



SWANBANK

July Newsletter 2024

Message from our Ministers...

Hello!

We find ourselves in our July edition of the SwanBank Newsletter. We have had so much positive feedback about the newsletter and continue to be grateful to all who play a part in its creation.

I'm trying to be a good gardener at the moment. By that I mean I like my garden to look lovely but, to be honest, I am a bit clueless! What I lack in knowledge I am making up for in enthusiasm though! So far this season I have had some garden successes and some epic failures too.

The latest failure was the purchase of a lovely yellow poppy, in flower with lots of buds ready to burst open, which I planted and then within 4 days it had been completely eaten by something – I'm guessing a slug. So my beautiful poppy is no more!

This letter is about poppies – we are preparing for Remembrance. Yes, I know it's only July, but we are getting ahead!

This year we are wanting to create a beautiful installation for Remembrance Day and are hoping it will involve people from our local community, schools, groups and individuals. It is a way to honour the day and also bring our community together to create something striking and meaningful. We also hope it will be an opportunity to invite family, friends and neighbours to share in the making of



hundreds of poppies and then join us on Remembrance Sunday.

In the year that marks 80 years since The D Day Landings it seems fitting to join as Church and Community to remember this and build community together.

Please will you get involved? You'll see an article later in this edition which outlines what we need to gather to make the poppies. We are asking you be part of this and encourage others too, to make it a fabulous visual installation, marking an important event and building togetherness as we do so.

As always, at the heart of all we do stands the love of Jesus and we see this as an opportunity to be alongside others and share some of that love as we work together.

God bless you,

Kathryn

Gone Fishing



I was introduced to fishing by my dad at 8 years of age. He taught me to fish at the local canal, and later at rivers and lakes as my skill developed. He was very patient and encouraged me to

learn through my mistakes. As a schoolboy we went fishing most weekends. My dad was a miner and fishing for him was a complete contrast to his working environment, out in the fresh air, in all weathers. Weekends were 'our time'. We took part in match competitions with Wolstanton Miners' Club. I was very competitive – I wanted to WIN! In the matches I fished alongside my dad and two uncles, beating them on occasions! On one occasion my dad 'persuaded' me to join him fishing on the River Severn on a school day – I didn't need much persuading! We had a brilliant day. I caught the first ever barbel over ten pounds from the River Severn, a whopper at eleven pounds! All was well, until a photograph of me and the fish appeared in the Angling Times – school was not impressed!

During my teenage years my fishing continued in competition matches and also pleasure fishing at my favourite place, Knypersely reservoir.

I married Hazel in 1978. Hazel knew what she was marrying into and on occasions I think she was pleased to see me go fishing, appreciating that it was 'my time' to relax and recharge my batteries. When my son Paul was about six years old, we started fishing together. Like me with my dad, Paul became 'hooked'! I enjoyed this quality bonding time for us, sharing as I did with my dad, a hobby we both love. Paul and I still fish together. We recently went on a fishing trip to Holland and I must admit Paul is

a better fisherman than me – I taught him well.

After the sudden death of my dad in 1990, my passion for fishing dwindled. It was a difficult time and I found myself doing more pleasure fishing where I found comfort remembering the happy times dad and I shared together. My approach to fishing had changed. Now it isn't so much about winning (although I still like to win sometimes), it is more about relaxation, contemplation and enjoying the wonders and the beauty of nature around me. I appreciate the changes of the seasons, the circle of life watching birds nesting and rearing their young. I have had a kingfisher sit at the end of a fishing rod, robins cheekily taking maggots from a bait box at my feet, mink taking fish from a keep net, wasps feeding on the sugar around the top of my tea flask, and a badger stealing my jam sandwich! Fishing isn't always about catching fish, it's the privilege to be able to share and be with nature at its finest.

Before becoming a Christian, unbeknown to me, the house group that Hazel was a member of was praying for me for about twenty years. In 2013, I gave my life to God. I was baptized and now believe that prayers are answered. I feel, since then, that I have achieved a good balance of worship and fishing. Fishing has a new element to it and my approach to it has changed again. Fishing provides me with the opportunity to share my faith with other fishermen.

