating it.

Instead, this side of Easter, just remember that God in Christ is always with us, walking with us along paths that are sometimes indistinct, and working to bring something good out of the worst of circumstances.

This issue of the Beacon includes memories of our Easter celebrations, and takes a look ahead to some of what we have planned for the coming months.

I hope you have a wonderful summer. I hope that you have the time to look back on the path that your life has taken, and thank God for the people who have travelled with you, and for the wonderful (and sometimes terrifying) things that have happened on the way.

As we look ahead, we know that God will be with us - however unexpected the outcome might be!

May God bless you in everything as we continue to travel together.

*Paula Paula*

# When; Where; What.

Sat	June 8th	4pm	Upp Road	Fashion Show
Sat	June 22nd	4pm	Upp Road	Quiz & Tea
Sat	June 22nd		Countes.....	Missions Coffee morning
Sat	June 29th	12—2pm	Christchurch	BBQ
Sat	Sept 7th	12—2pm	Christchurch	BBQ
Sat	July 6th	5pm	Mayflower	Karaoke
Fri	July 12th	12 noon	Upp Road	Community Lunch
<b>Sun</b>	<b>July 14th</b>		<b>All</b>	<b>Action for Children Sun</b>
Mon	Aug 5th	All Day	Blaby	Holiday at Home
Tues	Aug 6th			
<b>Sun</b>	<b>Aug 25th</b>	<b>2.30pm</b>	<b>Christchurch</b>	<b>Baptism of Jebisha Jovan</b>
Sun	Dec 14th	3pm	Bishop Street	Handel's Messiah

# Regular Prayer Meetings



Day	When	Time	Venue	Event
Sun	2nd of month	6.00 pm	Bishop Street	Inspiration eve...
Sun	3rd of month	8.45 am	Sth Wigston	Bible Breakfast
Mon & Wed	Weekly	1.00-1.30 pm	Bishop Street	Prayer/service
Tues	4th of month	1.45 pm	Syston	Julian Prayers
Tues	Weekly <b>But</b>	10.00 am	Syston	Holy Communion
	1st Tues	11.00 am		
Tues	Monthly	1.30 pm	Wesley Hall	Bible Study
Wed	1st of month	11.00 am	Wig Mag	Service
Wed	2nd of month	10.30 am	Mayflower	Healing Service
Wed	Weekly	9.30 am	Birstall	Holy Communion
Wed	1st of month	1.00 pm	Bishop Street Phone	Holy Communion
Thurs	Monthly	7.30 pm	2718948	Julian Prayers
Thurs	Weekly	10.00 am	Christchurch	Prayers
Sat	Weekly	10.15 am	Oadby.	Prayers

# The Presidential team come to town!

On Sunday March 17<sup>th</sup> a congregation of more than 450 people gathered in Bishop Street Methodist Church, Leicester to greet the President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference.

A joyful service of celebration concluded with Holy Communion. The service was introduced by the Acting Superintendent of the Leicester Trinity Circuit Rev Paula Hunt and the Communion was led by Rev Novette Headley, the Superintendent of the Leicester West Circuit.

There was singing by the Zimbabwe Fellowship Singers, music by the Birstall Methodist orchestra, with Martin Briers at the recently restored organ and Leon Dundas at the piano.

The Vice-President read from Exodus and led the Intercessory prayers. Roger Whittaker read the Gospel from Luke.

Invited guests included a Deputy Lieutenant of Leicester Mr. Robert Collins, representing the Lord Lieutenant, the Lord Mayor of Leicester and the Archdeacon of Leicester, representing the Bishop, along with several other dignitaries.

The President, taking the Transfiguration as her theme, challenged us not to stay on the mountain-top, but to go with Jesus into the valleys: "Tell the story of Jesus" she asserted, "not just in words." It was stirring stuff.

The day had begun with an early interview on BBC Radio Leicester's morning show and was followed by a light breakfast in the Lord Mayor's Parlour where a gracious civic welcome was given.

Following the service a buffet lunch was held in St. Martin's House adjacent to the Cathedral. Later the Presidential party was greeted in the Cathedral by Canon Alison Adams and after a tour the President said prayers at Richard the Third's tomb. It was an especially moving moment.

The visit concluded with a tour of the nearby Richard the Third centre which embraces the excavated grave of the King. Martin Traynor, Chairman of the Trustees led the tour and the Trustees provided a generous tea.

It was, in every respect, an inspirational day. (see picture centre pages)

John Aldridge.

## Circuit archivists old & new

A big thank you to Eric Orbell who has retired from the post of circuit archivist after some 46 years in the role.

Mary Bryceland has taken over and says that Eric will be a hard act to follow. If you have any items to deposit please let Mary know and she will be happy to collect, sort and itemise ready to deposit at the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland which is based in Wigston.



What sort of things can be deposited? Standing order 015 is the authority to preserve the records of the church, and more information can be found at [www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/office-holders/archivists/](http://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/office-holders/archivists/).

Items include: minutes, annual reports, church magazines, accounts, records of special events, church registers, plans, information about buildings, etc., etc.

