

Wantage & Abingdon Circuit

CHILDREY

GROVE

WANTAGE

SECTOR

NEWS

  
The Methodist Church



June 2020

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Contributions for the **Summer (July/August) Newsletter** should be sent to the editor by email, phone or in writing by **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2020** to [wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com)  
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### **Sunday Services and Church Activities**

All worship services, business meetings and church activities have been suspended for the time being. This means that until we are advised otherwise, there will be no Sunday services in any of the churches in our Circuit.

**Texts for Services for each Sunday are posted on the websites.**

**There is a Circuit Zoom Service at 10:30 each week:**

(for access to these please contact Rev Keith Underhill)

**Keith is posting regular reflections which are on the websites.**

**Grove web site** is found from [www.wantab.org.uk](http://www.wantab.org.uk)

**Wantage web site** [www.wantagemethodist.org.uk](http://www.wantagemethodist.org.uk)

**Circuit web site** [www.wantab.org.uk](http://www.wantab.org.uk)

**Circuit YouTube channel**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBpMj71hDzpMhVj6t\\_ZQt0w](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBpMj71hDzpMhVj6t_ZQt0w)

Each week Wesley's Chapel in London will continue to live-stream worship, adapted for no physical congregation.

Service times: Wednesday 12:45, Thursday 12:45, Sunday 9:45 and 11:00.

All these services will be available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUAUqhmhevz5sqhh72LIMxA>

More information about all of this can be found at  
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/seasons-and-themes/worship-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

## **From the Manse.....**

There have been plenty of comments, jokes and Gifs on social media in recent weeks about how we seem to have lost our sense of routine, and the difficulty we sometimes have in trying to remember what day of the week it is! A much longer version if you like of the confusion that is often found between Christmas and New Year, when we try to remember which days are when.

This time round it has been enforced upon us by a global pandemic rather than a global celebration and consequently for a great number of people that regular pattern of daily life is now missing, it has gone A.W.O.L.

So many of the activities that mapped out our day or week giving us a sense of rhythm have now been abandoned and are no longer there.

What this has done of course is to make us live far more in the present than we have perhaps been used to, thereby helping us to make the most of the moment.

We now recognise that trying to plan for anything in the future, or too far ahead, is so difficult, if not impossible.

I have just been told that a weekend away that was planned and booked last year has now been cancelled and consequently, I have been offered the chance to either rebook or receive a full refund.

I decided straight away that I am going for the full refund, for even if I rebook for a number of months' time, will I still find myself in a similar position later on?

The days in which we now live tell us that to plan for this day, or a week ahead at the most, is about as good as it gets at the moment.

In response to the announcements from the government, the Methodist Connexion is looking at what it will mean for us as a church and how we might cautiously progress in the weeks and months that are to come.

As to when we might be allowed back into our buildings for worship and what restrictions will still be placed upon us, nobody knows at this stage.

In the last book of the Bible, The Revelation of John, we find in Chapter one, verse eight: "I am the Alpha and the Omega", says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Our God who was there before anything came into being, our God who will be there long after all is finished and of course our God who is with us in the present, in the here and now.

I wonder how much time we spend in the past or in the future and because of that, miss out on the present?!

Whilst the events of the past may still have some hold over us or ensnare us, it is the present where we really live.

Whilst the future may entice us to look for that which is to come, luring us into something unseen and yet to be experienced, it is the here and now where we actually exist.

The good news is that we can trust God for the present, for this day, this moment in time, this hour, because of the past and the future.

The knowledge that we can live expectantly in the reality of this day because of the truth of what has been and the hope of what is to come, can often be found running through the psalms.

It is summed up too by Charles Wesley who writes:

“Tis Jesus, the First and the Last,  
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home;  
We'll praise him for all that is past,  
And trust him for all that's to come.

With love and God Bless  
Keith

## **Regular events on Zoom**

Please contact Keith for access to these weekly events.

Sunday     Circuit Service at 10:30

Tuesday    Tea@Three at 15:00

An opportunity to see people for a chat.

