

Wantage & Abingdon Circuit

CHILDREY, GROVE & WANTAGE SECTOR



CGW NEWS



JUNE 2024

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Contributions for the **next Newsletter** (July/August) should be sent to the editor by email, phone or in writing by **Sunday 23rd June 2024**

e-mail : wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com

Tel : 01235 766655 / 07710 214601

Sunday Services and Church Activities

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

Grove web site is found from www.wantab.org.uk
Wantage web site www.wantagemethodist.org.uk
Circuit web site www.wantab.org.uk

CGW News Contribution deadline dates – 2024

Summer (July/August)	Sunday 23 rd June
September	Sunday 18 th August
October	Sunday 22 nd September
November	Sunday 20 th October

From the Manse.....

With some of Liz's American cousins recently staying with us for a few days it was an opportunity to unearth the photo albums (from the times before smart phones and digital cameras) and to be reminded of family (gone but not forgotten) and of previous times spent together both here in the UK as well as in the States.

Searching through numerous tomes I came across a couple of photos that were taken at a church Garden Party at Parkway Methodist Church in Bristol where Liz and I worshipped whilst I was doing my ministerial training. In fact, we lived in what had been the church caretaker's flat above the church hall in the midst of a huge car park.

These snapshots show me throwing wet sponges at one of our friends who had his head through a wooden board of an outline of Dennis the Menace. Said friend, is now a member of the Connexional Team!

In so many ways that image captured in time, doesn't seem so long ago and although my hair is now grey and there are increasing signs of my body getting older, in myself I still feel in my 'twenties'. A feeling that many of you will no doubt also recognise and experience.

Much has happened in those intervening years, both good and bad and the experiences from those decades have helped to make and shape me and as I reflect on all that has happened, I know that God has been with me.

I am reminded of the words of Nahum Tate (1652-1715) who in his hymn based on Psalm 34 boldly proclaims;

"Through all the changing scenes of life,
in trouble and in joy,
the praises of my God shall still
my heart and tongue employ."

I will in the next few days send copies of these photos to my friend as a reminder of those times back in the 1980's and hope that he like me, will smile and in doing so give thanks even as we acknowledge God with us in the here and now.

With love and God Bless

Keith

Stepping out with Noah in June

There will be one walk this month which will take place on Sunday 30th June at 2:30pm. We will meet outside the Wantage Manse, and the details of the walk will be sent out nearer the time. The walk will be between 3-4 miles.

Wantage & Grove Church Partnership

Joint Service and AGM

Time and Date - 4pm Sunday 9th June.

Venue - St John the Baptist, Grove



Social justice and evangelism webinar: Finding Jesus on the streets. 10 June, 7pm

This webinar is for anyone interested in exploring the most sustainable and impactful ways to do mission. God invites all of us to join in with the work of Kingdom building in our local communities, what does that mean for us? Come along and hear stories, share stories, and explore how 'love in action' is at the intersection of justice work and evangelism. [Book your ticket.](#)

International Cafe Didcot

Continuing by popular demand

July dates:

Thursday 6th, 13th, 20th

11:30 am to 1:00 pm

The Hub

Didcot Baptist Church

43 Wantage Road

Didcot, OX11 0BS

A friendly welcome
English practice
Refreshments
Arts and crafts
Signposts to advice

Organised by Didcot Churches Refugee Welcome

Cornerstone News – June 2024



Join the team

We are blessed with a very friendly team made up of a small team of paid staff and a large team of volunteers. We currently have one paid cook vacancy for 9.15-2.30 pm Monday, Thursday and Friday.

Our volunteer shifts are just two hours long and we are looking to cover a number of regular gaps on our rota for serving in the café and helping in our Christian Bookshop. Our Saturday shifts would suit young people 15 or over looking to complete their DofE Awards. If you are interested in any of these roles, either call or email our Manager Sarah (details below) or why not drop in and meet our team?

Monthly hot meal special

We will be serving Chicken wrapped in Bacon with seasonal vegetables on **Wednesday 29th May** at 12.30 pm – please do book in advance so that we know how many to cater for.

Outside catering

As we get quieter in the café during May & June, we have more capacity to supply outside catering for your events. We can cater all size of events from a tray of sandwiches for a meeting to a full cold buffet for up to 100 people, – please contact us for more information.

Meal vouchers

We did our Free Breakfasts slightly differently in the Easter School Holidays, handing our vouchers to be redeemed from our marble jar. These vouchers are valid till the end of the summer so if you know a family who would benefit, let us know. If you want to contribute – ask at the till about buying some marbles.

Fathers Day – 15th June

Looking ahead we have cards and items suitable as gifts for Fathers such as mugs, pens and socks.

Bookshop promotions

Our new consignment of books has arrived and will be on offer until late July. Do come and browse. We also have a large selection of children's books on special offer.

AGM

Our AGM will be held on **Monday 17th June** at 7.30 pm. Join us for light refreshments and a chance to review our year.

