

Wantage & Abingdon Circuit

CHILDREY, GROVE & WANTAGE SECTOR


The **Methodist** Church

CGW NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2022

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Contributions for the **next Newsletter** (October) should be sent to the editor by
email, phone or in writing by **Sunday 18th September 2022**
e-mail : wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com
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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

October	Sunday 18 th September
November	Sunday 23 rd October
December/January	Sunday 20 th November

From the Manse.....

We've owned and had dogs longer than we've had children but in all that time we've never had a puppy before. Just over six weeks ago Pepper, who is a Sproodle (a Springer Spaniel/toy poodle cross) became the latest addition to our family.

She is settling in well but, as all those who've ever had a puppy will know, she has her moments and can be something of a whirlwind as she comes to terms with her new home, teething and the opportunities and challenges of life in general.

She is attending puppy training classes and is a quick learner.

We knew that we would need to purchase a number of items in preparation for her arrival, but we have been amazed at the sheer scale and size of the puppy accessory market that exists.

It seems that almost every item boasts that they will sort out any problem you may have or indeed prevent them from occurring in the first place and also claim to be eco/dog friendly and kind to the planet.

Yet, the other morning what was it that really motivated Pepper whilst we were on our walk? Was it a fancy toy, or home cooked peanut butter treats or liver cake?

No, none of those! What motivated her was a long stick that was lying in the grass. This discarded piece of tree instantly became her new and most wanted treasure as she eagerly followed along the pavement with me waving it in front of her.

A reminder that often it is the simple things of life that can mean the most and make the biggest impression on us.

A smile, an encouraging word or an act of random kindness can make someone's day and transform their world.

Happiness is not to be found in things or possessions, the stuff that we own or desire. It is to be found in relationships, in loving and caring for others even as they do the same for us.

As we begin a new Methodist Year and face all the challenges of these times, may we be assured that we are loved by God and find happiness, meaning and purpose in that knowledge.

Love and God bless to you all

Keith

Stepping out with Noah!

Rev Keith Underhill

What on earth is this you may well be asking? Well, it is one of the practical outcomes of my walking the Thames Path during my recent sabbatical which I found to be stimulating, thought provoking, reflective, fun and inspirational.

I am wanting to both further explore and to offer a contemplative, intentional, reflective way of walking with one another in which we might know and experience God together.

Why this title? Well, Noah is one of only three people in the Old Testament described as walking with God (can you name the other two?) and as the Methodist Church already has a programme entitled walking with Micah, which is about social justice, I didn't want to confuse issues by calling my initiative, Walking with Noah!

I am planning to begin this in October and it will take the form of a walk of around 3-4 miles or so where in conversation, laughter and the silence of our own thoughts, we seek to be attentive to God as we walk together in the beauty of his created world. There will be opportunities to join me for just a part of the walk thereby making it shorter and hopefully more inclusive.

It is my intention that there will be two walks a month, which will take up either a morning or afternoon with the dates and routes given in advance. To begin with, the walks will be local to Wantage/Grove but those further afield within the Circuit will also be explored as time goes on.

More details will be available within the next two-three weeks - but in the meantime the dates for October and November are

Tuesday 11th October at 10:00am

Wednesday 19th October at 2:00pm

Tuesday 8th November at 10:00am

Thursday 24th November at 10:00am

Do let me know if you are interested in joining me or if you have any questions or queries.

Bible Study at Elmbrook Care Home

June Grunwald is leading a new monthly bible study at the new care home in Grove Road. The first meeting was on Monday 8th August where we had hoped to use the equipment in the cinema room to listen to some hymns and look at some images based on Mark 1:16-20 (Jesus calls the fisherman). Unfortunately we couldn't get the system to work but six of us managed to share some ideas using a laptop instead. The bible study will have a different theme each month and last between 30-45 mins. On 12th September the theme will be on Harvest and will we try out a projector in a lounge instead. If you would like to be involved, please contact June. Visitors to the care home must take a lateral flow test.

Plans for Sunday Afternoons and Evenings at Wallingford Church

The Leadership Team is keen to try out our **Sunday evening services** once again to see if we can attract enough people to make them viable.

They will be on the first Sunday of the month (so that it's easy to remember) and they are: **4 September, 2 October and 6 November.**

Initially they will start at 6:30 pm although the Leadership Team would like to hear your views on whether continuing with that start time works for you. We also hope to be able to organise at least one of those services to include Holy Communion.

The team would also like to give the **Café Church** a few more trials to see if it is a style of worship that people would enjoy and might attract more newcomers and friends from other churches.

Café Church is held in the hall and starts at 3:30 pm with tea, coffee and cakes, followed by a shorter, more informal service and will take place on **9 October and 4 December.**

If you are interested in trying out the cafe style worship being held at Wallingford Methodist Church on Sunday, 9 October and would like a **lift**, June Grunwald intends to go and could offer a lift to 3 more people.

Please attend some of these services if you can and, as importantly, please let one of the stewards know what you think of the plans.

Retreats

June Grunwald

At the end of July I went on a walking retreat at The House of Retreat in Pleshey, Essex. Since my last visit, the house has been upgraded so that most rooms have en-suites and there is now a lovely orangery overlooking the garden. (A pleasant place to sit and enjoy a coffee whilst sewing up all those angels I had knitted!) I had a great time, met some lovely people and enjoyed walking through the Essex countryside.

Like many other places, retreat houses have been badly hit by Covid and a number have closed. But some are beginning to get back to a "new normal" and offer a wide range of retreats. Some offer quiet days, weekends or weeks. Some hold retreats with themes such as gardening, painting, singing or retreats for Advent or Easter. Not all retreats are completely silent although most have spaces for silence in them. Some are happy for a group of friends to book rooms or have separate self-catering accommodation. Some are tiny and some are large and set in acres of grounds.

Over the years I have visited a number of retreat centres. If you are interested in dipping your toe into a retreat, feel free to have a chat with me.

