

REGULAR ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	Services	10.30am and some evenings
MONDAY	Craft Club (alternate weeks, see Diary for dates)	2.00pm to 4.00pm
WEDNESDAY	Community coffee shop	9.00am to 5.00pm
THURSDAY	Thursday Group (1st Thursday in month)	2.45pm to 4.00pm
SATURDAY	Community coffee shop	10.30am to 11.30am

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

The Church I grew up in was a fantastic place to be inspired and nurtured in the Christian faith, but it did not make a big deal about the season of Lent. So since becoming part of the Methodist Church a few years ago I have come to really appreciate the opportunity Lent offers to anyone who wishes to develop personally and spiritually.

By the time this *Newsletter* comes out, those who are observing Lent will be halfway through.

If we have given something up, do we now feel that we have beaten our reliance on it? Or is it getting harder and harder? If we have taken on something new, does it feel like it is benefiting our lives or those around us? Or is it proving to be a real struggle? If we have recommitted to prayer or other spiritual disciplines are we feeling encouraged in our efforts? Or are we coming up against obstacles and discouragement?

Some of us might beat ourselves up when we 'fail' at these sorts of resolutions. We can feel guilty and bogged down if we don't live up to our Lent commitments. And the danger is that these feelings can overwhelm us and lead us to say "well, I'm already failing so I might as well give up completely".

In these sorts of moments I would remind us all (myself included!) that this is not a journey we undertake alone. As well as our fellow travellers in the church, in our community and perhaps in

our homes, it is important that we do not lose sight of the person for whom and with whom we ultimately travel: it is Jesus who led the way with his own time of prayer and fasting in the desert; it is Jesus who dwells with us and accompanies us on our own spiritual journeys; it is Jesus who knows our darkest thoughts and failings as well as our best self and our successes; it is Jesus who reaches out in forgiveness and compassion when our Lent isn't going quite as we might have hoped, always encouraging us with second chance after second chance, and with the encouragement to keep going.

My prayer for those of us who are participating in Lent (and those for whom Lent is not a meaningful part of our spiritual life), is that we would know that encouragement day by day over the weeks to come.

And as Lent draws to a close towards the end of March, and we enter into Holy Week, the intensity of the Passion and the celebration of Jesus' resurrection there will be opportunities to come together to worship, with our own Maundy Thursday service, a joint walk of witness with the other Histon churches on Good Friday and our Easter Sunday Holy Communion...

And, of course, the journey of faith doesn't end there... *Simon*

DIARY DATES FOR MARCH

Wed 2 nd	Service at Bramley Court	2.45pm
Thu 3 rd	Thursday Group. Revd Simon Oliver will tell us about his experiences as an actor and writer for a Christian drama company	2.45pm
Sun 6 th	Mothering Sunday. Preacher: Miss Elsie Salmon	10.30am
Thur 10 th	Big Issues. Revd Barbara Johnson. <i>Chaplaincy – Church without walls?</i> Service Chaplain to Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service	7.30pm
Fri 11 th	Country dancing	8.00pm
Sun 13 th	Preacher: Revd Simon Oliver	10.30am
Mon 14 th	Craft Group Science meets faith at Wesley. Prof R Cowburn: <i>God of small things,</i>	2.00pm 7.45pm
Wed 16 th	Service at Etheldred house	11.00am
Sun 20 th	Preacher: Revd Jean Simmonds Material for April <i>Newsletter</i> please	10.30am
Thu 24 th	Maundy Thursday communion service	7.00pm
Fri 25 th	<i>Good Friday</i> : Service at St Andrews Histon, 10am, followed by walk behind the cross to the Library Green. Then coffee and hot-x-buns in Methodist Church hall. Offers of buns very welcome (to Christine, please)	
Sun 27 th	Easter Day. Holy Communion. Preacher: Revd Simon Oliver	10.30am

DISCIPLE COURSE

The 34 weeks of Disciple Bible Studies have come to an end, and our sincere thanks go to Jean, Kathy and Steve from the nine of us who have received so much help, support and encouragement during our time together. When we first met on 26th February 2015, it seemed a long journey ahead to embark on, and quite a challenge, but we grew together as a group of friends and learned so much from each other and leaders, especially in the small groups – thank you friends.

So, to Jean, Kathy and Steve, thank you for all the time you spent in preparation, and the help you have given us with questions and challenges.

And, thank you Lord for our precious Bibles, you have truly opened our eyes over this course.

Joyce Hallett

GENERAL CHURCH MEETING AND GIFT DAY

The General Church Meeting and Gift Day will take place on Sunday 1st May 2016 after morning worship and a bring-and-share lunch.

Nominations for the stewards, who are appointed at this meeting, may be given to the minister by 17th April. You must make sure that the person is willing to stand, and get someone else to second your nomination.