## **A prayer for MHA**

God of mercy  
At this time of anxiety and fear  
We thank you for the dedicated work of MHA.  
We pray your blessing on all who wash feet,  
Who bring healing,  
Who sit with the dying,  
Who bring comfort in confusion,  
Who bring peace to the afraid.  
In this we see the love of Jesus  
Who is our strength and hope,  
In whose name we pray.  
Amen

The Revd Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference

## Can You help MHA?

MHA are asking for your support for their staff, residents and their families, during what is a very challenging time.

As a national charity they are committed to enabling older people to live later life well in our care homes, retirement living schemes and our community groups. They have been working tirelessly to adapt their activities to ensure people are given the person-centred care and support they require, no matter what the circumstances.

Amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, the committed workforce have been working tirelessly to support our 6,000 residents. However, they have been doing so without a steady and secure supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) and the majority without testing for the virus, which would help to further protect both them and the residents.

MHA have been petitioning the government since the outset of the pandemic to address these shortfalls and to recognise the vulnerability of those in care homes, alongside those in the NHS. Only now is it starting to be recognised that the care homes are the second front line and need to be properly equipped with all the tools to safely do that job.

Additionally, PPE is needed so families are able to say farewell to their loved ones as they approach the end of their lives, as they are not currently allowed in care homes for the protection of residents, staff and themselves.

As there is still no guarantee in the government's supply chain, MHA have maintained an adequate supply of PPE by purchasing from commercial suppliers but continue to be charged up to five times more per item of personal protective equipment. A face mask that used to cost around 20p is now costing us £1.

You can donate to help MHA purchase the vital PPE that are we needed – face masks, gloves, goggles, aprons and gowns, vital to limit spread of the virus and protect staff, residents and their relatives.

You can sign the on-line petition to ask the Government to ensure adequate and consistent supplies of PPE and timely and ample testing for all residents and staff.

Please encourage friends and family to do the same.

Thank you for your continued support during this time. MHA are committed, now more than ever, to enabling people to live later life well.

Contact MHA through

<https://mha.org.uk/get-involved/>



## Christian Aid

Millions of people have been evacuated from their homes in India and Bangladesh due to Super Cyclone Amphan. But these life-saving efforts are being restricted because of the need to social distance.

Raging winds of up to 120mph and 17 foot high waves have battered and damaged thousands of homes made with mud, tin and thatched roofs.

Please pray with us for our global neighbours who have felt the destruction of Cyclone Amphan. Pray for their protection and safety during these unimaginable circumstances.

Pray for those across India and Bangladesh.

'O afflicted one, storm-tossed, and not comforted,  
Behold, I will set your stones in antimony,  
And your foundations I will lay in sapphires.' (Isaiah 54:11)

God of refuge,  
protect our sisters and brothers in Bangladesh and India,  
tossed far from their homes by Cyclone Amphan.  
Some afraid to evacuate for fear of a pandemic disease,  
surrounded by catastrophe and debris.  
Comfort them as they journey and where they stay.

Your love knows no distance, O God be near your children in peril.

Set them on their way to safety, let them find your help.

Awaken in our hearts a love that reaches out –  
a love that shelters neighbours from the storm,  
a love that lays the foundations for recovery,  
a love that perseveres.

We pray for their protection to you,  
our God who never gives up.

In Jesus name,  
Amen

We want to thank you for your prayers and overwhelming generosity. It is because of your ongoing support that communities are more resilient and we can provide immediate, life-saving help in times of great need.

Christian Aid's Bangladesh Country Director, Pankaj Kumar says: 'We have an increased number of intense storms year on year, and it is the most poor and vulnerable who are being hit the hardest. They are still restoring their homes and livelihoods from previous years... Amphan risks putting them back to square one.'

Our local partners are assessing the needs of people most in danger so that we can give life-saving support. Immediate help is likely to include safe water, hygiene kits, masks and sanitisers – to avoid transmission of coronavirus.

Our partners are on the ground supporting the evacuations to cyclone centres, especially elderly people and people with disabilities. Your support makes this possible.

