

Wantage & Abingdon Circuit

CHILDREY, GROVE & WANTAGE SECTOR

  
The **Methodist** Church

# CGW NEWS



December 2024  
January 2025

Minister : Rev Keith Underhill – Tel: 01235 763321  
keith.underhill@methodist.org.uk

When Keith is not available, please talk to one of the Stewards listed below, who will put you in touch:

Helen Carter : 01235 764810  
Ian Sturt : 07426 772761

Please send material for the **Weekly Notices** to :

**Grove** Jenny Marriott : 01235 767624  
**Wantage** Gill & Gordon Skidmore : 07710 214601  
email : [wntgmethodistnotices@gmail.com](mailto:wntgmethodistnotices@gmail.com)

Contributions for the **next Newsletter** (February 2025) should be sent to the editor by email, phone or in writing by **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

e-mail : [wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wantage.sector.newsletter@gmail.com)

Tel : 01235 766655 / 07710 214601

**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](http://www.wantab.org.uk)  
**Wantage web site** [www.wantagemethodist.org.uk](http://www.wantagemethodist.org.uk)  
**Circuit web site** [www.wantab.org.uk](http://www.wantab.org.uk)

**Sector Newsletter Contribution deadline dates – 2025**

February	Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> January
March	Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup> February
April	Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March
May	Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> April
June	Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup> May
July/August	Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> June

## From the Manse.....

As part of my recent birthday celebrations, Liz, Amy & Becca took me out for the day. It was a surprise outing with nobody saying where we were going or what we would be doing, apart from the fact that we would be heading to London. We all met at Marble Arch tube station and then walked the short distance to Frameless London. Feel free to click here to go to their website <https://frameless.com>

“42 MASTERPIECES, 4 GALLERIES, 1 TICKET”. FRAMELESS is redefining the experiential immersive art world....we are the largest permanent multi-sensory experience in the UK. FRAMELESS features four galleries and showcases some of the world’s greatest works of art presented in ways never seen before. Where art breaks free.”

A few weeks later, and I am still trying to find the words to adequately sum up the experience. It was amazing, breathtaking and mind-bending. As you stood in each of the four galleries in turn, you experienced some of the world’s most famous paintings in a way that nothing can prepare you for. It is hard to explain and even their creative website can only give you a snapshot of what you will experience.

In galley number three, the paintings really came to life and all the people, objects and even the very landscapes of sea and city all moved and along with the cleverly chosen music, (as in all four galleries) you find yourself fully and totally immersed in what you had only previously seen and known as a still life work of art.

It struck me that this experience is to be found at the very heart of the Christmas story. That God took on human form and became totally and fully immersed in our world and in our lives. Not for him the dipping of a divine toe into the messy waters of our humanity, but rather plunging full in, being totally immersed and as one with us.

As we prepare to celebrate once more the mystery of the incarnation, we give thanks for the God of God’s own son, fully human!

As the hymn writer reminds us;

“Lord Jesus Christ  
You have come to us  
Born as one with us,  
Mary's Son.”

With much love and God bless

*Keith*

## **Week of prayer for Christian Unity 18<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

During this Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity, there will be an online session of daily prayers each evening at 8:00 pm for 20 minutes.

Each Church will be invited to lead one of the sessions, and the prayers will be as varied in format as the traditions of our member churches. This form of celebration of the week of Prayer for Christian Unity has been well received in the past and we are looking forward to repeating it again.

In addition, there will also be a united service on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> January at 4:00 pm at Wantage Methodist Church at which Keith will be preaching. There will be a tea beforehand at 3:00 pm.

### **Stepping out with Noah in January.**

Our first walk of the New year will be on **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January at 2:00 pm**, meeting outside the Wantage Manse. The route will be confirmed nearer the time depending on the weather and conditions underfoot!

### **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 minutes. In November we held a Remembrance style service instead of the more normal bible study. Unfortunately the technology failed to work, which meant we couldn't see some lovely images but we managed to sing quite well. On 9<sup>th</sup> December our theme will be Advent. On 13<sup>th</sup> January our theme will be The Wise Men and on 10<sup>th</sup> February our theme will be Love.

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. In between bible studies I pop into Elmbrook on an irregular basis and have a chat with some of the Bible Study group and any other residents who would like a chat. My most bible based chats are with a resident who doesn't come to the group.

**From the Editorial Team**

**Gill and Gordon wish all our readers a Happy Christmas  
and every good wish for 2025.**

Suggestions for a new title for the monthly Newsletter in 2025 are welcome.



# Cornerstone News

– December 2024



A very **Merry Christmas** to all our friends, supporters, volunteers, staff and especially to our loyal customers. Over the last few years, we have had much to rely on God for but also much to thank him for. He has continued this year to provide for our needs, be those needs staff, volunteers or customers. Not only have we been able to continue to serve our customers this year but, by their generosity, we have also been able to bless many families with free meals using our marble jar scheme.

Thank you to all who continue to keep our marble jar topped up and allow us to bless those families.

