

Alton Methodist Church

NEWSLETTER



March 2022

Minister: Rev. Philip Simpkins

Tel: 01420 83167

Church website www.altonmethodist.org.uk

Circuit website www.hsbccircuit.org.uk



Dear Friends,

March often marks the arrival of spring and already we have enjoyed the sight of snowdrops, crocus, catkins and being St David's Day, the joy of daffodils adorning the garden.

Our delight in creation is shared by the Psalmist who wrote:

Praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord from the heavens;

Praise him in the heights above.

Praise him sun and moon;

Praise him all you shining stars.

Praise the Lord from the earth,

*You great sea creatures and all
ocean depths...*

Lightening and hail, snow and clouds

Stormy winds that do his bidding.

You mountains and all hills,

Fruit trees and all cedars.

Wild animals and all cattle,

Small creatures and flying birds.

Young men and women,

Old men and children.

Praise the Lord.

As we praise God for the beauty of creation we are made conscious of our responsibility to care for the world in which we live.

In the 'Caring for Creation' course that a group of us have participated in we have been challenged as Christians to be proactive in doing what we can to protect the environment.



I was particularly provoked by the statement of a Local Preacher quoted on the course who said:

There is a terrible danger in sitting inside our churches looking up in worship at our remote God in heaven, while outside the world is on fire.

Worship that saves the world on the other hand is courageous, daring and willing to look reality in the face and step out in a way that responds to God 'doing a new thing' in his Kingdom already present with us.' (Brian McLaren)

As Christians we are encouraged to be working alongside others in leading the way on environmental issues.

The course suggests practical things like:

Recycling all the plastic we can and cutting down on single use plastic.

Thinking about the way we spend our time and money – does it help the environment?

Using the car less, walking more and not flying if we can avoid it.

Cutting down on meat, growing more of our own food, not using pesticides.

Reducing the impact we humans are having on the planet – walking lightly on the earth.

Well, I don't know about you but there are plenty of challenges in that list alone, not to overwhelm us but to remind us that we can all consider how we might 'walk lightly on the earth' and thus play our part, giving thanks to God who is in the business of recreation.

*Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning
Born of the one light, Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, Praise every morning,
God's recreation of the new day.*

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



Messy Church

In February we welcomed children and their parents to explore the story of Noah and the ark – any excuse to make boats and animals! It was great to see some parents and children coming having received invites from 'Stay and Play'.

After playing an animal pairs game and hearing the story of the flood we then went into the hall to enjoy various crafts on this theme. Some made doves, others made an ark, some crafted clay, others painted pictures.



Icing biscuits always proves popular as does eating these home made delights afterwards (Thanks Angela!). Sea creature hats were made and children can spend ages being creative with Hama Beads.

We look forward to the next Messy Church on the first Saturday of March (5th) from 10am to 12 noon. Thank you to everyone who helps both in preparation and with the activities on the day.



Lent Course 2022

'Serving the King – Serving the Kingdom'



We are invited as Christians in Alton to meet together during the season of Lent to share in a time of teaching and discussion. It will have Biblical input, time for conversation and questions, presentation from local community groups and prayer.

We aim to look at Jesus, the Servant King and what it means to serve our community in practical ways.

This year our five-week course will be held at 'The Alton Maltings' (Tyndale Auditorium) and led by leaders and lay members from our different churches.

The course will conclude on Maundy Thursday and include Holy Communion. There will then be an opportunity for us to meet together on Good Friday for shared worship at the Parish of the Resurrection.

Lent Course Dates for your diary are as follows:

Thursday March 17th at 7.30pm

Thursday March 24th at 7.30pm

Thursday March 31st at 7.30pm

Thursday April 7th at 7.30pm

Thursday April 14th at 7.30pm (Maundy Thursday)

Good Friday – United Service at the Parish Church

We look forward to joining together as a sign of our unity and purpose as Christians in Alton.

GAP Big Breakfast

At the Parish Centre, St Lawrence Church

Saturday 19th March

9am to 10.30am

Come and enjoy a big breakfast along with fellowship and friendship on the above date as part of the Greater Alton Project of Methodists and Anglican working together.