If you'd like to give to support this work, please consider donating now.

And please, stand in solidarity and pray for our global neighbours impacted by Cyclone Amphan. We're hugely grateful for all you do for the communities we serve.

Thank you,

Nick Georgiadis Director of Fundraising and Supporter Engagement

## **Little People**

*Jacky Mattam*

Many thanks to all those who so generously supplied toiletry items for the JR.

This is an ongoing request. The items are used on the maternity ward for new mothers who have few supplies, but also to put together bags for nursing staff, trying to keep fresh after wearing PPE for long hours.

Toothpaste      Soap      Shower Gel      Face Cloths      Deodorant

Hand cream      Travel tissue      Shampoo

But no Toothbrushes as I have simply loads at the moment.

Keep safe

## **Cornerstone Coffee Shop**

*John Hogston : Board member*

The Cornerstone is now closed and the staff are on furlough. The board are meeting regularly using Microsoft Teams and are working on the future opening. It will be quite difficult to work with 2m spacing guidelines.

## **Wantage & Grove Street Pastors – Quarterly News – April 2020**

How quickly our lives have changed, and in ways that none of us could have imagined only a few weeks ago. On 17 March, our Management Committee met and decided to suspend Street Pastor patrols until further notice, with the aim of protecting our volunteers and helping to prevent the spread of Coronavirus. It seems that, as individuals, families, communities and as a nation, we are in uncharted waters; heading out in to the unknown together. Whenever Street Pastors go on patrol, they go out in to the unknown - and often in to the dark. They have with them a few supplies, mostly to help other people. But they don't go unprepared; with the help of Prayer Support Volunteers, they start in prayer, seeking the Lord's guidance, protection and provision. And they head out, turning to prayer as different situations arise. More now than ever, this should be the daily pattern of our lives: start in prayer - head out in prayer. Maybe even, as it says in 1 Thessalonians Ch 5, "Pray without ceasing"! Like Street Pastors, we are all here to be a blessing, to bring hope - a light in the dark, a listening ear, a friendly face.

### **Ascension Trust**

Ascension Trust (AT) is the governing body for 8 church-led initiatives, the most well-known of which is Street Pastors. Their mission is to empower Christians to work together within their local community to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged and vulnerable people. Other AT ministries are School Pastors, Rail Pastors and most recently, Response Pastors - who are deployed in times of major incidents and crisis such as the Grenfell Tower Fire and terrorist attacks in London. In 2009, Eustace and Sharon Constance came to Wantage to start our training and we were delighted that they were able to return and join in our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in October 2019. We don't like to show off, but we were rather pleased when they presented us with this beautiful plaque recognising our 10-year achievement. The inscription reads: *"Presented to Wantage and Grove Street Pastors in appreciation from Ascension Trust for 10 years of dedication, commitment and loyal service given to the work of Street Pastors"*.

### **How we helped on the Streets**

We met a group of three young men who were supporting a fourth man who had had too much to drink. We gave a bottle of water and stayed with them while they decided what they were going to do with their drunk friend. The drunk man didn't want to go in a taxi and was insistent on walking home. Our team walked with them some of the way until it was clear that they could make good progress on their own.

We met a couple and asked if they were okay as the woman was injured. They said they were fine so we left them but made sure to go back that way soon after. When we went back, the lady confirmed that she was fine and safe. We later saw the couple trying to get a taxi. The man stopped a passing car and got the lady in it and walked off. We spoke to the driver and, realising that he was not a registered taxi, got the lady out and found a genuine taxi for her. It turned out that she knew the driver, which we were all very glad about.

One night we found a lost phone and wallet. The phone rang in our hands and the person on the other end asked, 'who are you?' We explained that we were Street

Pastors and had found the phone and wallet. With the help of the caller we were able to re-unite the phone and wallet with a very grateful young lady.

