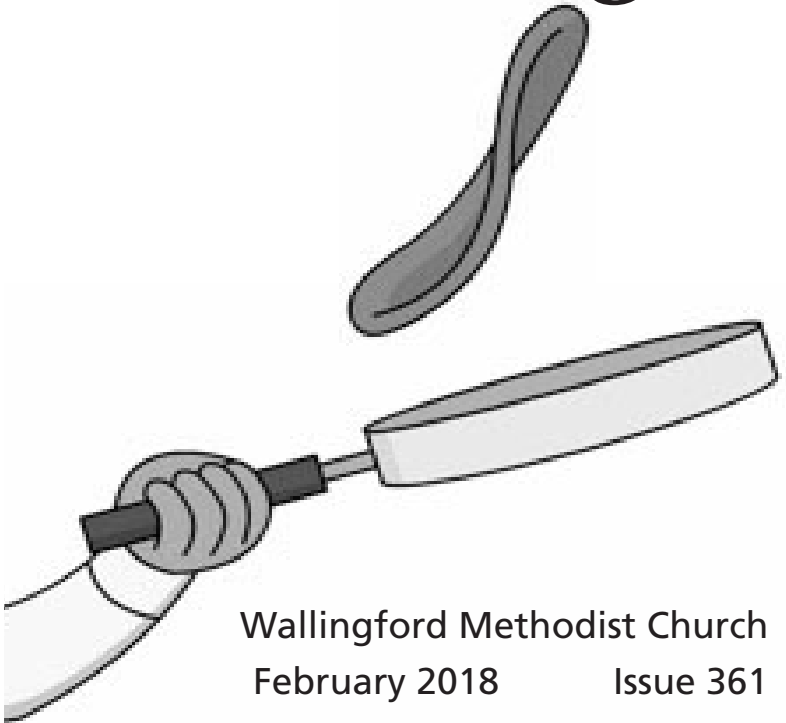


The Messenger



Wallingford Methodist Church
February 2018 Issue 361

A message from our Minister



Dear friends,

How do you respond to the different seasons of the year? Do you have a favourite season? We have seasons in the Christian year too. The festivals of Christmas and Easter are preceded by the seasons of Advent and Lent, particular times of reflection and preparation that can help to give us a rhythm and a focus in our lives.

I have just concluded another “season”, leading the annual Covenant service in each of the 3 churches where I serve as minister in Wallingford, Didcot and Milton. This means I have had several weeks of reflecting on the Covenant Prayer and every time I come back to it, some part of it stands out in a fresh and challenging way. It gives us individually and as a church community, space to rediscover what commitment to follow Christ means. These words are part of it:

“I willingly offer all I have and am to serve you, as and where you choose.” Willingly? Do we offer service and worship to God willingly? Perhaps for many of us, the answer is “sometimes” or “It depends....” We often hesitate and hold back.

As we approach the start of Lent we recognise these conflicts within ourselves. We want to follow Christ but we also want to follow our own inclinations. It is difficult to be attuned to God when loud voices are all around urging us to accumulate more possessions, to protect our own self-interest and to please ourselves. We need the help of God’s Holy Spirit to enable us to be more attentive to God’s promptings and then have the courage and the will to act on them.

This Lent you may find this prayer helpful, from the Celtic Book of Daily Prayer.

Lord help me now to unclutter my life,
To organise myself in the direction of simplicity.
Lord teach me to listen to my heart;
Teach me to welcome change instead of fearing it.
Lord, I give you these stirrings within me,
I give you my discontent,
I give you my restlessness,
I give you my doubt,
I give you my despair,
I give you all the longings I hold inside.
Help me to listen to these signs of change, of growth;
To listen seriously and follow where they lead
Through the breathtaking empty space of an open door.

Every blessing, Katherine

Food for your thought !!!

Developing a plan for church growth

Here is an extract from our last Church Council when the meeting was asked to have a wide conversation and consider the future growth of our church the outcome of which would be reported back to the Circuit Meeting in 2018. Questions for consideration/discussion are:-

- Do we have a plan for growth or end of life?
- Why do we do what we do?
- What could we do differently to enable us to be more fruitful by Gods grace

The meeting split into groups to discuss these questions. There was general agreement that we would look to grow. Some people suggested we need to focus on ways to grow our youth work and could do this by focusing on BB&GA and other 'young' groups connected to us. It was felt that 'street corner evangelism' does not work and that it is better to build relationships in a more natural way with neighbours and friends and to try to find a way to talk about our faith.

There was a suggestion that a small group of volunteers might visit churches which are growing and the Connexion Magazine has encouraging examples of church growth with some innovative ideas - copies are available in the atrium.

A church open meeting to discuss this as agreed by the leadership team on **Saturday 17th February 10.30am - 3pm** including a light soup lunch. All are welcome

Art & Photographic Exhibition 2018

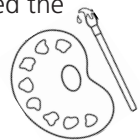
Calling all artists and photographers - it's time to start thinking about your entries for this year's exhibition.