Each November a time is set aside to remember victims and survivors of domestic abuse. I would like to mark this with an on-line service on the circuit YouTube channel, and wondered if there were any people who would like to be part of this. It would entail voice recording a reflection, prayer or reading and emailing it back to me. If you would like to participate please do get in contact with me at selina.nisbett@methodist.org.uk or on 01235 521868. *Deacon Selina*

Homeless Oxfordshire

PSSST..... something exciting is happening. October 8th 2022

Hello, we have some extremely exciting news!

On Saturday October 8th 2022, we will once more be hosting our sleep-out event, Hoxstock, and this year it's even more special because it's our 35th Birthday!

The events' world has been on hold since 2020, so we're thrilled to announce the return of our famous sleepout. With limited places available it is important to sign up as soon as you can.

Sleeping under the stars for one night isn't even close to what people without a home experience. But by joining us at HOXSTOCK we can show love, solidarity, and compassion to those people who face that reality.

With your help we can continue providing life-saving help to those who sleep rough every single night, 365 days a year, in all weathers.

We know that tackling homelessness is about much more than just providing a roof over someone's head and one of our aims is to raise awareness of issues around homelessness and the support that's available to those affected in our county.

Together we have the power to change attitudes and help make homelessness a thing of the past. So, this is your personal invitation to join us and become part of the Team Hox movement. There is no entry fee - all we ask is that you pledge to raise just £200 for Homeless Oxfordshire. These vital funds will help us to continue delivering the much-needed services we provide. Ask your family and friends to sponsor you and help get someone off the streets for good.

There will be lots of fun and entertainment through the night - it is our birthday after all! More details to follow in the coming weeks on our website and social media,

To register your interest please email us: sleepout@homelessoxfordshire.uk

See you there!

Prayer for Ukraine

Loving God, your Son Jesus Christ, wept over Jerusalem.

Today, we weep over Ukraine.

We weep for those uprooted from their homes and lives.

We weep for those cowering in basements.

We weep for those who have witnessed death and destruction on their streets.

We weep for those separated from parents, from children, from spouses and siblings.

We are amazed at the resilience of people seeking to comfort those in need and so we pray for Governments opening up borders so that Ukrainians can have safe passage.

We pray for churches and individuals providing food, clothing and shelter.

We pray for medical workers ensuring that shattered bodies are put back together again.

We pray for ordinary Russians demonstrating and voicing their disapproval of the military actions in Ukraine.

May the Holy Spirit give us the willpower to turn our tears into action also.

May we, through our words, prayers and example pursue the things that make for a just peace in the world today and especially in Ukraine.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray.

Amen

World Peace Day

On Wednesday 21 September from 10 am to 12 noon, Wantage Methodist Chapel will be open to mark the United Nations International Day of Peace. Images, words and music will be projected in the Chapel to mark the day. The day was established by a United Nations resolution in 1981. In 2002 the General Assembly officially declared September 21 as the permanent date for the International Day of Peace. Peace Day has grown to include millions of people in all parts of the world, and each year events are organized to commemorate and celebrate the day.

This year the theme is "End Racism : Build Peace". We invite you to join the efforts of the United Nations as we work towards a world free of racism and racial discrimination. A world where compassion and empathy overcome suspicion and hatred. A world that we can truly be proud of.

Wantage & Grove Street Pastors Annual Report to the 2022 AGM



Hello everyone. Firstly, thank you for reading our new Annual Report, we hope you enjoy the new format and we are very grateful for your support for Wantage and Grove Street Pastors. It's been a roller coaster year for myself and also for the charity, I moved with my family last August to Wantage and prior to that, and subsequently, felt a call from God to be chair of Wantage and Grove Street Pastors. The roller coaster ride carried on with learning the ropes and understanding the charity that I was now chair of, with official duties starting in October at the AGM. It has been a privilege to see what a wonderful charity this is as it seeks to serve, listen to and care for the people of Wantage and Grove. It has been a challenging year as Covid has impacted everything, but I have witnessed first-hand on the streets, as I joined a patrol as an observer, how respected and well known the Street Pastors are! I am looking forward to the year ahead, especially with the exciting project we are going to launch officially in the new academic year. Thank you to everyone who is involved with Wantage & Grove Street Pastors, to those who are prayer support volunteers, volunteer street pastors, to the trustees, to those who give, to Nigel Watt for his hard work as co-ordinator and to all the churches that give financially and support us in so many ways. It really has been a roller coaster ride so far and in reality I look forward to continuing the ride in the next year.

Thank you to all our volunteers whose hard work and dedication has help us achieve another year of Caring, Listening and Helping in our communities. Thank you too to all those individuals and organisations who have supported us in so many ways throughout the last year from prayer and patrols to finances and provision of our base - Thank you!

We are 143 Members, 13 Friends, 12 Partner Churches, 18 Street Pastors, 23 Prayer Support, 6 of 7 Trustees (1 vacancy), Coordinator Nigel Watt, 5 Prayer & Patrol Teams each month

We recruited two new Street Pastor trainees and 3 new Prayer Support Volunteers. We have three Friday teams, two patrolling 8 pm - midnight, one patrolling 10.30 pm - 2.30 am; and two Saturday teams out from 11 pm to 2.30 am.

The year in patrols

	2021/22	2020/21
Patrols	46	14
Hours covered	184	40
Supporting vulnerable	16	0
Calming aggressive	9	1
Flip-flops	2	0
Lollypops	~1140	~40
Water	25	5

People we met

	Male	Female	Total	2020/21
Under 13 yrs	4	1	5	0
13 to 17 yrs	23	28	51	17
18 to 25 yrs	91	65	156	32
25+ years	105	45	150	55
Totals	223	139	362	104

The number of patrols increased this year from 2020/21, which had been affected by COVID-19 lockdowns. Patrols were generally quieter than other years and, due to changes in drinking habits, fewer people were in need of help.