One of our teams offered help to an older man who was staggering about in town with the aid of a walking stick. Our help was declined, but we ran to his aid after he fell while standing in a doorway - having let go of his walking stick. Thinking that he had probably relieved himself, our team (now wearing gloves) got the man to his feet and bravely assisted with doing his belt up. Unfortunately, it took two more falls and two more attempts at getting the belt buckle in the right hole before the man's trousers were adequately secured and he was able to make his way home in moderate safety.

All in a night's work for our brave Street Pastors! Well done!

**For more information on how we helped, check out our Reports page on our website: [www.wantageandgrove.streetpastors.org.uk](http://www.wantageandgrove.streetpastors.org.uk)**

### **Management Committee Goals**

Each year our Management Committee sets goals to help focus our efforts and to ensure that we continue to serve our community well. Our 2020/21 goals are centred around delivering patrols, finances and relationships.

Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do - we would not exist without all those who so generously give their time to serve. We would love to have more volunteers to build resilience within our teams and to extend how we serve the community. King Alfred's Academy has asked us to be a presence in the town when children and young people finish their day, as some youngsters can be most vulnerable outside of the formal school day. Efforts to start some afternoon patrols have yet to come to fruition - we don't quite have enough volunteers to make it happen. We do need people to join as Street Pastors and Prayer Support Volunteers to maintain our level of service in Wantage and Grove, to improve what we are already doing and to branch out into new opportunities.

Finances are needed to run any charity and we need about £15k per year. The Lord has been faithful in providing what we need and we are very thankful for individuals and churches who regularly contribute. More support in this way would be fantastic as we know that the few grants we receive may not be sustainable in the future.

Our member churches are our core community of support, so we endeavour to hold a *Street Pastor Sunday* in each church this year. By this, Christians in our community can hear first-hand what God is doing in our town and the difference it makes to have people gathering to pray over the area while others are out on patrol. We also plan to hold other events this year, which seek to increase support in prayer, volunteering and finance.

Thank you for the ways that you help us to achieve our goals. We can't do it without you - Thank you!

### **How we helped on the Streets**

Street Pastors patrolled 5 times in January, 5 in February and 4 times in March. Fourteen patrols providing 64 hours of cover. Giving lollies is not only a nice way of saying 'hello' but they also put some sugar back in the blood stream - which helps

reduce aggression and confusion in those that have had a lot to drink. They sometimes come in handy for helping to quieten down noisy individuals! We've not patrolled since the end of March but we hope to get back to the streets as soon as we are able!

	<b>JAN 20</b>	<b>FEB 20</b>	<b>MAR 20</b>
<b>Flip-flops</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Water</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Space Blankets</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Lollies</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>325</b>
<b>Litter</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>64</b>

## Welcome Zack



We are very pleased to welcome Zack Smith, who is training to be a Street Pastor. Zack is a talented young athlete who, following a mission trip to South America, is passionate about helping people with his life. Of course, he'll bring our average age down a bit too! Welcome Zack, it's great to have you!

## £300 Gone!

That got your attention! ...but it's a good news story? The £300 fee for training as a Street Pastor has gone! While we have sufficient funds there is no need to ask Street Pastor recruits to pay anything. So, now is a great time to join and begin your training as a Street Pastor. And, with afternoon patrols on the horizon, there's a patrol to suit everyone. For more information check out our "So, what's involved in being a Street Pastor?" Leaflet, speak to your Church Rep, or contact us using the details below:

## Wantage & Grove Street Pastors

**Website:** [www.wantageandgrove.streetpastors.org.uk](http://www.wantageandgrove.streetpastors.org.uk)

**Email:** [wantageandgrove@streetpastors.org.uk](mailto:wantageandgrove@streetpastors.org.uk)

**Mobile:** 07554 655 594

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/wantageandgrovestreetpastors](https://facebook.com/wantageandgrovestreetpastors)

**Registered Charity:** 1134429

## **Wantage & Grove Food Bank**

*D Townsend - on behalf of FoodBank*

Well it has been an interesting start to 2020!!

We do really appreciate all the support you give to FoodBank and the inhabitants of our town and surrounding villages - whether that is by manning the phone, collecting & sorting food, delivering parcels or praying! I know for some of you it has been a frustrating time as you have had to take a step back in order to look after your own health or the health of others in your household - we would much rather you stay safe and well rather than put yourselves at risk though!

