

This is our monthly newsletter. The newsletter can be received by anyone who has an e-mail address. To subscribe to this service please send your e-mail address to: northstaffscircuit@hotmail.co.uk.

Dear Friends

“To know how to grow old is the master work of wisdom, and one of the most difficult chapters in the great art of living.” *Henri Frederic Amiel (1821-1881)*

Peter and I have recently been blessed by a gift from the Methodist Church – the opportunity to attend the Methodist minister’s Preparation for Retirement course. And it truly was a blessing. It was also a challenge! With other ministers and their spouses we were encouraged to think about how this coming move (my retirement is two and a half years away) and the transition from full time ministry to retirement will be different from all the other moves I’ve made during my ministry. The quote that I started with began to have great significance as I realised that retirement won’t just happen – we need to prepare ourselves.

I’ve come home reflecting on a number of things –

Where will we live?

How will our finances change?

What will my identity be?

How will I maintain my spiritual well-being?

Are there aspects of ministry that I definitely want to continue? What do I want do? What do I definitely not want to do?

When Jesus needed time to be with God, to reflect, and to pray, he took himself away from his immediate surrounds and the demands on his time. Peter and I are now about to enjoy a second gift from the Church – a three month sabbatical. This time and space away from the day-to-day work of Circuit ministry and other church commitments gives us the opportunity to do some of that reflection I mentioned. We will be spending some time in areas of the country that we don’t know to help us decide where we might live. I am planning to visit two or three cathedrals and also have a short retreat to Holy Island, Lindisfarne. I’d like to do some reading about spirituality in older age and develop my Bible journalling. And we are looking forward to each others’ company as we do these things together!

Transition times aren’t just challenging, they can also make you vulnerable, especially when they involve life changing decisions. Methodist ministers don’t actually retire of course – we ‘sit down.’ A term derived from the fact that we are itinerant – we ‘travel’ through our ministry. When we reach retirement age we cease to ‘travel’ – we ‘sit down’. But we are still Methodist ministers until the day we die. Our calling is part of who we are and our ordination promises very much define our identity. Attending the course we’ve just done and our forthcoming sabbatical means that for me this transition is now beginning, which doesn’t mean that I’ll be slowing down or neglecting my ministerial duties in the Circuit and District! Rather I’m hoping over the rest of my appointment here to discover more about myself, about my relationship with God, and about what it means to be a woman of a certain age who may, or may not, decide to wear purple!!
(read the poem by Jenny Joseph if you don’t understand that last comment)

“The only people who are old are those who think they have learnt all they need to know and have given up discovering. For the rest of us each day reminds us of our ignorance and needles us towards discovering more, about ourselves and about life and death.” Michael Guilford

Older age is often referred to as the autumn of our days. Autumn is the time of years when our woodlands are often a blaze of bright colour – red and orange and yellow. That is only made possible because something is dying. Autumn is also the time when spring bulbs may be planted. An action of hope and trust and faith – for we know that despite the darkness and the cold of winter new life will come with the spring. As we continue our journey through Lent towards the cross and onwards to Easter, and the message of resurrection, may we rejoice that in Christ we live and move and have our being, in this world (no matter what our age) and in the next.

