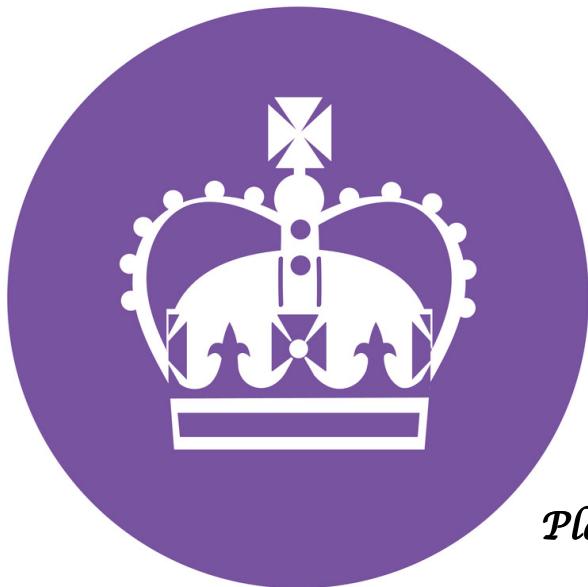


Alton Methodist Church

NEWSLETTER

June 2022



*Elizabeth II
Platinum Jubilee*

Galina Pilina, Getty Images

Minister: Rev. Philip Simpkins

Tel: 01420 83167

Church website www.altonmethodist.org.uk

Circuit website www.hsbcircuit.org.uk



Dear Friends,

This month begins with special celebrations to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. They will mark Queen Elizabeth II 70 years of service to the United Kingdom, and the Commonwealth.

Four days of public events and celebrations will bring communities together as we reflect on Her Majesty's amazing life and work throughout the decades. There will be the Trooping of the Colour on June 2nd, the lighting of Platinum Jubilee Beacons, a Service of Thanksgiving for the Queen's reign held at St Paul's Cathedral, a Platinum Party at the Palace, The Big Jubilee



Lunch and The Platinum Jubilee Pageant complete with the Gold State Carriage. Locally many events will have been arranged with street parties and festivities.¹

The Queen has lived a life that is a wonderful example to us all of service. At 21 years of age she made a pledge to the nation that '*My life will always be devoted to your service*'.

It is a promise that she has oft repeated. In her first Christmas broadcast as Queen in 1952 as she approached her coronation said, '*Pray that God may give me wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises that I shall be making, and that I may faithfully serve him and you, all the days of my life*'.

The Queen has also lived a life of faith also expressed in her Christmas broadcasts. In 2002 she said:

*'I know just how much I rely on my own faith to guide me through the good times and the bad. Each day is a new beginning, I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right, to take the long view, to give of my best in all that the day brings, and to put my trust in God.'*²

Through all the changing and challenging scenes of life Queen Elizabeth has been an inspirational monarch who will always be remembered for her faith and service.

Such an example reflects the calling of Christ who after washing the disciple's feet said:

Now that I, your Lord, and Teacher, have washed your feet, you should also wash one another's feet.

I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. (John 13.14,15)

The Bible Reading Fellowship have prepared this prayer for our use:³

Sovereign Lord,
you are God above all nations, rulers and leaders,
and so we thank you
for the faithful service of Elizabeth, our Queen,
in this her platinum jubilee year.

Grant her grace
to fulfil her coronation vows to you as our earthly ruler.

Strengthen her faith;
deepen her life of prayer;
bless her example of godliness;
and magnify her experience of your love;
that she may continue to be
a beacon of stability and hope
for our country.

In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen

Every blessing, Philip

¹ Pexels Free Download – by David Jakab

² Hope for All Magazine p17

³ <https://www.brf.org.uk/platinum-jubilee-prayers/>

Messy Church

It was a real pleasure to welcome many children, parents, and carers to our May Messy Church. I think there was in the region of 20+ children – so hard to count when they keep moving!



We listened to the story of 'Jesus Feeding the Five Thousand' after playing a game together.