We are all delighted that Kate Powell has joined us as our new Anna Chaplain and funds raised from this event will go towards funding the project – we would really love you to support this both in person and with your financial donations!

Church Family News

Our thoughts and prayers are with **Shirley Benjamin** and her family at this time as they visit **Ray** who is now in St. Michael's Hospice.



Lent Lunches in Holybourne

Lent Lunches will be held on Wednesdays at Holy Rood, Holybourne from Wednesday 2nd March for six weeks.

Come and join us at 12.30pm for a delicious soup accompanied by a bread roll and enjoy fellowship and conversation.

A donation to the Karamoja fund which supports ministry in Uganda would be appreciated.

World Day of Prayer Service

The service this year is on **Friday 4th March** at All Saints Church starting at 2pm. It has been prepared by Christian women from England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the theme is based on the words from Jeremiah 'I know the plans I have for you'. This is an opportunity to share together in an act of worship which travels across the whole world on that day. Do come along and join in this service and enjoy a cup of tea together afterwards with old friends and new.

Church Bible Study

We have completed looking at Ephesians and how it can help in our lives. We meet again on Tuesday 1st and 15th March at 2pm to take a look at The Beatitudes and also discuss how we can help save the planet.

Jennie Marlow

Mercy Ships Coffee Morning

Whilst we have not resumed our Friday coffee mornings since the pandemic, we have held a couple of successful charity ones. Following on from what we have learned about Mercy Ships, there will be a Coffee Morning at church on **Friday 25th March** between 10am and noon. Do pop in and support this interesting project.

Ladies @ Wetherspoons

We had a good number meeting for coffee and chat last month, but there's always room for more – so come along any time from 10am on Thursday 31st March.

Jennie Marlow

Seasonal Walks

The next two seasonal walks – open to all – are being planned to take place on the following dates:

Spring Saunter : Wednesday 16th March

Summer Stroll : Tuesday 24th May

These morning walks will take us along country footpaths and bridleways, and they are usually around four miles in length.

We finish with lunch together in a local hostelry, and you are very welcome to join us for the meal, even if you choose not to walk!

Watch for full details on the usual notice board in the foyer.

David Allan

CAMEO News

The appalling weather conditions kept all but the most intrepid members of CAMEO from attending our February meeting. That meant that, sadly, there was a small audience for David's talk on stamp collecting. However, it was a most appreciative audience because what we learned about the information to be gleaned from the stamps themselves was fascinating. Thank-you David.

Afterwards we gathered together for tea and cakes, including Christine's mouth-watering lemon drizzle. So, a very enjoyable interlude on a wet and windy afternoon.

Our next meeting is at 2pm on Saturday 19th March, when the speakers will be Karen Booker and Steve Hunt. The title of their talk is "Leading a Merry Dance."

Judy Nicholls & Janet Meager

Baking done to order

Dawn Padwick

01252 329396

d.padwick@btopenworld.com



Dawn Padwick, who used to have a stall at Friday coffee mornings, no longer has a regular stall but is happy to bake to order. She will deliver if needed urgently but she attends the Tuesday coffee mornings every other week so items can be collected from her there.

Help needed!

For many years Joy Wilson has faithfully "flicked a duster" round the church sanctuary and any other places she could find dust! Now she has decided to hang up her duster and we are looking for someone willing to pick it up!

If you think you could manage to pick up this task please speak to me or to Joy who will tell you what she has been doing.

We are very grateful to Joy who just quietly got on with this task keeping the Lord's house dust free!

Christine Allan (84739)

Books for May Market – but not yet!

Helen Smith has kindly offered to run the book stall at the May Market on Saturday 14th May. However, she asks that you do not bring her books yet as her garage is presently in full use housing the car!

She will be happy to collect books from the beginning of May but if you are able to deliver them direct to the church on the evening of 13th May it would be a great help.

