



Culcheth **Methodist** Church

Transforming the World by meeting the needs of our community as God's people

Ellesmere Rd, Culcheth, Warrington WA3 4BJ

Reg Charity No. 1129901

Minister: Rev Katharine Bland 01925 763218

kjbland@yahoo.co.uk

Church Contact: Elizabeth Marr 01925 762187



Our Church building remains closed for the time being, due to the rise in Covid cases in our area, and our Getting Together groups are “on pause” unless they can meet virtually.

If you can access zoom, we are meeting for coffee after the Sunday Service at 11.30am – see link on the next page, we are going into small breakout groups, so we can catch up with each other.

We are also sharing connection via phone calls, an email group, a facebook group (Culcheth Methodist Church), and the weekly notice sheet.

If you would like to join the email group, please email amyedriver@gmail.com

SHARING SUNDAY WORSHIP

We are sharing our Sunday Service over the telephone.

If you would like to listen in, for 10.30am on Sunday:

Dial **020 3478 5289** on your telephone,

When it asks for the access code, enter **145 404 825#**.

When it asks for your ID, press #

The call will be charged at the standard UK phone rate.

Any questions, call 01925 766550.



Luke 3 1-6 A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the LORD, make straight paths for him

Pray Together – members of the church will be at prayer from 6.30-7pm every day, and from 9.30-10am on Mondays, do join in wherever you are.

Communication:

Weekly Notice Sheet: To Amy by Wed 6pm for inclusion this week, Tel 766550, culchethmethodist@gmail.com

Website: www.leighandhindley.org.uk Facebook: LeighAndHindleyMethodist contact Rev Katharine Bland

Room Bookings: Linda Bloomfield, lindajbloomfield@yahoo.co.uk 01925 765875

Magazine entries to cmcnews57@gmail.com.

Prayer Circle requests contact Janette Hutchinson:766819/07729 313466 or Jane Bushby:509558/07949 390862

Message from Rev Katharine Bland

Dear Friends,

I can't believe we're up to the third Sunday in Advent. Why do the days always seem to speed up when we get to this point? At our recent circuit staff meeting we discussed the variety of worship we are planning to provide, and I must admit, I'm really looking forward to the variety on offer:

Christmas Eve at 2.30pm will be an online Nativity, and I'm on the lookout for anyone who would like a speaking part. Do let me know if you'd like a part, and I will send you a copy of the script. I can confirm that the role of 'Donkey' has now been filled! (A big thank you to Dave Briney!) Even if you don't want a speaking part, everyone is encouraged to dress as their favourite Nativity character. Do think about joining us, and especially inviting family and friends to join in too, especially the children. I can't think of anything better for Christmas Eve afternoon.

Christmas Eve at 8pm, I will be leading an online reflective service, and I have a surprise in store for you...our musician son Christopher, who is currently at the Guild Hall in London, is busy recording music especially for this service, and it may well have a jazzy twist to it.

Christmas Eve at 11.30pm, Revd Len Periera will be leading an online reflective service especially for those who prefer a late night.

Christmas Day at 10am with Rev'd Viv and Colleagues - let's celebrate together the Birth of Christ.

The services will be available on zoom and access will be online or by telephone - details to follow.

So, after all that, I think it is quite apt that our candle representing this Sunday is the Candle of Joy. We have already reflected upon the Candle for Hope and the Candle for Peace.

You'd think the Candle for Joy would be an easy one because joy is all around us - in the children, the lights, the music, although sadly not this year in the gathering together. But how often do we let our preparations, or our memories, push joy to the side?

Joy is like an underground spring that wells up within us, but joy is also a choice, an attitude.

Like a muscle, it needs to be exercised. So today we open ourselves to joy, trusting that God has already planted it in us. All we need to do is give it care and offer it to share.

Let's pray together:

Loving God, we open ourselves to you, trusting that this is how you made us: you created us for joy-filled hearts and lives. Show us the creative power of hope. Teach us the peace that comes from justice. Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you, that we may walk in the light of Christ. Amen.

God Bless, Love Katharine

Dot Pendleton

Dot passed away peacefully at home on Sun 6th Dec. Eric would like to thank everyone for their support and prayers. They particularly found Open Doors on Sat and Mon very supportive, pre-lockdown. Dot's funeral will be on 8th Jan. Our thoughts and prayers are with Eric and family, and with David O.

Barbara Fuller

Barbara passed away peacefully on 1st Dec, surrounded by her family. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

Post Church Virtual Coffee

If you would like to join in for a virtual post-church Zoom coffee at 11.30pm, just for half an hour, the link is below. We have had some lovely chats in our breakout groups in these last few weeks, do join us. Note that this is now a repeating meeting – it will be the same link each week.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88560759929?pwd=MFFDRittR0hkN0loWTlaTjIBN1V6UT09>

Meeting ID: 885 6075 9929 Passcode: 012778

Christmas Stars over Bethlehem

We would invite you, and anyone you know, to make a paper or card star to add to the “Stars over Bethlehem” window display. You might like to make one to remember someone you have lost, someone you are missing because of the Covid restrictions, or just because you’d like to. I have included a template, but please feel free to make as many as you’d like, of any shape or size, and decorated in whatever way you’d like. The knitted nativity is set up in the window, with added fairy lights, and if you post any stars through the Church letterbox, they will be added to the display. The more the merrier! If you’d like one added on your behalf, contact Viv Briney (764249 or vivbriney@hotmail.com)

Christmas Post

We are operating a Christmas card delivery service for Culcheth and Glazebury Methodist Churches. Cards to be delivered in Culcheth and Glazebury should be posted through the church letterbox by 13th December and will be delivered by 22nd December. We’re not asking for a donation but will probably hold a collection for an agreed charity next year.