Lenten blessings

Liz

North Staffordshire Circuit (11/22) Preaching Plan – March 2024

				March				
				3	10	17	24	31
				Lent 3	Lent 4 Mothering Sunday	Passion Sunday	Palm Sunday	Easter Day
Lectionary Year (B) (Principal Service)				Exodus 20:1-17 Psalm 19 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 John 2:13-22	Numbers 21:4-9 Ps 107:1-3,17-22 Ephesians 2:1-10 John 3:14-21	Jeremiah 31:31-34 Ps 51:1-12 or Ps 119:9-16 Hebrews 5:5-10 John 12:20-33	Isaiah 50:4-9a Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 Philippians 2:5-11 Mark 11:1-11	Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9 Psalm 118:1-2,14-24 1 Cor. 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43 Jn 20:1-18 or Mk 16:1-8
Please Pray For:				Halmer End	Higherland	Madeley	St Luke's	Silverdale
Wolstanton (95)	LS	10.30 6.30	StF MWB	Ventom HC	Parkes	M Ventom	Davies T	Kirk HC
Cross Heath (23)	CL	9.30 11.00 3.00	StF MSB	NIV LA	Sutcliffe	Barnett GP	Legge HC	Legge HC & Easter Breakfast Williams
Higherland (36)	CL	10.00 6.00	StF MM	LA - BB/GA	Legge HC	Chadwick	Sutcliffe Legge Messy Vintage	N Jones
Madeley (21)	CL	10.30 3.00	StF MWB	SoF 1234 NIV	Legge HC	R Jones	Rowley Barnett	Parkes HC
Silverdale (48)	CL	11.00 5.00	StF MM	Café Church LA	Benson	Youth	Emmaus	Legge HC Refuel
Audley (31)	JV	10.30 3.00	StF MWB	SoF 1&2 GNB	X White	Ventom X	Dyble T X	X Ventom HC
Bradwell (37)	JV	10.00 3.00	StF MWB	SoF 1&2 NIV H&P	Parkes HC	LA	Ventom B	US @ St Barnabas 9.30 am Ventom HC
Halmer End (23)	JV	10.30 3.00	H&P MWB	SoF 1&2 GNB	Sutcliffe HC	Irvine	Legge	Parkes Harrison T
St Luke's (19)	JV	10.30 3.00	H&P MWB	GNB	Davies T	N Jones	Harrison T	Ventom HC Matthews
Printed Service for this week prepared by:				Ventom	Singleton	Legge	Heap	Ventom
BGMC				Wednesday 20th March, 2.30 pm - Holy Communion - Revd Joy Ventom				

Green Tips

Practice mindful shopping - buy only what you need. Mindful shopping is about being aware of your consumption patterns and opting to buy only what you need. This habit not only saves you money but also reduces the amount of waste generated. It's an approach that promotes a simpler, less cluttered lifestyle while also being kinder to our planet.

Use a programmable thermostat - a programmable thermostat is a device that allows you to set temperatures for different times of the day, reducing energy consumption when you're not at home. It's estimated that homeowners can save about 10% of their bills with a properly set programmable thermostat. Plus, it's a comfort too! Your home is cozy and warm in winter or cool and refreshing in summer right when you step in, all while being kinder to the planet.

Foodbank – please click on this link [here](#).

Thank you to everyone across the Circuit who gives regularly to Foodbank through their church. Foodbank remains open through these troubled times and demand for food is high. Can I please ask you to all keep on giving by taking your donations to your nearest Foodbank.



Clayton St Luke's host a session
on Tuesday morning. 10.00am – 12 noon

All Saints, Madeley host a session
on a Wednesday morning. 10.30 am - 12.30 pm
Cornerstone, High Street, Knutton, ST5 6BX

On Wednesday afternoon 2.00 pm – 4.00pm
Chesterton Pentecostal church

on Thursday Morning. 10.00 -12.00 noon
Newcastle Congregational church

on Thursday afternoon. 2.00 pm – 4.00pm
St Thomas church Kidsgrove

on Friday afternoon 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm

or you can take your contribution to our warehouse on the Parkhouse estate on a Monday afternoon or Wednesday morning ... please give us a ring if you want details of how to get there, it is on the Aspire work complex.

Your gifts large or small are very much appreciated and are a lifeline to those sadly more vulnerable than ourselves.

Please give us a ring if you want to drop your gift off at our house!
Carol and Marion Reddish TEL 01782 613265

If you would like to make a monetary donation to Newcastle Staffs Foodbank you can contact the Trustee/Treasurer Paul A Roberts for details: -
tel: 0300 102 9088 or email him on accounts@newcastlestaffs.foodbank.org.uk.

If you would like to Gift Aid your donation please visit the website or contact Paul A Roberts for details.

People can also contact info@newcastlestaffs.foodbank.org.uk for details to donate food or money donations.

At the present time Foodbank are short of the following items:-

Tinned Cold Meat

Cereal

Rice Pudding

Custard

Jam

Tinned Fruit & Vegetables

Long Life Milk

Long Life Fruit Juice

Coffee



We Urgently Need Carrier Bags

Our carrier bag stock is extremely low.

So, if you have a collection of carrier bags that you no longer use, why not donate them to us?

Drop them off at our warehouse or any of our centres.

Visit newcastlestaffs.foodbank.org.uk/locations/ for our opening times.

