

Wantage & Abingdon Circuit

CHILDREY, GROVE & WANTAGE SECTOR

CGW NEWS


The Methodist Church



Harvest

2021

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keith.underhill@methodist.org.uk

Should you need a Minister when Keith is not available, please talk to one of the
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Contributions for the **next Newsletter** should be sent to the editor by email, phone
or in writing by **Sunday 3rd October** to
wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com
Tel : 01235 766655 / 07710 214601
Editors : Gill & Gordon Skidmore

Sunday Services and Church Activities

Please see page 20 for the arrangements this month.

Wantage Morning Worship will be shared each week on Zoom at 10:30
(for access to this please contact Rev Keith Underhill)

Texts for Services at home for each Sunday are posted on the websites.

Grove web site is found from www.wantab.org.uk

Wantage web site www.wantagemethodist.org.uk

Circuit web site www.wantab.org.uk

Circuit YouTube channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBpMj71hDzpMhVj6t_ZQt0w

CGW News Publication deadline dates

Autumn	Sunday 3 rd October
November	Sunday 31 st October
Dec/Jan	Sunday 28 th November

From the Manse.....

This has been the first full year on our allotment and it has to be said that it's been an interesting one to say the least. Whilst our shallots, beetroot, sweetcorn and courgettes have done well, other crops have suffered in one way or another and have struggled. A combination of blight, slugs, deer and critters that have nibbled their way through some of our produce along with poor weather have all contributed in one way or another to the difficulties.

There have been some very disheartened folk looking after their plots. For us, it may be disappointing, it may feel a waste of time, hard work and effort, it might make you ask why bother - but we are fortunate that it is never a matter of life and death.

If our tomatoes are blighted, we can go to the supermarket. If the deer have eaten the runner bean shoots, we can go to the market stall. If our courgettes have been attacked by vermin, we can go to the greengrocers.

Not so for so many of the world's poorest farmers and those who work their small patch of land. If the rains do not come, if there is disease, if the crops fail, then there is no fall back and the fragility of life is real and the young and vulnerable face starvation.

This time of year reminds us that harvest has and always will be about giving thanks for what we have and not taking it for granted; no doubt the change in global weather patterns will throw that into even sharper focus in the years that are to come.

Harvest is also and more importantly about sharing what we have with those who have so little and intentionally working towards a fairer and more just world.

Each year, All We Can remind us of the two sides of the harvest coin - giving thanks and social action to bring about change and transformation. This Judaeo-Christian imperative is clearly spelt out in the book of Leviticus (23:22) "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and for the alien: I am the Lord your God"

The work of All We Can enables real change and transformation to take place in the lives of individuals and their communities even in the most trying and desperate of circumstances. Difficulties have been exacerbated and compounded by the impact of Covid and the recent Government cuts to the overseas aid budget - yet their work continues and is able to bring hope and life to so many.

Thank you for your support and generosity to All We Can and other relief agencies, not only this Harvest time, but throughout the year.

With love and God Bless

Keith

Circuit News

Looking to the future.

As a Circuit and as churches in Wantage, Grove and Childrey, we are seeking to discern our priorities for the coming months and years as we look to the future.

As part of that process we are encouraging everyone to hold this process before God in their daily prayers.

Please do share your own thoughts and feelings, hopes and concerns with us as we continue to travel as pilgrims and disciples together.

The prayer below has been specifically written for that purpose and we hope that you will find it useful.

*Eternal God, creator of time and space, of years and seasons,
grant us your help we pray
as we hold before you our churches and Circuit at this time.*

*We give thanks for your faithfulness to us
and for the ways in which you have guided us in the past.
As we look to the future
we acknowledge that you are the God of new beginnings
and fresh possibilities.*

*May we be bold and courageous
as we seek to discern your will and purpose for us.*

*We thank you for the opportunities that lie ahead
and for your continued guidance.
Show us that which we need to lay down
as well as what to pick up - where to channel our energies
and resources even as we value and treasure
our past and our heritage.*

*Speak to us through the prophets of this age
who are doing your will working in our communities
as well as in our churches.*

*We pray for those who lead us as a Circuit and in our Churches,
grant them your wisdom, guidance, compassion,
openness and sensitivity.*

*We pray also for ourselves,
that we might be the people you call us to be in these times
and that we would be open and receptive
to the movement of your spirit.*

*We ask these and all our prayers
in and through the name of Jesus Christ,
our Lord, Saviour and friend.*

Amen.