When fishing I feel at peace and I find during a five-hour match, four are spent in conversation with the Lord, and my dad. I don't feel alone. I know the Lord is with me, as is my dad. I feel blessed that I am a child of God and thank Him for His amazing creations of nature that I can embrace whilst fishing.

With blessings

Hadge Lawton



Dementia Activity Group

The first Dementia Activity group took place on Monday 3rd June. What a fantastic two hours we spent together. The afternoon started with an array of delicious cakes, coffee and chat, followed by a programme of quizzes, puzzles and gentle physical activity. On the whole we did nothing but eat, drink and laugh! Thank you to Kev, from Approach, who led us. Where does he get his energy from? Please continue to pray that the group grows and relationships develop further. If you are someone living with Dementia, please come along with a friend, spouse or family member. We are sure you will enjoy it and will develop an important support network, whilst having fun. We meet every Monday between 1-3pm in the coffee lounge. If you feel you can help us by baking a cake every now and then, it would be really appreciated. Please speak to **Clare Metcalf, Janet Bagnall** or the Church Office.



North Staff Circuit – Lay Pastoral Vacancy



LAY PASTORAL ASSISTANT

20 hours per week £12,480 per annum for an initial three-year appointment.

If you are caring and compassionate and enjoy working with people, then you could be just the person to join us. You will be working alongside our ministers to provide Christian pastoral care within the churches of our Circuit and help to further develop a pastoral care network.

For more information and an application pack please contact the Circuit Administrator: Mrs Michelle Bradbury
northstaffscircuit@hotmail.co.uk

Closing date: 12 noon on Monday 8th July 2024
 Interviews to take place: Friday 26th July 2024
 Role to begin: 1st September 2024.

District Secretary Vacancy



Chester and Stoke-on-Trent
 METHODIST DISTRICT

At the Spring synod on Saturday 20th April 2024, Mr Ian White announced he would be stepping down in December as Synod Secretary for the Chester & Stoke-on-Trent District after 8 years in the role.

Ian's decision means that the District need to appoint a new synod secretary from January 2025, although the hope is that the new secretary could be identified sooner so that they can shadow Ian in preparation for the September Synod.

The role is a volunteer role and is open to both lay and ordained people. If this is something you'd be interested in exploring further, please contact the Chair of the District, **Revd Helen Kirk** on the email below or tel. 01270 627786..

chair@chestokemethodists.com

Alternatively, contact **Ruth** who also has a copy of the role description.



July - Circuit Preaching Plan

Venue	Time	7 th July	14 th July	21 st July	28 th July
Swan Bank	9.00am 10.30am 6.15pm	Stephens Stephens 🕒 Brabbs	Brooks Stephens Jeffries	Jeffries 🕒 Jeffries (Baptism) Stephens 🕒	Stubbs Stephens/Jeffries A Johnson
Potter's Church	9.30am 11.15am	P Barber P Barber	Price Price	Zinyemba Zinyemba	Hancock Hancock
Oasis Church	10.45am 6.00pm	Hancock	Nixon	Stephens	Community Sunday
Wesley Hall	10.45am	Own Arrangement	Tattersall	Wyatt 🕒	Harrison
The Gateway	10.45am	Dutton	Mason	Cooke	Own Arrangement
Mt Pleasant	10.45am	Wakelin	Harrison	Tindale	Own Arrangement
Packmoor	11.00am	Tindale	Boateng	Leese	Brooks
Village Church	11.00am	Kirk 🕒	Jeffries	A Johnson	Own Arrangement
Whitehill	10.30am 6.00pm	Brooks Cooper	Cooper 🕒 Cooper	Chapman Wakelin Q&A	Andrews Cooper 🕒

Plain Sailing?

Sitting at the airport in Dubrovnik this June, whilst waiting for my delayed flight home, I was mulling over another week sailing around the beautiful islands of Croatia. I was thinking Christian life can be a bit like riding on a small sailboat, with a boat being a metaphor for God. When the seas are calm, it's easy to stand on the deck and gently drift along just admiring the spectacular views, not thinking too much about the boat being there under your feet at all. But when the seas are rough and stormy, you have to hold on tight and rely on the boat to keep you afloat and eventually lead you safely back to port.