2nd Alton Company



Company Section

Practice for the Day of Action activities continued in our Friday evening meetings. By Saturday 12th February the boys were ready to face the various challenges at Court Moor School in Fleet. Five Companies from across the Battalion attended the event. Our boys acquitted themselves well, in particular they won both of the drill competitions. Glenda Bentley's First Aid training helped them achieve second place in that activity. The boys were awarded certificates in the following events:

1 st place	Colour Party drill
1 st place	Single Rank drill
2 nd place	Scripture Quiz
2 nd place	First Aid
3 rd place	Inspection

Our Company gained 3rd place overall.

On Saturday 29th February a Sharing Day was held at our church for BB leaders from our Battalion and beyond. It was a very valuable event, one we were glad to be able to hold face-to-face once more. This was an opportunity to share experiences and ideas for activities that work well with the boys the Brigade supports in their Christian journey, from the Anchor Boys, through the Juniors and onto the Company and Seniors.

We had a presentation from BB headquarters about ongoing developments for the Brigade, including the launching of a new activity programme for our Company and Senior boys' awards that will now align more closely with the Anchor and Junior award structure.

We thank David Allan for his efforts in organising this valuable event.

Lt. Rolfe Bridson

Captain's View

It's all systems, or sections, go at the moment!

The Company section have just taken part in the Battalion "day of action", competing against 4 other companies in events ranging from drill to super-stars (gym tests) and scripture quiz to football.

With first place in both the single rank drill and the colour party drill competitions and second place in the scripture quiz and the first aid, the boys secured third place overall on the day. A big well done to them for the preparation beforehand, and execution of the tasks on the day. They were not quite as successful in the non-uniform events, but took part and applied themselves with great spirit.

The Junior section boys are getting ready for their competitions day. The theme is Joseph, so Mr Burgess has been channelling his inner Jason Donavon to help (?) with the singing element. There is also hand writing, artwork and a reading all on the theme. Figure marching is also part of the day, so let's hope the juniors can be inspired by the company sections success at drill and marching.

Unfortunately, the Battalion chess in January did not take place, but now that the majority of the covid restrictions have been removed, we really can get back to things. One such thing is band practice. We have re-started band practice on Wednesday evenings; just as well as there is a church parade later in March (20th) as well as the prospect of a parade in Winchester to mark Her Majesty's jubilee.

All in all, a lot to look forward to...

Pete Burgess (Captain)

Girls' Brigade News



We look forward to seeing friends and family at the joint BB and GB parade at church on Sunday 20th March. The youngest boys and girls have been learning a new song, 'As for me and my house', complete with signing. It has a catchy rhythm which should set your toes tapping!

The n:vestigate girls have continued with the theme of 'Our Family' with some interesting, if unintended, diversions. One week the girls were supposed to be making cards to express their appreciation to a family member and two of them produced lovely creations for their (pregnant) teacher. It may have been off message, but their enthusiasm was a delight. We had a lot of practice in cutting out hearts, with 'Love Ribbons' for a family member one week (managed to stay on message that time) and a cute dog assembled from hearts on Valentine's Day.

The n:gage & n:counta groups have completed a session based on 'Stewardship'; concentrating on what stewardship means, what are we stewards of, what choices we make now & how can we be better stewards?

We thought about reusing, recycling, upcycling.

We are starting to plan for our annual Camp and this year we plan to go to Littlehampton and have a classic seaside holiday.

Since returning in September we have been a small but happy band. If there is anyone aged from 4 ½ years and upwards who would like to find out more about joining, please contact our Group Leader, Kym, on 01252 334814 or n:vestigate leader, Nancy, on 01420 85994.

Kym Burgess & Nancy Buck

Norma's News from Romania



I have gathered a total of 107kg of equipment which has been sent by courier to a hospital in Rădăuți, north-east Romania. It includes uni-forms, catheters, cream and tablets (not easy to send now), infusion sets, a rollator, a stool, the casing for a water closet and much more. *[This town is close to the Ukrainian border so I won't be visiting it in the near future!]*

More supplies will be sent out in advance of my next flight out on 19th March, when I hope to visit the nursing home and orphanage nearer to my flat in Ploiești in the south of Romania. I already have a full suitcase of supplies in my flat and will add sweets for the children on arrival in Romania.