How we helped on the Streets

Following the end of covid lockdowns in March 2021, people started to go out at night again. Large groups began gathering at closing time and often there were scuffles, disagreements and glass bottles thrown. Street Pastors maintained a calming influence, encouraging people to make their way home. On several occasions the police were called to bring the situation under control.

We cared for many vulnerable women who were unwell, upset, had been abandoned or were just waiting for the bus. We also supported several men who were feeling victimised or had been involved in a fight.

As well as giving flip-flops and later, we used our mobile power pack to help charge people's mobile phones.

We spent time chatting to people and hearing about the different situations they face, including a man whose family business had lost lots of money during the pandemic lockdowns and a young man who had recently come out of prison and was starting to get back to work.

It's a real privilege to hear about people's lives, to spend time with them and to encourage them for the future. We prayed for one young man who was nervous about going on a date. He called his friends over and asked us to pray for them to have the peace of God – so we did!

For more information about our activities, check out the Reports page on our website. See bit.ly/wgsp-reports

Community Involvement

Wantage & Grove Street Pastors works alongside and supports a number of local, regional and national groups. However, our local Community Alcohol Partnership has not met for some time. We regularly contribute to the Neighbourhood Action Group, which seeks to identify and resolve issues that arise in our local communities.

Street Pastor initiatives in our region share training events, best practice and resources. Coordinators meet together throughout the year to organise a local training programme and to support and encourage each other.

Charity Overview

Trustees

Paul Gander - Chair (appointed October 2021)

Marj Lunn - Secretary

Michael Elliott - Treasurer

Steve West

Sarah Goodall

Hilary Moore

Vacancy for one more Trustee

Coordinator

Nigel Watt (part-time paid role)

Street Pastor Sundays

Vale Elim (online) - 30 May 2021

St John's, Grove - 27 June 2021

Wantage Community Church - 30 January 2022

Wantage Baptist Church - 6 February 2022

Events & Fundraising

Sharon Tedford concert - 15 October 2021

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Anne Cheeseman - appointed March 2021

2021 AGM

Our 2020/21 AGM took place in October at the local Cornerstone Cafe. After the formal business, we had a fabulous and challenging question from one of our Street Pastors who had noticed a decrease in opportunities to assist and interact with people particularly since Shush closed. He was asking what changes might we make to remain relevant in our community? As well as continuing our efforts to start Afternoon Patrols, the Looking to the Future section of this report will give you an insight into an interesting and exciting new initiative we hope to launch soon.

CIO Progress

Members endorsed a proposal to transfer Wantage & Grove Street Pastors from an Unincorporated Group to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) at our 2020 AGM. The paperwork was duly handed to the Ascension Trust legal department to process and submit to the Charities Commission. As yet we are still waiting to hear back although we have been given to understand that we are in amongst a large backlog of applications which are being dealt with by a reduced number of staff.

Financial overview

Michael Elliott - Treasurer



We ended the 2021-22 financial year with a surplus of £4,942 compared with a deficit of £1,788 in the previous financial year. The table below summarises our income and expenditure.

Our income from grants were significantly higher this year. This is mainly because last year's grant from Oxfordshire CC was reduced because it was not paid when we were not patrolling due to Covid restrictions. We also received some smaller but welcome grants from other supporters of Wantage & Grove Street Pastors.

Covid-19 restrictions continued to reduced the income from individual supporters as for most of the year we were unable to hold fundraising events or visit our supporting churches. However, we are grateful to those supporters who give by standing order (18 in total) who have maintained their giving at the same level as last year.

We are especially grateful for a substantial one-off donation from one of our supporting churches.

Expenditure has increased, partly due to operating more patrols and inflation, but mostly because we were now able to resume training especially of new street pastors. We were also able to support another local SP initiative by paying their Ascension Trust licence fee.

We are grateful for the continuing support we receive from members, the public and charitable bodies, especially at this time when many are experiencing reductions in their income together with greater demands on available charitable funds. Our work continues to be recognised and valued at all levels within the community. Thank you!

Income		2021/22	2020/21
SP training contributions	Uniform & training fees from new Street Pastors	0	0
Church support	Grove Free Evangelical Church, St John's Grove, Wantage Christian Fellowship	9,585	2,870
Grants	Oxfordshire County Council, TV Police Community Fund, Penuel and Kingsgrove Trusts	6,200	2,900
From Individuals	18 standing orders, and one-off donations	3,090	3,350
Events	Sharon Tedford concert	645	0
Collecting boxes	Cornerstone, Kings Centre and various pubs	197	134
Gift aid recovery		445	629
Total income		£20,162	£9,883
Expenditure			
Staff costs		9,808	9,629
Cost of fundraising	Sharon Tedford concert	375	250
Training & Safeguarding		1,027	38
Operating costs	Flip-flops and lollipops, refreshments for those on duty, kit, mobile 'phone top-ups, printing, etc.	729	512
Ascension Trust fee	15% of income (except OCC grant) paid to Ascension Trust	2,385	1,173
Donation	To neighbouring SP initiative	800	0
Bank charges		96	69
Total expenditure		£15,220	£11,671
Closing Bank Balance		£20,379	£15,437

Reserves Policy

To maintain reserves of half our annual cost of operations.

Looking to the Future

Growing Our Online Presence

Coronavirus taught us many things; especially the need to put what we do online to enable more people to engage with the church. There are many social media platforms available that reach their own audience. We want to grow our online presence on a number of media platforms to:

- ▶ Encourage the church to join us in prayer and support us through volunteering and financial giving.
- ▶ Engage with the local community to raise our profile and bless people with encouraging messages.
- ▶ Connect with 18-25 year olds who we meet on the streets and provide helpful information about the local night-time economy.
- ▶ Reach out to younger people to let them know who we are and what we do in Wantage and Grove.

We hope to recruit someone at 3 hrs/week for this role, starting September 2022.

