

Wantage & Abingdon Circuit

CHILDREY, GROVE & WANTAGE SECTOR


The **Methodist** Church

CGW NEWS



December 2021
January 2022

Minister : Rev Keith Underhill – Tel: 01235 763321
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 23rd January 2022** to
wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com
Tel : 01235 766655 / 07710 214601
Editors : Gill & Gordon Skidmore

Sunday Services and Church Activities

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

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 - 2022

February	Sunday 23 rd January
March	Sunday 20 th February
April	Sunday 20 th March
May	Sunday 24 th April
June	Sunday 22 nd May
July/August	Sunday 19 th June
September	Sunday 21 st August
October	Sunday 18 th September
November	Sunday 23 rd October
December/January	Sunday 20 th November

From the Manse.....

As I begin to take the first part of my postponed Sabbatical, looking at and being on pilgrimage, many of the nativity passages within Matthew and Luke Gospels have a poignant resonance this year, for both walking and journeying feature heavily in the narratives that are so very familiar.

A young betrothed couple travelling from Nazareth to Bethlehem in order to be registered and star gazers from the east, searching for and following a star. Then of course, the flight and escape to Egypt of Mary, Joseph and their new born son.

Even with the help and use of a donkey and camels (none of which are mentioned in the texts) those who feature in these much loved passages would have been on foot for quite a lot of the time.

In the Old Testament, three characters are specifically mentioned as being those who “walked with God”. One is Noah; Brownie points to those who can name the other two!

There is something significant about walking that helps to root us in the reality of the world and of everyday life. Journeying at a walking pace, allows us to take in our surroundings and to appreciate the views that are before us and all that which we so often readily ignore or take for granted.

Walking, by its very nature, is not fast and there is something about the pace at which you travel that is important.

We often speak of our own journey through Advent towards Christmas and as we follow in the footsteps of those who are part and parcel of the Christmas story, may we be aware that, like all pilgrims, we tread on holy and hallowed ground; our feet touching the earth upon which those who have gone before us have trod.

As together and on our own, we travel towards Bethlehem once more, I wish you all a peaceful and blessed Advent and Christmas

With love and God Bless

Keith

Christmas Cards

Last year we produced a Christmas Greetings edition of the Newsletter to reach those who were not able to meet on the premises.

This year as people still have understandable caution, we propose to repeat what we did last year. If you have a greeting you wish to share, please send it to

wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com

telephone 07710214601 / 01235766655

or drop it in the Wantage Methodist Church post box **by Sunday 12th December.**

Keith's Sabbatical

I am very grateful to our Methodist District and our Circuit Stewards for allowing me to split my three month sabbatical into two. I will therefore be taking the first part of my sabbatical during December, with the remaining two months being taken between May and June 2022.

I am pleased to say that Revd Irena Byron, a Methodist Supernumerary Minister in our Circuit, has readily agreed to provide emergency pastoral cover for December. Her contact details, should you need them, will be found on my out of office replies to emails or on my answerphone.

Thank you for your encouragement and good wishes and for those who have already agreed to take on extra responsibilities whilst I am away.

I look forward to meeting up with you all again in the New Year.

Love and God Bless

Keith

Amnesty International - Write for Rights 2021

For a number of years Wantage Methodist Church has taken part in this winter campaign by writing cards to people across the world who have been detained or injured because they have stood up for their rights. In the past church members have sent cards with personal message of support and hope. The campaign is slightly different this year with people being asked to send emails or to sign petitions. If you sent cards in the past or feel able to do take part on the Write for Rights campaign for the first time, please see the Amnesty International web-page

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/write-for-rights>

Sponsored walk update

Gill Skidmore & Alison Brown

In the October newsletter we wrote about the 42km, i.e. marathon, sponsored walk (<https://www.charitychallenge.com/expedition/costs/3456/London-Royal-Parks-Challenge#tabs>) that we are doing in February in aid of the MS Society. We have chosen that charity because two of our church members, Anne Hatto and Jordan Smith, are both suffering the horrible effects of this cruel disease.

We are now fully registered, so we can't back out! We will be walking with Gill's daughter, Janine (Beighton), who is collecting for MND, because her sister-in-law died of Motor Neurone Disease last month, and two of her friends, who are doing it for breast and oral cancer charities. Together we are **Team Madness** – it seemed an appropriate name!

Our fundraising pages are now up and running:

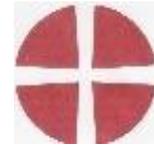
<https://justgiving.com/fundraising/alison-brown93>

<https://justgiving.com/fundraising/gill-skidmore1>

We also have paper sponsorship forms for those who are uncomfortable with online donations.

We will also be doing some fundraising in other ways – details to follow.

Please help us to raise money for research to help people like Anne and Jordan.



Wantage & Abingdon **Methodist** Circuit

Top 10 Carols

Christmas Eve from 8.00pm

A time to sing, pray and hear the greatest story ever – as you make your final preparations for Christmas Day.

I will choose the readings

you choose the carols.

email me at jocelyn.bennett@methodist.org.uk

or send to 50 Lydalls Close, Didcot, OX11 7LA

with your favourite 3 carols by Sunday 19th December

Then join the zoom worship on Christmas Eve

The TOP 10 will be revealed

Which will be NUMBER ONE?

