Alton Methodist Church

NEWSLETTER



December 2026

Lay Minister: Mrs. Liz George

Tel: 07703 648935

Church website: www.altonmethodist.org.uk

Circuit website: bvmcircuit.org



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

Dear Friends,

I find that December has a way of arriving at full speed, what with seeking ideas for gifts, food shopping lists, carol concerts, and year-end deadlines, it is easy to reach Christmas Day feeling more exhausted than inspired. Yet the Christian calendar invites us into a very different rhythm during these weeks: the quiet, expectant waiting of Advent.

Long before the first Christmas carol was sung, the prophet Isaiah spoke words of comfort to a weary people: *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given... And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"* (Isaiah 9:6). I notice that Jesus did not enter a tidy, peaceful world. He arrived in the middle of political tension, crowded inns, and ordinary human struggle.

That truth brings deep relief to us this December, a time when our world is anything but peaceful and many are weary. Good News!

We do not have to manufacture a picture-perfect holiday to welcome Christ. God meets us right in the middle of our busy schedules, unfinished to-do lists, and mixed emotions.

As we move through this month together as a church family, perhaps we may consider choosing one small way to slow down, such as:

- Pause for five minutes each morning to read a short passage from the Gospels before checking our phones!
- Reaching out to someone who might find the holiday season lonely or difficult.
- Join our worship each Sunday as we light the Advent candles and remind one another where true hope is found.

- Come and hear the traditional readings and sing carols at the Carol Service 20th December 4.00pm
- Join in Pop Up Carols in your neighbourhood one evening. Details will be available soon

I pray that for us all this December will be less about keeping up with the season's demands and more about resting in the promise of *Emmanuel*—God with us.

Every blessing

Liz George



Christmas Services

At Alton Methodist Church, St Lawrence and All Saints

Sunday 13th Dec:	3pm - Carol Service at All Saints
	4pm - Christingle at St Lawrence
Sunday 20th Dec:	4pm - Carol Service at Alton Methodist
	6pm - Carol Service at St Lawrence
Christmas Eve:	4pm - Crib Service at St Lawrence
	11.15pm - Midnight Communion at St Lawrence
Christmas Day:	8am - Said Communion at St Lawrence
	10am – Family Service at Alton Methodist

Church Family News



We are sad to announce the death of **Graham Thomas**. His funeral service will be held at St. Mary's Church, Bentworth on **Monday 14th December** at 11.30am, followed by a burial in the churchyard there. You are invited to join the family for refreshments at the Alton House Hotel afterwards.

Our thoughts and prayers are with **Delia Thomas and family** at this time.

We wish all our friends who are unwell or in residential accommodation a Happy Christmas!

Carol Singing



"Tis the season" to be carol singing in aid of Action for Children.

The Girls' Brigade will be singing at Austen Place on Monday 7th December and the Boys' Brigade will be out in the streets of Alton **on Wednesday 16th**. All are invited to join the BB group, meeting at church at 7pm, then returning for a warm-up drink and mince pie.

Any loose change from the Church Carol Service on Sunday 20th will also go to support the children and families helped by the charity.

Ladies @Wetherspoons



We will be meeting to say goodbye to 2026 on **Thursday 31st Decembe**r from 10am. Do join us.

Jennie Marlow

Christmas greetings from the Anna Chaplaincy Team

Advent: Waiting Together



Advent is a season of waiting, watching and hoping. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, we are reminded that waiting is woven into the story of faith. Mary waited, the shepherds watched, and generations longed for the promised Messiah. Their waiting was filled with hope, even when the way ahead was uncertain.

As a team, we know that waiting is part of life for many older members of our community. It may be waiting for a visit, a phone call, news from loved ones or simply the reassurance that someone is thinking of them. Through our visits and conversations, we are reminded how much a listening ear, a prayer or time spent together can mean.

Advent reminds us that God meets us in our waiting. We are never forgotten or overlooked. The light of Christ shines into every season of life, bringing comfort, peace and the promise of hope. Waiting can sometimes be difficult, but it can also be a gift: an opportunity to pause, reflect and be more aware of God's presence in our lives.

This season, may we all discover afresh the wonderful truth that, even in the quietest and longest waits, God is with us.

"Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." (Isaiah 40:31)

With love and blessings for the year ahead,

Emily and the team

CAMEO NEWS

Our annual shopping afternoon was a great success. CAMEO members were able to begin their Christmas shopping with some real bargains, then relax with tea and cake, while the afternoon raised £252 for the charity Home Start - a "win:win" situation!





At the beginning of the afternoon Janet Meager, who has stepped back from her organisational role in the group, was presented with a card and gift to thank her for her 14 years of involvement.



Our next meeting will be on Saturday 12th December when we shall be Christmas carolling, accompanied by Terri White, before enjoying the traditional sausage rolls, mince pies - and Carol's delicious Christmas cake.