Growing Our Prayer and Patrol Teams

Volunteers are fundamental to the Street Pastor ministry; not least of all those who go out as Street Pastors and those who support them in prayer and with refreshments at the base. We will always have to push forward with recruitment in order to maintain our presence in Wantage and Grove and to continue to bring the love of Christ to our communities.

But we don't just want to maintain what we've got - we want to grow! With only 5 teams going out each month, there is plenty of space in the calendar for more teams - a third Saturday team, for example.

We also would like to start some afternoon patrols to support Wantage while there are lots of young people moving through the town after school. But we will need your help if we are to achieve these things.

Trustee Goals for 2022/23

Each year our Management Committee sets goals to help focus our efforts and to ensure that we continue to serve our community well. We centre our goals around the key areas of delivering patrols, finances and relationships.

▶ Delivering Patrols:

- Increase the number of volunteers, Street Pastors and Prayer Support Volunteers
- Hold Street Pastor Sundays in each of the partner churches
- Set up an additional Saturday team
- Investigate and possibly initiate on-line street pastor presence
- Pursue daytime patrols

▶ Finance:

- Secure funding to cover our costs

▶ Relationships:

- Complete the transition of WGSP into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation
- Recruit new Trustee, particularly a Fundraising Lead

Call for urgent action on the cost of living crisis

Former Prime Minister Gordon Brown has joined with 56 faith groups, charities and politicians to call on the government to take urgent action to bridge the cost of living gap faced by the lowest income families.

The call responds to a report, written by poverty expert and Loughborough University Professor Donald Hirsch which reveals the gap between the support the government is currently offering to households and the anticipated rise in living costs. The report concludes that the current flat-rate payments offered by the government will fall at least £1,600 short of making up for recent changes to living costs and benefits faced by a couple with two children.

The report assesses the extent to which cost of living measures announced in May will compensate for three blows experienced by millions of low income families: cuts in Universal Credit, inadequate uprating of benefits with accelerating inflation in April and the further rise in the energy cap anticipated in October. It shows that the package of support measures falls well short of making up for these losses, even with the October increase in the cap.

The groups, supported by Gordon Brown, are urging the Government to consider appropriate measures to bridge the shortfall in family finances, which is only anticipated to rise into the winter months. Some charities are calling for benefits to be uprated in line with inflation, and for debt deductions from Universal Credit to be paused.

The report is endorsed by 56 charities, faith groups and politicians, many of whom are providing front-line support for families hit by rising costs, including the Trussell Trust, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Child Poverty Action Group as well as the Methodist Church, the Bishop of Durham, the Hindu Council UK and the Muslim Council of Britain. It has also been endorsed by Welsh First Minister Mark Drakeford, Metro Mayors, Tracy Brabin of West Yorkshire, Andy Burnham of Greater Manchester, Jamie Driscoll of North Tyne Combined Authority, Sadiq Khan of Greater London, Dan Norris of West of England, Steve Rotherham of Liverpool City Region and Mayor of Bristol Marvin Rees.

The report contains stories of first-hand experience of the impact of the rise in cost of living. Lowri receives Universal Credit and cares for her father and daughter. Her food and fuel bills have doubled, and she's had to sell her daughter's bike to make ends meet: "I have spent the last 5 years living in survival mode, just about surviving each day, worrying about money constantly. I am emotionally and mentally exhausted living like this. It is not living, merely existing. There is just no way people can manage to pay all their bills, and all we are doing is existing to pay bills. Terrified is an understatement."

Professor Hirsch said: "The shortfall families are facing between skyrocketing costs and the support government have offered continues to grow. Families were falling behind with the anticipated rise in costs even when the measures were announced, and since then the food and energy costs forecast for this winter have continued to rise sharply.

The flat rate emergency payments announced so far leave families with children particularly far behind, because they are not sensitive to the extra costs that children bring. A new package needs to address the fact that by the autumn, living costs could have risen by as much as 14% for low income families, who have received only a 3% increase in benefits. An additional across-the-board uprating to Universal Credit and other benefits would address family need far more effectively than further flat rate payments.”

The former Prime Minister Gordon Brown commissioned the report, after facing the realities of rising costs alongside churches and charities in the UK:

“This is a crisis that Britain hasn’t seen in decades. The most urgent and immediate challenge for the incoming Prime Minister is to ensure that families with children and disabled people aren’t neglected to struggle through the challenges ahead. We need targeted support for families on the lowest-incomes, not just cuts in taxes or flat rate payments which don’t account for the specific needs of people on the brink of poverty. There should be no argument that a permanent increase in Universal Credit is the only way to take a sure step towards a solution.

"This crisis goes far beyond politics; this is a moral issue - our responsibilities to our neighbours and in particular to those who have the least and whose needs are the greatest. The incoming Prime Minister has a moral responsibility to ensure that everyone has enough to live on, through this crisis and beyond. We cannot be at ease when millions are ill at ease and cannot rest content as long as there is so much discontent. Our society will be stronger when we help the weak and will be richer when we help the poor."

Revd Graham Thompson, President of the Methodist Church in Britain, who have endorsed the report, said:

“Churches and other faith groups are on the front line of offering support to families who are already being swept under by rising costs. We know that millions of families aren’t simply making hard choices between heating and eating, but are having to go without both completely. If people aren’t give enough support to live, we don’t dare to imagine what will happen this winter. The government now have a duty to step up and take firm and long-lasting action to ensure not only that this crisis doesn’t deepen, but that it doesn’t happen again.”

The report is based on figures drawn at the end of July 2022. With the anticipated announcement from OFGEM regarding the rise in the energy price cap, the figures presented in this report are only likely to rise, leaving families in a worse financial position.