Join Zoom Meeting – TOP TEN CAROLS

<https://zoom.us/j/93232120474?pwd=MGxmNXJsZEczY2I0di9yODF5U2ROZz09>

Meeting ID: 932 3212 0474

Passcode: 786821

Christmas Services and Events in Wantage & Grove Church Partnership

Wantage

St John Vianney RC Church

Christmas Eve Mass 24th December 6 pm and 9 pm

Christmas Morning Mass 25th December 9 am

Wantage Baptist Church

Sunday 19th December 5 pm An atmospheric evening of traditional carols by candlelight.

Sunday 25th December 10 am Christmas Day celebration for all ages. Children are invited to bring their favourite Christmas gift along.

Wantage Community Church (Wantage Primary Academy OX12 7GQ)

Carol Service Sun 19th December at 4pm

Christmas Service Sat 25th December 11 am

Wantage Methodist Church

Carol Service 19th December 10:30 am

Christmas Eve Service with Holy Communion 24th December 8 pm

Christmas Morning Celebration 25th December 9:30 am

Wantage Church of England

Nine Lessons and Carols 19th December 6 pm – Wantage Parish Church

Christmas Eve

Crib Service 3 pm - Wantage Parish Churchyard

Mass for Christmas Eve 8 pm - Holy Trinity Charlton

Choral Midnight Mass 11 pm - Wantage Parish Church

Christmas Day

Mass 8 am - Wantage Parish Church

Mass 9:15 am - Holy Trinity Charlton

Choral Mass 10.30 am - Wantage Parish Church

Grove

Grove Methodist Church

Carol Service 19th December 10:45 am

Christmas Eve Service (at Wantage Methodist Church) 24th December 8 pm

Christmas Morning Celebration 25th December 10:45 am

Grove Free Evangelical Church (Old Mill Hall Grove)

Christmas Donkey Walk and Carol Singing (Knights Green, Grove) Friday 17th December 5:15 pm

'The Real Christmas' Sunday 19th December 10:30 am

Christmas Day Family Service 25th December 10:30 am

Boxing Day Communion 26th December 9:30 am

St John the Baptist Parish Church

Christingle 12th December 4 pm

Carol Service 19th December 6 pm

Crib Service 24th December 4 pm

Midnight Communion 24th December 11:30 pm

Christmas Communion Celebration 25th December 10 am

Vale Elim Church (Millbrook Primary School Grove)

Christmas Story Family Service 19th December 4 pm

Christmas Day 'Christmas Morning Online' (see www.valeelimchurch.org.uk) 25th December 10:30 am

Sunday Morning Celebration Boxing Day 26th December 10:30 am

East Challow

St Nicholas

Christmas Carol Celebration 19th December 10 am

Crib Service 24th December 4:30 pm

Midnight Communion 24th December 11:15 pm

Christmas Communion Celebration 25th December 11:15 am

West Hanney

St James the Great

Carol Service at HWMH 19th December 4:30 pm

Crib Service 24th December 5:30 pm

Midnight Communion 24th December 11:30 pm

Christmas Celebration 25th December 10 am

Denchworth

St James

Crib Service 24th December 4:30 pm

Christmas Communion 25th December 10 am

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18 – 25 January 2022

The churches of Wantage & Grove are each preparing a 20 minute Zoom presentation of worship and prayer in their own style for sharing at 8 pm each day.

Wantage & Grove Street Pastors Quarterly News



Hello! I am Paul Gander and together with my family (my wife Francesca and three children) I moved to Wantage in August to be Pastor and Community Development Lead for Wantage Community Church. As part of that role I will be the new Chair of the trustees for Wantage and Grove Street Pastors. I was approached in the spring to see if I would be interested in taking on the role of chair and after a time of prayer and seeking God, I felt it was right to put myself forward and fortunately the trustees all said yes! I have worked in the community for the last 18 years, first as a youth worker and more recently in my role at Kings Church where I led the community development work. As part of my youth work job I spent 13 years on the streets of Didcot doing detached youth work, which I found was a wonderful privilege to serve the young people of the town. This background therefore gave myself a real heart for the role of Street Pastors and what it does for Wantage and Grove. I hope and pray that I will be able to serve the charity and the town in this role over the coming months and years. When I am not working or with the family, I enjoy watching most sports or getting out and walking through the countryside.

I have heard so many great things about the street pastors and I look forward to hearing more stories of the great work God is doing through the street pastors.

How we helped on the Streets

We achieved twelve patrols since our July edition of Quarterly News - five patrols in July, four in August and three in September. We were unable to patrol on three occasions. With no 'slack in the system', it is more difficult to fix problems when they arise. If we are unable to replace a Street Pastor who has had to drop out for some reason, then the patrol cannot go ahead.

We are pleased to report that we are no longer seeing large groups gathering in Wantage. There were a number of smaller aggressive situations that we were able to help calm down, including preventing two groups of people from aggravating each other. At the end of one of our patrols we were standing outside a pub when a lady frantically rushed back to the pub, hoping to get in and saying that she had lost her mobile phone. We offered to call her number and found that her phone was in her pocket all the time! The poor lady was very apologetic – and a little embarrassed!

Patrols in Grove have been quiet. We visit several locations including the skate park and kebab van, Savile Way shops, Millbrook Square, Old Mill Hall, The Bay Tree pub and The Bell pub.

In Wantage, as well as spending time in the Market Square, we also visit Betjeman Park, the Undercroft Car Park, Manor Park and from time to time the cemetery. Our earlier patrol visits Sweatbox and spends time with the staff and young people.