**'Touch the Earth Lightly' Circuit flower
festival and eco event**
Milton Methodist Church
Saturday and Sunday 2nd, 3rd October 2021



The event aims to make people more aware of the influences they have on climate change, and what they can do to reduce their carbon footprint.

Programme:

Saturday 2nd October

10 - 4.00 **Flower Festival** open with vegetarian refreshments on sale, swap shop, bring your unwanted things (no rubbish please!) and take away useful things, taste samples, craft exhibition, learn about electric cars and bikes.

12.00 **Ready, Steady, Cook:** Cookery competition to prepare a tasty vegetarian meal from surplus garden produce.

4.00 **Free film show of 'Thank you for the Rain'**, a film promoted by Christian Aid with a good story exploring the effect of Climate change on a community, presented as a documentary about a farmer in Kenya. (85 minutes, Ice cream in the Interval)

Sunday 3rd October

2.00 - 3.00 **Flower festival**, swap shop and eco book sales open

3.00 **Touch the Earth Lightly Circuit service**,
led by Rev Jocelyn Bennett, preacher Martin Hodson

4.00 **Circuit tea** (outside hopefully)

All events are risk assessed and covid safe as far as we can make possible.

Further details: Jo Lakeland (jolakeland@blewbury.uk) or Mary Hancock
(imhancock@gmail.com)

If you have **craft** things made in lockdown that you would like to put in our exhibition, please contact Chris East (christine.east@outlook.com)



TODDLER GROUP LEADER VACANCY

Trinity Church is looking for a friendly person who is sympathetic to Christian values, with experience in Early Years settings, and who enjoys working with very young children and carers. You will lead our small team of volunteers, maintaining a safe and happy environment. We have excellent equipment and facilities in our updated, spacious Centre. You will be responsible for one session a week; Thursdays AM

This is a fixed-term appointment, starting in September 2021 (or as soon as possible thereafter) Funding for this project ends in July 2024.

Salary: £10 per hour, 4 hours per week (to include all admin.), term-time only (35.5 weeks pa)

The post is subject to a successful Enhanced DBS disclosure, and completion of safeguarding training.

The nature of this role requires moving play equipment and some furniture.

Further details (A4 SAE essential) from: Trinity Church Office, Conduit Centre, Conduit Road, Abingdon OX14 1DB; or by email: trinity.abingdon@gmail.com

Apply by application form with covering letter (max. 4 sides of A4, please)

Closing date: 30th September 2021



Pilgrim Homes Sponsored Walk 2021

A sponsored walk in aid of Pilgrim Homes will be held on Saturday 25th September. (Framlands in Naldertown is our local Pilgrim Home where a few of our church family currently live.) The walk starts at Christopher Wood, Ardington at 10:30 am and is a circular walk of 5.5 miles. If you would like further information or a sponsor form please contact June Grunwald (jnurdglaw@live.co.uk) who has been on this walk a few times or contact the organiser Dave Pepler (dave.a.pepler@gmail.com). Unfortunately June is unable to walk this year.



Sponsored Walk in aid of Pilgrim Homes

Meeting at 10:30am
Saturday 25th September 2021
Christopher's Wood, Ardington,
Nr Wantage. OX12 8PD



Park in Christopher's Wood Car Park
Ardington, Nr Wantage

OS Grid Ref
SU 42440 88036

OX12 8PD (nearby)

Approximately 5½ mile circular walk from Christopher's Wood Car Park to West Hendred & the Ginges

Sponsorship forms available from Dave Pepler via email - dave.a.pepler@gmail.com

Please note:- Good walking shoes or boots are strongly recommended as the route is of mixed terrain.

Dogs to be kept on a lead and children under the age of 10 must be accompanied by an adult.

Pilgrim Homes
175 Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 2JL
Tel: 0300 303 1400 Fax: 0300 303 1415 Email: info@pilgrimsfriend.org.uk
www.pilgrimsfriends.org.uk

Pilgrim Homes is a registered charity (formerly known as 'The Aged Pilgrims' Society') and registered social landlord. Charity No. 242266. RSL No. A0822



All proceeds go towards the support of the Framland Pilgrim Home
Pilgrims' Friend Society Registered Charity Number 242266





THANK YOU We are very grateful to all who are supporting us in what is for everyone a very difficult time. Like most Charities we have had a serious drop in our income. As churches families and individuals try to adapt, we know many are wondering about their own financial future but can you help us help the most desperate?