As I have to self isolate for the next week I am very grateful to Elizabeth Marr for taking charge of sorting. David Ogilvy.

Lockdown: Lexicon and Legacy

Rev Bob Davies’ book, with contributions from several of our congregation, has been glowingly reviewed in the Methodist Recorder. If you would like a copy (£10 + £2 P&P), send a cheque to Rev Robert Davies, 38 Sands Avenue, Chadderton, Oldham, OL9 0NU cheques payable to Rev Robert Davies)

Action for Children

Action for Children, the Methodist Church children’s charity this year cared for more than 300,000 vulnerable children and here at Culcheth we support them in several ways.

One major contribution is through the Christmas Parade and Gift Service in early December. All sections of the uniformed Groups – Scouts and Girl Guides - supported by members of our Church have each year collected hundreds of toys and gifts bringing them to the Service. These have been donated to our local office of Action for Children for distribution in the North West of England. However in 2020 due to the Covid -19 pandemic the Service will not take place and children and families in the care of Action for Children could miss out. Whilst there will be no Service I would appeal to you to support the collection of new toys, books and gifts as usual. Already Faith Miller of the 6th Culcheth Brownies has made a commitment to collect new gifts. Having spoken to Diane Goodier at the local office for Action for Children she highlighted that a local need is for children’s pyjamas. If you would be willing to purchase these as your gift that would be fantastic or make a donation so that these could be bought. Please support Action for Children by donating and collecting from others new unwrapped presents and let me have them before the 10th December. I would be happy to collect these or they can be left at my house by

arrangement. Margaret Johnson 19 Cawley Avenue, Culcheth WA3 4DF.763927 or 07815104290.

Around 40 members of our Church and community have League of Light home Collecting Boxes. Last year this raised £900.00 for Action for Children. I will be opening the boxes again this year immediately after Christmas. Several box holders are able to call with these and I'd welcome this. Others I'd be pleased to collect from. Please note that I will ring before calling for the box. The Three Towns Operatic Society Christmas Concert in December 2019 raised £425.00 for Action for Children. In these difficult times there will not be a Concert in 2020 and the potential for a donation is eliminated.

In order to support this deficiency, I appeal to you to consider supporting Action for Children in one of many other ways this Christmas. Please visit the website www.actionforchildren.org.uk for information about how you can offer your help.

With many thanks, Margaret Johnson

Youth Work Update

There is a short video update on the Youth work here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-QKF9oX-r-w>

As I continue to mentor and connect with young people, each week I'm reminded of the detrimental effect that the pandemic has had on them. Please do continue to pray for the youth work – the mentoring, building relationships, Fresh groups, online platforms, debate club, detached street work, and that the young people would encounter the message of hope this Christmas.

Here is a recent message from Steve Murphy (WYFC director).

What has struck me again more than ever is how the work of Warrington Youth for Christ is pivotal in the lives of young people across our town. Our workers are called to bring God's truth hope and love into the lives of children. It's through our mentoring and pastoral support - being utilised by our high schools - that students are able to access a listening ear and some sound advice by youth workers who are being led by the Holy Spirit, offering truth and hope that comes from Jesus. Please do all you can to prioritise praying for wisdom for each staff member who is engaging in this highly rewarding yet complex part of our ministry.

Hannah

Support Needed

Although we are not currently meeting in person, the work of our team continues – the Pastoral team have, of course, been particularly busy since March, and so many people have been praying. Behind the scenes, volunteers continue to manage our finances, lettings and property, and the Steward team are currently planning some extra activities we can all get involved in during the Advent and Christmas season.

Could you offer any support? As you will have seen in our last Church Council minutes, our finances are in good shape at the moment, so it would be a great time to take on the **Treasurer** role, with able support from Julie Mainwaring as bookkeeper and Julie Worswick on Gift Aid. The **Lettings** role is also vacant, and again this would be a great time to take on the role, while it is quiet, and Linda has got everything ship-shape.

Perhaps you'd like to join the **Steward or Pastoral team**? As most of you know, Viv & Dave Briney are planning to move as soon as they are able, which will leave some big gaps, but ones we can fill in different ways.

6th Dec 2020

Remember, you don't need to do these roles in the same way as the previous person did – all the roles can be shaped to fit your gifts, and perhaps you will bring a different way of working that will help us renew!

Christmas Hampers. HUGE THANKYOU!

THANKYOU SO MUCH to everyone who contributed with great enthusiasm and generosity to the Christmas hampers appeal. It has been very exciting to see such an exciting array of festive goodies building up in Jane and Dave's garage in recent weeks! On Saturday 5th, two car boot loads of completed hampers and individual food items, which will be used to create more personalised hampers, were delivered to Helping Hands. They were very grateful, knowing how much they will be appreciated by their recipients over Christmas. We reckoned there would be well over 10 hampers worth, at least, and further generous donations have continued to arrive. A massive thank you once again, and also to those of you who have faithfully continued to support the Food Bank in Leigh, whose need is greater than ever.