*As part of my role I 'should encourage members of every church in the circuit to be vigilant in identifying all records that are available to deposit. Encourage searches in safes, cupboards, spare boxes and apparently unlikely places for discarded and stored records.'*

Do you have anything at home? I found that I have a minute book for a group which has now disbanded - the book is on its way to the Record Office. We also found a tin box at South Wigston containing papers relating to the former Primitive Methodist chapel in the village – it closed in 1967.

If in doubt **DON'T THROW ANYTHING AWAY!**

Please contact me [pmbbry@gmail.com](mailto:pmbbry@gmail.com) or 0116 281 2625.

## Visit to Claremont St.

**Susan Price** came to Claremont Senior Friendship Group to tell us about living and working in Papua New Guinea. Her display included **Crocodile** walking sticks.

**(See picture centre pages)** The walking sticks fascinated us all!

Later she told us about her expedition to the Pandas in China. Absorbing. Life in parts of the world are so different from ours. What variety there is in God's creation.

## ACTION FOR CHILDREN: 1869-2019



This year the Children's Charity of the Methodist Church is celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. It was on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1869 that two ten-year old boys walked through the door of the first National Children's Home set up by the Revd. Thomas Bowman Stephenson, a Wesleyan Methodist minister who, on being stationed in Lambeth, had been deeply shocked by the plight of children living on the streets of that part of South London. With the help of two Methodist friends he renovated a stable in Church Street, Waterloo and so the important work of caring for vulnerable children and young people began. By 1871 the home was moved to Bethnal Green and girls were also admitted. The home was approved by the Wesleyan Methodist Conference and the work rapidly expanded. In 2008 'NCH' became **Action for Children** to reflect the shift away from providing residential homes to a wider range of services for children and young people, many of which are run in partnership with local authorities. The newly appointed CEO for the Charity, Julie Bentley aims to give Action for Children a higher profile so that more people may know what it is they do: last year 301,000 children, young people and their families were helped by over 550 services and projects. **Action for Children Sunday** falls this year on **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July**. We are encouraged to celebrate the achievements of the past 150 years and prayerfully reflect on what still needs to be done to make children's lives better.

See [www.actionforchildren.org.uk](http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk)

**Howard Smith**

# Brothers in Faiths: Vigil for New Zealand

Just over a week after from the attacks on the mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, we were gathering with our Muslim friends at the Oadby Mosque in an act of Solidarity.

There were representatives present from the two Leicester synagogues as well as six clergy representing Churches Together in Oadby.

We heard encouraging words from each of those three faith communities and a particularly inspiring address from a woman who had spent most of her life in Christchurch.

As one of the Jewish representatives was speaking, the wind started rustling the paper he was reading from. Instinctively, our Muslim host and the Methodist Minister reached out to hold the paper for him.

It wasn't planned, the photo wasn't posed, it was a simple act of helping our brother. (see photo centre pages)

It was a joy to be together.

## Vigil for Sri Lanka

I greeted my friend from the Orthodox Synagogue and we agreed that it was good for us to gather, but we lamented that we were meeting again so soon.

Yet another atrocity. Yet again, murder in the name of religion.

It was almost a footnote that a worshipper had been murdered in a synagogue in San Diego.

We were addressed by one of the members of Oadby Baptist Church who grew up in Sri Lanka, and by the Secretary of the Oadby mosque who also lived there for many years.

It was especially good that one of our Hindu friends spoke too.

More tears. More sadness and frustration. **Over a hundred of us from all parts of the community.**

But at least here in Oadby we stand side by side to support each other, and to unite as we say: not in our name. ( see picture in centre pages)

# LINE-DANCING.



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For over 20 years I've been going Line-Dancing on Wednesday Evenings, but as a good Methodist I always go to my meetings first even though it often means I'm the last to arrive, but I always stay until the end and help put all the equipment away. Unlike many types of dancing, you don't need a partner in Line-Dancing, we stand in lines and do the dances all together, so everyone faces the Stage at the same time and as the dance progresses, have their backs to the stage at the same precise moment.

I actually learnt Line-Dancing at Friday evening classes at my previous church's hall (Mayflower) but my first taste of Line-Dancing took place in the USA, in California in 1997 where there was a Country Music club near to the Hotel I was staying in, and they offered free Line-Dancing lessons! Now was my chance, I'd been to the USA a few times and enjoyed the Country Music and watching the Line-Dancing, but to actually take part was a great leap forward for me! And within weeks of arriving back in England I saw an advert at Mayflower Methodist Church for Line-Dancing classes for beginners on Friday evenings, so took this as an opportunity I couldn't miss! I even took some Line-Dancing exams and now have a collection of certificates and trophies for my efforts.

As someone who grew up in the Methodist Church in the non-uniformed youth organisations, Wednesday evenings had been my mid-week evening out, and at Mayflower I first went as a Junior School pupil to 'Playhour', followed by 'Minter Club' from aged 11-14, then to a group which we called 'Table-Tennis Club' from aged 15 upwards, which also included adults so after I returned from 3 years at York University to Leicester I re-joined this club and remained with it until it closed in the 1980's. So when I heard there was a Line-Dancing group I could go to on Wednesdays I started to go there and they are a lovely group of people to meet & get to know. Over the years several Methodists have come along on Wednesday Evenings as well .