In the midst of all the uncertainty - we can say that God is good and he does provide. We have been inundated with offers of help, of monetary donations, and now there is food on the shelves once more, the supermarket collections are providing a steady stream. We have also been blessed by the generosity of Waitrose & Ray Collins each providing a significant amount of food early on, and in the case of Waitrose putting food aside for us so we could pick up items that were in short supply. I think though even at the height of the food shortages we were still the only place with loads of pasta!! (we still have plenty even now!)

So some figures for you:

This year up to the end of April we have delivered over 200 parcels!!

March 2020 - 59 parcels (95 adults & 105 children) (cf. March 2019 - 31 parcels)

April 2020 - 71 parcels (120 adults & 111 children) (cf. April 2019 - 38 parcels)

Things seem to be calming down to a more manageable level for now - but there is no doubt we will be needed for some time to come. We will try and re-schedule the Volunteers Training Evening for a date in the Autumn - assuming small gatherings will be allowed by then.

So thank you & keep praying - in particular for:

our volunteers who are self-isolating/shielding.

those who have found themselves out of work unexpectedly

the clients with poor mental health

the other agencies we work with e.g. independent advice centre, health visitors etc

and thank God for his provision and protection

## Childrey

### **Prayers:**

Prayers are asked for Amy Rose Legge and her family, Keith & Leonora, David, Barbara, Shirley, Jean and all those unknown to us who are in need of our help.

We also pray for the continued success of the "Open the Book" Project where the teachings and stories of the Bible are taken into the Ridgeway C of E School in Childrey on a weekly assembly basis by a dedicated band of leaders from local churches using our premises as a base.

Christian Love to all.

## Grove

I am sure you are all aware that, due to the Coronavirus outbreak, all our church services and activities have had to be cancelled for the moment.

Keith is doing very well with keeping everyone informed of the situation and in touch with each other.

## Wantage

### **Keeping in Contact**

With the current situation with regard to the Coronavirus we have to cancel future events including the lunches. Up to date information will be posted on the web site.

<https://wantagemethodist.org.uk>

We are looking at various ways of keeping in touch.

There is always our internet website, and our Facebook presence, but it is understood that many of us cannot access the internet easily, if at all.

We shall continue to publish a monthly newsletter and weekly notices and post those on the website. We will also do our best to distribute copies to those who would wish to receive them.

### **Pastoral**

In our May Newsletter we recorded the deaths of **Doug White** and **Pam Rose**, and this was followed by news that **Sheila Penney**, also a resident at the Wantage Nursing Home, had died too. Each announcement was made with sadness, and all will be missed from our Church family. It seemed, as well, that these losses would be intensified because of the restrictions preventing their funerals taking place in the usual manner. **Pam's and Doug's funerals** were indeed different from what they would have been before circumstances prohibited gatherings of more than a very small number of people. However, Pam's funeral on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May, and Doug's two days later, both exceeded the expectation with which these occasions had been anticipated. Keith's wonderful ability to choose words of great reassurance and comfort, the perfect warm May sunshine on both days, the technology which enabled live streaming from the Crematorium, and the tranquil and naturally beautiful setting

on each occasion, all contributed to services which were uplifting, reassuring, and greatly appreciated by everyone who was able to share in them.

Kelvin's tribute to Pam was a most eloquent and moving expression of the loving relationship they shared, as well as an account of Pam's many achievements, her generous and caring nature, and her many years of service to our church and other charities. As Kelvin returned to his seat, Keith expressed the thoughts of everyone listening, by saying that, if it were not for social distancing, he would have given him a hug, and added that Kelvin had "made us smile, made us cry and had summed up so much of Pam's nature, who she was, and always will be to us". In his address Keith spoke of Pam's younger days, including her honour in becoming the country's first female Bank Manager, and endorsing all of Kelvin's comments about the skills and interests which she enjoyed whilst in good health.