Norma Duke

All Saints Hard of Hearing Group

LIP READING



Lip Reading is a valuable tool for those with a hearing loss!

Starting on the first Tuesday afternoon after Easter (3rd May), at 2pm in All Saints Church Hall, Queens Road, Lip Reading lessons led by Maggie Short (ATLA), qualified Lip Reading tutor, will recommence. These will continue on the first Tuesday of each month. The cost will be £3 per person and each class will last for an hour and a half, the first hour will cover the art of lip Reading which will be followed by a cup of tea and an opportunity to practice the skills learnt. For further details please contact Kate Dando 01420 83514 kaddando@gmail.com

Why not come along and join us!

Recycle for the Anna Chaplaincy Fund

From the beginning of March there will be a Recycle 4 Charity box at Alton Methodist Church to **collect used ink-jet cartridges**. They can be original or remanufactured cartridges. Unfortunately laser/toner cartridges cannot be accepted here.



When I send off a box of cartridges to Recycle 4 Charity they will send a credit to the Alton Methodist Church bank account, which will then be allocated to the Anna Chaplaincy Fund. (The recycling account is set up in the name of Alton Methodist Church as the Anna Chaplaincy Fund is held within the AMC bank account.)

Values vary according to the type of cartridge, typically £1 to £1.75 each for original cartridges.

If you want to learn more, please contact me on 01420 85994 or visit www.recycle4charity.co.uk.

Nancy Buck

Civic Service

Sunday 20th March, 3pm

The Mayor's Chaplain will lead a service of thanksgiving for the Town Mayor and Councillors to which Mayors of adjacent towns and other dignitaries are invited.

The future for your landline telephone

Norma Duke wrote to Damian Hinds MP with her concerns. Here are the main paragraphs from his reply.

"I do appreciate the concerns you set out about the plans to turn off the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) in 2025.

The reason for the switch-off (which will be phased), is that the PSTN is becoming increasingly unreliable, and operators are concerned about their ability to continue maintaining it into the future."

"The retirement of PSTN does not mean that landlines will become obsolete, nor that handsets will need to be replaced. Rather, landline operators in the UK will switch every home phone in the UK to an internet-based connection. My understanding of the rationale behind this is that it will help to reduce costly maintenance of the current PTSN system and, perhaps more importantly for users, support improved call quality."

"Ofcom's rules ensure that all phone users must receive equivalent protections, however their landline is delivered. The regulator has also made clear that those without broadband internet connection should be given the option to purchase a simple connection for making calls only, rather than have to pay for full internet services."

In summary:

- Landline phones will continue in use but will be connected via the internet instead of the PTSN.
- You should be offered a basic 'phone only' internet connection at a lesser price than full internet access if you neither have nor want full internet access.
- Mr Hinds thinks you won't need to replace your handset. *[That is not my experience, but one new phone was provided as part of the package. Ed]*

GOOD NEWS for Everyone !

That heading is a bold claim! Especially these days, when we seem to have a daily diet of bad news !

However, we would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to GOOD NEWS for Everyone ! It is an Association of Christian men and women who have a passion for sharing the Word of God with everyone who has yet to come to know Jesus Christ as their Saviour. *[Formerly Gideons UK]*

The aims of GOOD NEWS for Everyone ! are exactly the same as when we were called Gideons. We want to introduce others to Jesus Christ and share His Word wherever and whenever we can. As before, we're looking for opportunities to;

- Provide Bibles for distribution across the world, working with various like-minded partners
- Place Bibles or New Testaments in schools and universities, hotels, care homes, prisons, hospitals and other institutions;
- Take part in church services, when invited to do so;
- Take assemblies and religious education classes in schools.

If you are interested in becoming part of GOOD NEWS for Everyone ! there are a number of ways in which you could be involved. The Association is always keen for both men and women to become members, and help us in our expanding areas of Christian witness. Alternatively, you could become a Friend of the Association, which, in short, means that you become a prayer partner and supporter of our work, and receive a twice-yearly magazine, full of reports and testimonies of life-changing encounters.