Back to Normal? Ever so slowly and carefully things are getting back to something like 'normal'. For us this has meant more applications from the likes of Red Cross whose destitution and day centres for the homeless are now receiving clients again as the hotel accommodation used during Covid is withdrawn. Also busier are the refugee organisations as the eviction recommences of those where an application to stay in the UK has been refused. After a refusal individuals and families who have been surviving on £39 per person per week have just 28 days to quit the housing, or file a new claim on what are often very complex cases.

On a more positive note, we are hoping that now we are able to meet in person every one will be able to spread the word of what we do. At Wantage in the chapel vestibule you will find complete copies of this September Newsletter.

How we Helped:

Project Future is a holistic mental health and well-being service supporting young people who experience significant and multiple challenges. These include homelessness, poverty, experiences of the criminal justice system and high socio-economic inequality and structural disadvantage.

"The Fund for Human Need has assisted a number of people experiencing poverty and immense hardship from our organisation with emergency grants. These include assistance for homeless parents to purchase nappies, clothes and other necessities for their children; financial support towards the cost of educational courses or course materials; and emergency funding for groceries. The speed at which the Fund for Human Need has been able to respond has been tremendously helpful.

Grants such as these are often critical in supporting people to move forward with their lives with dignity and autonomy. FHN grant recipients have been able to, for example: complete and pass education courses, obtain housing; gain full-time employment in careers and industries of their choosing; provide for and support their children's well-being through lockdown and the pandemic; and move in the direction of developing greater financial and other stability in their lives and for their families.

As well as assisting financially, FHN grants are also important in the meaning they convey. Knowing that people and communities care about us and the things we experience means a great to us all and has been invaluable during homelessness and financial crises during lockdown. Thank you all for your donations and to the Fund for Human Need for responding so quickly and sensitively to the emergencies our young people experience".

From Project Future, a young person's mental health and wellbeing service.

Running the Fund for Human Need

In the last Newsletter, you heard from our Chair, Revd Roger Cresswell. For this issue, I have been invited to share who it is that I am as Secretary and what it is that I do. I am David Palmer and like Roger I am a Supernumerary Methodist Minister, but unlike him I became a Trustee only at the 2015 Annual General Meeting at which time I was appointed also as Secretary.

It was a job I was very willing to do and I 'joined up' without hesitation.



I may have been persuaded by an extremely difficult moment early in my ministry. I hesitate to tell you, but on balance I think I have to. The youngest daughter of our family had died and days after the funeral we were faced with an undertaker's bill which, though it was kept to a minimum by the undertaker, was still too much for us to pay. I phoned the Methodist Church's Finance Department to attempt to withdraw funds from a car account that all ministers personally had then. I was asked if I was buying a car... I told the young lady our circumstances and she asked me to hold the line while she talked with her boss. He came to the phone himself and told me that a cheque would be on our mat the next morning.

I am choking up even as I recall the feeling of relief.

Today, I am happy to be involved with FHN and to know that what we are doing brings the same kind of relief to others. It is 'need' we address more than we do 'poverty'. The two are different and demand different solutions.

As Secretary, I oil the wheels of our organisation, preparing the agendas (along with the chair) for our Trustees Meetings, sending out calling notices, playing my part in the meetings and preparing and sending out minutes as quickly as possible after the meetings as accurate records of the reports received and our decisions. When it comes to our AGM this coming November we will once again (Alleluia!) meet together at Methodist Church House in Marylebone Road, London. I've already arranged the venue, also the simple lunch. Invitations are yet to go out to guests and District 'Friends of FHN'.

As a charity, we have legal, moral and ethical responsibilities. The Chair, the Treasurer and myself are the principal officers who address these things in collaboration. All the trustees just now have policies to review. And, given a successful application four years ago, to Methodist Action on Poverty and Justice, for support with our administration costs, we now have responsibilities for an employed worker for the first time in FHN's history. And it's Gill who has got me writing this!