Now is the time!

Yes, that's right - now is the time! Now is the time to sign up for Street Pastor roles in Wantage & Grove Street Pastors! ...and there are plenty of options available to you because we're always looking to expand what we do:

Night time economy patrols - caring for people who are out at night on Friday and Saturday nights ('early' and late night patrols)

Daytime or afternoon patrols - caring for people who are in town in the daytime, especially children and young people who may be vulnerable or a target for 'county lines' criminals after school.

Online patrols as "Screen Pastors" - caring for people who are online by providing a safe space for people to talk about their lives

Now is the time to apply for these roles because we will be hosting the all important *Roles & Responsibilities* training course in the new year. This 1-day course is mandatory for all Street Pastor roles and forms the basis for further training.

Contact us for more information about Street Pastor roles - email us at

wantageandgrove@streetpastors.org.uk or call us on 07554 655 594

2021 AGM

Our AGM was held on 5 October 2021. Members accepted the annual report and accounts for 2020/21. Trustees were re-elected and Paul Gander was elected as a trustee and appointed as our new Chair. Following the formal AGM, our Coordinator, Nigel Watt gave an update on patrols and operational issues. Pete Beckley asked the question, "*As a Street Pastor I observe that there has been a noticeable decrease in opportunities to assist and interact with people on Saturday nights. Can WGSP make changes to remain relevant in our community?*" This led to a very useful discussion about how people's behaviour has changed since lockdown with pubs closing earlier and the effect of currently not having a nightclub in town. Several ideas of how we can remain relevant were suggested, including support for daytime and online patrols. Other ideas were suggested including observing the night-time economy to see where problems lie, working with local schools in lesson provision and connecting with Be Space as they seek to provide prayer spaces in schools and in the community.

Remaining relevant to the needs of Wantage and Grove will be key to our success.

Farewell PC Darren James

We are sorry to have to say 'farewell' to PC Darren James as he leaves the Wantage Neighbourhood Police Team to take up a post at the Thames Valley Police Control Room in Abingdon. Darren joined the team in Wantage nearly 23 years ago and has worked tirelessly, not only tackling and solving crime locally, but he has been dedicated to building relationships in the community and helping to keep people safe. Darren was awarded Community Officer of the Year in 2018 for his contribution to local policing - an award for which he was nominated by members of the public. Not only do we see Darren on the streets at night while we're patrolling, but also at the Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) - a group whose purpose is to identify issues in the local community and to take action towards resolving problems wherever possible. We are very grateful for all the support we receive from the police and so we will certainly miss Darren. Well done on the new job Darren, and best wishes for the future from all of us at Wantage & Grove Street Pastors.

Little People

Ann Barber

For many years, since two friends from St. John Vianney Church, Jackie and Tessa, established this charity, local churches have supported their Christian outreach to needy families within our local community. We have responded to notified requests for children's clothing, and for basic household goods. We learned during lockdown that their work was ending and **Little People** would no longer exist. That position has now been reversed. Jackie has taken well earned retirement, but Tessa feels called to continue the project, and will do so on her own, but with help and support from people in local churches. Having downsized to a house with less room and virtually no storage space, the range of goods has had to reduce accordingly. The main requests are now for good quality children's clothing, definitely **no white goods**, nor any large pieces of furniture. However, as soon as possible between now and Christmas there are just three requests:

NEW children's toys, Supermarket Vouchers, Argos Vouchers

Tessa's contact details are: landline: 01235 762912, mobile: 07874 997230, and her address is: 1 Weaver Row, Wantage, OX12 7DZ [on the corner of Garston Lane and Chapel Close]

Tessa will be delighted to receive these items, and for word of **Little People's** work to be spread as widely as possible. Next year, when there are specific needs, especially for children's clothes of particular sizes etc., the best way of letting everyone know will be through announcements and weekly Notices and monthly Newsletters etc. If you have any queries, or would like to know more about ways in which you can assist with the work of **Little People**, please get in touch with Tessa.



Cornerstone Coffee Shop, Grove



Our pre-booked Christmas lunches are now all fully booked.

We are serving **Christmas-themed specials** alongside our normal menu throughout December.

On Christmas Lunch days (Friday 3rd, Tuesday 7th, Thursday 9th, Monday 13th & Wednesday 15th December) the cafe will be open for drinks and cakes from **9:30-11:00 am only**.

Christmas and New Year Opening Hours

Monday 20th — Thursday 23rd December 9:30 am – 4 pm

Friday 24th December **9:30 am – 2 pm (early closing)**

25th December 2021 — 3rd January 2022 **Closed**

Tuesday 4th January onwards Usual opening hours

WANTAGE CHORAL SOCIETY
WANTAGE SILVER BAND

Christmas Oratorio

Bob Chilcott

★
SELECTION FROM

100
CAROLS
FOR
CHOIRS

(some for the audience to sing)

★
CONDUCTOR Paul Burke
ORGANIST Sebastian Thomson

Saturday 11 December 2021 7.30pm
Wantage Parish Church



WANTAGE
CHORAL
SOCIETY

All Tickets £12

(£10 if purchased in advance; under 16 Free)

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM MEMBERS OF WCS OR ON THE DOOR

wantagechoralsociety.co.uk Registered Charity No 265227

WCS Members - Wantage
Grove

Alison Brown, Carolyn Roche, Gill & Gordon Skidmore
Kath Gourlay, Liz Trew,

JPIT - THE GLASGOW COP26 SUMMIT BRIEFING

What we need and what we got

In November 2021, the COP26 Summit agreed the Glasgow Climate Pact. In this brief analysis we assess the Glasgow summit's achievements against the yardstick of what is necessary if we are to avoid exceeding 1.5 degrees of warming.