Prayer breakfasts

Our monthly prayer breakfasts continue on the second Saturday of each month. The next one will be on **Saturday 8th June** at 8.30 am and I look forward to you joining us for croissants, tea, coffee, prayer and fellowship.

Cornerstone, 10 Savile Way, Grove, OX12 0PT

Tel.01235 772280 email: office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk



God is **love**
Where there **is** **love** there is God
(1 John 4)

Come and join us at Oxford Pride on Saturday 8th June to celebrate the fabulous diversity of everyone.


We're forming a small but growing group of Methodists from across our different churches and circuits in Oxfordshire to walk together in the procession that begins at 10.30am on Saturday 8th June at Radcliffe Square in Oxford, and would love to welcome you too.

Spread the news!

For further details, or to register interest to help us link up on the day, contact Libby (07874 339996, libby.hawkness-smith@oxfordmethodists.org.uk).

We can also tell you about our plans for goodie bags and church banners!



The Methodist Church 
A place to **belong**

Revd Helen Cameron

Over the period of her time as Chair of the Northampton District, Revd Helen Cameron has been a great friend and supporter of our circuit. She is leaving the District this month to become the President of the 2024 Methodist Conference. Her farewell service is at Wesley Memorial Church, Oxford in the afternoon of Sunday June 9th. Our thanks and best wishes have been conveyed to her and we will be holding her in our prayers as she enters a challenging year.

Revd Helen Cameron receives King's Coronation Medal

The Revd Helen Cameron reflects on receiving The King's Coronation Medal.

I was surprised but delighted to receive a letter on St George's Day informing me that King Charles III had conferred The King's Coronation Medal on me in recognition of my contribution and participation in the Coronation of their Majesties, the King and Queen in May 2023.

Coronation medals have been struck to commemorate the coronation of every British monarch since King Edward VI in 1547. The tradition of giving silver medals to those assisting in a coronation at Westminster Abbey began in 1603 with the coronation of King James I, and has continued ever since.



The privilege of participating in an ecumenical blessing of the newly crowned King in my role as Moderator of the Free Churches Group stays with me as does the privilege of leading prayers at the funeral of the late Queen Elizabeth. Whatever our individual or corporate views are of the role of the monarchy, I was conscious in that moment, in the life of our nation, that it was good that the people and the prayers of the Free Church were valued and visible. I still feel that.

Conversations with my fellow presidents and the General Secretary of Churches Together in England in this last year reinforce how important that ecumenical blessing was. It was an important symbol and sign of the change in understanding of the diversity of the Church and the importance of ecumenical relationships in England and the UK since 1953. Many people who talk to me about it saw it as an important celebration of the gift of diversity we know together in Christ.

Reverend Canon Helen Cameron

Chair of the Northampton District

President - Churches Together in England

President Designate - Methodist Conference 2024-25

Moderator of the Free Churches Group

Don't use asylum seekers as a 'political football', warn Church leaders

Senior leaders from the Church of England, Roman Catholic, Methodist, Baptist and United Reformed Churches have expressed their gratitude for those who work alongside refugees and asylum seekers, in the face of rising hostility and unjust malignment of this support from some quarters in recent weeks.

Their statement follows the passing of the Safety of Rwanda Bill through parliament, and news of further lives lost in the English Channel overnight.

"We retain deep misgivings about the Safety of Rwanda Bill, passed in Parliament last night, for the precedent it sets at home and for other countries in how we respond to the most vulnerable. This includes victims of modern slavery and children wrongly assessed as adults, whom we have a duty to protect.

As leaders in Christian churches we wish to express our profound gratitude to those who live out Jesus's call to feed and clothe the poor, and to welcome the stranger, through their work with asylum seekers and refugees, at times in the face of opposition and prejudice.

We note with sadness and concern the rise in hostility towards those who come to these islands seeking refuge and the way in which the treatment of the refugee and asylum seeker has been used as a political football.

We are disappointed that the kindness and support offered by churches and charities to the people at the heart of this debate - those fleeing war, persecution and violence trying to find a place of safety - has been unjustly maligned by some for political reasons.

In their response to the tragic attack in Clapham earlier this year, some former Home Office ministers, MPs and other commentators sought to portray churches and clergy as deliberately facilitating false asylum claims. It was for this reason, at the request of Anglican leaders, that representatives of our Churches met the Home Secretary in February. When asked, neither he nor officials could provide evidence to support the allegations of widespread abuse. Home Office Ministers have since confirmed this in a written parliamentary answer, and on questioning by the Home Affairs Select Committee. Follow-up meetings have since been agreed to promote closer cooperation and co-working between the churches and the Home Office.

Like so many in this country, we seek to support a system that shows compassion, justice, transparency and speed in its decisions. We grieve the appalling loss of life in the Channel today. There may be differences between our churches and Government on the means by which our asylum system can be fair, effective and respecting of human dignity, but we do agree that borders must be managed and that vulnerable people need protection from people smugglers. We have pledged to continue to work with the Home Office, and we do so in good faith."

The Methodist Church, along with over 250 other organisations from across the UK, have signed an open letter to the Prime Minister following the passage of the Government's Rwanda Act

The organisations have come together to make a stand against the Government's Rwanda Plan, which they say breaks international law and "*abandons our duty to share in the global responsibility towards those forced to seek safety*".

Open Letter to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on the Rwanda Bill/Act

Dear Prime Minister,

We write to express our shared outrage at the passage of the misleadingly named 'Safety of Rwanda Act'. This is a shameful and performatively cruel law that will risk people's lives and betray who we are as a society.

We all want to be safe - and we want that safety for each other, too. As a country, we are proud to uphold our responsibility to support refugees. Given the chance, communities across our country go the extra mile to welcome those in need. The wider public do not support the Rwanda plan.

But this law would enable the Government to forcibly expel people seeking asylum - including children and survivors of trafficking and modern slavery – despite concerns they could be put at grave risk of harm and human rights abuses. The Rwanda plan will force people who have fled violence and persecution into detention centres where they may face abuse and mistreatment, with no time limit. They will then be removed to a country to which they have no connection, despite our country's Supreme Court ruling that it is unsafe for them. Through this law, the Government will put them at grave risk of mental and physical harm, and of being returned to danger in the countries they fled.

Despite the clear ruling from the Supreme Court, the Government is rewriting the facts so they can shirk our responsibilities to refugees. In doing so, the Government would break international law and further shatter the UK's commitment to justice and the rule of law. While this is a targeted attack on refugees and migrants, an attack on one group's rights is an attack on all of us.

Outsourcing our asylum system to other countries is never acceptable. It abandons our duty to share in the global responsibility towards those forced to seek safety. Instead of continuing down this dangerous path, the Government must guarantee that asylum claims will be heard fairly on our shores, and open safe routes so that people are not forced to take dangerous journeys.

As organisations working towards a better future for all, we believe in kindness and compassion. The Government must listen to the people, abandon this deplorable deal with Rwanda and similar plans with other countries, and protect those who need sanctuary.

From All We Can

Embracing the True Meaning of 'Charity Begins at Home': A Call to Action



Charity Begins at Home

by Finlay Adams-Brown

At All We Can, our core mission is clear: to support our global neighbours and see every person's potential fulfilled. However, in recent years, I fear that this mission has become that much more difficult to engage with and also to respond to. In a world steeped in anxiety, scepticism and uncertainty, everywhere we look, we see new fears and new challenges that we are forced to confront. We live in a perpetual scarcity mindset, in what feels like the eye of a storm that we are all in. Recently we faced Covid-19, the panic-buying of toilet rolls in Covid-19, the cost-of-living crisis now, climate change, famine, war in the Middle East, and God only knows what is next. This is the world that we have become so used to seeing, and so used to being a part of.

Instead of hanging on to all of that anxiety, at All We Can we invite you to break free from the shackles of this scarcity mindset and do something bravely, trustingly, and sacrificially, by giving to a vision: one where every person's potential might be fulfilled.

To do this, we might begin by looking at the theme of this year's campaign: 'Charity Begins at Home'. Initially, you would be forgiven for thinking All We Can has gone completely rogue, "Are they seriously asking me to turn away from the world and look inward?!" Well, in some ways, yes! Yes, we are!

It is important to note that we are not telling you to turn away from the world, however we are inviting you to begin by looking inward, at yourselves, and at your resources. We are not advocating for isolation but rather we are encouraging introspection. We want you to grapple with that notion of home and really consider what it means to you.

For many of our partners across the world, the notion of home, is less limited to a particular geographical area as we in the West may know it to be but is much more focused on the transient nature of home. See, for them, and for Jeremiah Burgess, Co-Founder and Executive Director of our partner SHIFSD in Liberia, home is more a people, home is a movement, home is a feeling that if you are living in exile as Jeremiah was, in a refugee camp in Ghana, a neighbouring country, fleeing from war, that notion of home takes on a very different meaning altogether.

Many of us, including myself, have been fortunate enough to never having ever thought of our home being taken from us or home being that transient thing. Yet, when we look back to the origins of the All We Can movement, we see its very foundations built upon these concepts. As a response to the refugee crisis in Europe in the 1930s, Henry Carter, a Methodist Minister, felt a duty and a responsibility to respond and so he founded what we now know to be All We Can. Since its inception, All We Can has helped to support hundreds and thousands of people worldwide, who may not have had a home, but now do.

I share these reflections not to shame anyone of us reading them, but rather to prompt us to confront the anxieties of our world and respond as Henry Carter did so many years ago when the world looked just as bleak and just as hopeless as it may seem for many of us today.

Some of the most common and despairing questions I get asked as someone who works in the international development sector are, 'but what can I do, what difference can I possibly make?'

To answer this, I begin by not focussing on the scarcity and the hopelessness that is everywhere, for all to see. Rather, I begin by pointing people towards the abundant blessings and generosity of Jesus Christ.

In Luke 21: 1-4, we are presented with a lady who did not have much at all, who gave two small copper coins to the temple treasury whilst other very wealthy people came and gave considerably more. Jesus turned to them, and He said, 'Truly I tell you; this poor widow has put in more than everyone else here. All of these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, gave all that she had.'

This, for me, is perhaps the truest embodiment of what it means to give, where sometimes even the smallest of gifts can represent the largest of sacrifices.

Giving, at its core, comes *from* the heart – you give *from* your heart *to* something, whether that be an idea, a mission, a cause, All We Can's cause. Our hearts deal in other currencies than money: how we deal with our time, what we do with our possessions, will all reveal our hearts. Yet still I find, how we choose to spend our money, once we spend out on all of the essentials, is arguably the truest heart monitor I know. And it is in this light, where perhaps the question shifts from not, how much should you give? But rather, how much should you keep back?

In the story of the Widow's Offering, Jesus sits down and watches what people are putting into the offering. Jesus understands that money issues are issues of the heart. He does not seek all of your money, but He does seek all of your heart. Giving something today, for many of us, might not be all that difficult, however giving something sacrificially today is.

What Martin Luther King has labelled the 'Great Exchange' shows us that though Jesus was rich, for our sakes, He became poor so that through His poverty, we may become rich. God is asking us, when our world seems so chaotic and unstable, that we do not look to money to be our source of identity and security, to hoard and to stockpile as may have done in Covid-19 and may continue to do now. But instead, he invites us to look to the cross as the only thing capable of breaking us free from that

scarcity mindset. The cross says that to you and me, you are loved, and look how you are loved. The God of heaven gave up everything for you, He entered scarcity on the cross so that you would never have to. He entered into separation from God, so that you would for all time, be connected to the riches, the grace and the extravagant generosity of your Heavenly Father.

At All We Can, we pray that you may strike a blow in the face of such a despairing world by doing something trustingly and sacrificially as the widow did. To many, the widow gave just two small copper coins, but in reality, she gave all that she had.

We pray that you place your faith in All We Can today as you may have done for many years previously, that you may place your faith in the partners we walk alongside. So, if you feel your heart resonating and aligning with All We Can's vision and should you decide to give to support our partners, we encourage you to ask God the following questions:

What are you placing on my heart?

How much should I give and how much should I keep back?

What figure shall I put down before you? Amen.

This reflection expands on the sentiments expressed during our recent fundraising event, 'Charity Begins at Home', where we showcased the incredible work of our partner SHIFSD and called supporters to embrace the true meaning of 'Charity Begins at Home' and make a tangible difference in the world. If you missed out on the event and wish to catch up, please head over to our YouTube channel.

The Crown Singers

present

'Heav'n keep our loves alway!'

Music on the theme of love
by Monteverdi, Stanford and Matyas Seiber.

All Saints, Church, Lydalls Road, Didcot
Saturday 29th June at 7:30pm

WANTAGE CHORAL SOCIETY

Summer Concert 2024



Come and hear some wonderful choral music in the delightful surroundings of Letcombe Regis Village Hall and enjoy a glass of wine and canapés.

Saturday 6 July 2024 | 7.30pm

Letcombe Regis Village Hall OX12 9LJ

John Rutter – **Feel the Spirit**

Bob Chilcott – **A Little Jazz Mass**

George Shearing – **Songs and Sonnets**

George Gershwin – **excerpts from Porgy and Bess**

Conductor Sebastian Thomson **Accompanist** Peter McMullin



wantagechoralsociety.co.uk
Registered Charity No 265227

Tickets £15 – including wine and canapés

Available from Eventbrite, Wantage Bookshop
or via wantagechoralsociety.co.uk
or members of WCS or at the door

Under 16s – Free

GROVE

It was a pleasure and delight to welcome Carol and Roger Barber along with Chris Lavery into Church Membership by transfer on Sunday 26th May. We celebrate that they have found a home with us and feel part of our fellowship.

You are invited to a **Coffee Morning for “Tools with a Mission”** on **Saturday, 1st June** from 10 am till noon in the church. Jenny and family are our hosts for the morning. “Tools with a Mission” collects usable tools (carpentry, electrical, car maintenance, gardening, computers, sewing and knitting machines), refurbishes them, sorts them into trade kits, and sends them to the developing world for livelihood creation. Bryan Orchard, our local TWAM representative, is hoping to come along and will be able to answer your questions about how it all works.

Hope you can join us for a chat, coffee/tea and cake. We look forward to seeing you.

Ecumenical “Prayer for Revival” is held on the first Sunday of each month in our church. The next meeting is on **Sunday, 2nd June** at 6.30 pm till 8 pm. You are invited to come and pray with us. All are welcome.

Tuesday Fellowship for May on **Tuesday, 28th May** at 2.15 pm. Brenda Groves and her granddaughter Chloe are coming to talk to us about “Children of Watamu”. We are meeting at Peter and Noreen’s home, 8, Vicarage Close, Grove. All are welcome.

Tuesday Fellowship for June is on **Tuesday, 25th June** at 2.15 pm. Keith Underhill, our minister, is coming to talk to us. Venue to be arranged nearer the time and will be put in the weekly notice sheet. All are welcome.

Film Club will meet on **Friday, 28th June at 7.30pm** in the Meeting Room.

We will be showing “The Great Escaper”.

The “Great Escaper” is a 2023 biographical drama film directed by Oliver Parker, written by William Ivory and starring Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson.

It is based on the true story of 89 year-old British World War II Royal Navy veteran Bernard Jordan who “broke out” of his nursing home to attend the 70th anniversary D-Day commemorations in France in June 2014.

All are welcome. Admission is free; a small donation helps to cover the cost of licences and DVDs. Masks are optional.

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.

Thank you for your support for the May Coffee Morning for Christian Aid which raised the sum of £216.80. There is a further £46.97 in hand from last year's tax rebate to add to this. So a total of £263.77 is being sent to Christian Aid. Thank you to everyone.

Thank you also to all those who generously continue to support the Foodbank by putting contributions in the box in the entrance hall week by week. **Thank you.** All your contributions are very much appreciated. The need is still great.

We continue to hold in our prayers all those who are in poor health or have other difficulties and problems. We trust that, with care, life has opened up again for you.

CHILDREY

We would ask that you hold those who attend our chapel in your prayers at this time, as decisions are made and taken about the future.

Please note that there will be just one service in June which will be on the 9th at 11 am. This will be a service of holy communion led by Keith.

Prayers

We remember in our prayers:

Vicky, Robin and Becky Legge and the Legge family grandchildren. John Cliffe. Keith, 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

Wantage Methodist Church - looking to the future

On **Saturday, 15th June from 9:30 to 12 noon** we will be holding our second special open meeting as we continue to look to the opportunities as well as the challenges that lie ahead. This meeting will build on last year's and will continue to deal with the sustainability of the Circuit and how this will impact on us as a church here in Wantage as we plan for the future when the Circuit reduces to two Presbyters who will be based in Abingdon and Didcot. In all of this, we look to the future in a spirit of faith and trust, knowing that God will continue to bless us.

It is **important** that as many people as possible from across the Church community come along so that together in our listening and our conversation we can begin to discern the way forward.

The Church Leadership Team looks forward to seeing you there - in the meantime, if you have any questions, queries, concerns, or suggestions please do let either Keith or the Church Stewards know.

Holy Habits

Our next Holy Habit will cover the months of June through to August and is on the theme of fellowship.

As is our usual practice there will be one **service** per month that focuses on the Holy Habit theme. (June 23rd, July 21st and August 11th)

The **film** will be watching together in church is Paddington - date t.b.c.

There are **three books** that people might like to choose from (or any combination of!) that encourage us to look at and explore the theme of fellowship from a different angle.

"The Bees" by Laline Paull published by Fourth Estate in 2015. This novel and work of fiction focuses on Flora 717 who is a bee born into the lowest class of hive society. Not only does this book delve into the way that hives work but also raises questions about living in community, survival, internal tensions, religion and outside enemies.

"Winnie the Pooh" AA published by Egmont in 1926. Join Winnie the Pooh and his collection of friends as they share their adventures together in the hundred-acre wood

"Offshore" by Penelope Fitzgerald published by Fourth Estate, this was the winner of the book of prize and was published in 1979. This novel focuses "on a mixed bag of the temporarily lost and patently eccentric who live on houseboats that are rising and falling with the tide of the Thames on Battersea Reach." Set in 1961 this story captures a bygone age.

We will meet at Cornerstone at 10:00 am on **Saturday 20th July** to have a chat about these books and the issues raised over tea, coffee and cake.

“In all circumstances, take up the shield of faith, praying at all times in the Spirit.” Having just celebrated Pentecost Sunday and, given all of the challenges facing us as we try to live as Christ’s disciples, these words from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians seem appropriate. In sharing news of our church family, they offer us encouragement as individuals, as members of our church family, our local community and within the wider world.

Jane Rudd: With sadness we learned that Jane’s stay in Elmbrook Court for palliative nursing care was a very short one, as she died there on 1st May. As a longstanding member of our church, she worshipped with us over many decades, and was also a member of the Camera Club with its strong associations with our Church, and with her nursing experience was one of our named team of First Aiders. This is a particularly sad time for Jane’s husband Harry as he experiences widowhood for the second time. Our prayers are with him, and all of Jane’s family, who will be part of the private cremation service on 24th May. A thanksgiving service in celebration of Jane’s life will take place in our Church on Thursday **4th July** at 11.00 am, at which everyone will be welcome.

There is better news about Eileen Rennie who has been discharged from hospital and is now receiving rehabilitative care at The Close Care Home in Burcot. Eileen sends her love to everyone at Church, and is clearly missing all of her church friends as much as we are all missing her. We pray for her continuing recovery, and look forward to the improvement in her health which will enable her to return home.

There are two celebrations amongst our church family which we are pleased to record this month. On 1st May, Alison Brown joined our ranks of proud grandmothers when her daughter, Hannah gave birth to a son, named Rafe, in the JR Hospital. As Hannah lives in Southmoor, Alison will be able to have frequent contact with her grandson, and we wish her all of the joys which accompany that special role. We also send our love to Hannah, whom many of us remember from the years when she was part of our Junior Church and Youth groups.

Congratulations go to Mary Trotter who will be 90 years old on 11th June. Although Mary worships with us less frequently now than she did for very many years, it is still thanks to her that our cloths for the Communion table always look so beautifully pristine. This was a duty which Mary willingly undertook at the start of this century, in response to a plea from our then Minister, Brenda Woods, for the presentation of the elements of Holy Communion to be as perfect as we could make them. We are grateful for 24 years of this service to our church, as well as the decades of leading Wednesday Fellowship, and, together with Robin, running our Shell and Nest Club children’s groups. We all wish you a very happy 90th birthday, Mary.

We have recorded in our weekly Notices that Alan Sykes died on 11th May. Whilst Alan was not a member of our Church, he was very well known to many of us through his leading roles within Wantage Silver Band. Alan’s contribution to our local community has brought great joy to many people for half a century. Professionally, he was a leading figure in the Nuclear Fusion work at Culham. Alan’s father worshipped with us for many years until frailty meant that he could no longer do so. Our thoughts

and prayers are with Eileen and the whole family at this sad time. Alan's funeral will be at our Church on Wednesday June 5th at 12 noon.

Praying for each other: In June the people listed below will be included in the prayer time at the Tuesday Bible Study Meeting. On June Grunwald's List: Nicky Atkinson, Stella Belcher, Graham Godfrey, Agripinia Kilpatrick, Eileen Rennie, Sonia Wilkie and on Rita Lawrence's List: Kay Goodwin, Pam and John Leake, Carole and Keith Robbins, Helen and John Carter.

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 Group.

Joan Kidd's Thanksgiving service will be on Saturday 1st June at 1:00 pm in Wantage Parish Church lead by Rev Katherine Price. This is the closest date available to what would have been Joan's 103rd birthday.

Community Café

June Grunwald

The Community Café was busy in May. Once again we opened on the Bank Holiday Mondays. It was lovely to welcome Martin and Judith Smithson at the café in early May and they enjoyed meeting up with various people. We have also had people drop in for the first time and it is lovely to see the warm welcome they receive.

The café does not charge for coffee or home-made cakes, but each week we have "piggy banks" for donations to a charity. Our charity for March, April and May was Christian Aid. (As this report is compiled in mid May the full amount raised for Christian Aid will be notified in the July newsletter.) Our charity for June, July and August is for our own church funds.

The café 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 and to those who provide such delicious cakes. If you cannot commit regularly but would be willing to be called upon at short notice it would be helpful. The café members have greatly missed Eileen's presence and we wish her a full recovery. I have greatly appreciated those who have supported me in Eileen's absence.

Knit & Chat

Carolyn Roche

Despite one of our meetings in May falling on a Bank Holiday both our Mondays were well attended. As usual we enjoyed catching up with news and seeing what everyone is currently working on. This is principally hats or angels and the variety of colours and patterns are a delight to behold. This month Knit & Chat will meet on **Monday 3rd June** and **Monday 17th June** at 2 pm in the Hall. Come and join us for a time of companionship, chat and knitting/sewing.

If you need wool, have any other queries or just fancy a chat do please call me.

Kids@Church

Jane, Dave, Cath and Keith

In May we celebrated the birthday of the church! Pentecost!

We listened to the Pentecost story in the church and then talked about how we celebrate birthdays in our homes. We showed presents we had received for birthdays. In the hall we had great fun playing party games and then had a party tea (at 10.30 in the morning!) finishing with cake!

We will next be meeting on **Sunday 16th June** and then **in the park on 21st July**.

Kids@Church is an informal service and activity followed by breakfast for children and their parents/carers and new friends are always welcome!

For more information please speak to Rev Keith Underhill 01235 763321

Bible Study at Elmbrook Care Home

June Grunwald

This Bible Study is held at the care home on Grove Road. It is held on the second Monday of the month at 2.30 pm, lasting between 30-45 mins. In May, which was near Pentecost Sunday, we looked at Acts 2:1-13. Keith also joined us in May and led Holy Communion. Sad to say one of our regular members, Louise, passed away at the end of April. She will be much missed. We have also missed the contributions of Eileen and Joan (regular attendees from church) who have both been in hospital. Our studies for the next few months are: **June 10th** (Psalm 138); **July 8th** (Mark 6:1-13) and on **August 12th** (Ephesians 4:25-32). Residents really appreciate people from our church joining in their study and we often enjoy fellowship with a cup of coffee in the Elmbrook lounge afterwards.

A prayer of thanks for hidden treasures

I wonder...

Why you, Lord, choose to hide your treasures and to invite us to join in the divine 'hide and seek'?

Why you, Jesus, choose darkness as the place where the richness of your light shines most strongly, most resolutely?

Why you, Spirit, choose to summon us by name – speaking into our lives with such intimacy and love?

Perhaps, Three-in-One,
you delight to find us seeking;
you enjoy the powerful impact of even the smallest of lights, piercing the deepest darkness;
you intend for us to know your voice, follow your promptings and to bear witness to your name.

Thank you for revealing your hiddenness, illuminating our darkness, and enabling us to know how much you have treasured us. Amen.

Philip Gough, District Chair, Lancashire District

Prayer list

Please pray for

Bethan Grant, Anne, Carol Mackinder, Emma Wright & family, Caroline, Geoff, Doug & Anne Hatto, Richard in York, Edwina, Adrian, Louise, Diane, Meriel, Diane's daughters Claire & Julie, June Hartle, Jane Robinson, Richard & Anne, Peter, John & Jo, Harry Rudd, Mary Spalding, Jane & Emma Soffe & family, Trudy, Jade, Sue, Gordon, Findley, Eileen, Norma. All at Bullingdon Prison, staff, prisoners and visitors. Our Ministers, Deacon, Community Chaplains, Local Preachers & Worship Leaders, kids@church and Street Pastors, Cornerstone and those members of our church family who, through frailty or ill health, can no longer worship with us.

If you or the person/people you have put on the prayer list would still like to be in the June newsletter, please let Carolyn know by **Friday 21st June** in order to meet the newsletter deadline.

Carolyn Roche: telephone: 01235 764310 email: ciroche48@hotmail.com

Tuesday Afternoon Prayer and Study Group

Carolyn Roche

This is an open and friendly group who meet in the Parlour on a Tuesday afternoon at 2 pm to study and pray. Please feel free to come along and join us any week and you can be assured of a warm welcome. If you cannot meet with us, know that you are remembered in prayer. Prayer is an important part of our meeting and we spend time each week praying for situations near and far. If you have someone or a situation you would like us to pray for please let me know.

During May we looked at the final four studies from the Holy Habits Worship book.

In June we will be using the study guide for Bible Month, which this year will be based on Genesis.

Dates for June are as follows:

- 4th The Sovereign God who Creates
Reading: Genesis - Chapters 1 - 11
This meeting includes the Monthly Prayer List.
- 11th The God who Calls and Blesses
Reading: Genesis – Chapters 12 - 25
- 18th Quiet Day of Study and Reflection
led by Libby Bolton and based upon the Genesis study guide.
- 25th The God who comes to People in their Struggles
Reading: Genesis – Chapters 25 - 36

The Quiet Day takes place at the Convent. We gather at 9.45 so that those who wish can join the Sisters for Holy Communion. The study sessions are led by Libby Bolton and are interspersed with coffee, lunch and we finish with tea and cake at 3 pm. The cost for this will be £30. **If you wish to take part please can you let me know by Friday 7th June.** If you have any queries you can contact me (Carolyn Roche) by telephone on 01235 764310 or e-mail: ciroche48@hotmail.com

Lunchtime prayers - Friday 14th June – 1 pm for half an hour in the vestry (Haven). We pray for those on the prayer list, those mentioned on the prayer tree and any other requests that have come via the outside box or any other way. All are welcome.

If you would like to know more, please speak to Helen Carter.

Wantage & Grove Food Bank

Helen Carter

Currently there is a need to purchase many items to cover the required items for giving out to those requesting food parcels. Donations of long life milk and fruit juice plus tinned meat and fish would be particularly welcomed. (Please could you not donate cereals, toothpaste and tooth brushes just now - there are more than enough of those - thank you). The number of parcels that have been delivered so far this year is heading rapidly towards 400. There is a great need. Thank you so much to all those who donate either goods or money. Every donation is much appreciated.

First Aiders wanted Do you have first aid experience? For a variety of reasons we currently have too few named people we can call on in the case of an emergency within a church service or other church activities. We would like to find out if there are members of our church family who have first aid experience and who would be willing to be on a list of people who are prepared to act in the case of an emergency. Of course we hope and pray that such action is not necessary, but we do want to feel secure in the knowledge that there are such folk we can call on. I have talked of 'we', so who are 'we'? We are the church stewards and we would love to hear from you if you think you can help. If you can, please talk to Helen Carter, Sue Haithwaite or David Worth. Thank you.

Correction of Church Leadership Team/Church Stewards report in the Annual Church Report.

With many apologies for a significant omission in this report. I failed to include the names of Rachel and Morgan in those who faithfully perform the role of Sunday Steward week after week. Please would you amend your paper copies to include their names. Those of you coming to church on a Sunday will know how warmly you are welcomed at the front door of the church. Sue, David and I could not do our job of being church stewards without the willingness of the Sunday stewards.

Christian Aid - the amount we are able to send to Christian Aid as a result of the donations is a wonderful £911.65. Thank you everyone who gave so generously.

What is happening on the Wantage premises at present?

Sunday	9:30 am 10:30 am	Kids@Church Morning Worship	In person and on Zoom	3 rd Sunday Weekly
Monday	Morning Afternoon	Drop-in Café Knit & Chat	in the Hall in the Hall	Weekly 1 st & 3 rd Monday
Tuesday	Afternoon	Prayer & Study Group	in the Parlour	Weekly
Friday	Afternoon	Caritas Choirs		Weekly in term

Users All in the Hall

Monday	Evening	Slimming World CA Meeting		Weekly Weekly
Tuesday	Morning Evening	MIND Wantage Camera Club		Weekly Weekly
Wednesday	Afternoon Evening	My Life My Choice Wantage Sings		Last Wednesday 5 th June only
Thursday	Midday	KAWI		3 rd Thursday
Friday	Morning	Mothers & Toddlers		Weekly in term
Saturday	Morning	Dads Out		1 st Saturday

May

Thursday 30 th	Evening	Wantage Literary Festival	Chapel
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June

Wednesday 5 th	Midday	Alan Sykes' Funeral	All
Thursday 6 th	Morning	Wantage Baptists Parents & Toddlers -	Hall
Saturday 15 th	Morning	Wantage Futures	Hall
Thursday 27 th	Evening	Music Makers	Hall
Sunday 30 th	Afternoon	Kennet Opera	All
Thursday 20 th	Evening	Church Council	Hall

July

Thursday 4 th July	Morning	Jane Rudd's Thanksgiving	
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DIARY for May/June

MAY

Sunday 26th	4:30 pm	Circuit Service at Milton	
Tuesday 28 th	2:15 pm	Grove Tuesday Fellowship	p14

JUNE

Saturday 1 st	10:00 am	Coffee Morning at Grove	p14
Sunday 2nd	6:30 pm	Prayer for Revival at Grove	p14
Monday 3 rd	2:00 pm	Knit & Chat at Wantage	p18
Sunday 9th	4:00 pm	WGCP United Service & AGM	p 4/24
Monday 10 th	2:30 pm	Bible Study at Elmbrook Care Home	p19
Friday 14 th	1:00pm	Lunchtime Prayers at Wantage	p21
Saturday 15 th	9:30 am	Wantage Methodist Church - looking to the future	p15
Sunday 16th	9:30 am	Kids@Church at Wantage	p19
Monday 17 th	2:00 pm	Knit & Chat at Wantage	p18
Thursday 20 th	7:30 pm	Wantage with Childrey Church Council	

Sunday 23rd **DEADLINE for Summer CGW NEWS**

Tuesday 25 th	2:15 pm	Grove Tuesday Fellowship	p14
Thursday 27 th	7:30 pm	Music Makers at Wantage	
Friday, 28 th	7:30 pm	Film Club at Grove	p14
Sunday 30th	2:00 pm	Stepping out with Noah	p 4

SUNDAY SERVICES during June
All Services from Wantage are shared on Zoom

Sunday 2nd

Ordinary 9

Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Psalm 81:1-10; 2 Corinthians 4:5-12; Mark 2:23-3:6

10:30 am Wantage

Deacon Selina Nisbett

10:30 am Grove

Ian Sturt

6:30 pm Grove

Prayer for Revival

Sunday 9th

Methodist Homes

Ordinary 10

Genesis 3:8-15; Psalm 130; 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1; Mark 3:20-35

10:30 am Wantage

Stephen Atkinson

10:30 am Grove

Local Arrangements

11:00 am Childrey

Rev Keith Underhill

This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion

4:00 pm WGCP – United Service & AGM at St John's Grove

Sunday 16th

Ordinary 11

Ezekiel 17:22-24; Psalm 92:1-4,12-15; 2 Corinthians 5:6-17; Mark 4:26-34

9:30 am Wantage

Kids@Church

10:30 am Wantage

Rev Keith Underhill

This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion

10:30 am Grove

Daphne Savage

Sunday 23rd

Conference Sunday Refugee Week Ordinary 12

Job 38:1-11; Psalm 107:1-3,23-32; 2 Corinthians 6,1-13; Mark 4:35-41

No Service at Childrey

10:30 am Wantage Holy Habits

Libby Hawkness-Smith

10:30 am Grove

Rev Keith Underhill

This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion

Sunday 30th

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Ordinary 13

Lectionary: Lamentations 3:23-24; Psalm 30; 2 Corinthians 8,7-15; Mark 5:21-43

10:30 am Wantage

Rev Keith Underhill

10:30 am Grove

Peter Hemmings