She and I work together - seeking further grants, also on promotional matters. We've exhibited at many functions, including Greenbelt and the Christian Resources Exhibitions. We would have covered more, but for covid19. Advertising is pretty much my responsibility, in the Methodist Diary, the Conference Agenda (shown aside) and the Minutes of Conference. Making FHN known, and telling people about the relief it really gives to people in need, is the responsibility of us all.

Little People

Jacky Mattam has written to let us know that “Little People” is closing down. She writes:

“Over the years you have so kindly and generously donated to the Little People cause, to the huge benefit to local people in need.

Now we feel the need to call a halt to our work, after what must be more than ten hectic years.

Please be assured that anything recently donated will be used as originally intended.”

Little People was created over twenty years ago by two ladies from St John Vianney Church, Jacky Mattam and Tessa Heron. Jacky and Tessa recognised the needs of financially disadvantaged families for common items which other people no longer needed, such as children’s clothes, white goods, cots and beds, indeed anything that a family might need. They gradually set up a network of supporters to whom they would advertise needs of people known to Jacky and Tessa, and would collect donations of goods and deliver them to the family in need. At Christmas they ensured that disadvantaged families would receive gifts of toys and Christmas goodies so that the family would have a happier Christmas.

Their network was very informal and they did virtually all the work, for example loading an unwanted double bed into a car and delivering it to the family. Their original intention had been to just operate in Wantage but over the years, as their “clients” moved to nearby villages they extended their range.

In recent years Wantage & Grove Methodist Church members have often helped by providing goods and our Church has made frequent financial donations.

Jacky has written: “The Methodist Church has been such a huge support that I wanted you to be among the first to know. God bless all those 'oh so generous' Methodists”. Our thanks go out to Jacky and Tessa and their close supporters for all that they have done over the years to help those in need.

Wantage Christian Fellowship

Sadly we have learned that Wantage Christian Fellowship has ceased to meet. We give thanks for their witness to the Gospel in this community over the past years.

Childrey

For the foreseeable future Childrey will be open for Worship on the 2nd and 4th Sundays in the month.

This year's **Harvest Festival** service will be held at **St. Mary's Church** on **Sunday 19th September** at **10:00 am**. Everyone is very welcome.

Sunday 26th September: 11:00 am led by Helen Carter

Sunday 10th October: 11:00 am led by Ian Sturt

Prayers:

We remember in our prayers:

Pat Legge, Vicky, Robin and Becky and the Legge family grandchildren.

Keith, Leonora, Andrea, David, Joy Gee, Jean

and all those unknown to us who are in need of our help.

Christian Love to all.

Sharon Tedford in Concert

7:30 pm Friday 15th October at Wantage Baptist Church

We are delighted to welcome Sharon Tedford back to Wantage this October

Free entry with an opportunity to give to Wantage & Grove Street Pastors

Advance booking is essential - call: 07554 655 594

or email: wantageandgrove@streetpastors.org.uk

Grove

Sunday worship in church is open for all at 10:45 am and you are invited to come and share in it. The seating is well spaced, the windows are open, we sanitize hands and wear face masks in church and do appreciate being able to sing, even though it is behind face masks still.

Harvest weekend, Saturday, 2nd and Sunday, 3rd October.

We will be open for coffee/tea and cake from 10 am till 11:15 am on **Saturday, 2nd October**, and will also be making the church look festive with flowers. If you would like to bring along a vase of flowers to go on a window sill please do so. However, you will need to take it away again after the service on Sunday as there will be no auction or distribution of flowers this year.

Donations made at the Coffee morning are for "All we can" - previously the Methodist Relief and Development Fund.

Gifts for the Harvest (which can be brought on Saturday or Sunday) will be given to the Wantage & Grove Food Bank, so please can your contributions be in tins or packets. Sorry - no fresh fruit or vegetables as it isn't possible to make use of these.

Below is a list of items which the Food Bank can make use of:

Soup (packets or tins); tins of tomatoes, baked beans, spaghetti, vegetables, potatoes, fruit, rice pudding, custard; tins of meat and fish; jars of pasta sauce; packets of rice and pasta; jars of jam; breakfast cereals; teabags; jars of coffee; hot chocolate (not needing milk to mix); sugar (small packets); packets of biscuits, sweets and treats; cartons of UHT milk and large cartons of long life fruit juice.