Read the report See www.jpit.uk/enoughtolive

Listen to the podcast Gordon Brown on the cost of living crisis

Campaign

Churches and individuals can download social media graphics to share at <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Ohs2x2xBESYkyasWHVlzQuY9bo1-Wp28?usp=sharing>

Childrey

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

11th September 11:00 am Service of Holy Communion led by **Rev Keith Underhill**

18th September 11:00 am **Harvest Festival at St Mary's**

25th September 11:00 am Led by **Stephen Atkinson**

On Monday 4th July members of Childrey Methodist Chapel attended St Bartholomew's Church, Ducklington to witness the Service of Institution, Induction & Installation of the Rev Andrea Colbrook as Rector at Ducklington with Hardwick by the Bishop of Dorchester.

As you may be aware Andrea has just completed 3 years of ministry in the Ridgeway Benifice based mainly at St Mary's, Childrey. During that time St Mary's and the Chapel have worked and co-operated together in a true spirit of ecumenism, most notably in the establishment of a baby group, started by Andrea and St Mary's which meets weekly in Childrey Chapel.

The service was well attended and most enjoyable as were the refreshments after (a proper Chapel tea as we would say!) We wish Andrea all the best in her new role and pray for her in her new venture.

Prayers

We remember in our prayers:

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

The Stanley family.

Keith, Joy Gee, Jean and all members and supporters of Childrey Methodist Chapel.

The congregation at St Mary's, Childrey and the people of the village.

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

Wantage & Grove Street Pastors

Quiz & Curry Night

Join us for our Quiz & Curry Night on **Saturday 19th November** at Wantage Methodist Church. Put the date in your diary and get working on your team of 6 people.

Raising funds for Wantage & Grove Street Pastors! More details coming soon!

Grove

Sunday worship in church is open for all at 10:45 am and you are invited to come and worship with us. The seating is well spaced, the windows are open, and face masks are optional.

Our next **Coffee Morning** is on **Saturday, 3rd September** from 10 am in the Church. Our hosts will be Rachel Niblett and her family. Proceeds from the morning are for the Special Care Baby Unit at the J.R. Hospital. We hope you can join us for tea/coffee, cake and a chat.

Tuesday Fellowship. On Tuesday afternoon, **6th September**, 2:15 pm we will be meeting at the Cornerstone Grove for a Cream Tea. This is in memory of Katie King who kindly left us some money in her will and always loved going to Cornerstone. All welcome .

This will also be the last meeting on the 1st Tuesday of the month. We will then meet on the **3rd Tuesday of the month**.

Film Club is on **Friday, 16th September** at 7:30 pm in the Meeting Room.

We will be showing the film "**The man who knew infinity**".

When self-taught mathematical genius Srinivasa Ramanujan fails out of college, he does not give up hope. Determined to pursue his passion, he contacts Professor G.H. Hardy and is invited to attend Trinity College.

Cast: Dev Patel, Jeremy Irons, Devika Bhise, Toby Jones, Stephen Fry

All are welcome. The roof ventilation will be open. Masks are optional. Admission is free; a small donation helps to cover the cost of licences and DVDs.

Craft Group meets 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 each give a donation of £1 to Cornerstone and buy a drink of our choice.

Communication Dolls for the Ukraine.

We now have a pattern for the Communication Dolls, which have a sad face on one side and a happy one on the other. They are proving very popular with the children, helping them to express their feelings when they are unable to make themselves understood in other ways. The knitting is straightforward. Stuffing is available if needed – please ask Jenny Marriott for a pattern if you would like to have a go.

Donation Boxes **Thank you** to everyone who continues to contribute either to the Food Bank or the Ukraine Appeal through the donation boxes in our entrance hall. Your contributions are very much appreciated and do make a difference to people. There is a list on the notice board of items which are useful for the Ukraine Appeal.

Thank you for your support for the recent Saturday Coffee Mornings held in church.

The July Coffee Morning raised £149 for the Guides and the Coffee Morning held in August raised £186.70 for Methodist Homes for the Aged (MHA). Thank you.

Church family news: Nicholas Richards has shared the following with us.

“I am going to the Falkland Islands on 22nd August for 2 years, to continue teaching primary-aged children. I will be teaching children who live on remote farms across the islands but are too young to stay in the boarding house in Stanley, the capital. I am really excited about this new adventure and the possibilities it brings, including many photo opportunities with the unique and plentiful wildlife.”

We all wish Nicholas well in his new venture and our thoughts and prayers go with him. We look forward to hearing how he finds life there.

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 times we have been living through. We trust that, with care, life becomes more settled and normal again.

Ride and Stride for the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust is on **Saturday, 10th September**, when churches all over the county will be open to visit. Do take the opportunity to look inside churches which you haven't been in before. People will make you most welcome. Any offers to Ride or Stride? Funds raised through sponsorship are divided equally between the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust (who make grants to churches for repair/refurbishment work - we benefited when our rebuilding work was done) and your own church. If you think you might like to take part please contact Lynda Culley, who can give you the relevant information and also let us know so that we can appeal for sponsors for you through the notice sheet.

Special date to note:

Our Harvest Festival is on Sunday, 2nd October. We are planning a Bring & Share Lunch to follow morning worship. Details of this will appear in the Weekly Notice sheet during September. Gifts for the Harvest will be given to the Wantage & Grove Foodbank, so should be of the non-perishable variety such as tins, packets and dried goods. A list of useful goods needed will be included in the Weekly Notice Sheet nearer the time.

Wantage

God in love unites us

Dear All,

You will no doubt recall that in the summer of 2021 the Methodist Conference passed a number of resolutions in connection with the report “God in love unites us’.

Amongst other things, this granted permission for individual Methodist Churches to conduct same-sex weddings on their premises, subject of course, to the approval of the Church Council acting in their role as Managing Trustees. Also included was a conscience clause for Methodist Ministers allowing them to decline being the authorised person for such services if they wished.

Discussions and open meetings around the “God in love unites us” report took place within our Circuit and this church, giving an opportunity to those who wished to share their views, hopes and concerns.

Our Church Council met on Wednesday 27th July 2022 to consider how as a church we wished to respond to these changes.