Newcastle-Staffs Foodbank - Phone: **0300 102 9088** -

Email: info@newcastlestaffs.foodbank.org.uk

Registered Charity 1194404



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2024

FRIDAY 1 MARCH

A SERVICE FOR EVERYONE!

I beg you, bear with one another in love



World Day of Prayer

From the Christians of Palestine

Shared Service at 7.30pm

(with refreshments)

Led by All Saints' and Madeley Methodists

Held this year at

All Saints' Church, Madeley

Everyone Welcome



Godly Play as Bible Study

Story is one of the most ancient forms of knowing. It is the way our Christian heritage has been passed down to us. And story forms the foundation of Godly Play. It invites you to sit as part of a circle and listen as the stories of the Bible are told through word and action. It allows you to immerse yourself in the stories as an act of meditation and prayer and ultimately to encounter God. As the stories are told you sit and listen and at the end of the storytelling you are invited to consider a number of 'I wonder questions'. Questions posed by the storyteller that ask you to reflect on what you have heard. Questions like:

I wonder what part of the story was most important to you?

Or

I wonder where you are in the story?

Or

I wonder if there is a part of the story we can leave out and still have all the story we need?

There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions, they are a means by which you are invited to wonder deeply about the story and what it says to you. Then when the story is put away there is time to respond to all that you have heard and wondered about. It may be that you want to re-read the story again for yourself, paint, draw, model or write a response - the choice is entirely yours.

At the end of the response time we gather back together for refreshments before drawing our time together to an end.

If this is something you think you might like to try then our next Godly play session will take place on **the first Monday and Tuesday of the month ie Monday 4th March at 6.30 – 7.30 pm and repeated Tuesday, 5th March at 1.00 – 2.00 pm** and both sessions will be held at **Wolstanton Methodist Church**. Come and see, wonder, and reflect deeply about stories you thought you knew.



WOLSTANTON METHODIST CHURCH
 Invites you to
'ELDERBERRYED'
 embracing all ages and various interests
MONDAY 11th. MARCH at 2.30p.m.
'EASTER SUGARCRAFT'
 With Irene Bailey

MONDAY 25th. MARCH at 2.30p.m.
'EASTER PARADE'
 Easter afternoon tea
 Please book with Sheila – tel. 639882
 E mail: sheilaheap21@outlook.com

COFFEE, CAKE & CHAT
 An opportunity to renew friendships
 and make new ones

TABLE TOP & CRAFT FAIR
at Audley Methodist Church
Handmade Craft Gifts
Preloved items
Cakes by "The Cake Lady"
Saturday 16th March
10:30am to 12:30pm
£12 per table - call 01782 722755 or email audleymethodist@btconnect.com
Refreshments available

Higherland Methodist Church
SING-ALONG
 with
Fustian
 &
Musical Misfits



6pm - Saturday 16th March
Tickets £5 incl. light refreshments
Call Kev: 07988 532738

Baldwins Gate
Methodist Community
 (Baldwins Gate, Newcastle, Staffs, ST5 5DA)

Mid-Week Service
 on the third Wednesday of
 each month at 2.30 pm

20th March 2024 –
Holy Communion –
Rev Joy Ventom

Please come and join us.
All are very welcome.



Christian Aid Walk
Saturday 16th March at Tittesworth Reservoir

With a choice of two routes, all are welcome to register from 9.15 am onwards for a 10 am start. Please encourage family and friends to support you. Please click on the link for the [sponsorship form](#)

Monthly 6pm Coffee Bar Worship Time
 Songs, Craft, Prayers, Smiles, Coffee, Tea
 Biscuits, Chatter, welcoming, friendly.

Higherland Church

Messy Vintage 4th Sunday
 in the month

from The Bible Reading Fellowship 

Come along @ 6pm Sunday 24th March

Higherland Church Coffee Bar
2pm-4pm Monday 25th March



**Everyone welcome to come and
 join in the natter & laughs.**

Free cake & drinks.

**Join Audley Methodist
 Church for our**

**Easter
 Family
 Fun**

Tuesday

26th March 2024

10:30am - 12pm

refreshments
 available

for information call
 01782 722755 or email
audleymethodist@btconnect.com



Methodist Women in Britain Conference 2024 – 'Words Create Worlds'

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Our ability to communicate, to imagine, to work for change is held within a framework of sounds and images, vowels and consonants.