Judy Nicholls

GAP Ladies Lunch

The GAP Ladies' Lunch is held on the last Wednesday of each month at the Swan Hotel.

The ladies come from the GAP churches but also from other churches or even no church. Jesus is open to all!

We start our lunch with a prayer and news of former participants no longer able to meet with us, or those absent because on holiday, ill or at hospital appointments.

After the lunch we give our orders for the next month, choosing from the ordinary menu, lunch menu or even little ones! At present there is also a Golden Years Christmas Lunch on offer - £17 for 2 courses. I keep the book and place our orders a week before the next lunch.

There is no lunch meeting in December so the next will be on Wednesday 27th January. We have room for more ladies, so do speak to me if you are interested.

Norma Duke

Ink Cartridge Recycling for the Anna Chaplaincy

Thank you to those who leave their spent cartridges in the collecting box in the church foyer. I have posted another boxful to Recycle4Charity, for which they will pay us £25.25.



We've now reached a total of £503.60 and saved 24kg of ink cartridges from landfill since starting in March 2022.

Nancy Buck

Lunch Club

The next lunch club is on Tuesday 8th December at 12.30pm. Please let Emily know if you wish to book or are unable to take up your reservation.

Tel: 07535 209537 or email: annachaplainalton@gmail.com.

Girls' Brigade News

It's been a busy and exciting few weeks at 2nd Alton Girls' Brigade, with plenty of baking, crafting and preparations for Christmas!

At the end of October, we held our Baking Sleepover, where the girls spent the evening baking a wonderful selection of cakes and treats ready for our fundraising Coffee Morning and Craft Sale the following day. Alongside the delicious bakes, we also had a selection of handmade crafts for sale, which the girls had been working on over several weeks, giving old Girls' Brigade uniforms a new lease of life by transforming them into something new.

We are delighted to share that the event raised over £300 for Girls' Brigade funds! A huge thank you to everyone who came along, bought something, donated or helped make the event such a success. The money raised will help us continue providing activities and opportunities for the girls.

More recently, our n:gage and n:counta girls have been getting into the Christmas spirit! We've been busy preparing prizes for the jar tombola at the Church Christmas Fair, as well as practising Christmas carols ready for our visit to Austen Place on Monday 7th December.

This will be our final Girls' Brigade evening before the Christmas break, and we're looking forward to sharing some festive cheer with the residents. The girls have also been making Christmas cards, and after our carol singing, we'll be leaving a box containing a handmade card for every resident, as a little Christmas gift from us all.

It's been lovely to see the girls working together, getting creative and thinking about ways they can give something back to the community.

Meanwhile the n:vestigate girls have been thinking about Christmas joy, making Christmas decorations and practising carols with the older girls.

From everyone at 2nd Alton Girls' Brigade, we wish you a very Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year!

2nd Alton Company News

We had a full turnout for the town's Remembrance Service, and the weather was kind to us. Our band led the parade to and from the Cairn as usual, and this year also played General Salute as a mark of respect to the Deputy Lieutenant of Hampshire who was attending the ceremony as a representative of the monarch.



Anchors

The boys are very much looking forward to the Christmas party, and they have been getting in the festive mood with a hot chocolate heist! The boys competed in puzzles and challenges, to rescue the hot chocolate!



Juniors Remembrance Word Search



Wreath-making

Company and Seniors

The new term started with a bang – literally! There was an outing to the fireworks display in Holybourne and this was followed by a walk back along dark unlit footpaths to Anstey Park. The Interests Classes are now in full swing, with jam and chutney making being attempted, models being constructed and board games being enjoyed.

David Allan (Captain)



Jam-making in progress



Construction time

2nd ALTON COMPANY
THE BOYS' BRIGADE

Having successfully undertaken their expeditions during the summer, our participants are now finishing off the Volunteering, Skill and Physical sections of their DofE programme. Already several have completed everything they need to do, thus gaining their Bronze Award:

- Sol Brimson
- Charlotte Carr
- Patrick Newman
- Nayan Rahunathan
- Noah Sheridan

Congratulations to all of them – and hopefully there will be several more to report next month!

Expedition training for the 2027 session will start in January, the first meeting being on Wednesday 13th at 7.30pm.

David Allan

Hard of Hearing Group

At All Saints Church Hall

We like to be early with our Christmas celebrations– so on 24th November we had this year's special event. Robin, Graham and Jane provided the music for carols and popular songs that we were able to join in with, and Sarah provided delicious buffet items. We are so very grateful to them for making the event very special. In my opinion it was a grand social occasion – I believe that we started the Christmas celebrations off with great panache!

And then we move on to 2027 as we do not have a meeting in December. **On 26th January at 2pm** we will be hearing from Pete of the Blue Lamp Trust, who will be giving us advice about staying safe at home. I am reliably informed that the talk is very informative and will provide some tips that will be useful for everyone.