If your drawings, paintings or photos need mounting or framing, ready to be displayed at our two day show, now is the time to get it done.

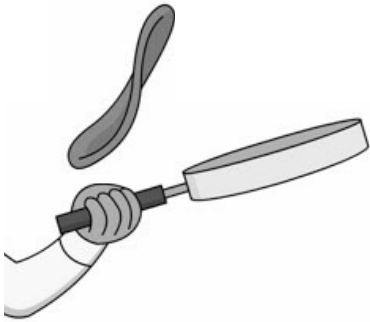
Entries have to be submitted by March 24th for the exhibition, which takes place on the evening of Friday April 20th and all day on Saturday 21st. All exhibits have to be for sale and are listed in the catalogue. Visitors to the exhibition have the opportunity to vote for their favourite picture and photo meaning that the artist and photographer who have most impressed the viewers each receive a certificate.

Entry forms are available by emailing artatwmc@gmail.com, or see Ian Scrivener if you need a paper entry form.

- Proceeds from the event will be shared between MSF (doctors without borders) and the Balsam Family Project. If you are willing to help with the organisation of the art exhibition in any way, please see a member of the fund raising team whose names are on the board in the atrium.



Pancake & Book Sale Saturday 10th February



The start of Lent will soon be upon us, bringing with it our annual pancake and book sale charity event.

Whether you prefer to first tuck into a pair of pancakes, topped with lemon, chocolate or treacle, or save that pleasure for after browsing the many second hand books which will be on sale, is up to you.

The pancake makers will be busy in the kitchen from 10 am until the last pancake is flipped shortly before 1 pm on Saturday February 10th. As last year, gluten and dairy free pancakes will also be available.

If you have any surplus books to donate, please bring them to church by Thursday 8th at the latest as it takes quite a while to sort them into categories or alphabetically by author for fiction. Donations can be left under the atrium stairs.

Proceeds will be split between the church's international charity MSF (doctors without borders) and our local charity the Balsam Family Project, which offers support to troubled families with young children.

If anyone would like to help with the sorting on any day in the week before the sale - or selling of the books, please put your name on the list in the atrium or speak to a member of the fundraising team.



Thanks, Nicky Lidstone

Still recruiting!!!

The Fund Raising Team would be very pleased to welcome new faces onto the team. If you feel able to help please have a word with any member of the team.

The work of the Fund Raising team brings organises a variety of social events to raise funds not only for our church but also for the charities we support which are at present the Karibuni Trust in Kenya and, much nearer to home at Didcot, the Balsam Project.

At the October Church Council it was agreed that In January we will change our international charity from the Karibuni Trust to Medecins Sans Frontieres for the coming two years.

Last year £1,526 was raised for church funds and £1,342 for our chosen charities an excellent achievement by any standard.

Food Bank Analysis For December 2017

December has been an exhausting and at the same time a rewarding month. Due to the continuing generosity of the people in Wallingford and surrounding villages, we have been able to give out generous amounts of Christmas food to 101 adults and 84 children – this despite the fact that we were closed for two sessions this month and had to cope with a very snowy day as well. On behalf of our clients I should like to say a huge Thank You to you all for thinking of them at this time. The people receiving the hampers from CAP are included in the total number and we were very pleased to help with supplying the basic items for them.

We have had more good news in that the Town Council, following our meeting with them at the end of November, have given us temporary use of the Lodge, situated to the side of the front gate, so that we can store boxes of tinned goods there rather than having to transport them from our garage down to the Food Bank. This makes life a lot easier for us and also means we have part of our garage at home reinstated as a garage. There is a move afoot to give us permanent storage nearer to the Food Bank so that everything can be within easy reach, but more of this at a later date. Watch this space!

In my last report I said that Eileen and I had visited Brightwell School to talk about the Food Bank. Neville and I were invited back at the beginning of the month to receive the food that the children had collected and Eileen and I were invited to their Nativity play, which was delightful.

Our food stocks are quite high at the moment, but, as ever, we still run low on basic items such as milk, fruit juice, sugar, tinned potatoes, corned beef and hot dogs. I know the last two items are not particularly basic but they are well received by our clients so we do like to keep a reasonable stock.

As this is the last report of 2017 I should like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and peaceful 2018 and to thank you once again for your continued support.

Jean Burt

Street Pastor Newsletter December 2017

Being a Street pastor in Wallingford is challenging in the sense of turning out on a Friday night until the early hours but we have not had to face things that some of our colleagues in other cities have had to deal with and I want to pay tribute to them in this edition of the newsletter.

The level of excellence and dedication with which the Response Pastors and the local Street Pastors responded to several emergencies across the country: the Grenfell Tower inferno, the attacks in Manchester, Westminster and London Bridge, was quite outstanding. We met some of the Manchester Team at the annual conference there a couple of years ago and one of our team joined one of their patrols for a night. It is very different to Wallingford!

With so many young people murdered in London alone, there is still an enormous task ahead of us as we continue to seek to respond adequately to stem the tide of these tragedies, not just for the moment but in the long term.