Please check that all items have one or more months' date ahead and no extra large packs please.

Our **Harvest Service will be held on Sunday 3rd October** and will be led by Keith.

This year, we will be supporting the work of All We Can and their campaign for 2021 "The Next Steps" which focus on their work in Nkayi - a dry and arid region of Zimbabwe.

Gift aid envelopes will be available in church for your use.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Emmaus Coffee morning on 14th August. A total of £295 was raised.

Also **thank you** to everyone who came along or donated for the Project Ecuador coffee morning in church on Saturday, 4th September. Again a very good response. A total of £204.25 is being sent to help in the work of the charity.

Coffee mornings: offers of help either on the day or by making cakes are very much appreciated. Please talk to whoever is hosting if you are willing to help.

Fresh flowers in church: It would be lovely to see fresh flowers in church on Sundays again. If you are willing to take a turn providing some please sign up on the list on the table in the entrance beside a date you can manage. The flowers can be brought on Sunday morning before the service and then you will need to take them away afterwards. Thank you.
Jenny Marriott (01235 767624)

Book Box: Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Book Box over time, keeping it topped up and borrowing. We are emptying the box at the moment **so no more books please.**

Wednesday Zoom Coffee mornings continue each week and are open to all. If you would like to join us on Wednesday mornings (usually 10:30 am) please let Keith know. You will then receive a weekly invitation by email and can join in as and when you are able to.

We continue to **hold in our prayers** all those who are in poor health or have other difficulties and problems compounded by the very different time we have been living through. We are thankful that it is now possible to meet up with our families and friends again and trust that, with care, the way forward will open up gradually for everyone.

THE BEST
OF ALL IS
GOD
IS WITH US.

Thanks from Noreen & Peter Hemmings

Thank you so much for all your cards, flowers and good wishes for our Diamond Wedding Anniversary. We had a great time with family and friends and feel very blessed to have had such a long and happy marriage. Our thanks also to Helen for such a lovely service on Sunday morning and to Julie and her helpers for preparing such a wonderful meal. Thank you also for your generous gifts which have enabled us to send over £300 to Medicins Sans Frontieres.

Wantage

Harvest Festival

This year we are happy to say that we shall be able to hold out Harvest Festival in the Chapel on **Sunday September 26th**, and, as is our practice, we will be supporting the life-changing work of All We Can.

Their theme for this year's campaign is "Next Steps", focussing on the Nkayi district of Zimbabwe, and during the service, we will hear stories of the community from Nkayi district in Zimbabwe, where All We Can's local partner HEFO (Health Education Food Organisation) is working.

The southern part of Nkayi faces harsh climatic conditions stemming from the climate crisis which means that hunger and food shortages are widespread and households endure tough financial situations. Dry lands and limited access to water have a big impact on the lives of the community. Distances from 2 km to 10 km are walked to get to water supplies. The land has suffered from poor farming practices but HEFO, know that the words of Isaiah 61:11 are true: 'For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.' In addition, women are particularly disadvantaged in terms of rights to land, property and decision making.

HEFO help communities like those in Nkayi by teaching climate-resilient sustainable farming practices, and increasing access to clean and safe water as well as livestock production. In a region where lengthy dry spells can make them susceptible to droughts, accessing clean water is vital for the health of the community, their livelihoods, and the animals they are rearing.

The impact of Covid-19 on the community has made it difficult for farmers to travel and sell produce; community development projects have faced interruptions and delays.

It will be lovely to celebrate God's bountiful goodness to us as a church family once more and to be able to share these gifts with others more fortunate than ourselves. Gifts of groceries for the food bank, long life milk, juice etc. or money for All We Can, would be much appreciated.

As is our custom we will be decorating the chapel on Saturday morning **25th September** from 10:30 am. You are welcome to bring your gifts then, or to the service on Sunday in which case please put them on the table provided before you sit down.

Decorations for the chapel this year will be limited to small **flower arrangements only** and, as distributing fresh produce remains a problem owing to Covid restrictions, we would have to **say no** to the lovely fruit and vegetables that have filled our church in the past.

The flower arrangements may be taken home after the service, which you might like to keep or give to someone who has not been able to get to church.

There are special harvest envelopes for All We Can in church, and the treasurer asks that you make any cheques or card donations using these free post envelopes so the money goes directly to the charity. If it is not possible to do this, cash donations can be collected and forwarded as a church cheque.