In fact arriving on a Wednesday is a bit like arriving at church on a Sunday Morning, everybody there occupying the same chairs & tables at the Line-Dancing venue (The Railwaymen's Club Concert Room), just as we sit in the same pews (or maybe chairs) when we are at our Churches on Sunday

Morning. We don't actually sing hymns on Wednesday evenings, but we do sing 'Happy Birthday' to anyone whose birthday falls on the Wednesday or nearby, and it's usual practice for the birthday person(s) to bring a container of chocolates to pass round!

I hope to still be Line-Dancing for at least another 20 years, and given that many Line-Dancers are at least 20 years older than me I'd better aim for longer than that! I always wear an appropriate Stetson hat at Line-Dancing, and have left a note for my first pair of Line-Dance boots to be buried with me when it's my turn to leave this world in a wooden box. And I'm very grateful for all those in the Methodist Church who have helped me learn many Line-Dances over the years!

**Stephen Thompson**



## **Methodist Women in Britain.**

### **Grants and gifts.**

#### **Social and Community Action Grants.**

Interest from the Welfare Fund is used to make grants to projects which meet a local social or community need, and for groups or individuals seeking funding for imaginative new areas of work.

Examples are:-

- Buying equipment for an after school facility.
- Car hire and other costs for summer trips for young people attending a Youth Wellbeing centre.

New toys, resources and storage racks for a Stay and Play group

If you think you have a new project in mind or an ongoing activity which needs new resources then consider applying. The details are on the web site: [www.mwib.org.uk](http://www.mwib.org.uk)

#### **Discretionary Grants.**

These are small on-off grants for women involved within the Methodist church. Grants of up to £1000 are available on a match funding basis, and might be used to

cover the cost of training for a particular role within the church or a church lead project, or inject a small amount of money into a new project.

### **Empowerment gifts.**

Details are in the annual review and on the web site.

These are gifts going to overseas projects working with women and girls. Up to £10,000 is available annually to such projects. If your church is supporting an overseas project then look at how to apply for a gift, usually £1000 to support the work.

I am happy to give any help.

Please contact me on email: [richardandmarygill@gmail.com](mailto:richardandmarygill@gmail.com)

or text me on 07940 851071.

**Mary Gill**

## **Aigburth news.**

At the AGM of Friends of Aigburth held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March, David Frost, treasurer, was able to report that the Amenity Fund current account was a healthy £3,495. Further money was held in reserve accounts.



However, the Residents Support Team continue to plan fund raising events as the money is constantly needed for trips, entertainment and materials to benefit the residents. The Garden Fund is also in constant use to purchase supplies for the garden. The main fund raising for the garden expenses continues to be the £ (pound) stall which raised £1000 in 2019. Any items you feel could sell for £1 would always be welcome.

After the business at the AGM Marilyn gave a well- illustrated and animated talk on how the garden club came to be formed and showed lots of 'before and after' photographs of the gardens. Her team of residents and volunteers have transformed the surroundings so all residents and visitors are able to enjoy flowers and later in the year home grown vegetables and fruit.

The Spring coffee morning on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2019 raised £361.95 for the Amenity Fund and £70 for the Garden Fund. It was a busy time enjoyed by

visitors and residents alike. Many braved the rather cold, windy day to visit the garden to see the daffodil display (over 1000 bulbs were planted in the autumn of 2018).

We plan to hold a Summer afternoon tea in June with an opportunity for visitors and residents to enjoy the garden once again.

**Mary Gill, Secretary for Friends of Aigburth.**

## **From the Editors:**

Welcome to our summer edition of Beacon. My goodness doesn't time fly? I wonder if it's because we plan ahead so much these days? We nearly all have full diaries for the coming months not just the next week. And trying to find a free day to go out with friends can be a nightmare especially if there's more than two of you in the group! Would we have it any other way, I wonder? Do we like being busy/popular? Does our busyness leave us bereft of prayer and fellowship? I read somewhere recently that we should all try to reinstate the true Sabbath--not a bad idea I thought. Be good if someone has something to say on this matter and would like to write an article for the next Beacon.

All that long preamble is to prepare you all for a shorter than usual time frame for items for the next magazine! We would really like the Beacon to come out at the same time as the plan. (And believe it or not Anne and I have got two dates to meet already in our diaries!) We would therefore ask for contributions as soon after 7th July as possible and no later than 15th July. The plan should be out by the latest second weekend in August so time will be tight to send it to the printers.

Finally, there has been a little confusion about the availability of large print copies of the Beacon. If you know of anyone in your congregation who could benefit from this please tell your senior steward as soon as possible. Not every church will need one and the plan was always for 7 copies to be sent to the Ministers to go to their churches to be passed round the Churches they had pastoral care over. It would appear that this hasn't happened for whatever reason.

Have a wonderful Summer.

**REMINDER.....CLOSING DATES FOR AUTUMN BEACON 7TH---15TH JULY**

# The Atheist and the Bear

An atheist was taking a walk through the woods. 'What majestic trees! What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals!', he said to himself.