**December in the Shop** Advent Sunday is December 1st and we have a selection of books suitable for study during the Advent period. There are also advent calendars – chocolate or traditional, and advent candles to mark the count down to Christmas day. There is a good selection of Christmas cards still available at the time of writing, also 2025 calendars and diaries, including the ever popular Hannah Dunnett range of cards and calendars. If you are looking for gifts, we have socks, chocolate and many other gift items, which we can also pack into a bespoke hamper for you, just ask at the counter.

**Out and About** If you are not able to visit our shop usually, you might be able to visit one of our stalls. We will be having a stall at St John's Christmas Fayre on 30<sup>th</sup> November. We will also be at Wantage Methodist Church on Dickensian evening: 5 - 9pm Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December and again at their coffee morning Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December 10 am -12 noon.

**December in the Café** Our Christmas specials menus will be running alongside our normal menu during December starting on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December. On Christmas lunch days (4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> December) we will be open until 11 am only for drinks and cakes. We will then be closed other than for pre-booked lunches although the bookshop will still be open as usual.

**Make and Bake** Our Christmas themed Make & Bake sessions will start on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November, open to all under 5s, 9.30 -11 am. It's just £2 and includes a craft, a "bake", singing & story time. Our Last Make and Bake will be on 10<sup>th</sup> December. We will restart on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

**Prayer breakfasts** Our monthly prayer breakfasts continue on the second Saturday of each month. The next one will be on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December at 8.30 am and I look forward to you joining us for croissants, tea, coffee, prayer and fellowship.

**Christmas and New Year opening** We will close at 2 pm on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December and reopen at 9.30 am on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

Cornerstone, 10 Savile Way, Grove, OX12 0PT

Tel: 01235 772280

email: [office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk](mailto:office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk)

## **A statement from the Methodist Church on Assisted Dying proposals**

**14 November 2024**

*Revd Dr Jonathan Hustler: Secretary of the Methodist Conference*

A Bill to legalise a form of assisted dying will be debated and voted on in the UK Parliament on 29 November. This follows the introduction of a proposed Bill in the Scottish Parliament in March 2024 which would allow terminally ill adults in Scotland to end their own lives, and the approval of similar plans to proceed with the drafting of legislation to enable assisted dying in Jersey in May 2024, and on the Isle of Man in July 2024.

Historically the Methodist Church has opposed any change to the law on this issue. In 2015, when assisted dying was last seriously considered in the House of Commons, the Methodist Conference discussed the issue, and heard contributions on both sides of the debate. While there was consensus around affirming the intrinsic value of human life, and the importance of high quality palliative care, two extracts from the motions put forward illustrate the very sincere beliefs held both by those who believe the law should change to allow assisted suicide, and those who see that as a slippery slope:

“[Assisted dying] would have a seriously detrimental effect on the wellbeing of individuals and on the nature and shape of our society, and can only add to the pressures that many vulnerable terminally ill people will feel” [Notice of Motion 2015/212]

“Where death is considered both certain and imminent, a compassionate due judicial dispensation to allow assisted end-of-life could be appropriate” [Notice of Motion 2015/221]

The Methodist Conference referred the matter to the Methodist Council, which decided not to revisit the Church’s position, but requested the production of resources to enable the Church better to respond to the needs of those requiring palliative care and understand the issues involved, in the wider context of the subject of death and dying.

These are available on the Methodist Church website here: [Death and dying - The Methodist Church](#)

As this issue is debated in Parliament again, we commend those resources for study and informed reflection. The web pages will be updated with additional resources and information over the coming days.

We also urge that this important issue is debated with sensitivity and kindness, recognising its potential to prompt pain and strong feelings in the people most closely affected by it.

## **A Statement in response to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury from the Methodist Church in Britain**

**14 November 2024**

In light of the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury following the Makin Review into abuses by the late John Smyth QC, the Methodist Church in Britain joins others in praying for all those affected by abuse. Survivors have been courageous in speaking of their experience and in calling the Churches to account and we hope humbly to continue to learn from them.

We are covenant partners with the Church of England, an anniversary we marked last week. Dr Welby has done much to strengthen the partnership between our denominations and we pray for the continuation of this work and for those who will discern who should be the next Archbishop of Canterbury. We are committed to developing our shared understanding and desire for good safeguarding practice at every level of our churches.

### **A prayer**

Loving God, we ask your forgiveness for the times when in your Church we have failed to protect vulnerable people.

We pray for your healing for those who have been hurt and for those who live with guilt and regret.

We ask for your wisdom and direction as we seek to keep safe all your children, in the name of Christ. Amen.

## **From Northampton District Newsletter**

### **One Voice podcast**

Have you listened to the One Voice podcast yet?! A partnership between the Northampton District and the Northampton Methodist Circuit, One Voice shares stories of hope and inspiration in a monthly podcast.