These envelopes can also be delivered to you - just *let Keith or one of the stewards know and they will ensure that you receive one.*

Morning Worship

Morning Worship is in the chapel and on Zoom. Services commence at 10:30 am. For the time being we will continue to have cautious Covid-19 disciplines to help keep everyone safe.

Pastoral

Ann Barber

The special birthday of our longest serving church member took place on the first Sunday of this month. It was therefore possible for the congregation to sing a greeting to Graham Godfrey on the day he became 99 years old. We offer Graham our warmest congratulations, and love the fact that he's back worshipping in Church again after more than a year on Zoom, and wish him well as he begins his 100th year.

We continue to hold Gill Morton and her family in our prayers as John remains in hospital still needing intensive care and treatment. It is encouraging to learn that some very small improvements have been achieved, and we pray for God's continuing love to support all of the family in their anxiety surrounding John's fragile state of health.

We were pleased to learn that Celia Roser has been able to return to Fleur de Lis, and our prayers remain for her recovery, which hopefully will progress now that she is back in her home surroundings.

Earlier this year Peter and Diane Preston moved to live in a bungalow in Grove. They have now transferred their membership from us to Grove Methodist Church. Our thanks go to Peter for all of his service in practical ways related to the upkeep of our buildings. We hope that the forthcoming operation on his back will be successful in reducing the pain and increasing his mobility, and that both he and Diane will settle happily into the fellowship of their new church.

Flowers in Church: ideas of ways in which to provide flowers for Sunday morning services, which were suggested in earlier newsletters, haven't generated a lot of support. This is understandable as circumstances dictated by Covid restrict access to Church, particularly for non keyholders. We will continue to try to supply a modest floral decoration each week, but if anyone would like to offer a pot plant which could, if necessary, be collected from them and placed in church, please let me know.

Praying for each other: In our first Newsletter for September, everyone on Celia's Pastoral List was named for inclusion in the prayer time at Eileen's Bible Study group. A second September Newsletter provides an opportunity for this additional prayer focus to be on all of the office bearers within our church family. We thank God for the responsibilities they undertake, and the care with which they complete their tasks. We

acknowledge the work of our Church Stewards, Treasurer, Pastoral Visitors, the Leaders and staff of Junior Church, YMOSES and Kids@Church, our Church Council Secretary and members, Property managers, the Chairs and Secretaries of Committees, leaders of weekday groups, and, of course, Keith as our Minister, and we pray for God's guidance and vision for our future to continue as another year of service begins.

Prayer list

Eileen Rennie

Loving God, in this Autumn Season we come with thankful hearts full of praise for your wonderful world. We thank you for the knowledge and skills you have given to all in our farming community to enable them to produce not only a Harvest to rejoice in, but food and resources to feed and share with all. As we rejoice, call us to remember those in other countries with less abundant harvests and help us to give as best we can to enable them to be fed. Lord, you have shown us abundant love. Help us now to share that love freely with all our brothers and sisters in Christ. Amen.

Please pray for:

Bethan Grant, Jane, Alan Bunn and family, Carol Mackinder, Emma Wright and family, Anne, Betty, Alex and Brian, June Coppock, Alastair Wright and family, Caroline, John Morton, Anne Hatto, All at Bullingdon Prison, staff, prisoners and visitors, our Ministers, Deacon, Local Preachers and Worship Leaders, YMOSES, kids@church and Street Pastors. 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 Autumn Newsletter, please let me know by **Friday 1st October** in order for me to meet the newsletter deadline.

Telephone: 01235 224284, email: eileenrennie@icloud.com

YMOSES (Youth Meeting On Sunday Evenings)- It was great to get together in July and September for a walk, some games, and discussion. We plan to meet on **October 10th** in the evening, and if you are at secondary school and would like to come along to this informal faith-based discussion group, you would be more than welcome! For more information please give me (Jane Kent) a ring on (01235) 765421.

Community Drop In Café

June Grunwald

With more people continuing to receive their doses of the vaccine and without the expected high spike in Covid cases in the summer holidays, we are pleased to announce that **Community Café will resume in October. Every Monday from 4th October, 9 am to 12 noon.**

Eileen will be contacting the volunteers who helped at the café in the past to see if they are still willing to restart in October. If it feels too soon for you, just let Eileen know and we thank you for your past support. If you haven't volunteered and would like to know more, then please have a word with June or Eileen. The main roles are in the

kitchen (preparing drinks, slicing cake, washing up.) In the hall (helping to set up, ferrying refreshments from the hatch and chatting with people).