As he continued walking alongside the river he heard a rustling in the bushes. Turning to look, he saw a 7 foot grizzly charging towards him.

He ran as fast as he could up the path. Looking over his shoulder he saw that the bear was closing in on him. His heart was pumping frantically and he tried to run even faster.

He tripped and fell on the ground. He rolled over to pick himself up but saw the bear raising his paw to take a swipe at him.

At that instant the atheist cried out: 'Oh my God!...'

**Time stopped.**

**The bear froze.**

**The forest was silent.**

It was then that a bright light shone upon the man and a voice came out of the sky saying:

'You deny my existence for all of these years, teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to a cosmic accident. Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I to count you as a believer?'

The atheist looked directly into the light.

'It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now, but perhaps, could you make the BEAR a Christian?'

'Very well,' said the voice. The light went out, and the sounds of the forest resumed.

**And then the bear lowered his paw, bowed his head and spoke: 'Lord, bless this food which I am about to receive and for which I am truly thankful, Amen.'**



# News from the Churches:

## Birstall.

### CHRISTIAN AID BIG BREKKIE



Birstall Sunday Club decided to combine Pancake Day with the Big Brekkie by making & serving pancakes for the congregation after the morning service.

It was great fun stirring & making the pancakes. The older members of Sunday Club cooked them whilst the younger members acted as waiters.

Everyone agreed that it should be repeated next year & £317.00 was raised .



A brilliant effort.

**Also: see pictures in the centre pages showing the lovely crosses the children made for Easter.**



## Bishop Street

### re Handel's Messiah

Performance of Handel's Messiah at Bishop Street with the Knighton Orchestra, conducted by Dr Paul Jenkins  
Come and sing or listen



**Saturday 14th December 3pm Performance**

**Tickets: £5 to listen; £10 to sing.**

If you would like to sing in the performance, the rehearsal will take place on the same day between 10am and 1pm.

Hire parts will be available, but bring your own Watkins Shaw or Novello edition. Black and white dress.

**Further details from [Fran.Rhys@Methodist.org.uk](mailto:Fran.Rhys@Methodist.org.uk) or  
[Office@BishopStreetChurch.org.uk](mailto:Office@BishopStreetChurch.org.uk)**

## ***Wondering Soul Exhibition Volunteers***

*Volunteers are being sought to help invigilate the Wondering Soul exhibition at Bishop Street Methodist Church and 3 other churches in the city centre between 2 May and 9 June. Joining the team of volunteers is simple and straightforward, not to mention a great way to meet new, like-minded people.*

*We are looking for volunteers who are friendly, approachable and happy to chat with visitors. An interest in art is useful, but not essential. Volunteers from all backgrounds and experience are welcome. Responsibilities during 3-4 hour shifts include: signposting visitors to other activities, keeping resources tidy, monitoring and documenting audience feedback, monitoring the artwork and logging observations.*



*As someone who helped host the exhibition in Norfolk recently wrote:  
“There were so many exciting opportunities for mission and evangelism.  
We’re bringing a coachload of visitors to Leicester.”*

*For more information contact: [bethany.piggott@leccofe.org](mailto:bethany.piggott@leccofe.org) or visit  
[www.wonderingsoul.co.uk/volunteers](http://www.wonderingsoul.co.uk/volunteers)*

Beth Piggott

[Bethany.piggott@leccofe.org](mailto:Bethany.piggott@leccofe.org)

0116 261 5389 (shared line)

Art Project Coordinator – Wondering Soul exhibition (part time)



[www.leicestercathedral.org](http://www.leicestercathedral.org)

Leicester Cathedral, St Martins House, 7 Peacock Lane, Leicester LE1 5PZ

## Blaby

Last time I wrote about proposed changes to our evening services, and we are now in the first quarter. We have had two weeks with a short Epilogue after *Messy Church*, and the first of our *T@4* with the second one now due.

This is a more informal chance for those living locally to get together and meet others and we close with a short period of worship. The first one was reasonably successful and we hope that in due course more will come from outside the normal congregation. We hear a lot these days about loneliness and this is our attempt to offer something for the local community. Encouraged by our experience last summer we shall be holding two days of **Hol-**



**iday at Home** again on Mon & Tues August 5th & 6th – two days of crafts, games, activities, sing-songs.... plus hopefully the ice cream man will call again. We also continue with our occasional services in Oak Court, the extra care home relatively newly built down the road, and some residents come down to Sunday services or other events.

In building terms, we are pleased with our new disabled access doors, even if they are a bit temperamental. They also give a much clearer view into the building from the outside. We would like to do some changes to the kitchen, but funds do not allow that for the present.

Over Lent and Easter we have more joint activities with Churches Together: lent lunches raising money for Christian Aid and a number of services on Good Friday, starting with an open-air service in the shopping precinct. What a difference in temperature from last year!

## Claremont Street

Two recent programmes on BBC TV reminded me of the illustrated talk given by Neil, the husband of Rev. Rachel Parkinson after he completed the pilgrimage to Santiago in 2015. He commenced walking alone, but met many interesting fellow pilgrims on the long route.