KEEPING 1.5 DEGREES ALIVE

Background

Following COP21 in Paris, the ambition of almost all governments (including the UK) was limited to keeping warming 'well below 2 degrees'. In 2015, most governments were not ready to increase their commitments to contribute to the higher ambition of 1.5 degrees.

What we need

We need unequivocal acceptance that every State Party will base targets on the contribution of their nation state to a 1.5 degree goal. This requires substantial near term action between now and 2030.

What we got at COP26

The Glasgow Climate Pact repeats the text of the Paris agreement on 2 degrees and 1.5. The Pact states separately that it "resolves to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees". However, we do not yet have any basis for a formula that could tie commitments on the part of developed nations for further provision of climate finance, to improved national contributions that would be compatible with 1.5 degrees.

PLEDGES ON REDUCTIONS IN CARBON EMISSIONS

Background

Governments were required to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to emission reductions by 2020 and most have done so.

What we need

Prior to COP26 the sum total of NDC's was roughly consistent with 2.7 degrees of global warming, not 1.5 degrees. We need States to urgently pledge action which to close this gap.

What we got at COP26

The new pledges improve the position a bit, and are now consistent with 2.4 degrees of warming. However, State Parties have been asked to revisit and strengthen the 2030 targets in their Nationally Determined Contributions by the end of 2022. The COP secretariat has been mandated to report the state of play on total pledges every year. The previous expectation that pledges only need be updated every five years has been scrapped reflecting a greater sense of urgency.

CLIMATE FINANCE

Background

In 2009, it was agreed that climate finance funding of \$100bn a year would be made available by 2020. By 2019 \$80bn of climate finance had been made available. The fund supports developing countries in mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

What we need

Meeting, and then surpassing, the \$100bn pledge is critical to ensure that developing countries receive the necessary support to achieve further mitigation actions. In reality, a lot more than \$100bn will be required.

What we got at COP26

The Glasgow Climate Pact “Notes with deep regret that the goal of developed country Parties to mobilize jointly USD 100 billion per year by 2020 ... has not yet been met”. The \$100bn pledge will be reached by 2023 or sooner.

The Pact “urges developed country Parties to at least double their collective provision of climate finance for adaptation to developing country Parties from 2019 levels by 2025”.

LOSS AND DAMAGE

Background

Extreme weather events such as floods, storms, droughts, and wildfires are becoming more frequent and severe every year. This leads to loss of homes, infrastructure, cultural heritage and livelihoods. When major disasters hit developing countries they can overwhelm the national capacity to rebuild.

What we need

Past COPs have resisted detailed discussion of loss and damage, or consideration of separate funding mechanism to address loss and damage. Along with our partners at Faith for the Climate we have called for new a fund based on needs, which we expect requires at least \$75bn/year.

What we got at COP26

There will be a push next year at COP27 for the implementation of the framework for managing loss and damage funding (the implementation of the Santiago Network).

Worryingly, the United States in particular seemed to be resisting the creation of a new funding stream.

STATE PARTIES' ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

Many governments make big promises on carbon emissions and then hope to employ various forms of double-counting and offsets in order to slash the actual cuts in domestic emissions that they will need to report. The Paris Agreement did not attempt to set out the rules for accounting for emissions and these were to be determined at COP26.

What we need

No possibility of double-counting credits for emissions generated in one country and bought in another. An agreement not to bring forward large amounts of historic Kyoto-protocol credits into the new post-2020 system. A percentage of the value of new carbon credits purchased by companies should be directed towards funding adaptation for developing countries.

What we got at COP26

Reasonably sound rules to ensure no double counting were set, the carry forward of Kyoto-protocol credits was strictly limited and 5% of the value of carbon credits will be directed towards funding adaptation.

IN CONCLUSION

We now have a framework for developing carbon markets. If the market for carbon can overcome the previous inadequacies, this could galvanise private sector investment in transition. Mark Carney, UN special envoy on climate action and finance, has spoken of a potential \$130 trillion of private finance in capital markets that can be re-purposed towards green industries. Even though this is almost certainly an optimistic estimate it demonstrates that the potential of private funding is large.

The picture around government-sourced multilateral funding for developing countries is less positive. Countries that are on the forefront of the climate crisis, such as small island states, have come away from COP26 feeling marginalised in the negotiations and it appears that their appeals for urgent funding for mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage have not yet been heard.

Eco Church

Churches complete the unique online Eco Survey about how they are caring for God's earth in different areas of their life and work. The answers a church provides will collect points towards an Eco Church Award – the more a church does, the more points it gets!

The survey takes the church through five key areas of its life:

- Worship and teaching
- Management of church buildings
- Management of church land
- Community and global engagement
- Lifestyle

Childrey

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

Sunday 12th December: 11:00 am led by Peter Hemmings

Sunday 19th November: 3:00 pm led by Ian Sturt United Carol Service

Sunday 9th January 11:00 am led by Rev Keith Underhill
Covenant Service This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion

Sunday 23rd January 11:00 am led by Tabitha Griffiths

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.

THE BEST
OF ALL IS
GOD
IS WITH US.