As you would expect, our Church Council reflected carefully and prayerfully on this issue. The vote on the resolutions was undertaken by a secret ballot. The Church Council voted unanimously in favour of same-sex marriage, thereby allowing same-sex weddings to take place on our church premises.

As your Minister I am happy to conduct same-sex weddings.

We are currently in the process of completing the necessary paperwork to submit to the Superintendent Registrar of the Oxford Registration District.

This decision is a recognition of who we are and a practical demonstration of the kind of church we seek, under God’s guidance, to be, building on our strong tradition of being a welcoming, accepting, understanding and inclusive church.

We will of course, be informing our ecumenical partners via the Wantage and Grove Church Partnership of our decision as well as making it known to our town and wider community.

I am aware however that some may find our decision difficult.

The Methodist Connexion speaks powerfully about the truth contained within the notion of “living with contradictory convictions”. This recognises that although not everyone agrees on everything, we nonetheless, recognise the importance of the truths which bind us together as well as the issues which currently divide us.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me.

With love and God Bless

Keith

Morning Service 11th September

We will be doing things a little differently from usual, and it may be helpful to know the arrangements in advance. It will be a Local Arrangement Service that, instead of being taken by a Minister or Local Preacher, will be prepared by the Tuesday Bible Study Group, and we look forward to being led in worship by some of the group's members.

It will be a unique and special occasion for another reason too – **we will be celebrating Graham's 100th birthday!** This will take place in the hall, but not until Keith has been able to return from leading Childrey's Morning Service which doesn't begin until 11 o'clock.

So, this is the plan for all who are able to stay: we will enjoy some additional singing together. The hymns will be chosen from Graham's list of favourites. Some of his good friends will also talk, for just a few minutes each, to recount their recollections of times shared with Graham, and what makes him special to them. At a guess, that's likely to take us up till about mid-day, by which time we hope that Keith will be with us.

Then, everyone who wishes to do so will be warmly invited to follow Graham into the Hall. Keith will present him with his birthday card, and when he has blown out the candles on his cake, coffee will be served. So, we'll be at church longer, and receive our drink and cake later than usual. But hopefully, the joy of the occasion will make the wait worthwhile.

Harvest Festival

This year we will celebrate our harvest festival on **2nd October**. Please check weekly notices for updated information.

Gifts - The decision has been made to give all gifts to the Wantage & Grove Food Bank. That means we are asking for **non-perishable goods only please**. See the Food Bank article below for more detail on how to support this group. Gifts can be brought to church on Saturday 1st October or on the day of Harvest Festival. Please, no fresh food. Thank you.

Decorating the church - The church will be open on Saturday 1st October between 10 am and 12 noon for the decoration of the church. Jan Abraham will be co-ordinating the floral decorations. Donations of flowers and foliage, preferably home-grown and from your garden, will be much appreciated. If those could be brought along as close to 10 am as possible that would be much appreciated so Jan knows what there is to work with. Offers of help with the decorating of the church will be welcomed. Thank you.

As we begin a new Methodist year together and look forward to all that we will share in the months ahead, it seems fitting to also reflect with thankfulness on so many blessings we have received in reaching this point.

In celebrating **Graham's 100th birthday**, we acknowledge all that he has meant, and means now, to our church family past and present. We thank God for Graham's many gifts and skills, and for his use of them all in ways that have brought blessings to us for so many years.

A day after Graham reaches 100, **Alison and Clive** reach their Silver Wedding Anniversary. They met each other through our church. In offering them our congratulations on this special occasion, we also thank them both for all that they have given back to us, in so many areas of our church life, during their 25 years together, especially Clive's long service as Church Treasurer.

On our first Sunday in September, not only will it mark the start of **Keith's 7th** year as our Minister, it will be a day of family celebration for him and **Liz**. Keith will baptise his first grandchild, William, and we welcome Amy and Dan and their family and friends joining us for worship on this happy occasion

When the A level results appeared, it was an occasion of much joy for **Charlotte Worth** and the family. Charlotte achieved four A* passes, and so has more than met the grades she needed to confirm her place at Liverpool University to study medicine. Congratulations from us all, Charlotte, and our prayers will be with you as you begin this exciting first step towards your chosen career.

On a sad note, we were sorry to learn that **Tony Walker** has recently died. We have good memories of Tony and his family, who were part of our church for several years, and thank God for the times we shared together. We ask for God's strength and comfort to sustain Heather, Stephen, and Robin and their families, and assure them of our love and our prayers.

Jane Kent's father died a few weeks ago, and we offer our love and support to Jane, Iain, James, Emily and Alice, and remember Jane's Mum and the rest of her family too. We pray that God will hold them all in his love, and bring them comfort in their time of sadness.

During the summer holidays, **Peter Bainbridge** had a cycling accident in which he sustained extensive injuries to his arm and shoulder. Peter has expressed his thanks for the prayers and encouragement he has received. We hope that he recovers well and that he and his two sons Adam and Euan may be able to worship with us again soon.

Directory Update: The new landline telephone number for Trevor and Sheila Johnson is available from the Editor or Ann

Church Flowers: For many years, until the lockdown in 2020, we had a system that worked well in ensuring that there were some flowers in church each Sunday, and they were usually taken to someone afterwards as part of our expression of pastoral caring. Since re-opening for Sunday worship two years ago, it hasn't been possible to re-establish that practice, although the provision of flowers and the gift of money by

a few people has been greatly appreciated. Requests in earlier editions of the Newsletter have generated only a small response. Now that a greater number of people are once again worshipping in person, it would be wonderful if we could re-establish the rota so that the provision of flowers is once again covered by a larger number of people. In hopeful anticipation, I have put up the blank list in its usual place on the notice board in the link corridor. The alternative to finding enough people volunteering for this task may mean that there will not always be flowers in church for our Sunday morning services.