The first filmed BBC pilgrimage to Santiago involved well known personalities who all had different reasons for embarking on such a challenging trek. What persuaded them to accept the invitation? Money? Fame? Publicity?. Did the experience change their beliefs?

The 2<sup>nd</sup> pilgrimage filmed was the Pilgrimage to Rome. Again by a group of well known celebrities .A more diverse group which included a gay man, a lapsed member of the Jewish faith, a Roman Catholic who questioned her faith (after the recent disclosures about the problems among the clergy) , an atheist , a Muslim and others with personal doubts about the existence of any God . As the journey progressed the group began to communicate their philosophies and religious or non religious experiences as they struggled with the climate, the physical and emotional demands and living with a lack of space and privacy. To complete the pilgrimage they learned to help and support each other

On completion as they entered Rome, the BBC had arranged for them to have a personal audience with the Pope who answered their questions and blessed them all personally.

In the light of the overall experiences what did they gain from the experience?

The two programmes form the basis of spiritual discussions which you may wish to explore. We are all on a pilgrimage to find our God in this violent century, to hold on to the words of Jesus, to love one another as He loves us and to love our neighbour as we love ourselves.

*Editors note; The Churches Together at Oadby used the film 'The Way' as their basis for their Lent meetings. It was very good and led to lots of discussion. Worth looking at.*

## Christchurch

Our chosen charity this year is **Leicester City of Sanctuary** (LCoS) and we have been making great progress with our fundraising to date:

Over £500 was raised when our Thursday Art Group sold some of their paintings and prints along with support from Wild Honey selling some products too!

Amelia's 'Lucky dip' together with a bake sale added a further £70+ for LCoS.

During Fairtrade Fortnight, yet more cakes!! Baked as far as possible with fair trade ingredients, raised £100 for Traidcraft Exchange. Traidcraft did not cease trading on 31 December 2108 as was feared and the latest news is encouraging. Christchurch Traidcraft has been running since 1992 and our sales have reached £214016. We thank our team for keeping our stall going every Sunday and thanks to all our customers for supporting this worthwhile venture.



### Exercises for the over 50s....come along and join in

We meet regularly every Thursday from 1pm until 2pm in Christchurch Hall. You are invited to come and try a session to see if it suits YOU with no obligation. Plenty of room for new members and it is not too difficult to pick up the moves to music, devised by Linda, an experienced trained pilates, yoga and keep fit teacher. The cost of each session is currently £3 per person.

## Community Barbecues:

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June and Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September – Noon to 2pm Bouncy Castle booked!

Opportunities to engage with our local community

## Father,

You are always loving, always generous and kind to your children.

Please have mercy on us as a nation at this time of turmoil and division. Help us to be tolerant and understanding of those who have different, sincerely held opinions. Guide our leaders so that your will be done in our country and in our relationships with each other, with Europe and the rest of the world.

Lord, have mercy on us, forgive us and heal us. Amen

## Countesthorpe

On Easter Sunday the other chapels in our group (Blaby and Cosby) were invited to have breakfast with us and join us for a Communion Service. It's good to get together.



Your Local  
Methodist Church

*Sharing the Love of God in the  
heart of the Village*

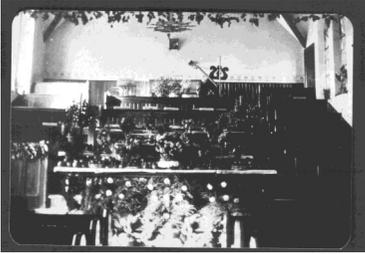


Countesthorpe  
Methodist  
Church  
Welcomes You . . .

On 14th April we had the opportunity to 'man' an information table at the Village Hall along with many other village organisations. We were able to promote ourselves by advertising our beliefs and our social life and fellowship and of course our location. This made it possible to advertise ourselves to the wider village population. We have also produced a promotional tri-fold leaflet.

On the Saturday after Easter Barry Hillyard gave a talk about our Chapel History, including old maps and plans.

Over the years many alterations and additions have been made with photographs to illustrate the changes to the building and showing some social history of the people. The talk was followed by a tour of the premises and then tea, coffee and cakes.



On 4th May we held a Coffee Morning supporting the work of Christian Aid followed three weeks later by our annual Spring Fair with all the usual stalls plus a 'prize every time tombola' - always popular.

We have a Missions Coffee Morning on 22nd June and over the Summer we have other events 'in the pipeline' including our annual Garden Party at the end of August.

## Great Glen

It's good to know that our premises continue to be well used by our local community especially Life and Confusion, two groups for young people, as well as U3A, a Yoga Group, Gardening Club and WI.

Linda and John Warner opened their home yet again for a "Curry and Quiz" night which raised over £500 for Christian Aid. It's always very popular and brings lots of fun and laughter in February when the dark winter evenings seem endless.



On the first Friday in March, Anglican, Methodist, Catholic and Salvation Army ladies joined together for the annual World Day of Prayer service in our church. This year the service was prepared by the Christian women of Slovenia and is shared by thousands of people around the world on the same day.

Some of our members attended the joint service at Bishop Street where they met together with other Methodists and enjoyed the fellowship and singing. Meeting also the President and Vice President of the Methodist Conference, Rev. Michaela Youngson and Mr Bala Gnanapragasam.