Grove

Sunday worship in church is open for all at 10:45 am and you are invited to come and share with us. 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.

A service of baptism was held for Elliot Phillips on 7th November. It was lovely to see so many of his family and friends together with Simon and Emily, and big sister Ellie, and older brother Leo. It was a joy to see them all.

We assure all the family of our continued thoughts and prayers at this special time.

Christmas worship:

Our **Carol Service** is on Sunday, 19th December at 10:45 am led by Carol Sturt.

Christmas Eve is a joint service this year at Wantage Methodist Church at 8 pm, led by Rev John Anderson. It will also be on Zoom, giving many more the opportunity to be a part of it. The Zoom invitation will be sent out nearer the time.

Christmas Day worship is at 10:45 am and will be led by Peter Hemmings.

There will be no service on Sunday, 26th December.

Fresh flowers in church: Thank you to everyone who responded to our plea to provide fresh flowers in church on Sundays again and filled their names on the list.

A blank list for the first three months of 2022 is now on the entrance table.

If you are willing to provide flowers on any of the Sundays listed, please fill in your name against the appropriate date. You will also need to take away the flowers after the service. Thank you so much. It is lovely to see flowers again.

The **Coffee morning in December** is on **Saturday, 11th December** (the second Saturday) from 10 am. It is being hosted by Lynda Culley and proceeds are for Yotam's Truck Fund, in Malawi. If you can offer to help or provide a cake, then please speak to Lynda **before 4th December**. *We continue with Covid precautions still, sanitizing hands and wearing face masks when moving about, but remove masks when seated for eating/drinking. The windows are usually open, so come prepared!*

Thank you to all who supported the Coffee morning in November for Freyja's Fund. The total raised at the Coffee morning from donations and from sale of cards amounted to £317. Judith and her family would like to thank everyone for their support. It is much appreciated.

Date for your diary: The first coffee morning in the New Year is planned for **Saturday, 5th February**.

Craft Group is meeting at the Cornerstone Coffee Shop on Monday afternoons from 2 pm to 4 pm. All are welcome. Bring your own craft to do and enjoy a chat and exchange of ideas with other crafters while you work. We give a donation of £1 to Cornerstone and buy a drink of our choice.

Tuesday Fellowship has restarted. At the moment we are meeting just once a month, on the **FIRST TUESDAY** of the month. Our December meeting is on **Tuesday, 7th December** at 2:15 pm in the Meeting Room. We will be discussing "Mugs". Please bring along a favourite mug which is special to you in some way.

No collection will be taken. Tea/coffee will be provided but please bring your own cup/mug to use. Please sanitize your hands as you come into church and wear a mask for moving around. Masks can be removed when seated. Chairs will be spaced out and windows open, so you may need an extra layer or coat to keep warm.

I'm sure it's not necessary to say **BUT** if you are feeling unwell or showing any signs of Covid, please do not come as we are all aware that at the moment numbers are rising still.

Lesley Hummerston and Kath Gourlay

Wantage & Grove Food Bank:

Carol & Ian

Just a reminder to everyone that we now have a food bank collection point in the foyer at our church. It would be wonderful if we could all try to remember to put some small item in there every week, as part of our weekly offering. Items in tins, jars and packets are best, with as long a shelf life as possible please.

There is still time to add some festive items to the box, such as biscuits, tinned salmon, Christmas cakes and puddings, chocolates and sweets. We will make sure that they reach the distribution point in time to be added to the Christmas food parcels that are being prepared for needy families. This is a wonderful opportunity to make a real difference this Christmas. God bless you, and many thanks.

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 Roger Bett know this month, as he is hosting while Keith is on sabbatical leave. You will then receive a weekly invitation by email and can join in as and when you are able to.

Our thoughts are with John, Audrey and David as they prepare for their move to Northern Ireland to be near to Rachel and Graham. The move is due to take place before too long now. We wish them much happiness and contentment in their new home and life there and our prayers will go with them.

A warm welcome to Tim Gant on the organ bench. It was just great to hear it being played again and to have 'live' music. The Hymnal serves us well and we are very thankful for it and its' operators, but it was a treat to have the organ in action.

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 are still living through. We hope you will be able to meet up with family and friends over the Christmas time and trust that, with care, the way forward will open up gradually for everyone.

Wantage

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.

Christmas Services at Wantage All shared on Zoom

**December 12th 10:30 am Rev Irena Byron
Blessing of the Angels**

This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion

**December 19th 10:30 am Carol Service
Mike Penny of the Open Bible Trust
Chairman : Churches Together in Reading and Berkshire**

**December 24th 8:00 pm
Christmas Eve Service with Holy Communion
Rev John D Anderson**

**December 25th 9:30 am
Christmas Morning Worship for all the family
Helen Carter**

Please note there will be no service on December 26th.

Christmas Cards

Over the past few years there has been the opportunity to share Christmas greetings on a board at church. Last year we produced a Christmas Greetings edition of the Newsletter to reach those who were not able to meet on the premises.

This year, as people still have understandable caution, we propose to repeat what we did last year. If you have a greeting you wish to share, please send it to

wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com

telephone 07710214601 / 01235766655

or drop it in the church post box by Sunday 12th December

As well as the external post box there will be a box in the Chapel vestibule.

The "pigeon holes" will be available in the Chapel vestibule for personal card exchange.