As our skipper said, "you need to trust in the boat to do its job". It's the same with God, you need to trust in him whatever life throws your way. He's there keeping you afloat even if you're not aware of him during the 'calm' days and he's certainly there in the 'rough' days too. You just have to hold on tight to him, as he does to you!



Nigel Johnson

The Symphonia Verbum Orchestra Presented its First Relaxed Concert at Swan Bank

On Friday 21st June the Symphonia Verbum Orchestra (SVO) presented a Relaxed Concert at Swanbank. Conducted and presented by Joe Hearson, this concert was truly a heart-warming event for both the audience and musicians alike. The aim of this event was to ensure that the concert was accessible to as many people as possible. As Stoke's only professional orchestra, it is important that the SVO is an orchestra for everyone.



There was a particular focus on enabling those who may struggle to attend the SVO's regular concerts at the King's Hall to come to this performance. People were free to move around, get refreshments, sing and dance along and generally express their enjoyment in whatever way they wished. There was also a colouring-in station at which some of the children in the audience sat to draw during



the concert.

The 150-strong audience was as diverse as the music selection, which ranged from Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* to *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*.

Hearing the audience singing along to the music was a real pleasure for the musicians, who relished the opportunity to connect directly with their audience. Many of the Orchestra's members greeted people as they arrived and stayed behind after the concert to talk with the audience members.

It is always hoped that an event such as this will serve as a stepping-stone to our regular concert series, and it was fantastic to hear that many audience members expressed their intention to join the SVO at its next full concert on 5th October at the King's Hall.



For more information about the SVO's work, contact **Joe Hearson** on 07938 579926 or via email at artistic.director@svo.org.uk. Plenty of information can also be found on the SVO's website www.svo.org.uk.

The SVO is grateful to JCB and Steven Mountford for their generous donations, without which, this event could not have happened. **Joe Hearson**

SWAN BANK NOTICEBOARD

The District Prayer 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

We're still looking to restock our supplies of **Pot Noodles** and **biscuits** to provide homeless people with something to eat and a hot drink and biscuit. Donations can be dropped off at the church office anytime.

Colour Splash this year (24th-26th July) has a theme called 'Wavemakers'. Kids (Reception to Yr 6) can join us in making waves on the 'Beach' and learn about God through fun games, crafts and Bible stories. It's just £25pp for the three days or £10 per day.

Also, after the Colour Splash service on Sunday 28th July we are having a church summer picnic in Burslem Park (or the Lower Hall if it's raining!). Bring along your own picnic and be prepared for fun and games.

What's on at Church

Approach
Dementia Support
Part of Dougie Mac

Every Monday
13:00 - 15:00

SWANBANK 

Join us at Swan Bank Methodist Church and take part in our fun and engaging Dementia activity group.

Enjoy these **FREE** group sessions for people living with Dementia and their carers at Swan Bank Methodist Church, Swan Bank Square, Burslem, Stoke - On - Trent, ST6 2AA.

Contact Approach Dementia Support for more information:
01782 214999 or enquiries@approachstaffordshire.co.uk



COLOUR SPLASH PRESENTS

WAVEMAKERS

24th - 26th July
from 9am - 3.30pm


For Kids in Reception - Y6
to book head over to
swanbank.org.uk/coloursplash

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.

What's on further afield



OneSound & Orchestra & Singers

50 YEARS

Anniversary Concert

Bringing together members from across 50 years of OneSound & MAYC Orchestra and Singers

6.30pm Saturday 6th July 2024
Coventry Central Hall, CV1 2HA

Contact us on os50threunion@gmail.com


tinyurl.com/oands50
Scan or click the link to book tickets!

Tickets: £5 (Free under 18)
Also available on the door

See **Ruth** for further details

Poppy Making



Can you save your whole 2 litre clear plastic pop/water bottles and 4 or 6 pint plastic milk cartons, including their tops, please. They will be used to make poppies for a display outside

the church for the annual remembrance day service. Could you make sure they are thoroughly clean before dropping them off at church.

Watch his space for more news as **Jane Sheeran** and **Georgie Boden** will be organising a team to create the display. It will be amazing.



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!
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