Once again we joined with St Cuthbert's Parish Church for our annual Lent course. Each week we watched an episode of a TV serial called 'Broken' followed by thought provoking discussion lead by our minister Rev Derek McLean and from the Anglican Church, Rev Kim Ford and Ordinand Sarah Collins.

On Palm Sunday we again joined with the congregation of St Cuthbert's to walk from Great Glen to St Andrew's Church, Burton Overy following the donkey as in previous years, where we shared in breakfast before the united service.

We will share another Bring and Share breakfast on Easter Sunday before Sunday worship lead by our minister, Rev Derek McLean, his first Easter as our Minister.

We look forward to another fund raising event during Christian Aid week - "Souper Saturday" when homemade soup and homemade bread and cake is served to between 40 and 50 people with the profits going to the charity. Looking forward to the summer we hope to have a coffee morning and cake stall to raise funds for Toilet Twining. Our toilets are not yet 'twinned' and we thought it was high time they were!

Our weekly Saturday "Coffee Drop-in" continues to provide good fellowship, the church being open during this time for anyone who wishes to spend a time of contemplation. You are most welcome to join us.



# Nativity

## Putting Christian Beliefs into practice-

### A night out with the Street Pastors

It is not only a sermon at Church that may give you cause to pause for thought but also how we may put our Christian values into action.



At one of our morning services in November last year at the Church of the Nativity, Russ Bentley from Street Pastors invited us to join him on a typical night out. We were asked to imagine the preparations needed before going out and what we could expect to come across.

The Street Pastors are out from 10pm to 3am on Saturday nights and the first and last Friday of the month. They are on hand to anyone who needs their help. This could be giving a blanket to someone sleeping rough and talking with them, offering a pair of flip-flops to a young woman carrying her shoes so that she does not cut her feet, helping someone to get transport home or waiting with them until a friend or family member arrives or just simply chatting with people out for a good night.

It has also been possible to help defuse arguments in or around the late night pubs and clubs. They particularly care for vulnerable people. Over the years they have been operating, they have built up relationships with taxi firms, bar and club managers. The Police and the Local Authority have supported them from the beginning.

A lot of people who have come to know them and what they do have realised that the Street Pastors offer practical help and are not out to preach.

The Street Pastors come from a variety of churches. On the nights they are on duty, they try to be in the midst of society and the problems people may face by taking the church to the street. They hope to make a difference for the benefit of all who use the city centre late at night.

Street Pastors can be contacted at [leicester@streetpastors.org.uk](mailto:leicester@streetpastors.org.uk) if you would like to know about becoming one or would like to financially support their work.

The Church of the Nativity has been making financial contributions to the Street Pastors as part of its outreach work for a number of years.

# Oadby

## Palm Sunday Churches Together Messy Church

The Methodist, Baptist and Anglican churches in Oadby got together to host families for a Palm Sunday Donkey parade. This included family friendly worship, crafts, games and tea. We started at St Peter's church on the Parade where children made



Palm Branches, heard the Palm Sunday story and joined in a simple act of worship. Then the donkey arrived, and everyone walked up to Oadby Trinity Methodist Church to have “selfies” with the donkey and join in games. Donkey themed crafts involved making painted footprint donkeys (ticklish AND messy!), a food craft and paper bag donkeys.

After this, families stayed for afternoon tea provided by the churches as an act of hospitality, sharing in the “Messy Grace”. Seventy one adults of all ages were there, many with accompanying children and grandchildren. The Christian Oadby Youth Project were also there to welcome teenagers who might otherwise have felt excluded. Clergy and volunteers from all the churches worked together to make this a successful outreach and witness event.

## Palm Sunday in Rome

Jane and I were privileged to join with thousands of Christians from all over the world to celebrate Palm Sunday in St. Peter's Square, Rome, which proved to be a very moving experience. The air was electric.

At 9.30 a.m. on the morning of Palm Sunday Pope Francis appeared in St. Peter's Square to take part in one of the great Easter traditions in Rome – the solemn procession and blessing of the palms. The Cardinals dressed in red robes carried golden palms which made this a very colourful event.

As palms are not readily available in Italy, branches from olive trees were distributed to the crowds which symbolise both the local olive culture and peace. The Pope blesses both. (see pictures centre pages)

**Jim Gannon**

# Uppingham Road

2019 is our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary here at Uppingham Road. We celebrated this on 24<sup>th</sup> February with Rev. Jill Marsh leading our worship. We looked back at our history and gave thanks for our church continuing to flourish. Our theme was 'Celebrating Diversity' and we carried this idea through into a delicious lunch after the service.



On 31<sup>st</sup> March Uppingham Road rang out to the sounds of *Songs in Praise*. Visitors from Birmingham, including TSM choir and the Cyder Sisters, joined a choir from the church and Gospel Melodies from Leicester in giving us some uplifting songs. Additional music was provided by a saxophonist. It was great to have young people also taking part, including our own Lulu on guitar accompanying her friend who sang. The programme finished with a full church joyfully singing 'We are marching in the light of God'.