The craft tables were a buzz of activity as children and adults painted pictures, made loaves and fishes from bread dough, made a collage of the young boy in the story, created colourful fish, carefully put together fish bead bracelets and remembered through a smiley face and hand craft that 'Caring is sharing'.



Thank you to everyone who was able to help and support Messy Church.

The next Messy Church is on Saturday June 11th (a week later than usual due to the Bank Holiday) from 10-12 noon.

The theme will be about the birthday of the church (Pentecost).

Church AGM

On Sunday 15th May we held our Church AGM when a reasonable number of people gathered on a Sunday afternoon to discuss the life of the church whilst also enjoying tea and cakes afterwards!

Time was spent prayerfully remembering members of our church family who had died since our last AGM.

We re-elected our present stewards for a further year and thanked them for their willingness to serve the life of the church in this way. Congregational reps. were also appointed.

At the meeting, having supported Mercy Ships as our charity for this last year, we shared ideas for learning about and supporting another charity in the coming year – ‘All We Can’, ‘Shelter Box’ and ‘Barnabas Fund’ were some of those mentioned. The stewards will discuss!

A property report revealed problems with leakage in the ‘Baby Change Toilet’ that is waiting to be resolved as and when we discover what is causing it. The fire alarm also tends to go off at unexpected times such as during Lunch Club or the Boys Brigade Annual Display – an opportunity to evacuate the Boys and their families to the muster point outside M&S!



We were delighted at the appointment of Kate Powell as our Anna Chaplain and authorised her from the church meeting as someone permitted to take the reserved sacrament to people in their homes/care homes.

A good discussion was held about the worship life of the church whereby people expressed their appreciation of variety in the ministry offered and the use of videos in service to aid reflection. We felt that planned evening services would not resume at this point, however occasional and locally arranged evening services could prove beneficial, maybe of a more reflective or café style nature. There was also a request for the church to begin a prayer meeting to underpin the life of all that we do.

Thanks were expressed for all that people do in the life of the church and the afternoon ended with refreshments.

If you would be interested in joining or hosting a prayer meeting for the life of the church say for 30mins to an hour (perhaps on a rota) – maybe on a Sunday evening/afternoon, please let Philip know. We could meet in church or in a home.

Mercy Ships

Katie Henderson is the very definition of an international nurse.

The 25-year-old from Nairn, Scotland, is just one of the international nurses aboard charity hospital ship, the *Africa Mercy*, docked at Dakar in Senegal, West Africa.

In fact, she is just one of a varied crew made up of around 50 nations all serving with Mercy Ships united in the shared belief that everyone – no matter where they are from – has the right to safe, affordable surgery and healthcare.

Two-thirds of the world’s population cannot get access to safe surgery when they need it. As a result, a staggering 16.9 million people die every year from conditions requiring surgical care.

Nurses like Katie, who is a paediatric intensive care unit (PICU) nurse, saw the extraordinary unmet need for improved global surgery and wanted to play a part in the mission of Mercy Ships.



"I just think that it should not matter where you come from, where you live or how much money you have. If there's a treatment – you should be able to get it. Everyone should get the treatment they need,"

When Katie arrived in Senegal in February, it was the same day the *Africa Mercy* arrived back in Dakar. She helped prepare the ship for its first surgeries onboard since the pandemic, as all efforts had to be focused in-country instead because COVID-19 made working on a ship difficult.

The sense of hope and gratitude she is witnessing onboard is something she is savouring.

*"It's not that people at home are not grateful, parents are so grateful when you help their children. But here it is so overwhelming, because if we were not here – this would not happen. But at home, if people can't go to a certain hospital, then they just go to a different hospital." "There is so much joy and hope here."*⁴

Alton Methodist Church received a 'Thank you' letter from Mercy Ships – over this last year we have raised over £1,700!

⁴. <https://www.mercyships.org.uk/>

Action for Children

I am looking forward to emptying more of your collecting boxes or, if you prefer, to write a cheque for Action for Children that would be welcome. The need is greater, the resources fewer and any help is much appreciated. Your box or cheques can be left at church for me or I can collect it from you. Thank you in anticipation – Jennie Marlow (85698).