Praying for each other: In September the people listed below, who are on **Eileen Rennie's** pastoral list, will be included in the prayer time at the Tuesday Bible Study Group: Janet & Richard Browning, Joan & Ed Clipsham, Sue Haithwaite, Jean Manners, Gill Morton, Gill & Gordon Skidmore and Jenny Whymark

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 the Tuesday Bible Study Group.

Prayer list

Eileen Rennie

Loving God, we come each day to meet you in prayer with thankful hearts to praise you for all that you have done and provided for us and for your continuing love and support in all that we face. We thank you for the restful summer period in which we have had time to reflect and plan ahead for our continuing faith journey. You are a faithful God and we ask for your guidance as we begin another Methodist Year. Remind us how important it is to read and study your word, to pray and to listen for your answer as we endeavour to spread the good news of your love for all and to grow your Church of faithful followers of your way. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Please pray for:

Bethan Grant, Jane, Alan Bunn and family, Anne, Carol Mackinder, Emma Wright and family, Caroline, Alastair Wright and family, John Morton, Anne Hatto, Gordon and Marina, Jane and Brian Soffe, June, Catharine, Richard in York, Jill, Julie and Nigel Bunney, Diane's daughter Julie, 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 September Newsletter, please let me know by **Friday 16th September** in order for me to meet the Newsletter deadline.

Eileen Rennie Telephone 01235 224284, or email eileenrennie@icloud.com

Prayer box

On the outside wall near the double doors to the Hall building, is a poster with the words: ***“Would you like us to pray for you?”***

It doesn't matter how big or small your prayer is, God can help”

The invitation is for anyone to place their request into the Prayer Box, and our promise is to respond by praying for them. Preachers and Worship Leaders will be notified and asked to include the requests in their prayers of intercession. **In addition**, we would like to set up a prayer support group, so that its members can also respond. Volunteers who would like to be part of the support group will receive information about the requests via WhatsApp or email. [Confidentiality rules will, of course, be agreed in advance]

Please send Ann a WhatsApp or email message if you would like to be part of the group, or let any of the Stewards know.

Kids@Church

Jane, Cath and Dave

We start meeting again on **Sunday 18th September** at 9:30 am.

Kids@church is an informal service for primary aged children and their families. We meet every third Sunday of the month at 9:30 am.

If you would like further details please contact Cath Worth 01235 770151.

YMOSES – Sunday 11th September between 7:00 – 8:00 pm

Tuesday Afternoon Prayer and Study Group

Eileen Rennie

The Group will resume again on **6th September**.

In July we concluded our Bible Month Study of Isaiah, Keith came to talk to us and once again inspired us with a meaningful message. We have had a short break during the summer period and now look forward to meeting again from 6th September.

From September we will meet in the Hall at 2 pm each Tuesday. This is an open friendly group who meet to study and pray each week so please feel free to come along and join us any week. You can be assured of a welcome. We are still mindful of everyone's safety and vulnerability so we continue to wear masks when necessary and have the chairs spaced and the windows and doors open for fresh air. Please be assured if you cannot meet with us that you are remembered in prayer.

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.

Dates for September are as follows:

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|----------------------------|---|
| 6 th September | Planning studies for the future and our usual prayer time to include Monthly Prayer List. |
| 13 th September | Individuals within the group will share their favourite Bible Reading/Verse, Prayer or Hymn and tell us a little about it and/or why it is special to them. |

20th September Val Broadbent will lead us in a message from Nehemiah.

27th September Keith will join us to inspire us with his thoughts.

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

Bible Study at Elmbrook Care Home

June Grunwald is leading a new monthly bible study at the new care home in Grove Road. The first meeting was on Monday 8th August, where we had hoped to use the equipment in the cinema room to listen to some hymns and look at some images based on Mark 1:16-20 (Jesus calls the fisherman). Unfortunately we couldn't get the system to work but six of us managed to share some ideas using a laptop instead. The bible study will have a different theme each month and last between 30-45 mins. On 12th September the theme will be on Harvest and will we try out a projector in a lounge instead.

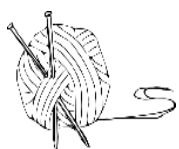
If you would like to be involved, please contact June. Visitors to the care home must take a lateral flow test.

World Peace Day

On Wednesday 21st September from 10 am to 12 noon, Wantage Methodist Chapel will be open to mark the United Nations International Day of Peace. Images, words and music will be projected in the Chapel to mark the day. The day was established by a United Nations resolution in 1981. In 2002 the General Assembly officially declared September 21st as the permanent date for the International Day of Peace. Peace Day has grown to include millions of people in all parts of the world, and each year events are organized to commemorate and celebrate the day.

This year the theme is "End Racism : Build Peace". We invite you to join the efforts of the United Nations as we work towards a world free of racism and racial discrimination. A world where compassion and empathy overcome suspicion and hatred. A world that we can truly be proud of.

June Grunwald, would be pleased to hear from anyone are able to "chapel sit" for an hour on Wednesday, 21st September in order to welcome visitors.



Knit & Chat

will meet on 5th and 19th September.

Carolyn Roche, 01235 764310

Community Drop In Café

June Grunwald

Numbers at the café fluctuated during July and August. Some were put off by the very hot weather and some were on holiday. It turned out that our church hall doesn't get very hot in the mornings and so it wasn't that unpleasant, until, that is, we walked home in the midday heat (like mad dogs and English men!) Numbers at the café varied between 20-40 people. Some regulars enjoyed the jigsaw puzzle and again we have been pleased to welcome new people too.

The café does not charge for coffee or home-made cakes, but each week we have "piggy banks" for donations to a charity. From April to June we supported Through the Roof (a Christian charity supporting people with disabilities). The amount raised was in fact £400 (an increase on the amount mentioned in the July Newsletter). In July and August donations will go to Wantage Methodist Church who have provided a free home to the café since 2019. The amount raised will be around £220.

The cafe is open every Monday from 9 am to 12 noon. All are welcome. Our thanks to all the volunteers on the rota who make the café such a welcoming place to come to. If you would like to learn more about the cafe please see June Grunwald or Eileen Rennie.