Recent episodes feature guests such as Paul Nixon, American author and ordained Minister, and Bea Hulme, Youth President, and we look forward to hearing from our District Chair, Rev'd Dr Sonia Hicks in the near future!

Take a listen to the podcast [here](#).

### **Bite-sized rural mission course**

*January – March 2025 on Zoom*

This exciting 6 session course, which will include some training from Matt Forsyth (Northampton Methodist District Mission Team Leader) is designed for all leaders in the Methodist Church and associated LEPs (lay, ordained, paid and unpaid) who want to engage more widely with their local communities and reach new people.

To find out more about the course and to get your free tickets, [click here](#).



# **LOCAL ARRANGEMENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING**

## **Wantage & Abingdon Methodist Circuit**

**Why God needs Local Arrangement Leaders**

**What makes an effective act of worship**

**Structuring the service**

**Formulating the prayers**

**Choosing the music**



**Milton Methodist Church**

**High Street, OX14 4EW**

**9.30 am—1.00 pm**

**Saturday 1st February 2025**

**Further details from Rev Bruce on**

**revbrucet@yahoo.co.uk or 01 235 813242**

Image ©Ronald Doucett, Unsplash





## **Christmas Tree Festival**

**6<sup>th</sup> December, 6 – 9 pm (Dickensian Evening)**

at

**Wantage Methodist Church**

Raising funds for

**Wantage and Grove STREET PASTORS**

**Come and see the Christmas Trees in the Chapel  
+ enjoy refreshments and stalls in the Hall**

**6.10 - 6.30 pm – Caritas Children's Choir**

**7 – 8 pm – Greengage-folk band**

**7<sup>th</sup> December, 10 am - 12 noon – Coffee Morning**

**8<sup>th</sup> December, 10.30 am – Morning Worship +**

**Blessing of the Angels**

**We hope Christmas and the New Year  
will bring you many blessings.**



Grove Methodist Church  
**CRIBFEST**

**Saturday 14th December, 2024**  
10am - 12 noon  
at Grove Methodist Church

*Refreshments will be served*

You may well be wondering what is Cribfest?  
It's an opportunity to share and see nativity sets as  
we prepare once more for Christ's birth in the stable  
in Bethlehem and for us to reflect upon all that is  
at the heart of the Christmas story and message.

**ALL PROCEEDS TO CRISIS**



## **GROVE**

**Ecumenical “Prayer for Revival”** is held on the first Sunday of each month in our church. The next meeting is on **Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> December** at 6.30 pm till 8 pm. You are invited to come and pray with us. All are welcome.

The first **Ecumenical “Prayer for Revival”** of the New Year will be on **Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025** from 6.30 pm till 8.00 pm. You are invited to come and pray with us. All are welcome.

***Change of plan for December.** No Coffee Morning on the first Saturday this year.*

Instead, we are holding **“Cribfest”** over the weekend **14<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> December**. You may well be wondering what is Cribfest? It is an opportunity to share and see nativity sets as we prepare once more for Christ’s birth in the stable in Bethlehem and for us to reflect upon all that is at the heart of the Christmas story and message. Perhaps you have nativity sets that you have unpacked for Christmas for decades or ones that you purchased whilst on holiday. They might be big or small; simple or lavish; traditional or modern, home-made or shop bought. Whatever age, shape or style they will form part of this special exhibition and celebration of cribs.

The Church will be open on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December** from 10:00 am – 12 noon for our community to come and view all the nativity sets that will be on display. Refreshments including mince pies will be available free of charge with any donations going towards the work of Crisis.

The nativity sets will be blessed the following day, **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December** at 10:30 am as part of our all-age interactive service.

We have already contacted the various organisations who use of our premises to invite them to join in with us and take part.

If you would like your family nativity set to be a part of this special celebration please bring it along to church on **Friday afternoon, 13<sup>th</sup> December**, between 3.00 pm and 5.00 pm when preparing and decorating the church will be taking place.

They can then be collected after 11.45 am and their owners can take them home for their family celebrations.

*Help welcomed. Also offers of cakes for the refreshments.*

**We invite you to join with us in our Christmas worship:**

**Carol Service at 6.30pm on Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> December**

**Christmas Eve Holy Communion at 6.30pm on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> December**

**Christmas Day All age worship at 10.30am on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> December**

**Tuesday Fellowship in November** is on **Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> November** at 2.15 pm.

Ian Sturt is our speaker for the afternoon. We are meeting at 14 Harlington Avenue, Grove, home of Jenny Marriott. All welcome.

**In December, Tuesday Fellowship** will be enjoying Christmas lunch together at the Cornerstone on **Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> December**. The meal is already prebooked.

**Tuesday Fellowship in January** will be on **Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> January**. Details will be published in the weekly notices nearer the time.

**Film Club** will meet on **Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> December** at 7.30 pm in the Meeting Room. (please note this is the second Friday of the month.)

We will be showing "**Nativity**".