The short time allotted for burial in Challow Cemetery, allowed only Keith the opportunity to speak about Doug. However, it enabled him to reflect on the total dedication with which Marjorie and Colin visited and cared for him whilst he was in the Nursing Home, and being with him in his final moments. Since Julia could not fly from Jersey to attend on 20<sup>th</sup> May, Keith was able to speak of the last visit to her father and of her sharing of The Lord's Prayer with Doug, - an occasion which was a comfort and joy for them both. At Julia's request, those present shared in saying the traditional form of The Lord's Prayer together. Initially it had been anticipated that only Marjorie, Colin and Keith could gather at Doug's graveside for his burial. In the event, eight other church members were also able to be there, representing the wider church family and offering them love and support for which Marjorie acknowledged hers and Colin's gratitude (see below).

Whilst we regret being unable to meet together in the ways we have hitherto enjoyed, there remains so much for which we feel blessed. We are thankful for the strength, comfort and reassurance which we receive through God's grace, and the faith which we share through our trust in His promises to us. Our Pastoral system is one of the special features of Methodism, through which, hopefully, everyone feels cared for and prayerfully supported. I also hope that everyone who was unable to read the May Newsletter online, received a paper copy. I will try to ensure that this happens with the June edition, and have a list of over twenty people to whom that applies. If you are aware of any additional people needing a paper copy, please let me know so that they can be added to the list (Ann Barber at 01235 767152).

### **Message from Kelvin:**

Thank you all for your support and prayers during recent times. I have been overwhelmed by all your cards and fond messages. You did Pam proud and I am blessed to be a member of our church.

Pamela came to the end of a long, long fight with dementia and died very peacefully in my company in Wantage Nursing Home. Her spirit is now with God and I pray that mine will join hers when it is my time to "Cross the Bar". I have had twenty wonderful years married to Pamela.

God bless you all, I pray that we can all meet together in Chapel some day soon.

## Message from Marjorie White:

Thank you for your fellowship, flowers and prayers over the years. We would like to thank Keith for his visits to Doug which continued through home, hospital and nursing home. Although Doug was unable to speak he always responded in some way. Thank you to those members of the church who were able to support Marjorie, Colin and Keith at the graveside service, at a physical distance and for those who prayed at home. Julia, Callum and Cameron in Jersey (Doug's daughter and family) would like to especially thank Keith for pre-recording his words and sending them. They had their own service simultaneously, at home, and sang the three hymns which would have been used had the situation permitted. Thank you to everybody who sent cards and for their phone calls. These and the lovely words of Keith, are such a comfort at this time.

## Praying for each other:

In June the people listed below will be included in the prayer time in which the members of Eileen Rennie's House-group 'meet' to pray in their individual homes: **on June Grunwald's Pastoral List:** Nicky Atkinson, Stella Belcher, Graham Godfrey, Eileen Rennie, Agripinia Kilpatrick, Roy Scholes, Jim Hughes and Sonia Wilkie, and on **Rita Lawrence's Pastoral List:** Kay Goodwin, Pam & John Leake, Carole & Keith Robbins, and Meriel Robson.

In addition to the names listed above, those in our church family, who through frailty or ill health would be unable to worship in church on Sundays, will also be prayed for by name during Eileen's house-group's time of collective praying in their own homes.

## Prayer list

*Eileen Rennie*

Loving God, we praise you and give you thanks for all the wonderful things you have already done for each one of us. We thank you that you have the power to completely change our lives. Help us to hold firmly to the saving grace of your word. Please calm our anxious hearts with the knowledge that you are with us, through your Holy Spirit guiding us each day. Please help us trust you in all circumstances. We acknowledge that your goodness is in control. Lord, you know what lies ahead. Help us to put the future into your hands and trust you completely. Help us to pray according to your will in the knowledge that you hear and answer prayer. Amen

Please pray for

Jean M, Bethan Grant, Jane, Alan Bunn and family, Carl, Carol Mackinder, Anne, Emma Wright and family, Alex and Brian, Gordon & Marina, Betty, Sheila Hall, Caroline, Adrian, John Morton, Jenny, Deacon Tracey Hume.