Pastoral

In our final newsletter for 2021, it is good to be able to include news of some of our church family members, which, in ordinary times, would be shared in conversation after Sunday morning Services. Throughout the year, when worshipping in person hasn't been possible for many people, written news has enabled us to reflect on sad events, share the joy of happy celebrations, and look forward to events planned for future dates. Everyone is grateful to the team of people who have facilitated live worship on Sundays, and the opportunity of experiencing of worship via Zoom. We acknowledge the hard work that goes into each, and offer thanks to all who make these services accessible to us all.

On 22nd November, Ed Clipsham celebrated his 90th birthday, and so we congratulate Ed, and send him our best wishes for this special occasion. At the same time, we send our love to Joan who is recovering from a bad fall whilst walking to Bible Study Group. We know Joan's aversion to any hint of fuss, and so just want to note with thankfulness that she has already recovered sufficiently well to be worshipping in church and going to Bible Study again. We pray for both Joan and Ed that they continue to know God's care and blessings, as they celebrate and return to good health.

We are pleased to record that Lois Greenhalgh has recently transferred her membership from Grove to Wantage. We warmly welcome her into our church family

It is a special occasion for Val and John Broadbent in December. They celebrate their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. We offer them our congratulations, and note with pleasure that they are inviting everyone to join them for coffee and cake after the Carol Service on the morning of Sunday 19th December.

An unfortunate fall recently left Eileen Rennie with lots of bruises and all the accompanying soreness, but it probably comes as no surprise that within a week she was back at Community Café and Bible Study Group, albeit on light duties as a concession to her injuries. We know that Eileen appreciates all of the support from everyone who has learned of her fall, and pray that she will soon be feeling much better.

Thank you to all of you who have already returned your completed forms for the new Church Directory. It would be very helpful if everyone for whose forms I am waiting, would kindly send them as soon as possible, please.

Little People: For many years, two friends from St. John Vianney Church, Jackie and Tessa, established this charity. We have supported their Christian outreach to needy families within our local community and we have responded to notified requests for children's clothing, and for basic household goods. We learned during lockdown that their work was ending and **Little People** would no longer exist. That position has now been reversed. Jackie has taken well earned retirement, but Tessa feels called to continue the project, and will do so on her own, but with help and support from people in local churches. (See page 5 for more details)

Praying for each other: In December the people listed below will be included in the prayer time at Eileen Rennie's Bible Study Group: on Mary Trotter's Pastoral List: Diane Barton and Mary Whittaker, and on Mary Whittaker's Pastoral List: June Crouch, Richard George and Arnold Tucker.

In addition to the names listed above, those in our church family, who through frailty or ill health can no longer worship with us on Sundays, will also be prayed for by name at Eileen's Group.

Prayer list

Eileen Rennie

Loving God, in this period of Advent we pray that we will always find time for prayer and reflection as we seek to prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of your Son. We thank you that we have your presence and your word in our lives, the example of the things that Jesus taught us of his time here on earth and the joy of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Give us courage, we pray, to share all this with others in the way that we live our lives. We look forward in faith to the beginning of a New Year conscious of your abiding love and presence in all that we do. Accept our praise and thanks. 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, Gordon and Marina, Peter Preston. 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 February Newsletter, please let me know by **Friday 21st January** in order for me to meet the Newsletter deadline.

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

Advent study for 2021

Groups are meeting in the Chapel and Hall on Tuesdays 7th & 14th December at 2 pm and on Zoom on Thursdays 9th & 16th December at 2:30 pm.

7th / 9th Dec Advent Study Week 3: Light in the darkness - Amy Boucher-Pye
14th / 16th Dec Advent Study Week 4: Word Incarnate: John 1:1-16 – Andy John

Memory Tree

It was lovely to see so many leaves placed on the memory tree in our Chapel in October and November. Leaves were placed on the tree by those coming to church on Sunday, by a few community cafe users as well as a phone request. Stephen Atkinson, the local preacher for Remembrance Sunday, blessed the tree with the following prayer:

O Lord, we dedicate our memory tree to the memory of every person whose name hangs upon it, and as a blessing for every person who has placed a name upon it. We will hold each of them in our prayers today and in days to come. We give thanks for their lives and trust that you will hold each of them forever within your love and generous grace. May this tree keep us mindful of all whom we love and hold this morning in special remembrance. **Amen**

Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial Day is **One Day – 27th January** – that we put aside to come together to remember, to learn about the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and the genocides that followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur, in the hope that there may be **One Day** in the future with no genocide. We learn more about the past, we empathise with others today, and we take action for a better future. It has been a tradition for Wantage Methodist Church to mark Holocaust Memorial Day in some way for a number of years (usually one of the few places in Oxfordshire to do so). The theme for 2022 is "**One Day**" and our **chapel** will be **open** on Thursday 27th January from 2 pm to 4 pm with a rolling powerpoint of information, images and music. There is also an opportunity to take part in the **UK Ceremony for Holocaust Memorial Day 2022**, which will be streamed online on Thursday 27th January at 7 pm. You will need to **register** to watch the Ceremony online, using the following link

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/take-part-in-holocaust-memorial-day/ukhmd/>

Bible Reading Notes [IBRA]

Please order your copy now **on the form on the notice board in the Hall vestibule**. The last day for doing this is **Friday 3rd December**.

For further information contact Peter Bainbridge on 01235 770373.