Ladies @ Wetherspoons

How about a coffee and chat? Pop into Wetherspoons between 10 and noon on **Thursday 30th June** – see you there?



Church Bible Study

We continue to meet on first and third Tuesday afternoons (7th & 21st June) at 2.30pm and we will be looking at some more of the Sermon on the Mount.

Church Family Visitors – Wednesday 22nd June 2.30-4.30

Calling all Church Family Visitors – Come along to an afternoon of looking at the subject of visiting – some dos and don'ts and safeguarding issues followed by tea and cake. Anyone is welcome to come along, whether you are currently visiting someone or would like to become a church family visitor.

Family News

We wish Iris Anderson health and happiness as she celebrates a special birthday on 11th June.





We send love and condolences to **Terri White**, whose mother has recently died in Brendoncare – hers was a life lived bravely.

ABC – Alton Bereavement Café

A new initiative is starting in Alton this month. Alton Bereavement Café provides an opportunity for people to pop in, enjoy a cup of tea/coffee and biscuit and, if they want to, talk about their grief to one of the team of ‘listening ears’, or just sit quietly and maybe enjoy one of the gentle activities on offer.

It's happening in **our church hall**, on the first and third Thursday afternoons, 2-4pm starting 16th June and at **The Maltings** on second and fourth Monday evenings, 7.30-9.30pm. on 13th & 27th June.

If you know someone who has been bereaved who would appreciate somewhere to go, tell them they can just pop in. For further details you can talk to Judy, Kitty or Jennie.

May Market a Success!

Our May Market was successful, with particular enthusiasm for spring plants. Overall the Market raised just over £660. I would like to add a big “thank you” to everyone who contributed their time or items to it, and to everyone who supported it.

Graham Titterington

2nd Alton Company



We ended our formal year with a parents evening/display. The boys from all three sections performed and showed off things that they have learnt and been working on throughout the year.

It is also when we promote boys up into new sections, and it was obvious to see that we are lacking in numbers in the Anchor and Junior sections. While they are an important part of our work, they are the best recruits for the Company section in 3, 4 or 5 years’ time, and the Company Section is where we really do carry out the part of our motto...“all that tends towards true Christian manliness”. So if you know of any primary aged boys that need something to fill their Friday evenings, with bible stories, craft, games and all manner of other delights...send them our way!

As you will see elsewhere, our Company section boys took part in the parade and service at Winchester Cathedral in celebration of the Queens Platinum Jubilee. I hope they realise that such an achievement will probably not be reached again in their lifetimes, and they were there to be a part of the celebrations.

All sections now kick off their informal summer programmes, which gives the newly promoted boys a chance to meet and get involved with their new contemporaries before September.

The Company section are looking forward to summer camp with the 1st Woodley company again.

Pete Burgess (captain)

Company Section

Having had a quiet month in April, the Company Section has had a very busy May. Parade nights were used to prepare for the Annual Inspection and Display evening held at the church on Friday 13th May. Family and friends

came along to see presentations by the boys from all sections of our Company. Rev. Philip Simpkins opened the evening talking to us all about the importance of gratitude and of saying thank you, reminding us that through prayer we can give thanks to God for all he does for us.

The Company band performed during the event, playing and marching within the church. There was a short demonstration of the boys' drill skills. Two dramas were performed: one poking fun at boys on an expedition; the other being a modern day version of Jesus' parable of The Great Banquet. A hi-tec game was demonstrated, involving cardboard tubes, ping pong balls and a bucket. Members of the Company were presented with *priceless* trophies (inscribed paper plates) during a parody awards ceremony.

The finale of the evening was the presentation of awards to individual boys and squads by Mrs Angela Simpkins. Then those boys moving up to the next section of the Company were transferred, an existing member of their new section accompanying them to their new position. In the Company Section we welcomed three new members from the Juniors.

On Sunday 8th, two boys from the Company along with leaders, operated a water station at the 8-mile mark of the Alton 10 running race. It was a hot morning, the runners were very grateful for the water handed out. However, Lt. Joe Murrell was unable to assist on the water station, as he was running in the race. Indeed he was one of the earliest runners to pass by grabbing a cup of water as he did.