**TSM Choir performing Songs of Praise**

We look forward now to Easter when we hope to start Easter Sunday with breakfast together followed by our morning worship. During the service our Lent cross will be transformed into New Life as we cover it with beautiful flowers. The finished cross will then be placed in our foyer for everyone to enjoy.

**On the 12<sup>th</sup> July we plan to open our doors for our third Community Lunch. Everyone is welcome to join us and share lunch together.**

**Our next fundraising events will be:**

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June 4 p.m. - Fashion Show. Tickets £5.**

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 4 p.m. – quiz and afternoon tea themed on the next production by our drama group The Cast Offs. Tickets £5 adults £3 children.**

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July – Karaoke Evening at Mayflower 5 p.m.**



## In Loving Memory

**Peter Wilson Naylor 11.01.1926—30.01.2019**

**Uppingham Road:**

On 30th January our oldest member passed away.

Peter Naylor was a life-long member of Uppingham Road. He took a keen interest, and was involved in every part of church life, holding most of the offices in church at some point (including circuit steward). His Christian life and work was an inspiration to many. He is greatly missed.



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## Wesley Hall

We attended the Ash Wednesday service at Sacred Heart Church where we were made most welcome. Unfortunately, Lent Lunches between the two Churches did not take place this year.

Our Easter Services comprised of Communion on Maundy Thursday, which included the washing of feet. Early on Easter Sunday we met together at 8.00am for Communion followed by breakfast and then at 10.45am we welcomed Rev. Tony Pick to take our Communion service. Each week throughout Lent we placed elements of the Easter story at the foot of the Cross. During the morning service, the Cross was brought alive with flowers (see pics). At the end of the service, the children took part in an Easter Egg Hunt which they enjoyed.



By the time you read this, we will have had another 'Bring and Share Games Night' which was a joint social event between the Methodist and Moravian congregations and the Community Centre. These evenings are proving very popular and great fun.

On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June we have a trip to the Moravian Settlement in Ockbrook to join them in their Garden Party.

# Wigston Magna

## A CELEBRATION

**DATE**                21<sup>st</sup> March 2019

**VENUE**             Holiday Inn, Wigston Fields



It may seem odd that a number of Methodists were meeting on a Saturday evening at a local hotel - not a usual gathering place for them! The answer is not so strange. This gathering was a unique occasion - the celebration of 200 years of Methodism in Wigston Magna. We wanted this to be a very special party so it was decided to hold this particular event away from church premises and enjoy a meal which we had not prepared ourselves. The party included family and friends of church members, together with past ministers and local preachers.

Our Guest of Honour was Mr. Bala Gnanapragasam, the Vice President of the Methodist Conference who reminded us that it was good to remember the past but that we must work hard to prepare for a successful future. In closing he presented us with the Anuradhapura wooden cross and a candle bearing the symbols of the Methodist orb and the Anuradhapura cross.

## EXHIBITIONS AND OPEN DAYS

Our church has been also been transformed by three exhibitions and Open Days of photographs, newspaper cuttings and other memorabilia telling the first three chapters of the story of the Methodist people of Wigston from the start of the two Societies until 1983. The exhibitions have been expertly presented with help from The Greater Wigston Historical Society, The Wigston Civic Society and the County Record Office.



Anuradhapura cross / Cross of Sri Lanka



## THE STORY CONTINUES: 1983 – 2019

**Chapter 3**, Growth and Decline, 1945 – 1983, ended with the two Methodist Societies deciding to come together as **'The Methodist Church in Wigston Magna'**. This was a momentous decision taken after many years of prayerful consideration. What would the future hold?.....

Come along on the Open Days of our next two exhibitions and discover what happened between 1983 – 1990 and 1990 - 2019:

<b>August 25th</b>	10am – 4pm	<b>Chapter 4</b>	1983 – 1990 <b>Uniting for the Future</b>
<b>August 26th</b>	12noon – 4pm		
<b>September 21st</b>	10am – 5pm	<b>Chapter 5</b>	1990 – 2019 <b>Life as WMMC</b>
<b>September 22nd</b>	12noon – 4pm		

*Refreshments from the era will be available in the **'Taste of the Times Tea-room'** alongside tea, coffee and biscuits. (We've already enjoyed Victorian delicacies, WWII treats and a Chapel tea reminiscent of the 1960's.)*

### Wigston Magna Diary:

June 8th and 9th      Flower Festival      Celebration of Flowers and Faith

### Special services for the Bicentenary

June 9th      6.00pm   Circuit Service      Led by Rev. Jenny Impey  
Preacher Rev. Paula Hunt

June 23rd      10.30am   Rev. Dr. Chris Swift      Director of Chaplaincy and Spirituality at MHA

6.00pm   Rev. Saidu Kanu      A vision for the church:  
Dementia friendly

June 30th	10.30am	Roger Stephenson	(former member at WMMC)
July 7th	10.30am	Rev. Arthur Rowe	(former minister of Moat Street Church)
	6.00pm	Rev. Jenny Impey	Our Calling: Service
July 14 <sup>th</sup>	10.30am	Rev. Jenny Impey	Cafe worship: Uniting for the future
August 4th	10.30am	Rev. Ruth Gee	Connexional Ecumenical Officer
August 18th	10.30am	The Revs. Arthur and Janice Cowburn	(former members at WMMC)
August 25th	10.30am	Rev. David Vale	(former minister of WMMC)
Sept 1st	10.30am	Dr. Miriam Stevenson	Education Sunday

**For your diary:**

Oct 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Reunion Weekend

details in the next Beacon

The final chapter of the story, **Chapter 6**, looks to the future..... **more** about that **in the autumn**.