For further information about the café, please contact either Eileen Rennie or June Grunwald.

Tuesday Afternoon House Group

Eileen Rennie

In September we have been meeting in the Church at 2 pm each Tuesday. We are studying the York Course Superstar. The new arrangement of different people leading the study each week is working well and bringing a fresh perspective to our meeting. Prayer is an important part of our meeting and we spend time each week praying for people and situations near and far. We still continue to socially distance, wear masks and ventilate the space when we meet. Safety for all is a priority.

It was good in September to welcome back some people we had not seen for some time. Please be assured, if you are not able to meet back with us yet, that you are remembered each week in prayer.

Dates for the next few weeks are as follows:

21 st September	Superstar Session 3 - The Psalms. Reading Psalm 27:1
28 th September	Keith will inspire us with his message.
5 th October	Superstar Session 4 - The Church. Reading 1 Peter 2:9-10
12 th October	Superstar Session 5 - Cross Purposes. Reading John 12:27-36

If you have someone or some situation you would like prayer for please let me know. We do all look forward to the time when we will all be meeting together again. In the meantime pleased be assured that you are all held in prayer.

If you have any queries you can contact me (Eileen Rennie) by telephone on 01235 224284 or e-mail: eileenrennie@icloud.com



Knit & Chat

Carolyn Roche, 01235 764310

Here we are, well into Autumn, but still plenty of time to knit a few more angels. I know that at present we have about 600. I shall start thinking about ordering labels when we get to November. It is lovely to see the styles and designs of the different knitters. I am alternating knitting an angel with working on a Christmas jumper. The latter is not going well so far due to problems with the tension! If the Community Café begins in October, then we shall start to meet in the Chapel. Please keep a look out for information on this in the weekly notices.

Remember that you can join our Knit & Chat Facebook group. Please let June G know if you wish to do so.

If you need wool, have any other queries or just fancy a chat do please call me. Look forward to seeing you **4th October** and **18th October** at **2 pm**.

The weather was set fair on Saturday September 11th which was the date for this year's annual Ride and Stride for the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust. Clive and Alison Phillips had dusted down their bikes, Gill Skidmore and Alison Brown were proposing to walk, and all of us were happy in the knowledge that Wantage Methodist church would not only be open but there would be people to welcome visitors throughout the day. A big thank you to the welcome team!

Gill & Alison's tale:

This year we decided to stride rather than ride because we wanted to test whether we could walk the distance before signing up for a marathon-length charity challenge in February. We shall be boring you with that later! Nearly 19 miles later and still feeling quite sprightly, we are convinced that we will be able to complete the full 26 next year.

Setting off from Grove at 10 am, we visited the Methodist Church and St John's, then headed out into the Vale, visiting the churches in East and West Challow and Childrey on the way to Sparsholt and Kingston Lisle. We had persuaded ourselves that we would need plenty of "fuel" on board to stay the distance – our excuse for indulging in a shared baked Camembert with toasted ciabatta, followed by delicious brownies and ice cream and lots of tea and coffee at the Blowing Stone Inn at Kingston Lisle! We would recommend them anytime for their friendly welcome and excellent food.

Suitably replete, we walked a few yards along the road to the church – where we were pressed to have more cake! They were justifiably very proud of their recently refurbished church and we were treated to a detailed tour by the Church Warden who had been responsible for it.

We then climbed Blowing Stone Hill (according to cycling websites, a 1 in 5 hill at its steepest) up onto the Ridgeway, where we enjoyed wonderful panoramic views as we made our way to Gramps Hill for the descent to the churches in the Letcombes. From there it was a relatively short leg back to Wantage to visit the final five churches. Because we wanted the mileage we finished by walking back to our starting point in Grove. We visited 15 churches in all.

As Alison P has already said, the weather was perfect for the event, we discovered good footpaths with lovely views keeping us off the roads, we met friends along the way, and we can honestly say that we enjoyed every minute of it. Is it fair to accept sponsorship if one hasn't suffered to earn it??!