Kids@Church (for families with children at primary school)

We are so excited about sharing a Christingle together in person between 4 and 5 pm on **Sunday 12th December!** If you haven't emailed us yet, please do so by **5th December** so we definitely have enough for everyone - cdccworth@gmail.com

We are really hoping to resume K@C in the new year!

YMOSES (Youth Meeting On Sunday Evenings):

(an informal faith-based discussion group for young people at secondary school and college)

In November we met outside round a fire pit! We enjoyed hot drinks and fireside treats! It was the week after most of the group had returned from 3 Generate - the annual national gathering of young people organised by the Methodist Church - so it was wonderful to hear all about the highlights of the weekend! The young people had clearly had a great weekend! We had fun planning a Christmas party and I just hope everyone will be well enough to come and enjoy it!

Any questions about either YMOSES or K@C please give me (Jane Kent) a call on 01235 765421

Community Drop In Café

June Grunwald

A warm welcome awaits you every Monday at the café from 9 am to 12 noon. (Particularly as the new heaters in the hall are now installed!) We continue to welcome back café regulars and also some new people. Our café has also been recommended by a member of the local WI who visited recently. We have been pleased to welcome some new volunteers at the Community Café too. From October to December the café will be sending money to Clean Slate, which is a low cost, long-term listening and support service for all victims of abuse and mental illness in Oxfordshire. In November we raised just short of £135. From January to March the café will be sending profits to another charity, Hope Uk, a charity equipping young people to make drug free choices.

Please note that the Community Cafe **WILL** be open on Monday, 27th December and Monday 3rd January. Over the last couple of years we have found that a number of people appreciate the cafe being open on a bank holiday, especially those who live on their own.

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

Tuesday Afternoon House Group

Eileen Rennie

In November we continued to meet in the Church at 2 pm each Tuesday. We finished our study of Ruth and started our Advent Study

In December we will continue our Advent Study. Alison is leading a group on the same study at the same time on Tuesday in the Hall and Gordon is leading a Zoom option. This gives those not ready to come in person yet the option to follow the study on Zoom. In January we will study the final Advent Study, followed the next week by a visit from Keith and then we will start Bible Month 2021 Mark.

Prayer is an important part of our meeting and we spend time each week praying for people and situations near and far. If you have someone or a situation you would like us to pray for please let me know.

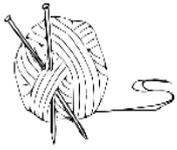
We still continue to socially distance, wear masks and ventilate the space when we meet. Safety for all is a priority.

It has been good to gradually welcome back some people we had not seen for some time. Please be assured that if you are not able to meet back with us yet that you are remembered each week in prayer. We do all look forward to the time when we will all be meeting together again.

Dates for December and January are as follows:

7 th December	Advent Study Week 3: Light in the darkness - Amy Boucher-Pye
14 th December	Advent Study Week 4: Word Incarnate: John 1:1-16 - Andy John
4 th January	Advent Study Week 5: Psalms of hope - Margaret Cundiff
11 th January	Keith will be sharing thoughts with us.
18 th January	Bible Month 2021 Mark 1:1 - 3:35 Identity and Mission
25 th January	Bible Month 2021 Mark 4:1 - 8:21 Mission and Boundaries

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

By the time you are reading this the majority, if not all of the angels will have had their labels tied on. If necessary, we will complete this task on 6th December. I can confirm that the angels will be blessed by Rev Irena Byron at the Sunday service on 12th December. In the following week the angels will be taken to the care homes, October Club and the Wantage Community Support Centre in Charlton. They will also be distributed around the town and people are invited to take some to put out in their area.

An update on the Christmas jumper – only one sleeve to go!! Maybe I will get to wear it this year.

In December, Knit & Chat will meet as usual on the 1st and 3rd Mondays – **6th December** and **20th December** at 2 pm in the Chapel. Just for the month January we will meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays – **10th January** and **24th January**.

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.

Eco Church / COP25

We are planning a conversation on our response to the Eco Church / COP25 issues on **26th January** at 7:30 pm. More details in the notices in the New Year. See the features on pages 12-14.

Personal Events

You are invited to help **John and Valerie Broadbent celebrate their Diamond Wedding** by joining them for a piece of cake and coffee following the Carol Service on **Sunday December 19th**. No cards or presents please, your presence will be lovely. **RSVP** (to help plan social distancing) will be appreciated.

All this is subject to possible further Covid restrictions.

Please ring 01235 797259 or email jandvbroadbent@gmail.com ASAP or before **Saturday 11th December**. Thank you.

Congratulations to **Alan & Eileen Sykes** on the arrival of another great grandson, Henry. First grandson for their daughter Judith and husband Steve Chapman, and a son for their daughter and partner Rory. Now a total of 4 great grandchildren, a baby cousin for Freddie, Elliott and Willow

HMP BULLINGDON

Helen Carter, 07881 504623

This year is the first year for many a year when we won't be sending Christmas cards to Bullingdon prison. I don't have the same contacts as I did and I have to admit I haven't even got in touch to see if we could do the same as we did last year. So I apologise that it would appear we are not supporting the men in Bullingdon as we have done.

There is however a way that we can support the men and their families and that is through Prison Fellowship (<https://prisonfellowship.org.uk/>). Please check out the section on Angel Tree as this is one way of supporting those in Bullingdon Prison and their families. I know that this scheme, together with Angel Tree Mothers' Day is valued hugely by parents and young adults in custody. Thank you. If you would like to know more, please do be in touch with me.