If you would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact Peter Blois (sleeve13@hotmail.co.uk and 01730 233054) or Roy Gregory (angielaw@btinternet.com and 01730 890073). We would love to hear from you !

Join Anna Tabbush & Ancora for an uplifting day of

WOMEN'S SEA SHANTY SINGING.

Saturday, 19th March at 10.00am



Ancora

Anna teaches national and international, traditional and contemporary songs. Plus some of her own compositions, which have been sung by choirs up and down the country and around the world.

Anna will teach us sea shanties by ear in luscious harmony in a workshop which will be fun and accessible for both novices and experienced singers alike.

She will get us singing, smiling & sounding gorgeous within minutes!

*The Salvation Army Hall Amery Street, Alton, GU341HN
Arrive at 10.00am for registration and coffee
to start at 10.30am.*

£15

There will be a 30 minute lunch break with home-made soup, scones and cake, all included in the price!

To book email Barbara at tansey.barbara1@gmail.com

Eco Corner

Sustainable Aviation



The aviation sector is responsible for 2.5% of UK CO2 emissions. However, the sector is forecast to grow to 4% before too long. That may not sound much, but aviation has a massive positive effect on the economy and so the problem is worth taking seriously.

In the short term, de-carbonising aviation depends on Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), as future technologies such as electric or hydrogen powered aircraft are some way away. At the moment, SAF is mostly fuel derived from waste oil or plant material and can be substituted directly for jet fuel, without modification to engines. But the quantities being produced are very small. However, CO2 and hydrogen can be re-combined to form hydrocarbons usable as fuel, having captured the CO2 from the atmosphere. The catch is that electricity has to be used to power the processes for making SAF and using plants for fuel may reduce space for growing food and for the preservation of the wildlife on which we all depend.

So, it nearly all comes down to electricity and here is some good news:-

A major expansion of offshore wind in Scotland has been announced by Crown Estate Scotland, approving 17 new projects representing two-and-a-half-times the UK's entire current offshore wind capacity.

Roughly two-thirds of the new capacity will be provided by wind farms using floating turbines, which can be installed in areas where the water is too deep for fixed foundation turbines, enabling access to larger areas with potentially stronger winds.

As ever, the project has to be approved by other authorities, so don't hold your breath.

Nigel Hughes

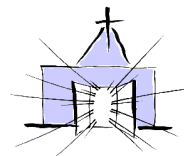
Dates for your Diary

MARCH

Tues 1	2.00pm	Church Bible Study Group
Fri 4	2.00pm	<i>World Day of Prayer Service at All Saints Church</i>
Sat 5	10:00-12:00	Messy Church
Tues 8	12:00	Lunch Club
	7.30pm	Church Council meeting
Tues 15	2.00pm	Church Bible Study Group
Wed 16	<i>tbc</i>	<i>Spring Saunter</i>
Thurs 17	7.30pm	<i>Lent Course (1) at Alton Maltings</i>
Sat 19	09:00-10:30	<i>GAP Breakfast at St Lawrence Parish Centre</i>
	2.00pm	CAMEO
Thurs 24	7.30pm	<i>Lent Course (2) at Alton Maltings</i>
Fri 25	10:00-12:00	Mercy Ships Coffee Morning
Sat 27	9.30am	BB Leaders Meeting
Thurs 31	10.00am→	<i>Ladies @ Wetherspoons</i>
	7.30pm	<i>Lent Course (3) at Alton Maltings</i>

Please look at articles in the Newsletter giving more information.

The April issue of the Newsletter should be available from Sunday 27th March.



Services at Alton in March 2022

Sunday 6th 1st Sunday in Lent

10.00am Rev Dee Yeadon - Holy Communion

Sunday 13th 2nd Sunday in Lent

10.00am Peter & Terri White

Sunday 20th 3rd Sunday in Lent

10.00am Rev Philip Simpkins - BB & GB Parade

3.00pm Civic Service

Sunday 27th 4th Sunday in Lent

10.00am Pam Jones

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 561543

Items for inclusion in the **April** issue of the “**Newsletter**” should reach the editor, Nancy Buck, by noon **Sunday 20th March** at the latest, please.

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