

SWANBANK



October Newsletter

Message from the Minister...

Dear friends,

The other night, I sat with a group of parents who have been in touch with the church wanting to have a christening. Of course, one of the most important questions that we had to ask each set of parents is what name they have given to their little one. So we had a whole variety of parents and a whole variety of little ones with a whole variety of names.

When it comes to names, I wonder, do you like your name? Who named you? Are you named after someone? Do you know what your name means?

I do quite like my name, though I always have to spell it out for people as I have one of those names that can be spelt several different ways.

In letters, cards and emails, it's very often spelt wrongly which doesn't really bother me to be honest! My parents gave me my name and, I'm told, I wasn't named after anyone else in the family, it was just a name they liked. I've since discovered that my name means pure! I don't think I'll say anything more about that!

Figures in the public eye are often responsible for bringing particular names into favour. In the early 90's, when the soap Neighbours was at the height of its popularity there were quite a few Kylies who were born. When David and Victoria Beckham had Brooklyn in the late 90's, there were a good number of others who decided to choose that name for their sons, too.

Names are important, and it can be that a lot of thought and care goes into choosing them, though I do wonder if there are some exceptions to that rule!

When I was expecting my two boys, I remember spending a lot of time talking about possibilities – names we liked, and names we didn't! Some names had happy associations, and others less so.

Our names mark us out and identify who we are as individuals. As a Christian, I believe each of us are made in the image of God and are also unique. While we might share our name with one or more people, that doesn't make us any less unique.

When someone remembers our name it can make us feel quite special. We may think they haven't a clue who we are, but when we discover they actually know us by name, it helps us to feel like we actually matter.

Sometimes, in the Bible, God gives people new names to signify a new beginning or a new way of living and the wonderful thing is that God calls us by name (Isaiah 43:1). How amazing is that?

God knows your name and calls you by name. This for me speaks of how much God loves us and how much we matter to him. The next time you feel forgotten, insignificant or passed over, remember this – God knows you. Your life is of huge significance. You are unique and you matter.

Ruthryn



SwanBank Church

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Office Opening Hours: Tuesday-Thursday, 10am-4pm

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SwanBank Gospel Choir

The SwanBank Gospel Choir is back!

We know that lots of you have loved being able to gather back together on Monday evenings as part of our Community Gospel Choir.

If you want to join in, then simply turn up to SwanBank at 7.45pm on the 2nd & 4th Mondays of each month. If you want to know more then you can check out the [Facebook page](#) or email Ruth.

Everyone is welcome!

Messy Church

Our next messy Church is on Saturday 6th November, and we'll be having a Light Party!

Join us at Swanbank from 10am for breakfast, messy crafts, songs, stories and fun, all ending with lunch. You would be so welcome to come as a family, it costs just £1 per child.

If you want some more information, then you can phone the office or email alice@swanbank.org.uk.

Coffee Lounge Events

There is loads going on in the Coffee Lounge over the next few weeks, so get these dates in your diary!

Sunday Roast - Sunday 7th November

Traditional Chicken Dinner with all the trimmings, with iced sponge and custard for desert. £10 for two courses and drinks. Book in by getting in touch with the Coffee Lounge Facebook page or phone the office.

Christmas Fayre - Saturday 20th November

Stalls, games, Santa's Grotto & refreshments, open to everyone! 11am-3pm.

Young Adults Weekend Away

In a few week's time, we are taking nearly 40 of our young adults away for the weekend for a great time of worship, teaching and building community together at Cloverley Hall in Shropshire.

We are trying to keep the costs as low as possible for our group of young adults, especially for students. If you would be interested in giving a financial gift to help us subsidise the cost of the weekend, then please get in touch with Sam Taylor via the office.

Men's Ministry Update

We are really excited to be relaunching some of our men's ministry over the next few weeks and months. A small team are working behind the scenes to pull together an exciting vision for ministry among the men in the life of our church, so if that's something that would interest you then keep your eye out for more information.

For now, we'd love you to put **6pm on Saturday 27th November** in your diaries for some food and conversation about what men's ministry could look like at SwanBank. To find out more, you can get in touch with the team via sam@swanbank.org.uk.

Operation Christmas Child

It's that time of year again! If you would like to fill a shoebox for a child for Christmas, you can collect the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes from the foyer of church, we need them back by the 15th November!

This is a brilliant way to support those children for whom Christmas is a difficult and challenging time.

You can find out more about the work of Operation Christmas Child by visiting their website, and if you can't make it down to church to pick up a shoebox, then you can do it all online by visiting their website.

Christmas Dates

Here are some of the key Christmas dates for you to put in your diaries, so you don't miss out on any of the festive fun we've got planned for you! We'll have more details for you about all of these events over the next few weeks.

Saturday 20th November - Christmas Fayre

Friday 3rd December - Burslem Lights Switch On

Sunday 12th December - Nativity Service

Sunday 19th December - Christingle Service

Christmas Eve Midnight Communion - 11.30pm

Christmas Day Service - 10am

Boxing Day Service - Online only at 10.30am