On the afternoon of Saturday 14th, the Battalion Chess Competition was held at the Church. This was the first time this annual event had been held since Covid changed our lives, so its taking place was evidence of our tentative return to normality. Teams of up to four boys were there representing four of the Battalion's Companies. It was a thoughtful couple of hours with players focused on the boards, pieces were moved and removed, Kings were checked, some games were won, some were drawn. Our young team acquitted themselves well, though when all the scoring was completed it was

the team from 1st Guildford that came out on top. All the players and the leaders in attendance were grateful to Mrs Allan for providing refreshments during the afternoon.



On the evening of Friday 20th, our Company boys participated in a very special event held in Winchester Cathedral. A Celebration of HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee by the Young People of Hampshire brought together young people from a range of the county's youth organisations, including the Boys' and Girls' Brigades, for a Cathedral Service marking the 70 years of the Queen's reign and her service to this nation. The young people in attendance were urged to similarly dedicate themselves to serving others during their lives.

Before the Service the young people paraded through the streets of Winchester to the Cathedral behind the Colour Party, the uniformed youth organisations being led in this parade by our Boy's and Girls' Brigades, as we represent the oldest such organisations. We should thank Mr Allan for his

role over the past months as a member of the organising team for this event, and for his arranging the necessary road closures required for the parade on the evening. Their participation in such a unique and special event should provide a lifelong memory for our boys, with the Service's celebration of service reinforcing a key aspect of the Brigade, that its members should live out their Christian faith including through service to others.

The Winchester Service was our last uniformed event until September (except for those of us going to Summer Camp). We now begin our summer programme of activities on Friday evenings, which are due to include Laser Quest in Woking, swimming at Coral Reef in Bracknell, wide games on Shortheath Common, but we begin more locally with games on The Butts. In addition, next month there is the Battalion Sports Day at the Spectrum in Guildford to look forward to. So there are busy and fun times ahead for the boys between now and the summer break.

Lt. Rolfe Bridson

Anchor Boys

At a successful display evening Finley won the Anchor's cup, which is awarded to the Anchor Boy who has earned the most star points, based on attendance, full uniform, good manners and thoughtful answers and questions.

The following Friday, four boys met for a craft night. The boys used salad spinners to make gorgeous paintings then made paper airplanes and gliders to have races. Some were definitely better than others! They also made clay sculptures, including a teacup and even a leopard!

Next week the boys are off to Kings Pond to spot the different birds and learn a little more about nature to continue with our summer program - just hope the weather stays sunny and bright! The boys have many more adventures to come this summer so we can't wait to update you next time!

Lt Glenda Bentley



*Friday evening craft night
with BB
Anchors & Juniors*

Lighthouse

Our Lighthouse group for children will meet on Sundays 5th and 19th June during the morning service. New children are always welcome.



Girls' Brigade News



Our n:counta & n:gage groups (Juniors & Seniors) have started looking at themselves. As we know our young ladies are bombarded with views of how they could and should look. We are discussing with them about the beauty that comes from within and how we can foster and encourage the positive attributes of being a good person.

The n:vestigate group have completed their 'Spring' badge and we have moved on to 'Summer'. Last week we were thinking about Sports Day at school and having a go at the egg-and-spoon race and the dressing up relay race, a hopping race and a sprint relay. The bible story reminded us that we need to pass on the good news of Jesus, just as we pass on the relay baton. The week before we had been thinking about planning a fair and made some bunting which you can see hanging in the Holybourne Room.

On Friday 20th May one of our young ladies, Niamh Kennedy, joined with members of the Portsmouth & Havant Companies to represent Girls' Brigade in Hampshire at the Platinum Jubilee Celebration at Winchester Cathedral. The service was attended by many other youth groups & youth uniformed organisations. We fell in and marched to the service. The music & service was fun around the theme of "I serve". I hope Niamh will be able to write her version of events for the next newsletter.