We hope you will be able to come; this meeting is open to the whole church, and is a chance to give your views on what is going on in our premises.

COUNTRY DANCING

Jane and I look forward to seeing you at country dancing on Friday 11th March in the Methodist Church Hall at 8.00pm. Partners are not necessary as we all dance with each other. There will be live music and a guest caller. See you there!

Kathryn Coles

BIG ISSUES

On 10th March we welcome Revd Barbara Johnson who will speak on Chaplaincy – Church without walls?

This is our final *Big Issues* of the series, we have discussed issues of faith, world, national, local and individuals' joys or concerns. We thank all our speakers whether, like our attendees, they have come from our villages or further afield. Also, of course, we have shared the fellowship of discussion and enjoyed the refreshments! Sincere thanks to all who contribute in any way.

So to our next series which begins next September. I have already been given some excellent suggestions for topics, but need more, so please give me your thoughts and ideas. All are welcome to the planning meeting which will be held in the summer, probably in June, the exact date will be advised in a summer *Newsletter*.

Helen Allen

QUIZ NIGHT

A date for your diary - we are holding a quiz night on Friday 8th April starting at 7.00 p.m. There can be up to eight people in a team. A selection of cheeses and various accompaniments will be provided in the interval.

The cost will be £8.00 per person.

Tickets are now on sale and will be available at the Church. Please speak to any of the Stewards if you wish to buy tickets or you can telephone us direct. Wendy has kindly agreed to sell them at the Community Café if that is easier for anyone.

We hope it will be an entertaining evening without too many furrowed brows!

Robin and Joy McCombie

DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Results are coming back well from the survey. If you have not filled one in yet the closing date is 20th March. You can find the survey on line, or copies are available in the coffee shop.

The quiz evening had to be postponed and will now take place on Friday 8th April. The yard sale will go ahead on Saturday 7th May, and a new date will be found for the beetle drive.

HOLIDAY CLUB LUNCHES

We have been asked to prepare lunches for the holiday club again this year, which is being held from Monday 25th July to Friday 29th July. If you are willing to help please make a note of the dates, further arrangements will be made nearer the time.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN COTTENHAM...?

For anyone who might be interested in some of the initiatives Simon is involved with at the Cottenham Community Centre Coffee Shop, here is some of what's happening in March

Sun Mar 6th: 6:45 for 7pm, Community Cinema: 'The Martian' ...there is a huge screen, incredible sound, and a bar; each screening includes a short introductory talk and the opportunity to stay on for a conversation about the film, life and faith at the end. (£4 in advance; see www.facebook.com/CottenhamCommunityCinema for more info)

Sat Mar 12th 10:30am, 'Dads Play': a chance for dads/male carers to hang out with their children, drink great coffee and eat bacon sandwiches!

Sun Mar 20th: 3-4:30pm, 'The Roost Easter Special': a great, fun, family event exploring life and faith with arts, craft, videos, music and more...plus the Sunday papers, cake and more great coffee.

Sun 27th 7:30-9:30pm, Arts Night: a small group of musicians, singers, poets, photographers, artists and storytellers exploring life and faith through the arts...

If you want to know more about any of these things or fancy getting involved, please talk to Simon or get in touch via www.revcoffee.net or simon.oliver@cantab.net.

CHURCH COUNCIL

Brief resumé of minutes of meeting held on 2nd February 2016

[If you would like further information, please speak to one of the stewards.]

The Fire Services have agreed that we can use the car park behind the telephone exchange as a fire assembly point. Notices are being prepared.

Two Circuit consultations were held on marriage and relationships and a response will be sent to the Methodist Connexion.

Property: various repairs have been carried out; other matters are still to be dealt with. A new letterbox for the church is now in place near the vestry door. Two more small *Gopak* tables have been purchased. Agreed that the stewards or members of the property committee may spend up to £200 without asking the Church Council.

Development: Discussions with the architect are continuing. A grant of £10,000 has been received, others are being applied for. A survey is being carried out in relation to this

Simon gave a report in which he considered what we might do as a church, particularly in relation to making connections with the community.

Finance: The annual Circuit Assessment was discussed and would be considered further at the next Church Council in June.

Annual donations were agreed: £100 each to:

Methodist Homes; LWPT; Jimmy's Night Shelter; Street Pastors and Camtrust.

Church life: Worship consultation had produced a Lent liturgy. Services agreed for Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. Good Friday service at St Andrew's Histon.

During Lent proceeds from Saturday coffee (50%) and all Sunday coffee to go to *All We Can*.

Need for appropriate songs for small children.

Thanks to Colin and Wendy for all their hard work in Coffee Shop over last four years. Thanks to Kate and Simon for donation to buy four more high chairs.

Coming events: (see diary on page 2)

Next meetings:

General Church Meeting – 1st May, with bring and share lunch and collection of gifts.

Church Council – 28th June