Back in Wallingford, we had patrols out on Friday 22 Dec. as usual then an additional patrol on Christmas Eve. I am pleased to say that although there were several parties going on there was little in the way of trouble, although quite a lot of bottles were picked up and broken bottles and glasses were swept up.

We get the opportunity to talk, sometimes in depth, with people who are struggling with various problems in life, which is often the reason for some late night drinking when pay day comes round.

2018 will be the 25th year of the work of Ascension Trust and 15 years since the launch of Street Pastors. We have been going for 6 years. As we celebrate these milestones, may I take the opportunity to encourage every Christian to consider serving as a street pastor for a time (it doesn't have to be a lifetime commitment) as a way of connecting with the realities of the 21st century. As God has called us to live and walk by faith, be encouraged in spite of all that is happening around us, to always look to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. I value your continued prayers and support of every kind for this ministry as we prepare to continue serving God and his people in Wallingford in 2018.

With best wishes for 2018

Neville Burt - Coordinator

Dates for your diary

Ash Wednesday

14th Feb Service of Holy Communion 12.30-1.15pm

Maunder Thursday

29th Mar 7.30pm Holy Communion at Didcot

Good Friday

9.45-10.15am followed by service in the Market place at 11am organised by us Methodists this year.

Easter day - 1st April

8.00am Communion

10.30am Morning worship

6.30pm Holy Communion

Future Fund Raising Events 2018

Please make a note in your diaries of the following dates. These events help raise money for the charities we have chosen to support Medecins Sans Frontieres and the Balsam Project.

Saturday February 10th

Book sale and pancakes

Friday/Saturday April 20/21

Art exhibition

Sunday 17th June

Anniversary lunch

Saturday October 20th

Pandemonium concert

Saturday March 16th

Jumble sale

Saturday May 19th

Concert?

Saturday September 15th

Jumble sale

Weekday Activities

Tuesday

Lunches

12.30 -1.30pm

Friendship Guild Group

2.30pm (Alternate Tuesdays)

Wednesday

Tots Time

9.30-11am weekly (term time)

Loving Hands - Crafty knitters

2-4pm

BB&GA Anchors

6pm

Juniors

6.45pm

Company & Seniors

7.30pm

The Gap

8pm (Fortnightly)

House Group Alternate weeks 8pm

3 Shillingford Court

Thursday

Coffee Morning and chat

10.30-12noon

Borough Bible Group Alternate weeks

2pm - Church lounge

Choir Practice

8pm (Special occasions)

Friday

Prayer Meeting Church

7.30pm-8pm

Minister Rev Katherine Pickering 01235 813242
katherine.pickering@methodist.org.uk

www.wallingfordmethodistchurch.org.uk
Registered Charity X65308

Organists

	10.30am	6.30p
Feb 4th	Gill Hall	Gill Hall
Feb 11th	Libby Bolton	Libby Bolton
Feb 18th	Gill Hall	Gill Hall
Feb 25th	Gill Hall	Gill Hall

PA Operatives

	10.30am	6.30pm
Feb 4th	Ian Scrivener	Ian Scrivener
Feb 11th	Iain Revell	Alec Goldsmith
Feb 18th	Alec Goldsmith	Norman Atkinson
Feb 25th	Wendy Warrick	Iain Revell

Coffee Rota (Sunday Morning)

Feb 4th	Angela/Belinda
Feb 11th	Pauline/Joan
Feb 18th	Pauline A/Shirley
Feb 25th	Sue/Mary



Next issue of the Messenger

Deadline for the March issue of the newsletter is

Tuesday 20th February

Pleased forward any items to paulineainley@btinternet.com

Sunday Worship

	10.30am	6.30pm
Feb 4th	Ruth Coward	Libby Bolton
Feb 11th	Rev Katherine Pickering S	Rev Keith Underhill
Feb 18th	Barbara Sexton	Rev Katherine Pickering S
Feb 25th	Marlene Chalkley	Rev (Sqn Ldr) Philip Corrigan

S - Communion Service

Lectionary Readings

Feb 4th	Isaiah 40:21-31 1 Cor 9:16-23	Psalms 147:1-11, 20c Mark 1:29-39
Feb 11th	2 Kings 2:1-12 2 Cor 4:3-6	Psalms 50:1-6 Mark 9:2-9
Feb 18th	Genesis 9:8-17 1 Peter 3:18-22	Psalms 25:1-10 Mark 1:9-15
Feb 25th	Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 Romans 4:13-25	Psalms 22:23-31 Mark 8:31-38

Church Stewards

Feb 4th	S Ifill
Feb 11th	B Kershaw
Feb 18th	M Swift
Feb 25th	C Hill

Door Stewards

	10.30am	6.30pm
Feb 4th	M & J Chalkley	S Scrivener
Feb 11th	S & D Shepperson	R Atkinson
Feb 18th	P Maskrey/H Brown	B Calcutt
Feb 25th	I & S Scrivener	R Atkinson