*Paul Maddens, a primary school teacher, is asked to produce the year's nativity play. Hilarity and confusion ensues when Paul brags that his ex, a Hollywood producer, is thinking of coming to watch his school's Christmas nativity.*

*Starring Martin Freeman, Ashley Jensen.*

All are welcome. Admission is free. A small donation helps to cover costs.

**Film Club in January** is on **Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> January** at 7.30 pm in the Meeting Room when we will be showing "**Pinocchio**", an animated film by Guillermo del Toro.

*Set in Fascist Italy during the interwar period, the film stars the voice of Gregory Mann as Pinocchio and David Bradley as Geppetto, alongside Ewan MacGregor, Burn Gorman, Ron Perlman, John Turturro, Finn Wolfhard, Cate Blanchett, Tim Blake Nelson, Christoph Waltz and Tilda Swinton.*

All are welcome. Admission is free. A small donation helps to cover costs.

**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 Coffee morning for Freyja's Fund in November. The total raised in donations was £220.10, to which was added £90.27 in hand from previous tax rebate. Card sales from both Morgan and Judith over the weekend raised about £150 and Judith also has money to add to this from sales made during the months since March. She would like to thank everyone for their regular support in buying cards from her. It is much appreciated.

## Coffee Mornings 2025

The list of dates for 2025 (first Saturday of each month) will be circulated shortly to our regular hosts. If there are others of you who would be willing to take/or share a turn do please get in touch with me. We are always glad of more volunteers.

In the last few years we have all had a rest in January and the first Coffee morning of the year has been in February. If there is anyone who would like to celebrate the New Year by hosting one on Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup> January, please do get in touch with me.

*Jenny Marriott (01235 767624)*

Thank you 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 donations are very much appreciated. The need is still great.

There is a list above the box of the things that are most useful to them at the moment.

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.

## **Grove – Special services for December and January**

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December** “Cribfest” 10:00 am-12 Noon

**15<sup>th</sup> December** 10:30 am blessing of the cribs and nativity sets from “Cribfest”

**19<sup>th</sup> December** 7:00 pm - Carols around the tree. The Parish Council’s Carols around the tree opposite the church will take place on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December at 7:00 pm, to be followed by mince pies and hot drinks in church.

**22<sup>nd</sup> December** 6:30 pm – Carol service Come along and join us as we sing some of your favourite carols and hear the familiar readings as we prepare for Christmas.

**24<sup>th</sup> December** Christmas Eve Our traditional Christmas Eve communion service will be at 6:30 pm as we prepare for his coming amongst us once more. Please note the change of time from past years.

**25<sup>th</sup> December** Christmas Day 10:30 am Come and celebrate Christmas Day in this all-age service – don’t forget to bring along one of your presents to show!

**Covenant Service** Our Annual Covenant service will be on January 5<sup>th</sup> and will include Holy Communion





WANTAGE  
IN HARMONY

WANTAGE IN HARMONY  
GOSPEL CHOIR PRESENTS:

# LOVE AND LIGHT

SUNDAY 8TH DECEMBER  
ST PETER & ST PAUL'S CHURCH, WANTAGE  
5:30PM TO 7:30PM (DOORS OPEN 5PM)

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM  
[wantageinharmony@gmail.com](mailto:wantageinharmony@gmail.com)

ADULTS £10, CONCESSIONS £8

ALL PROFITS TO CHARITY

**Wantage Choral Society**

**A Ceremony of**

# **Carols**

The concert includes seasonal works by  
Benjamin Britten, Ralph Vaughan Williams  
and other composers.

SOPRANOS	Daisy Livesey & Jessica Edgar
BARITONE	Jack Redman
ORGAN	Sebastion Thomson
HARPIST	Aoife Miralles
BRASS QUINTET	from Wantage Concert Brass
CONDUCTOR	Hannah Zaki

**Saturday 14 December 2024 7:30 pm**  
**Wantage Parish Church**

**All Tickets £15**

Tickets available from [wantagechoralsociety.co.uk](http://wantagechoralsociety.co.uk)  
**or members of WCS**  
**or on the door**  
**Under 16s - Free**

[wantagechoralsociety.co.uk](http://wantagechoralsociety.co.uk)

Registered Charity No 265227

## WANTAGE

### **Kids@Church**

*Jane, Dave, Cath and Keith*

At November kids@church we looked at "getting ready". Keith told us about Jesus getting his disciples to prepare for a special meal and the children went on a hunt to find pictures of things we might have at a party. He showed us the liturgical clock and we counted down the weeks to Christmas, much to the shock of some of the parents!!

We made decorations for the kids@church Christmas tree for the Christmas tree festival and finished with breakfast and time to chat together. We were delighted to welcome some new families.

Next date for Kids@Church **December 15<sup>th</sup>** and then **19<sup>th</sup> January**.

Kids@Church is an informal service, activity and breakfast for children and their families from 9.30 am. New friends always warmly welcomed!

Any questions, please phone Keith Underhill, 01235 763321.



### **Christmas Angels**

#### **Knit & Chat - Our host of angels are ready to fly!**

The labelling of the angels will be completed at our first meeting in December. This year they will be blessed at the Sunday morning service on 8<sup>th</sup> December. This

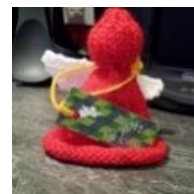
coincides with the Christmas Tree Festival. The Knit & Chat tree will be decorated with angels and hats which have been the main focus for our knitting this year. We will set out the angels in the chapel on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December. As in previous years, in the following week, the angels will be taken to the care homes and distributed around the town. People will be invited to take some to put out in their area.

In December and January Knit & Chat will meet as usual at 2 pm in the hall on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month.

**2<sup>nd</sup> December** and **16<sup>th</sup> December**

**6<sup>th</sup> January** and **20<sup>th</sup> January**

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



## **Wantage – Special services for December and January**

### **8<sup>th</sup> December at 10:30 am**

During this service led by Keith, our knitted angels will be blessed before being 'set free' bringing messages of hope and peace to all who find them.

### **22<sup>nd</sup> December at 10:30 am.**

This service will be our all-age, interactive carol service.

### **Christmas Eve 24<sup>th</sup> December at 4:30 pm.**

Following on from last year's positive experience, we will once again be holding a 'cloth for the cradle' service at which we will transform our crib into a suitable bed for Jesus and reflect together on the events of the stable and that first Christmas. This will be an all-age service including an informal act of Holy Communion for this most special of days.

### **Christmas Day 25<sup>th</sup> December at 9:30 am**

Come and celebrate Christmas Day in this all-age service – don't forget to bring along one of your presents to show.

### **Covenant Service.**

Our Annual Covenant service will be on **January 12<sup>th</sup>** and will include Holy Communion

## **Christmas Tree Festival**

### **Wantage Methodist Church 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> December**



This year our Christmas Tree Festival will be supporting Wantage and Grove Street Pastors. We shall be open from 6 pm – 9 pm on **Dickensian Evening, Friday 6<sup>th</sup>**



**December**, for people to look at the trees and to enjoy refreshments and stalls in the hall. Caritas Children's Choir (from 6.10 to 6.30 pm) and Greengage, a local folk band, (from 7 to 8 pm) will be performing Christmas music in the chapel.

The festivities will continue with a Coffee Morning on **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December**, 10 am - 12 noon and the trees will remain in place for the Sunday service when the angels will also be blessed.

We will be having a stall in the hall selling cakes, biscuits and handmade Christmas gifts/goodies (no bric-a-brac please). Please let me know if you would be able to contribute something for this. There are other jobs to be done in order for the festival to take place so please let me know if you can help – this ranges from setting out bases for the trees to taking a turn sitting in church when people are looking round. Many thanks in advance for your support. Looking forward to seeing you all that weekend.

*Carolyn Roche*





## **Christmas Tree Festival**

**6<sup>th</sup> December, 6 – 9 pm (Dickensian Evening)**

at

**Wantage Methodist Church**

Raising funds for

**Wantage and Grove STREET PASTORS**

**Come and see the Christmas Trees in the Chapel  
+ enjoy refreshments and stalls in the Hall**

**6.10 - 6.30 pm – Caritas Children's Choir**

**7 – 8 pm – Greengage-folk band**

**7<sup>th</sup> December, 10 am - 12 noon – Coffee Morning**

**8<sup>th</sup> December, 10.30 am – Morning Worship +  
Blessing of the Angels**

**We hope Christmas and the New Year  
will bring you many blessings.**



In this our final newsletter for 2024 we have an opportunity to reflect on the experiences of some members of our church family during the past year. We remember with sadness those we have lost, but with thankfulness for their presence with us, and their contributions to our church life. We hold their families in our prayers too as those special times of the year, such as Christmas, which are often celebrated together, will be touched by the sadness of a family member no longer being part of those gatherings.

Through the kind service provided by Gordon and his team of technical experts, those people who find it easier to worship from home are able to continue doing so via Zoom. Grateful thanks are offered to Gordon and Zack and others who work hard to make this possible – despite, on occasions, it being anything but a straightforward task, and one which is beyond the ability of most of us.

On the final Sunday in October there were two Services, each of them with a special focus. Our morning service included the baptism of Martha Heaver. This was witnessed by very many of her family members and friends. The many comments afterwards confirmed their appreciation of being so warmly welcomed, and the uplifting Service celebrating the special occasion for Martha, and everyone who was there to support her entry into our church family through infant baptism.

In the afternoon we held our annual Remembrance Service and again this was well attended. This year it reflected both the unusually large number of funerals which have occurred during the past year, and the comfort and reassurance which came through sharing in this act of worship and remembering.

Last month's reference to Derek Morton's operation turned out to be incorrect. On the appointed day, he was on his way to the Horton Hospital in Banbury when a phone message informed him of its cancellation. To date Derek has no new appointment and can only continue to wait patiently, but also painfully.

We have been pleased to welcome Jennie Sapsford to our morning Services for a few weeks, and hope that she will continue to worship with us. Having moved to Wantage fairly recently, our Community Café has been a helpful way of enabling Jennie to get to know other church family members.

Jane Robinson's annual visit to Glyndbourne concluded badly through knocking her leg, causing a nasty injury. This has necessitated many hospital visits, and with greatly impaired mobility, once again Jane isn't able to worship with us in person. We assure her of our love, and hope swift healing will enable her return to Church soon.

We are currently missing two neighbours and friends temporarily unable to be with us in Church. Whilst taking her dog for a walk a few weeks ago, Mary Trotter fell on the pavement and has a broken wrist. As well as the difficulties in having to manage many tasks onehandedly, Mary feels sorry that this accident also shatters her 90 year long record of avoiding any broken bones! With care and assistance from Mary T and Mary Whittaker, Diane Barton has been able to join in worship with us until recently. Diane's daughter Claire is currently taking a much needed and deserved rest from



being her Mum's sole carer. During this time Diane is staying at St Katharine's. We pray for Mary and Diane and all who are offering them support.

Eileen Rennie's return to Church has been welcomed as a sign of her improving health, and we pray that this will continue. We are thankful for Helen Carter's sound recovery which has enabled her return to local preaching, with her first service being at Wantage. We hope that she will go on progressing towards good health. Treatment is ongoing for Sue Haithwaite and June Grunwald whom we hold in our thoughts and offer our love and our prayers. We look forward to when they are both well enough to worship with us regularly again.

We are aware that, in addition to those we have named, there are others going through difficult times at present, but whose anonymity is preserved. We offer them reassurance that, in holding before God every member of our Church family, they will be supported by our collective prayers, and our hopes for their return to better health.

Along the wall of the Link Corridor, you may have spotted a Who's Who board with a collection of photos. We hope that it may be a helpful way of matching names to faces, and knowing whom to contact with queries about all aspects of church responsibilities and activities.

**Praying for each other:** Over the next two months the people listed below will be included in the prayer time at the Tuesday Bible Study Group: on **Mary Trotter's** Pastoral List: Diane Barton, Glenys Deval, Hilary Rewcastle and Mary Whittaker, and on **Mary Whittaker's** Pastoral List: Pam Lowerson, and Mary Trotter.

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 Bible Study Group.

**Local Arrangements** - the only local arrangement we have on the next plan (December to February) is on December 29<sup>th</sup>. As yet no planning meeting is arranged for this, but will be arranged for quite early in December.

Planning meetings are open to anyone who is interested in discussions as to what worship we would like. There is no compulsion to help deliver the acts of worship if you attend a planning meeting. We have a WhatsApp group for those interested in being involved in Local Arrangements within our church. Please do talk to Helen Carter or anyone in the Church Leadership Team if you wish to join that. If you don't have access to WhatsApp but would be interested in being involved in Local Arrangement planning and delivery, then please chat to Helen Carter and she will make sure you are informed of any planning meetings.

## 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 December we will be following the Advent course A Strange Christmas by Krish Kandiah. This is from the Cover to Cover series and provides readings, reflections and prayers for personal use as well as for the group study.

**Dates for December** are as follows:

- |                  |           |   |
|------------------|-----------|---|
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | Session 2 | Strange Worship - Reading Psalm 98:1-9.<br>This meeting includes the monthly prayer list. |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> | Session 3 | Strange Welcome - Reading Matthew 18:1-14   |
| 17 <sup>th</sup> | Session 4 | Strange Wisdom – Reading 1 Corinthians 1:26-31  |

**The group will not meet on 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> December.**

The group will resume in **January** on the 7<sup>th</sup> when Keith will lead. We will then meet on 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of that month. We intend to begin the group study book for the next Holy Habit.

If you have any queries or prayer requests you can contact me (Carolyn Roche) by telephone on 01235 764310 or email: [ciroche48@hotmail.com](mailto:ciroche48@hotmail.com)

## Advent Study Group

An Advent Study group, organised by Alison Phillips, will meet on this year beginning on **Thursday November 28<sup>th</sup>** and for the following three **Thursday mornings until December 19<sup>th</sup>**.

We will meet at 1 Mill Paddock, Letcombe Regis and begin at 10 am with coffee, then aim to start discussing at 10.30 until mid day.

Alison has ordered books (Unexpected Jesus) for those who have requested one, and will give them to you as soon as they have arrived. Each week our discussion will be based on the daily readings from the week before, and ideally you will be reading on or soon after November 21<sup>st</sup>. Please let Alison know if you have any questions (01235 760335) and we look forward to beginning the season of Advent with you.

## Stepping Out with Noah

Our first walk of the New year will be on **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January at 2:00 pm** meeting outside the Wantage Manse. The route will be confirmed nearer the time depending on the weather and conditions underfoot!

## Prayer list

### A Prayer in Advent

God of all holiness, who are we, that you should come to us?

Yet you have visited your people and redeemed us in your Son.