Over the half-term week we are to hold our Annual Camp. Although we are small in number we will be needing your prayers as some of the girls have never been to camp before.

Kym Burgess & Nancy Buck



Commissioning Service for Kate Powell as Anna Chaplain

St Lawrence Church, Alton, rang with the words of Bishop David Williams: 'Anna Chaplaincy is an innovative creative partnership from Alton to the ends of the earth. Anna Chaplaincy has so much to give to older people everywhere and Alton should be proud to have been the pioneers behind its success.'

Kate Powell is the fourth Anna Chaplain since 2010 to serve in the Hampshire communities where Anna Chaplaincy began. It is a joint Anglican and Methodist initiative through the Greater Alton Project, GAP. The concept of Anna Chaplaincy was gifted by GAP to BRF, to be scaled up nationally, from 2014.

Kate said after the service: 'It was such an honour to be commissioned by Bishop David – especially as he was once my vicar (at Christ Church, Winchester) and has christened two of my children and confirmed the other. He spoke so highly of the growing Anna Chaplaincy movement and his prayer during the service was particularly heartfelt.'

'May her hands be ready to do your work. May her eyes be open to recognise those in need. May her ears hear soft-spoken words of pain and sorrow. May her voice speak of healing and peace. May her feet walk the extra mile with those who falter. May she always be aware of your presence guiding her and your loving protection around her in all that she does. Amen'

More than 200 people had gathered at St Lawrence Church, Alton, (on 24 April 2022) to witness the commissioning of Kate in her paid, part-time, post, as well as to support confirmation candidates and for the reauthorisation of a licensed lay minister in the parish.



Anna Chaplaincy Update

It was an honour to be commissioned as Alton's fourth Anna Chaplain by the Bishop of Basingstoke at St Lawrence's Church on 24th April 2022. The Anna Chaplaincy network began in Alton over 10 years ago and there are now over 220 Anna Chaplains around the UK – the growth of which has been spearheaded by Debbie Thrower - the first ever Anna Chaplain. Bishop David declared that Alton should be proud to have pioneered such a valuable ministry and I would like to thank everyone for supporting me as I settle into my new role.

I have been busy leading communion services in care homes, attending a wide variety of activities attended by older people and setting up a group of Anna Friends, who are people called to volunteer their time to serve the older population of Alton. If you feel this might be a ministry God is calling you towards, please do email me for more information on annachaplaincy@alton@gmail.com

Kate Powell



The Anna Chaplaincy fund recently received a £500 donation from the Tuesday Traidcraft Coffee Morning which is held weekly at Alton Methodist Church.

Kate Powell received the cheque from Parish of the Resurrection member, Sarah Broadbent. Sarah is one of the regular staff at this ecumenical coffee morning, which is now in its 17th year. All profits are donated to local charities.

GAP Afternoon Tea/ CAMEO

Thanks to everyone who made the afternoon such a success: those who made the food; those who came to eat the delicious sandwiches and cakes and enjoy the company; and those who served them. Donations to the Anna Chaplaincy fund amounted to £302.

Special thanks are due to Christine and David Allan who organised the event, planning the food, setting out the tables - and putting everything back to rights at the end of the afternoon!



Next CAMEO meeting:

"A Musical Afternoon" with Terri White, 2pm on Saturday 25th June.

Judy Nicholls

Norma's News from Romania

What did I achieve in Romania? I was able to visit the nursing home and the orphanage I have taken items to in the past. However, the orphanage was empty and the gate open – closed down! I can only assume the younger children have been fostered or moved to another building.



On the edge of the city of Ploiesti there is a Concordia offshoot, providing training for older teenagers in baking, becoming a chef, plumbing, electrics, hair dressing and sewing – giving them job skills for a future.

Marius, a disabled friend, has had help from Germany and has assembled a pool team which is entering competitions. He was very pleased with the standing/walking frame I brought him.

At the school I took a lesson alone, with the permission of the principal, while the teacher was delayed with students at a county competition. The principal had seen me before and knew of my association with the school. Both senior staff were newly appointed, following the retirement of the former head.