Our monthly meetings are geared to better allow those with a hearing impairment to meet and listen to talks and enjoy entertainment. The planning for 2027's programme is almost complete and a draft is available. If you would like a copy, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me. For those that may not know, we have a raffle at every meeting and of course the ubiquitous tea and biscuits. You would be very welcome to join us!

And finally, if anyone out there thinks that they might be free to come and help us on a Tuesday afternoon then I would love to hear from you.

Annette Blackman 01420 543219 ablackman4@googlemail.com

Lipreading – no session in December



The next session will be on Tuesday 6th January, 2pm, in All Saints Church Hall.

Is your hearing loss cutting you off from the people and the moments that matter most? Do you find conversations around the dining table harder to follow? Are you starting to retreat little by little from the world around you? Why not make it your New Year Resolution to come along to see how Lip Reading may be able to help you towards a fuller social life? Pick up skills and tips in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere with others with similar difficulties. You will be made most welcome! For more information contact Kate 07811744843 (text only) kaddando@gmail.com

Knitters Anonymous

Handmade – with Love

Well done and thank you all so much as once again you have come up trumps with record numbers of beautifully crafted donations which have been delivered to both the BLISS and Ukrainian Charities in time for Christmas!



Thank you also to the many who have given us wool, surplus to their requirements, resulting in members being able to work with colourful and good quality yarns. We are also still collecting small, two holed buttons for the tiny jackets and flap hats for the prem babies, all of which may be left in the box on the back pew in All Saints Church.

As usual we will be able to display a small tree at the Christmas Tree Festival. The decorations, which were knitted by members of the group, include tree decorations and a small, knitted Nativity scene.

The Group will have its last meeting of the year on **Tuesday 15th December 2026**, from 2pm to 3.30pm in the Church Hall. Donations can be brought along to these meetings or can be left in the box in All Saints Church. Why not come along and see what we do?

For more info contact Kate 07811744843 (text only) or kaddando@gmail.com



Come and join us for

ALTON CHURCHES

POP-UP CAROLS

On a green space near you this December 2026

Everyone is welcome

Monday 7	6.15pm	Spicers (off Cowley Drive)
Tuesday 8	7.30pm 8.30pm	The Butts Green Alton Sports Centre
Thursday 10	2.00pm	The Lawn Care Home
Friday 11	5.30pm 6.30pm	Beech Village Hall Wentworth Gardens
Saturday 12	5.00pm	Lipscombe Rise
Monday 14	7.00pm	Ridgeway (between Lingfield Close and Fontwell Drive)
Tuesday 15	7.00pm	Holland Drive, Four Marks
Wednesday 16	6.30pm	Rivermead Gardens (Brewery Estate)
Thursday 17	6.30pm	Hop Field Place
Friday 18	6.30pm	Barleyfields, nr Holybourne
Monday 21	6.30pm 7.00pm	Greenfields Ave, corner of Vyne Close The White Hart Pub, Holybourne

For Christmas service details please visit our websites

www.harvestchurch.uk
www.resurrectionbenefice.org
www.hopechurchalton.org.uk
www.altonmethodist.org.uk



The Lord has come...
Luke 2:11

Dates for your Diary

Wed 2	2.00pm	Anna Friends meeting
Tues 8	12.30pm	Lunch Club
Wed 9	1.00pm	U3A Choir Christmas Concert
Thurs 10	2.00pm	Anna Chaplaincy Christmas Event
Sat 12	2.00pm	CAMEO
Mon 14	11.30am	Funeral of Graham Thomas at St Mary's Bentworth
Wed 16	7.00pm	BB Carol Singing for Action for Children
Sun 20	4.00pm	Carol Service



Services in December 2026

Sunday 6th	**2nd Sunday of Advent**	
	10.00am	The Stewards
Sunday 13th	**3rd Sunday of Advent**	
	10.00am	Rev Christine Parker - Communion
Sunday 20th	**4th Sunday of Advent**	
	10.00am	Rev David Wilson
	4.00pm	Mrs Liz George – **Carol Service**
Friday 25th	**Christmas Day**	
	10.00am	Mrs Jennie Marlow – Family Service
Sunday 27th	**1st Sunday of Christmas**	
	10.30am	GAP Service at St Lawrence

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 during the interregnum, please contact Mrs Liz George via the church email address (above) or Tel 07703 648935.

For bookings, please contact Mrs Liz Strain via the church email address (above) or Tel 07828 934200.

Anna Chaplain: Mrs Emily Spencer

Tel: 07535 2098537 Email: annachaplainalton@gmail.com

Items for inclusion in the January issue of **the "Newsletter"** should reach the editor, Nancy Buck, by noon **Sunday 27th December**.