As we prepare to celebrate his birth, make our hearts leap for joy at the sound of your word and move us by your Spirit to bless your wonderful works.

We ask this through him whose coming is certain, whose day draws near, even your Son, Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen

### Please pray for

Bethan Grant, Anne, Carol Mackinder, Emma Wright & family, Caroline, Doug & Anne Hatto, Richard in York, Edwina, Adrian, Geoff, Diane, Meriel, Diane's daughters Claire & Julie, June Hartle, Jane Robinson, Louise, Richard & Anne, Peter, John & Jo, Mary Spalding, Trudy, Jade, Sue, Findley, Jane & Emma Soffe & family, Eileen, Norma, Alison C & family, June G, Hunter, Angela, Vic Press, Val Broadbent, Vicky, Robin and Becky Legge and the Legge family grandchildren.

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 February newsletter, please let Carolyn know by **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> January** in order to meet the newsletter deadline.

Carolyn Roche: telephone: 01235 764310 email: [ciroche48@hotmail.com](mailto:ciroche48@hotmail.com)

**Prayer tree** - anyone can leave a prayer request on the tree. It is appreciated if a date is written on the tag somewhere. No tags are taken off the tree unless circumstances for the person or situation being prayed for change or the tree is full... Please take time to check the tree and choose someone or a situation to pray for or about. Also, if any of the prayer cards on the table feel relevant to you please do take one.

### Coffee at Cornerstone?

*Jane Kent*

As part of Holy Habits some people have been reading the book(s) linked to the theme and chatting about it/ them over coffee at Cornerstone. There isn't going to be a Holy Habit theme in December / January and it will restart in February but we thought it would be good to have a date in the diary for a chat and a coffee for anyone who is interested in January. Everyone is welcome!

We will meet at 10 am on **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> January**. If anyone would like a lift I am very happy to assist.

## **Community Café**

*June Grunwald*

The cafe is open every Monday from 9 am to 12 noon. All are welcome. Our café is open to everyone and there is no charge for refreshments, but people are welcome to make a donation which goes to a different charity each month. Our charity for September, October and November was Freyja's fund (a local charity based at JR which provides grants to children with cancer). At the time of going to press the amount raised was just over £320. The total will be more than this as money has also been raised by the selling of homemade birthday and Christmas cards. These were made by Liz, one of the café regulars. The charity for December, January and February is Siyabonga (a small charity providing support to children in Uganda).

Many thanks to all who volunteer at the café and to all the cake makers. It is much appreciated. Thanks also to those who have volunteered to be back ups in case we need someone at the last minute. With both Eileen and June out of action for a considerable time the teamwork has been much appreciated.

## **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 minutes. In November we held a Remembrance style service instead of the more normal bible study. Unfortunately the technology failed to work, which meant we couldn't see some lovely images but we managed to sing quite well. On 9<sup>th</sup> December our theme will be Advent. On 13<sup>th</sup> January our theme will be The Wise Men and on 10<sup>th</sup> February our theme will be Love.

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. In between bible studies I pop into Elmbrook on an irregular basis and have a chat with some of the Bible Study group and any other residents who would like a chat. My most bible based chats are with a resident who doesn't come to the group.

**Who's Who board** - Thanks to Ann Barber we have a new 'Who's Who display' on the noticeboard in the corridor between the chapel and the hall. This tells you who to approach about anything within the church that you need information on. If you can't see what you are looking for then please just ask one of the stewards.

## **Wantage & Grove Food Bank**

*Helen Carter*

There is a need for some lovely Christmas treats such as mince pies, Christmas puddings, Christmas cakes (some small ones would be great for those living by themselves as well as family sized ones), tins of ham, tins of salmon or anything else that is non perishable and that is 'Christmassy'. Extra Christmas parcels can be given to people of families who are nominated by referring agencies. These are usually made up quite early in December so early gifts would be much appreciated. Please could you just check that the use by date is at least into January 2025. Thank you.

## What is happening on the Wantage premises at present?

Sunday	9:30 am	Kids@Church		3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday
	10:30 am	Morning Worship	In person and on Zoom	Weekly
Monday	Morning	Drop-in Café	in the Hall	Weekly
	Afternoon	Knit & Chat	in the Hall	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday
Tuesday	Afternoon	Prayer & Study Group	in the Parlour	Weekly
Friday	Afternoon	Caritas Choirs		Weekly in term
<b>Users</b>		All in the Hall Rooms		
Monday	Evening	Slimming World		Weekly
		CA Meeting		Weekly
Tuesday	Morning	MIND		Weekly
	Evening	Wantage Camera Club		Weekly
Wednesday	Evening	Wantage Sings		Weekly
Thursday	Midday	KAWI		2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday in December
Friday	Morning	Mothers & Toddlers		Weekly in term
Saturday	Morning	Dads Out		1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday (2 <sup>nd</sup> in Dec)

## December

Weekend 6 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>		Dickensian Evening and Christmas Trees		
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Evening	Music Makers		