It was a good, happy trip. I didn't travel to the north-west – I couldn't add to the help already in place for refugees from Ukraine. 186 kg of freight went out, of which 6 boxes went up to Maramures county. More will go in June to the north-eastern hospital I support along with Emilia Barnett.

Norma Duke

DofE and Young Venturers on expedition

Lord Wandsworth College had offered us the use of their private woodland for overnight camping, so both our DofE Bronze and our Young Venturers Year 8 groups jumped at the chance. Perhaps they were a little less enthusiastic when they realised that "the facilities" consisted of a screened hole in the ground! However, undaunted, both groups really enjoyed their first experience of "wild" camping, and explored (with varying degrees of accuracy!) the many footpaths around Shalden, Weston Patrick, South Warnborough, Long Sutton and Odiham.

David Allan



The campsite in the woods



The DofE Bronze group about to set off

Change of Address

Jacob and Liz George have returned to their home in Salisbury Close with phone number 01420 88721. We are pleased to hear that Liz's mum has settled happily into a nursing home where she benefits from the round-the-clock care that she now needs.

Ink Jet Cartridge Recycling

I've sent off the second consignment of used ink jet printer cartridges which I hope will realise £36 for the **Anna Chaplaincy Fund**.

In addition to used cartridges, I have been given some unused cartridges. If anyone could use HP302XL (both black and tricolour) please contact me. It seems a waste to send them for recycling!



Nancy Buck (01420 85994)



*The start of the
Young Venturers'
walk*



*Preparing breakfast at the
campsite*

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

A selection of popular operatic music sung by Alton Choral Society and Soloists

In Aid of Naomi House

July 2nd

START AT 7:30PM

Alton Methodist Church

Tickets :
Adults : £ 10 Children (16+) : £ 5

Tickets may be purchased from
Alton Secondhand Books
43 Normandy Street, GU34 1DQ

Tel: 01420 89352. (Tue-Sat, 10-5) or contact admin@altonchoral.org.uk

Tickets will be on sale from Tuesday 7th June.

Dates for your Diary

JUNE

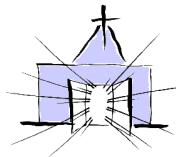
Tues 7	2.00pm	Church Bible Study Group
Sat 11	10:00-12:00	Messy Church
Tues 14	12.30pm	Church Lunch
Thurs 16	2pm-4pm	Bereavement Café
Tues 21	2.30pm	Church Bible Study Group
Wed 22	2.30-4.30pm	Church Family Visitors' meeting
Sat 25	2.00pm	CAMEO
Tues 28	7.45pm	Family Committee meeting
Thurs 30	10am-12noon	Ladies @ Wetherspoons

JULY

Sat 2	10am-12noon	Messy Church
	7.30pm	'A Night at the Opera' concert

Please look at articles in the Newsletter giving more information.

The July/August issue of the Newsletter should be available from Sunday 25th June.



Services at Alton in June 2022

Sunday 5th Pentecost

10.00am Rev Philip Simpkins - Holy Communion

Sunday 12th Trinity Sunday

10.00am Liam Sheridan

Sunday 19th 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time

10.00am Pam Jones

Sunday 26th 13th Sunday in Ordinary Time

10.00am Liz George

CONTACT US

Church Office: Email altonmethodist@hotmail.com (Tel 01420 82695)

The church office is not usually staffed. Emails will be picked up and passed on to the relevant person, but answerphone messages may be overlooked.

For pastoral matters, please phone or email Rev Philip Simpkins.

Tel: 01420 83167 Email: philip.simpkins@methodist.org.uk

For administrative matters, including bookings, please contact Mrs Liz George via the church email address (above) or Tel 01420 88721.

Items for inclusion in the **July/August** issue of the “Newsletter” should reach the editor, Nancy Buck, by noon **Sunday 19th June** at the latest, please.

If you are able to email your contribution to the office (or to Nancy) it would be much appreciated.

Alton Methodist Church is in a covenant partnership with the Parish of the Resurrection in the Greater Alton project.