Alison & Clive's tale:

Cycling round the village churches in The Vale of the White Horse is a delight at this time of year. The countryside is looking particularly beautiful with golden fields, harvested but not yet ploughed, trees beginning to wonder if it is time to get their autumn colours on and pretty villages full of late summer flowers. Life has definitely got going since this time last year as there were posters of village events, football practice and people enjoying sitting over cups of tea in each other's company once more. I think there is so much catching up going on that not all churches were open to sign our forms, but where there were no people there were often refreshments left out, or in one case a welcoming bench where we could sit and enjoy the view while

we ate our sandwiches. We stopped at Shellingford Church and by chance met the lady who has bought Joyce Sharp's house. The name has been changed, but I noticed the lovely garden flowers that she was using to decorate the church, and thought how lovely that the flowers that Joyce used to grow were still being put to good use, an eternal memory of the love Joyce had for her garden. The downside of the day is that we must have cycled past several tons of blackberries. This is clearly a good year for them, at least something has benefitted from the cool damp summer with only occasional bursts of heat! I gave up trying to remember the best places to revisit, but don't miss the opportunity to go picking as the apple harvest is not far off!

Happy to say that Clive and I got home safely and back to church in time to welcome Gill and Alison who were our last but one visitors to our chapel. Thank you again to all who made this day possible, and to those who have generously sponsored any of us. The sponsor forms do not have to be returned immediately, so if you would like to contribute to this worthwhile cause, please contact Clive, Gill, Alison B or me. Half the money goes to OHCT to help the upkeep of the beautiful church buildings, of which we visited seventeen on our 20 mile ride, and the other half goes directly to our church.

Coffee on the Decking

June and Alan Grunwald enjoyed hosting coffee on their decking every Monday morning during August. Despite the varying forecasts it didn't rain once, but was a bit chilly some mornings. A handful of people turned up each Monday and it was good to have an opportunity to have a chat.

Users: Weekdays at Wantage Methodist Church

Monday	morning	Hall	Community Café (from 4/10 tbc)
Monday	20/9 aft	Hall	Knit & Chat
Monday	4/10 & 18/10 aft	Chapel	Knit & Chat
Monday	evening	Hall	Slimming World
Tuesday	morning	Hall	MIND
	afternoon	Chapel	Tuesday Afternoon House Group
Tuesday	evening	Hall	Wantage Camera Club (from 28/9)
Tuesday	12/10 @7pm	Parlour	My Life, My Choice
Wednesday	5:30pm	Hall	YoCO
Wednesday	evening	Hall	Wantage Stage Musical
Thursday	evening	Hall	Wantage Bridge Club
Friday	morning	Hall	Mother & Toddlers
Friday	afternoon	Hall	Caritas Children's Choir
Saturday	2/10 morning	Hall	Dads' Out

DIARY for late SEPTEMBER

Sunday 19 th	10:00 am	Childrey Harvest Festival in St Mary's Church
Monday 20 th	2:00 pm	Knit & Chat in the Hall
Saturday 25 th	10:00 am	Harvest Preparations
Sunday 26 th	10:30 am	Wantage Harvest Festival

DIARY for early OCTOBER

Saturday 2 nd	10:00 am	Grove Coffee Morning at church. Harvest Preparations
Sunday 3 rd	10:45 am	Grove Harvest Festival
DEADLINE for "Autumn" NEWSLETTER		
Monday 4 th	2:00 pm	Knit & Chat in the Hall
Wednesday 6 th	7:30 pm	Wantage Church Life Meeting

Services during SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 19 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom) Tabitha Griffiths
	10:45 am	Grove Rev Keith Underhill
		This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion
	10:00 am	St Mary's Childrey Harvest Festival
Sunday 26 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom) HARVEST FESTIVAL Rev Keith Underhill
	10:45 am	Grove Carol Sturt
	11:00 am	Childrey Helen Carter

OCTOBER

Sunday 3 rd	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom) Daphne Savage
	10:45 am	Grove Rev Keith Underhill HARVEST FESTIVAL
Sunday 10 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom) Rev Keith Underhill
		This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion
	10:45 am	Grove Libby Bolton
	11:00 am	Childrey Ian Sturt
Sunday 17 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom) Helen Carter
	10:45 am	Grove Rev Irena Byron
		This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion