



SWANBANK

August Newsletter 2024

Message from our Ministers...

Nick recently passed his level 1 qualification in British Sign Language (BSL). It has been fascinating to discover this world of language alongside him, and even what it might teach us as people of faith. The first thing you learn in BSL is how it is structured, the instruction being, imagine what order you would draw it. So, when interpreting 'the cat sat on the table', you would draw/sign the table first and then the cat sitting on it, effectively signing, table, cat, sat.

What I love about this is that it teaches us, 'first things first'. I am, it feels like, the world's best person at saying a lot of things before actually getting to the point in any conversation, by which time most people have switched off or got so lost in the story that they are utterly confused!

Jesus reminds us to put God's Kingdom first in our lives. *"But put God's kingdom first. Do what he wants you to do. Then all those things will also be given to you."* (Matthew 6:33 – NIRV).

I wonder what it means to for us to put God's Kingdom first, in our lives, in our conversations, in our thinking, in our relationships. Yes, we might think it is easy to do, but how often do we paint a picture where Jesus is an add-in, or an afterthought rather than the subject



around which all other things are pictured?

Revelation begins with a bunch of short messages to various churches. Many of them make for pretty tough reading, but there's a phrase in there that I often recall:

"I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing up for the sake of my name, and that you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first."

Remember your first love. Remember the thing that first convinced you of your salvation in Jesus. Remember your first calling. Remember that God's love for YOU came first.

Ruth

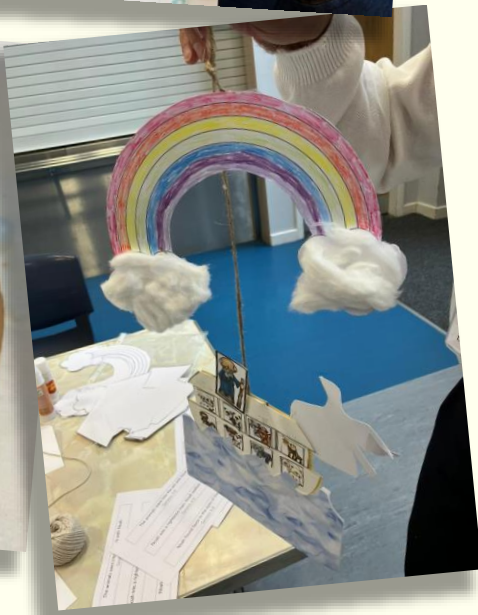
St Nathaniel's School end of year service at Swan Bank

We had the great pleasure of welcoming around 400 children from St Nathaniel's Primary School to Swan Bank for their end of year service. We wish them all a fantastic summer holiday and all the best as they all start their new adventures either in new schools or new year groups.



Messy Church

We had a "splashing" time on Saturday 6th July at our Messy Church, where we explored the story of Noah's Ark. We had lots of fun trying to build our own boats out of Lego and then seeing if they would float! **There will be no Messy Church in August so the next will be on Saturday 7th September, we'd love to see you there.**



Pastoral Network of Care – How can you help?

Would you like to join the 49 men and women, who are already part of our growing Network of Care? Would you like to be on a regular rota? Can you offer an hour or so a month? Please consider being added to a list of volunteers who we can contact and if you're available, can help someone feel loved and cared for. There are lots of different roles available including

Hospital visiting Team – sitting in a hospital bed can feel very lonely and the days seem endless. Having a visitor from a church family member can make such a difference.

Emergency Pastoral Team – Are you willing to make a few phone calls to someone who just needs a chat and to show an interest in them as they go through a challenging time?

Sunday Teams – Do you enjoy chatting to people and making them feel welcome? Why not join our Team, get to know the people around you and let us know if there are any concerns or joys which we should know about, or if you haven't seen anyone for a while.

Dementia Activity group (Monday 1-3pm) – We need people to come along and chat, serve tea, coffee and cake and of course join in with the fun and laughter. You will sign up on the rota to offer the dates which are best for you.

We also need an endless supply of home-made cakes – can you help us? See **Clare Metcalf**

Pastoral Link – Please consider joining the 19 people who already visit church members who are not able to attend church or need a little TLC.

Building Bigger tables – there have been a few occasions where people living alone have needed meals delivered to their homes. Are you an organised person, would you be able to organise a rota of people living in the same locality to deliver meals? We can use our church database to identify where people are



located. Are you willing to cook and deliver a meal to someone nearby who is struggling and needs our help?

Writing to Students – It's important that we support our young people as they move away from home and enter the world of college or university. Would you enjoy writing to them and keeping in touch, just to show them they are not forgotten?

Missing Members and Friends – How can we help people feel valued and loved if they choose to leave us? How can we ensure that they don't just slip away? Are you good with monitoring and problem solving?

Outreach Activities – how about joining a group of people who give out gifts/invites to our special events? For example, Angel bombing Burslem at Christmas to invite people to the Christingle.

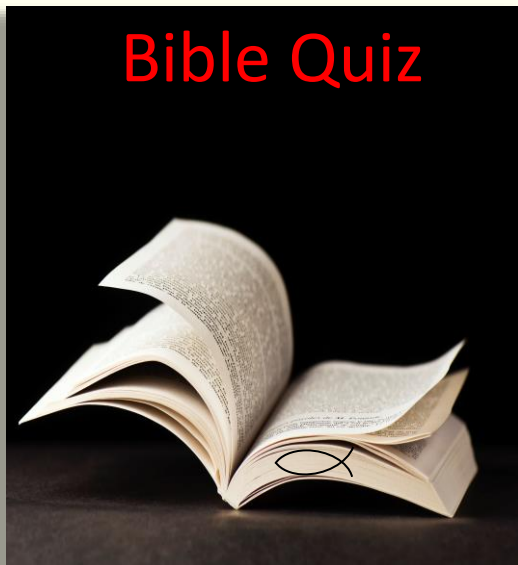
Creative opportunities – Would you like to join a craft group who knit, crochet, or make small gifts to give out? This may be an organised meeting or be something which you can make at home. We are currently planning a huge display of poppies and need your help in producing these. Please have a chat with **Georgina Boden** or **Jane Sheeran**.

As you can see there are many opportunities to serve. Please get in touch with **Janet Bagnall** or one of the team to discuss how you can become part of the Network of Care and show that at Swanbank we are "Loving God and Loving People."

August 24 - Circuit Preaching Plan

Venue	Time	4 th August	11 th August	18 th August	25 th August
Swan Bank	9.00am 10.30am 6.15pm	Stephens Stephens (Baptism) Stephens	Jeffries Jeffries Stephens	Stephens Stephens Jeffries	G Cooper Brabbs Stephens
Potter's Church	9.30am 11.15am	Stanyer Stanyer	Hancock Hancock	B Barber B Barber	Jolley Jolley
Oasis Church	10.45am 6.00pm	Law	Wakelin	Own Arrangement	Community Sunday
Wesley Hall	10.45am	Boateng	Own Arrangement	Cooke	Brooks
The Gateway	10.45am	Tattersall	Batho	Stanyer	Boateng
Mt Pleasant	10.45am	J. Johnson	Brooks	Tindale	Leese
Packmoor	11.00am	Tindale (Baptism)	Own Arrangement	Wakelin	Harrison
Village Church	11.00am	B Barber	Stephens	Jeffries	Own Arrangement
Whitehill	10.30am 6.00pm	Shaw Jeffries	Leese Bowers	A Johnson Chapman Q&A	Batho Cooper

Quiz – Hidden Books of the Bible



Can you find sixteen books of the Bible hidden in the text below?

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. Merely by a fluke, it kept people looking so hard for the facts and for the others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially as the names of the books were not capitalised but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few minutes for you. Yes, there will be some really difficult ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one

of them. There will be great rejoicing or loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so that she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now, there really are sixteen books of the Bible hidden in this paragraph.

One preacher found fifteen in twenty minutes – but it took him three weeks to find the other one! Thanks to **Julia Hatcher** for providing the quiz. Answers will be in the September issue.



Colour Splash 2024

What an amazing three days! Colour Splash 2024 saw nearly 60 children join us as we sailed across the high seas with our resident sailor Brian. Our reformed mariner had recently given up on his pirating ways and was desperately trying to be like Jesus, often with hilarious consequences. The children had fun exploring different Bible stories using crafts, games, talks and skits. They discovered the story of Jesus calling the disciples and heard that He wants them to be His friend too. They learnt how Jesus calmed the storm and how He can calm storms in their own lives. They also found out how we sometimes must step out of the boat and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, so that we can walk on the water.

The children were thrilled to have a visit from Zoo2U who brought a variety of exotic animals for them to see and hold. We all got rather wet on Thursday in our water fight and had opportunity to show our athletic prowess on Friday during our sports day, maybe we'll see some of them in future Olympics!

Thank you so much to all our volunteers, who have worked tirelessly to ensure the children have the most enjoyable experience possible. Thanks to those who gave financially: many families were able to join us thanks to your support. Lastly, thank you to all those that have supported us in prayer, God has truly blessed us and the children over the last three days. Now, time for a nap!

Nick Jefferies



The Symphonia Verbum Orchestra Presents: 'Around the British Isles'



Tickets are now on sale for The SVO's next concert on **5th October** at the King's Hall, Stoke, at 5pm. Featuring some fantastic music by beloved composers from the British Isles, this will be an unforgettable night of music presented by Stoke's own professional orchestra. The concert is part of the SVO's 'Discover' concert series, through which it hopes to play its part in enabling everybody to access classical music and to enrich the lives of all who come into contact with the orchestra. The SVO is dedicated to inspiring more young people to take up music and is therefore committed to giving all under 18s and carers free tickets so that they can more easily experience the immense joy of live orchestral music. Early bird discount until 3rd August! For tickets or more information, visit www.svo.org.uk or call 07938 579926. **Joe Hearson**



Volunteer Opportunities at Cross Rhythms City Radio and xRhythms...

From our building in Stoke-on-Trent city centre, Cross Rhythms has served the city and represented the local church since 2002. We could only do so with the support of hundreds of incredible volunteers.

Whether you are looking to get work experience, to enhance your CV, you have time on your hands, or you have many years' experience in a certain area...if you would love to be a part of a local Christian ministry serving in the city, we would love to hear from you.

Below is a list of roles we are currently looking for people to help us fill. Should any interest you please email hr@crossrhythms.co.uk. Thank You!

Radio Presenters – Could you present a show? Weekday mornings or at weekends. From one day/programme per week.

Studio Engineer – Drive the studio and record audio and video interviews. Part time, maybe couple mornings a week.

Production Engineer – Edit/compile programmes, interviews, programme promos etc. Part time, maybe two days a week,

News Journalist – Compile and record (be the voice for) our daily news (1-2 hours daily) and/or our Community Choice Stories (few hours a week).

Broadcast Assistants – Help research and prepare features for breakfast and drive time shows. Possible on air presentation of features. Part time, as available.

xRhythms Presenters – Initially looking for breakfast and drive time presenters on this new teenage DAB station. Ideally in your twenties. Does not have to be every day.

xRhythms Contributors – Young Christian Bloggers and vloggers needed for this teenage focused website (xrhythms.co.uk).

IT Assistant – General office IT jobs, possible website work – depends on experience/abilities.

Building Maintenance/Decorator/DIY – Occasional jobs, as needed.

PA to CEO – Part time eg two mornings per week.

Events Representative – Represent and promote Cross Rhythms and xRhythms at events and exhibitions. Ad hoc role, as required.

Business Engagement Officer – Represent Cross Rhythms at business networking events or meet with local businesses. Promote co-working space, meeting room availability, radio interview opportunities, advertising and sponsorship opportunities. Part time role, as available.



Swan Bank Church, Swan Square, Burslem, ST6 2AA

Office hours:- 10am - 4pm, Tuesday - Thursday



01782 575129



admin@swanbank.org.uk



www.swanbank.org.uk

Sunday 10:30am Service, live stream links:



www.youtube.com/@SwanBank/streams



www.facebook.com/swanbank/?locale=en_GB

Future Articles

If anyone has any stories or articles to be considered for inclusion in future newsletters, please contact **Shirley Brooks** or **Nigel Johnson** directly or email :-

officeassistance@swanbank.org.uk.

SWAN BANK NOTICEBOARD

The District Prayer Book Handbook 2023-24 has lots to offer in learning about our Chester and Stoke District and plenty of ideas for prayer.

www.candsmethodists.org.uk/resources/district-prayer-handbook.html

Hold the date!

The next city-wide united celebration event will be at Swan Bank on Sunday 8th September starting at 6:15pm. More details will follow in the September Newsletter.

The Circuit invites you to the Accreditation Service for Local Preacher Mr Chris Mason.

When: 3pm, 8th September 2024

Where: The Gateway Methodist Church, Goldenhill.

Guest preacher: Rev Simon Sutcliffe.
Followed by refreshments.

Volunteering at the Community Grocery

Our local Community Grocery in Burslem is always on the lookout for volunteers to help out. If this is something you'd be interested in doing, then either pop into the shop and speak to Georgie or click on the link below.

<https://communitygrocery.org.uk/volunteers/>



Regular Activities at Swan Bank

Sunday

Sunday Night Young Adults – Fellowship Room, 7:30-9:00pm

Monday

Prayer Time – Meeting Room 1, 9:00-9:30am

Bible Study – Meeting Room 1, 10:00-11:30am

Dementia Activity Group – Coffee Lounge, 1:00-3:00pm

Gospel Choir – Fellowship Room, 7:30-9:00pm
2nd & 4th Mondays of each month

Tuesday

Little Treasures (0-4 years old) – Lower Hall, 9:30-11:00am *(term time only)*

Chatty Café – Coffee Lounge, 10:00am-12noon

Tuesday Club – Coffee Lounge, 1:30-3:30pm

Wednesday

Knit & Natter – Meeting Room 1, 10:00am-12noon

Foodbank – Coffee Lounge, 2:00-4:00pm

(To receive a food parcel an E-voucher will be required beforehand from a referral agency)

Thursday

Younger Youth (School years 3-6) – Upper Hall, 5:45-7:15pm *(term time only)*

Youth Club (11-16 years old) – Upper Hall, 7:30-9:00pm *(term time only)*

Saturday

Messy Church (Primary school aged children) – Lower Hall, 10:00am-12noon *(first Saturday of each month)* Breakfast included and only £1 per child! **Note, no Messy Church in August**

Women's Walking Group – Rendezvous usually at Swan Bank before going to the start of the walk *(3rd Saturday of each month)*. See Liz Thompson for details.

Contact the office on 01782 575129 for further details of all our regular activities

Need Help or Advice (or know someone that does)?

Childline

Free advice service for young people
www.childline.org.uk
121 online chat available
Tel. 0800 1111

Mind

Advice and support for mental health
www.mind.org.uk
Tel. 0300 123 3393
email info@mind.org.uk

Samaritans

Emotional support for anyone struggling mentally
www.thesamaritans.org
Tel. 116 123
Email jo@samaritans.org

Kooth

Online counselling and emotional wellbeing service for young people
www.kooth.com

Young Minds

Advice and support for mental health
www.youngminds.org.uk
Text YM to 85258

Supportline

Confidential helpline for emotional support on any issue.
www.supportline.org.uk
Tel. 01708 765200

Refuge

Help for people facing domestic abuse
www.refuge.org.uk
Tel. 0808 2000 247
121 online chat at www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Shout

Free and confidential crisis text line
<https://giveushout.org>
Text SHOUT to 85258

Youth Access

Find advice & counselling services locally
www.youthaccess.org.uk/services/find-your-local-service

NHS Urgent Mental Health Helpline

www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/
Tel. 111

Brighter Futures

A local support service for help with homelessness and mental health issues
www.brighter-futures.org.uk
Tel. 01782 406000

CAMHS (North Staffs)

NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services - advice and support
www.combined.nhs.uk/services/camhs-north-stoke/
Tel. 0300 123 0987

Citizens Advice (North Staffs & Stoke)

Provides local support for people facing debt and financial problems
www.snsCab.org.uk
Tel. 0808 278 7876

Papyrus Hopeline UK

Help for young people experiencing thoughts of suicide
www.papyrus-uk.org
121 online chat available
Tel. 0800 068 4141 or Text 88247

FRANK

Honest info and advice about drugs
www.talktofrank.com
Tel. 0300 123 6600
Text a question to 82111

Kidscape

Info and advice about bullying
www.kidscape.org.uk

North Staffs Carers

Providing support for unpaid carers
www.carersfirst.com/home
Tel. 01782 793100

Community Drug and Alcohol Service

Provides local support for drug and alcohol addiction
www.scdas.org.uk
Tel. 01782 283113