## GOD'S PLAN

Some days it seems the sun has gone,

and darkness covers the land

Yet through the mists of doubt and fear

I proclaim.....**GOD HAS A PLAN**

By faith I see a path well lit,  
where God reaches for my hand

By faith I grasp and hold his hand,  
for I know **GOD HAS A PLAN**

Though life may take erratic paths,

as I strive with God and man

I know the angels lead me on  
as they whisper **GOD HAS A PLAN.**

He has a plan for my life which is true and sure

though I stumble and stagger along

and the way be often dark and bleak

nothing shall steal my song

**FOR GOD HAS A PLAN.**

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## DON'T QUIT

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,

when the road you're trudging seems all uphill,

When funds are low and the depths are high,

and you want to smile but you have to sigh,

When care is pressing you down a bit,  
rest if you must but don't you quit.

Life is odd with its twists and turns  
as everyone of us sometimes learns

And many a failure turns about,  
when they might have won if they'd stuck it out

Don't give up, though the pace seems slow

you may succeed with another blow.  
Often the goal is nearer than it seems

to a faint and faltering one;  
Often the struggler has given up when  
they might have captured the victory cup,

And they learned too late when the light slipped down

how close they were to the golden crown.

Success is failure turned inside out,  
the silver tint of the clouds of doubt,

And you never can tell how close you are,

it may be near when it seems afar;

So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,

it's when things seem worse that you must not quit.



We live at a time when the pace of change has accelerated dramatically. Many of us have lost touch with the ancient ways of doing things and yet the book of Jeremiah reminds us:-

***This is what the Lord says:  
“Stand at the crossroads and look;  
ask for the ancient paths,  
ask where the good way is, and walk in it,  
and you will find rest for your souls.”***

Jeremiah 6:16

It is decision time in the UK as politicians and ordinary folk like you and I debate the pros and cons of the EU. How many of us look back over history to find clues of which way to go? How many of us pray for God’s guidance? How many of us consider our destiny more than our economic wellbeing?

It is decision time for the world as we have seen the horrors of the pollution we have caused in the oceans. We see signs of a changing climate creating hardship and fear in some parts of the world. Of course, it doesn’t prompt urgent action until it begins to affect us.

Although the verse above is often quoted, many omit the last phrase of the verse:-

***But you said, ‘We will not walk in it.’***

I wonder if past ways of doing things have been sacrificed on the altar of so-called progress. I wonder if we are sleep-walking into a world which will be increasingly violent and lacking in compassion, especially for the poorest and less able.

I wrote a meditation for us to pray over. I gave each person a small stone and asked them to hold it in their hand as I read the meditation.

## ***I am a stone***

***I am a stone. Hold me in the palm of your hand. Feel my surface with the tips of your fingers. Parts of me are rough – other parts are smooth – just like your life with its good times and bad times.***

***I am a stone. I have existed since the world began. When the mountains and hills were created, I was born. When the ice age covered the globe, I was there. When dinosaurs roamed the planet, I was there. I am timeless and will still be here for centuries to come.***

***But what about you? You were born into this world and, one day, you will be here no more.***

***I am a stone. I have neither life nor breath – neither spirit nor emotion. I cannot speak, I cannot love, I cannot change the world – I can only watch and hope.***

***But you – you have life and energy and spirit. You can love and care for people. You can change the world around you, every day of your life – if you choose to.***

***I am a stone. I only watch and hope – and ask questions – these questions:***

***•What will you do with the life God has given you?***

***•What will you do with the energy, the spirit, the love and compassion that God has placed within you?***

***•Will you change the world around you for the better?***

***•Or will your heart become like me – a heart of stone?***

***I am a stone and one day, long into the future, we will meet again in eternity. I will ask you these questions again. What answers will you give me when you look back on your life?***

***I am a stone. Take me home. Place me on your mantelpiece or on a bookshelf. Take me down once in a while and reflect upon my questions. I am your stone now.***

### **Let's Discuss ...**

1. Are the modern ways of doing things always the best? Give examples,
2. What aspects of the past do you look back on with sadness at their loss?
3. Is your church building a silent witness to the glory of God or a monument?



Claremont Street

Sue Price  
with Croco-  
dile sticks  
from Papua  
New Guinea

## Presidents Visit



Little Big  
Band  
At Rothley



Vigils in Oadby - New  
Zealand & Sri Lanka



TSM Choir: Uppingham Rd 'Songs of Praise'

## Lentern Crosses



Wesley Hall



Rothley

## Easter crosses



Rothley



Wesley Hall

## Palm Sunday events



Palm  
Sunday  
in Rome



Donkey  
Parade  
in Oadby



Birstall



Oadby