FOOD BANK (<https://www.wantageandgrovefoodbank.org.uk/>) - ongoing donations of food or money

The demand for food bank parcels has been at an unprecedented level this year and is expected to increase as autumn and winter set in. Consequently, there will be a **box available for donations of non-perishable food stuffs in church** each week from now on. Also, if you would like to gift money then there are two ways of giving financial assistance. Cash and cheques can be put in an envelope marked "Wantage and Grove Food Bank" and taken to either Cornerstone in Grove or The King's Centre shop in Wantage. Cheques should be made out to Wantage and Grove Food Bank. If you would like a receipt then please include your name and address in the envelope. If a BACS transfer is preferred, then please email wantageandgrovefoodbank@gmail.com for the bank details needed. Thank you.

Things most needed at the moment are custard (ready made), sugar (small bags) and treats (sweets, chocolate etc).

Basic category donations : pasta, rice, pasta sauce, tins of fruit, tins of tomatoes, tinned vegetables, tinned meat, tinned fish, tinned pulses, baked beans, tinned spaghetti, cartons of juice, cartons of milk, jam, coffee, tea, biscuits, hot chocolate etc.

Miscellaneous category : things like Nutella, peanut butter, ketchup, cooking oil.

Toilet Twinning

Now that church attendance has returned almost to normal it may be worth remembering that there are collecting boxes for the charity "Toilet Twinning" in each of the church toilets. Before the pandemic these boxes collected a lot of money to enable toilets to be installed and sanitation improved in the under-developed world. Very little money has been collected in the past two years. Maybe it is time to start dropping small change into the boxes again? Over the years leading up to the pandemic the church "purchased" over a dozen toilets for villages all over the world.

Holy Communion and the Benevolence Fund

Up until the start of the Covid pandemic it had been usual at Wantage Methodist Church to hold a collection at Communion Services, separate from the normal church collection, for the "Benevolent Fund" (more properly named the Benevolence Fund)

There is a long-standing tradition in Methodist Churches of maintaining a Benevolence Fund, collected and distributed principally for "the relief of poverty and distress" in the local community. The minister may use it at his or her discretion to give emergency financial support to individuals or families whether church members or not. Additionally, the Church Council is required to review the fund at each autumn meeting, and, if there is a surplus to expected needs, to decide how to use it. In practice, at Wantage, we have used the surplus to provide donations to local charities and other good causes.

This collection was suspended during the pandemic but Church Council has agreed that it will commence again at Communion Services from September onwards as a "retiring" collection. At those services, in addition to the plates at the church entrances, which are used for donations to the church general fund, there will be collecting boxes in which members and visitors may, if they wish, make donations to the Benevolent Fund. Any donations made at refreshments after the morning service are already being added to the Benevolent Fund.

Before the pandemic most of the money collected for the Benevolent Fund was distributed to local charities. However, there had been an increasing trend for modest donations to families and individuals who are suffering financial hardship. This trend is likely to increase as our society moves further into austerity through the increasing price of fuel and other inflationary pressures.

What is happening on the premises at present?

Sunday	9:30 am	Kids@Church	Monthly on the 3 rd Sunday
	10:30 am	Morning Worship	In person and on Zoom Weekly
	Evening	YMOSES	Monthly on the 2 nd Sunday

Monday	Morning	Drop-in Café	in the Hall	Weekly
	Afternoon	Knit & Chat	in the Chapel	1 st & 3 rd Week each month

Tuesday	Afternoon	Tuesday Prayer and Study Group	in the Hall	Weekly
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Friday	Afternoon	Caritas Choirs	(in school term)
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Users All in the Hall

Monday	Evening	Slimming World
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Tuesday	Morning	MIND
	Evening	My Life, My Choice (Parlour)
	Evening	Wantage Camera Club (from 13 th September)

Wednesday	Evening	Wantage Stage Musical
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Thursday	Midday	KAWI	3 rd week each month
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	Tea time	"Chop & Chat" (5:30pm to 8:30 pm in September & October)	
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Friday	Morning	Mother & Toddlers
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Saturday	Morning	Dads Out	1 st week each month
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Specials

September 24 th	Afternoon/evening	Down2Earth	Hall
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October 13 th	Evening	?Wantage Music Festival AGM
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DIARY for SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 3rd 10:00 am **Coffee Morning** at Grove

Monday 5th 2:00 pm **Knit & Chat** at Wantage

Saturday 10th **RIDE & STRIDE**

Sunday 11th 7:00 pm **YMOSES**

Wednesday 14th 7:30 pm **Circuit Meeting** at Milton

Friday 16th 7:30 pm **Film Club** at Grove **"The man who knew infinity"**

Sunday 18th 9:30 am **Kids@Church** at Wantage

DEADLINE for OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

Monday 19th 2:00 pm **Knit & Chat** at Wantage

Wednesday 21st 10:00 to Noon **World Peace Day** reflections at Wantage

OCTOBER

Sunday 2nd **Grove Harvest Festival**
Wantage Harvest Festival

SERVICES during SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 4 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Rev Keith Underhill
	This service will include the sacrament of Baptism		
	10:45 am	Grove	Peter Hemmings
Sunday 11 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Local Arrangements
	10:45 am	Grove	Local Arrangements
	11:00 am	Childrey	Rev Keith Underhill
	This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion		
Sunday 18 th	9:30 am	Wantage	Kids@Church
	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Rev John Anderson
	This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion		
	10:45 am	Grove	Rev Keith Underhill
	This service will include the sacrament of Holy Communion		
	11:00 am	Childrey	Harvest Festival at St Mary's
Sunday 25 th	10:30 am	Wantage (shared on Zoom)	Rev Keith Underhill
	This service will include the sacrament of Baptism		
	10:45 am	Grove	Carol Sturt
	11:00 am	Childrey	Stephen Atkinson