# SERVICES during December & January

## December

### Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>

Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10; 1Thessalonians 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

10:30 am Wantage

### Advent Sunday

Belinda Kaur

10:30 am Grove

Rev Nigel Ogley

This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion

6:30 pm Grove Prayer for Revival

### Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>

### Advent 2

Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

10:30 am Wantage Blessing of Angels Rev Keith Underhill

This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion

10:30 am Grove

Ian Sturt

### Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>

### Advent 3

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

9:30 am Wantage

Kids@Church

10:30 am Wantage

Graham Luscombe

10:30 am Grove Cribfest

Rev Keith Underhill

### Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup>

### Advent 4

Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46b-55; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

10:30 am Wantage Carols

Rev Keith Underhill

10:30 am Grove

Rev Georgina Bondzi-Simpson

6:30 pm Grove Carols

Rev Keith Underhill

### Christmas Eve 24<sup>th</sup> December

4:30 pm. Wantage Cloth for the Cradle

Rev Keith Underhill

This will be an all-age service including an informal act of Holy Communion

6:30 pm Grove

Rev Keith Underhill

This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion



## **Christmas Day 25<sup>th</sup> December**

Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-4(5-12); John 1:1-14

9:30 am Wantage All-age service Rev Keith Underhill

10:30 am Grove All-age service Rev Keith Underhill

## **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>**

1 Samuel 2:18-20,26; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52

10:30 am Wantage Local Arrangements

10:30 am Grove Local Arrangements

## **Sunday after Christmas**

## **January**

### **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>**

### **Covenant Sunday**

### **Christmas 2**

Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1: (1-9),10-

18

10:30 am Wantage Andrew Dixon

10:30 am Grove Covenant Rev Keith Underhill  
This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion

6:30 pm Grove Prayer for Revival

### **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>**

### **Baptism of Christ**

### **Ordinary 1**

Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17,21,22

10:30 am Wantage Covenant Rev Keith Underhill  
This service will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion

10:30 am Grove Belinda Kaur

### **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>**

### **Christian Unity**

### **Ordinary 2**

Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

9:30 am Wantage Kids@Church

10:30 am Wantage Ian Sturt

10:30 am Grove Rev Keith Underhill

4:00 pm Wantage Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Rev Keith Underhill

### **Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>**

### **Ordinary 3**

Nehemiah 8:1-3,5-6,8-10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21

10:30 am Wantage Rev Keith Underhill

10:30 am Grove Libby Hawkness-Smith

# DIARY FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY

## DECEMBER

Sunday, 1 <sup>st</sup>	6:30 pm	Prayer for Revival at Grove	p11
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	2:00 pm	Knit & Chat at Wantage	p17
	<b>Weekend 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Christmas Tree Festival</b> at Wantage	p18/19
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup>	6:00 pm	Dickensian Evening	
Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Coffee Morning	
<b>Sunday 8<sup>th</sup></b>	10:30 am	Morning Worship & Blessing the Angels	
Monday 9 <sup>th</sup>	2:30 pm	Bible Study at Elmbrook Care Home	p4/24
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Lunch	Grove Tuesday Fellowship	p12
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Grove Film Club	p12
<b>Saturday 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10 am - 12 noon</b>	<b>“Cribfest”</b> at Grove	p10/11
<b>Sunday 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10:30 am</b>	<b>Blessing of the cribs : “Cribfest”</b> at Grove	p11
	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>Kids@Church</b> at Wantage	p17
Monday 16 <sup>th</sup>	2:00 pm	Knit & Chat at Wantage	p17
<b>Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>10:30 am</b>	<b>All Age Carols</b> at Wantage	p18
	<b>6.30pm</b>	<b>Carol Service</b> at Grove	p14
<b>Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup></b>		<b>Christmas Eve</b>	
	<b>4:00 pm</b>	<b>“Cloth for the Cradle”</b> at Wantage	p18
	<b>6:30 pm</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b> at Grove	p14
<b>Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup></b>		<b>Christmas Day</b>	
	<b>9:30 am</b>	<b>All age worship</b> at Wantage	p18
	<b>10.30am</b>	<b>All age worship</b> at Grove	p14

## JANUARY

Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Coffee Morning at Grove (tbc)	p12
<b>Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup></b>	6:30 pm	Prayer for Revival at Grove	p11
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup>	2:00 pm	Knit & Chat at Wantage	p17
<b>Sunday 12<sup>th</sup></b>	2:00 pm	“Stepping out with Noah”	p23
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Grove Film Club	p12
	<b>18- 25<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity</b>	p4
Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Drink & Chat (Book Group) at Cornerstone	p23
<b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup></b>	9:30 am	Kids@Church at Wantage	p17
	4:00 pm	WGCP United Service at WMC	p4
		<b>Deadline for February Section Newsletter</b>	p2
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup>	2:00 pm	Knit & Chat at Wantage	p17
Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup>	2:15 pm	Grove Tuesday Fellowship	p12