Jenny and Becca have teamed up to offer two different angles, inviting us to examine the words we use, the reality we create with those words and the future that they shape.



Rev Jenny Pathmarajah is a long-standing friend and supporter of Methodist Women in Britain and is very excited to be leading this weekend. Most of the time she's very happily sat behind a piano and known amongst us for her music workshops and in days gone by, contextual bible studies. But her first degree was in Linguistics at Durham University and has a real passion for the power of words and how they transform our everyday life and understanding of God. Jenny leaves the comfort of the piano stool this weekend and promises us an enlightening and challenging journey as we discover the power of words in the church and our faith.

Becca Byass lives in Nottingham and works as an Engagement officer for All We Can (Methodist Relief and Development). Prior to that, Becca worked in social care for seven years, promoting wellbeing and enabling individuals to 'live later life well' and as the Nottingham and Derby District Wellbeing Officer (with a similar aim but less Bingo!). Becca has a master's degree in Theology, Politics and Faith-based Organisations, a PGCE in Secondary Education and a BA in Biblical and Evangelistic Studies. Becca is scared of disconnection and rejection, she hopes for a future where every person's potential is fulfilled and finds joy in the changing seasons, large bodies of water, Ossie (black Labrador), and her two children, Felicity (15) and Alex (17).

Friday 19th to Sunday 21st April 2024 at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick
Cost £185 full board; Zoom only option £40; Bursaries available (need to apply)
Booking opens on 15th January 2024 on our website: mwib.org.uk
More info needed? Contact swanwick.mwib@gmail.com or 0300 030 9873



North
Staffordshire
Methodist
Circuit

Invite you to a Circuit Prayer Event



Saturday 11th May 2024
2.30pm and will be
finished by 4.30pm

In the Coffee Lounge at
Wolstanton Methodist Church

*Lord please
hear my
prayer*



Christian Resources for Life
@ Methodist Book Centre

Support your local, independent
Christian bookshop

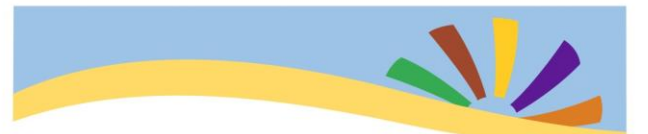


In Store

Online



www.crfl.co.uk
Gitana Street, Hanley, ST1 1DY
01782 212146



Madeley Methodist Church
invites you to join us at our



Warm Space
Elevenses



On Wednesdays at 11am

Chat

Free
Refreshments

Activities

Everyone Welcome

Senior Moments
St. Luke's Methodist Church
Severn Drive
Clayton
ST5 4BH

FREE ENTRY

SENIOR MOMENTS

Crafts

Activities

Quiz

Games

Art Talks

Tea, Coffee & Biscuits

Stories

10.30am - 12.30pm, last Thursday of every month, starting Thursday 27th October.

Fun, explore together in lots of creative, interactive and fun ways.
A great opportunity to enjoy some time together.

For more information please contact Phil or Jeanette Hodges
on 01782 634766 or look on our Facebook page.

Silver Service

..on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of every month..
..beginning at 11:30am..

1st Thursday = Communion Service : 3rd Thursday = Activity Service

at Silverdale Methodist Church,
Earl Street (behind the Chip Shop!)
ST5 6NF

Find us on FaceBook: "Silverdale Methodist Church"
Visit our website: www.silverdalemethodistchurch.org.uk

SILVERDALE METHODIST CHURCH

There's nothing like a good cuppa coffee
and a friend like you to share it with!

Let's catch up!

**WHY NOT CATCH
WITH FRIENDS OLD
AND NEW**

**BRADWELL METHODIST
CHURCH
THURSDAY'S 10 - 12**

**SILVERDALE
METHODIST
CHURCH**

REFUEL

worship & the word
FOLLOWED by FOOD!

Join with us on the **LAST SUNDAY OF
EVERY MONTH**, at **5PM**, for 1-hour of..

**PRAISE &
WORSHIP**

..and then stay to share food together.
all-age & interactive, informal & relaxed – a Worship Experience for all

Like us on Facebook Follow us on Instagram Find us on YouTube



BE STRONG
& TAKE HEART,
ALL YOU WHO
HOPE
IN THE LORD.

PSALM 31:24