DIARY for DECEMBER/JANUARY

DECEMBER

- Monday 6th 2:00 pm Knit & Chat in Wantage Chapel
Saturday 11th 10:00 am Grove Coffee Morning at Church
Sunday 12th **DEADLINE for CHRISTMAS GREETINGS SUPPLEMENT**
Monday 20th 2:00 pm Knit & Chat in Wantage Chapel

JANUARY

- Monday 10th 2:00 pm Knit & Chat in Wantage Chapel
18th – 25th **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**
Monday 24th 2:00 pm Knit & Chat in Wantage Chapel
Sunday 23rd **DEADLINE for FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER**
Wednesday 26th 7:30 pm Eco Church / COP25 Conversation
Thursday 27th **Holocaust Memorial Day**
2:00 – 4:00 pm Wantage Chapel open for reflection

FEBRUARY

- Saturday 5th 10:00 am Grove Coffee Morning at Church

Services during DECEMBER & JANUARY

DECEMBER

Sunday 5 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Ian Sturt
	10:45 am	Grove	Helen Carter
Sunday 12 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Rev Irena Byron
		Blessing of the knitted angels and Holy Communion	
	10:45 am	Grove Holy Communion	Rev Alan Grist
	11:00 am	Childrey	Peter Hemmings
	4:00 pm	Wantage Kids@Church	Christingles
Sunday 19 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Carol Service Mike Penny
	10:45 am	Grove Carol Service	Carol Sturt
	3:00 pm	Childrey United Carol Service	Ian Sturt

Friday 24th

CHRISTMAS EVE

8:00 pm	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Rev John Anderson
	Joint Christmas Eve Communion	
8:00 pm	Top 10 Carols on Zoom with Rev Jocelyn Bennett	

Saturday 25th

CHRISTMAS DAY

09:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Helen Carter
10:45 am	Grove	Peter Hemmings

There are no services on December 26th

JANUARY

Sunday 2 nd	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Rev Keith Underhill
	10:45 am	Grove	Barbara Kershaw
Sunday 9 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Peter Hemmings
	10:45 am	Grove	Marlene Chalkley
	11:00 am	Childrey	Rev Keith Underhill
		Covenant Service with Holy Communion	
Sunday 16 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Libby Bolton
	10:45 am	Grove	Rev Keith Underhill
		Covenant Service with Holy Communion	
Sunday 23 rd	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Rev Keith Underhill
		Covenant Service with Holy Communion	
	10:45 am	Grove	Derek Morton
	11:00 am	Childrey	Tabitha Griffiths
Sunday 30 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Rev Ian Griffiths
	10:45 am	Grove	Rev Keith Underhill

January

18–25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

23 World Leprosy Day England/Wales, Scotland

27 Holocaust Memorial Day

February

13 tbc Racial Justice Sunday

20 World Day of Social Justice

27 Church Action on Poverty Sunday

21 Feb–6 Mar Fairtrade Fortnight

March

4 World Day of Prayer Scotland, England/Wales

8 International Women’s Day #BreakTheBias

22 World Water Day

25 UN International Day of Remembrance of Victims of Slavery and Transatlantic Slave Trade

April

22 World Earth Day

28 International Workers’ Memorial Day

May

15–21 Christian Aid Week

June

5 Environment Sunday (also Pentecost)

5 tbc Tax Justice Sunday

11 JPIT Conference

20–26 Refugee Festival Scotland

20–26 Refugee Week

26 International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

August

23 International Day for Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition

Public Issues Calendar 2022 updated 10/11/2021

September

1 Sept–4 Oct Creation Time, Creationtide or Season of Creation

13 Education Sunday (England and Wales)

18–25 World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel

18 Freedom Sunday (end slavery)

18 Peace Sunday

21 UN International Day of Peace

October

3–7 tbc Good Money Week

10 World Homeless Day (see also www.housingjustice.org.uk/)

9–15 Prisons Week (England and Wales)

9–16 tbc Week of Prayer for World Peace

10-16 tbc Challenge Poverty Week

18 Anti-Slavery Day

23–29 One World Week

24 United Nations Day

November

6 tbc International Day of Prayer for Persecuted Christians

13 Remembrance Sunday

13–20 Interfaith Week

14–20 tbc Living Wage Week

19 World Toilet Day

20 World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims

20–26 tbc Prisoners' Week Scotland

25 Nov–10 Dec 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

December

1 World Aids Day

10 Human Rights Day

18 International Migrants Day

Inclusion in this calendar is not an indication of endorsement

How hard was that journey
For a mother-to-be,
To a cold, dark, strangers' town,
And makeshift nursery?
Yet in that cattle stall
She bore the mightiest King of all.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Let the whole world sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
For the birth of our King.

How strange was the vision
Shepherds saw on that night?
Angels bearing wondrous news,
All radiant with light.
Yet in that cattle stall
There shone the brightest hope for all.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Let the whole world sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
For the light of our King.

How long was that journey
From the East for those men,
Bearing gifts to an unnamed king,
an unknown Bethlehem?
Yet in that cattle stall
They found the greatest gift of all.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Let the whole world sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
For the gift of our King.

How hard is the journey
That the infant must make?
What the cost, from crib to cross,
And all this for my sake?
Yes, from that cattle stall -
The greatest sacrifice of all.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Let my whole heart sing.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
For my saviour and my King.

Words and music: © Paul Thompson