All at Bullingdon Prison, staff, prisoners and visitors, YMOSES, kids@church and Street Pastors and those members of our church family who, through frailty or ill health, can no longer worship with us.

If you or the person/people you have put on the prayer list would still like to be in the Summer newsletter, please let Eileen know by **27<sup>th</sup> June** in order for her to meet the newsletter deadline. Telephone: 01235 224284, email: m.rennie50@ntlworld.com

### **Tuesday Afternoon House Group**

*Eileen Rennie*

The weeks during lockdown have meant we have not been able to meet on Tuesdays and at the time of writing it is still not possible to predict when that is likely to happen. We are missing meeting together but we have been keeping in touch by email and telephone. I email the group each Monday with details for our prayer time and each Tuesday although apart we have united in prayer at 3:00 pm. It has also been good to see some of the group on the Zoom services we have already had and now the added opportunity to see friends on “**Tea@Three**”. People have really appreciated these times as well as all the material on the Church website and on [youtubewantageandabingdonmethodistcircuit](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wantageandabingdonmethodistcircuit).

We do all look forward to the time when we can all meet together again.

If you have any queries you can contact me (Eileen Rennie) by telephone on 01235 224284 or email: m.rennie50@ntlworld.com

### **Community Drop In Café**

*Eileen Rennie*

Regretfully another month has passed and due to the current Coronavirus situation we are still unable to open the Cafe and to date have no idea when that is likely to be. We know from messages and phone calls we have had that many people are missing the joy of their Monday morning weekly visits. We continue to look forward in faith to when we are able to meet again. Meanwhile be assured that you are being held in prayer. When we are able to meet again the donations will be going to Clean Slate, a low cost, long term listening and support service for all victims of abuse and mental illness. Our sincere thanks to our 22 willing volunteers who have served us so well. When normal service is resumed we look forward to welcoming you. For further information contact either Eileen Rennie or June Grunwald.

### **Knit & Chat**

*Carolyn Roche, 01235 764310*

So here we go for another month of remote Knit & Chat. It has been lovely to see yet more photographs on the Facebook page and June has put some of them on the church website. The angels look so pretty in their varied patterns and colours. It is also lovely to hear about other things that the group are making. As I wrote in May, if anyone is short of anything then please let me know as I am sure that one of us will be able to help. Let's continue to keep in touch through phone, text, email and Facebook and look forward to the time when we can all meet together again to Knit & Chat.

## Wednesday Fellowship

*Diane Barton*

I can't tell you how much I am missing all my lovely Fellowship friends, Wednesdays don't seem the same whilst we are far apart. I know you will be missing our meetings too because you have told me so. I fear it will be some time yet before we can get together again, but when we do Mary and I will be ready and waiting to welcome you all back.

Meanwhile I thought you might like to see this poem about the blackbird by Patience Strong.

### **SOLO** by Patience Strong

Alone upon the leafless bough a blackbird  
sang a song. The sky was grey and wintry  
but his note was sweet and strong.  
No company, encouragement or coaxing  
did he need – no cue, no audience to  
applaud, no prompting and no lead.

Alone he sang for pure delight and as I  
listened there – there came the thought  
that Love too sings where all is bleak and  
bare – its nature to express in face of malice  
and mistrust. Love, unprompted, gives itself  
and sings because it must ... meeting the  
unspoken need with charity and grace –  
like the bird that sings impromptu in a  
lonely place.

### **ZOOM Meeting for all interested in Worship and Mission & Service**

We are preparing a joint meeting for **Worship Consultation and Movers & Shakers** on **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June at 3:00 pm**. If you wish to be part of this meeting, please contact Keith who will manage the access details..

Topics will include:

Thoughts re Harvest

Christmas Tree Festival

Where from here for Wantage 2020 celebrations

Bible Month / Bible Study

Holy Habits

Caring and social ideas

Sunday Morning Worship possibilities as we emerge from lock down.

We suspect there will be other topics.....