



SWANBANK

June Newsletter 2024

Message from our Ministers...

Hello!

What a wonderful evening we had at our SwanBank Quiz Night. We had so many people sign up that we had to move the event into the Auditorium. It was fun (if slightly chaotic!) and it definitely was not about the winning, but rather, the taking part!

A team of volunteers were involved, mostly behind the scenes: setting up and clearing away; shopping and cooking; welcoming and helping. A massive thank you to all who played a part in making it happen.

What was lovely and filled me with joy, was to see a good number of people having asked friends and family to come along with them. This was an example of the importance of invitation.

It led me to recall the time when I was about 15 years old. I was trying to pluck up the courage to invite a friend to come with me to my Church Youth Fellowship. It took me ages to ask her as I thought she would say no. When I did finally ask if she'd like to come with me, she said yes straight away. This led to her being involved in our Youth Fellowship right through her teenage years. I later heard from her that she had wanted to come for so long and was just waiting to be asked! Better late than never I guess, but if only I'd done it sooner!

What did I learn from this? That it is always better to invite, it is always better to ask, it is always better to include. The worst that can happen is that someone says no, yet, if they say yes, then you never know where it might lead.



I'm sure many of you will know that one of the biggest reasons people find their way into a church and crucially, a Christian faith journey, is because of a personal invitation. Someone like you or me have taken the time to invite them along, maybe offer to meet them at the door or pick them up.

For those reading this who are part of our Sunday gatherings, I wonder when you last invited someone to church with you. Maybe you have done so very recently, or maybe you can't remember when or if you've ever done so. Can I encourage us all to take every opportunity to invite someone – you never know where it might lead. Perhaps someone you know is just waiting to be invited.

We carry the Good News of Jesus through the life of SwanBank and it is news to be shared. So, let's commit to being bold in our invitations. I wonder, who will you invite?

God Bless you

Kathryn

SWAN BANK NOTICEBOARD

Hot off the press is the start of our Dementia Activity Group, meeting every Monday 1-3pm in the Coffee Lounge. The first meeting will be on the **3rd June**. We are looking for some friendly volunteers to make refreshments, welcome guests and chat to those attending. Please contact the office for further details.

Cliff College in the Peak District offer lots of themed courses. Some on-line others at Cliff College itself. Dates and costs vary but follow the link below if you want to know more.
<https://www.cliffcollege.ac.uk/study/courses>

VOLUNTEER CHAPLAINCY ASSISTANT KEELE UNIVERSITY 2024/5

An exciting and challenging gap year working with students while exploring your Christian faith and vocation

A 10 month role from September 2024
Accommodation on campus and a living allowance provided
Details: www.keele.ac.uk/chapel

Focus on Volunteers

Swan Bank has an ever-growing number of people volunteering in the life of our church. New friendships are being made and there is a palpable enthusiasm to offer up gifts and talents to support and help others in our Christian ministries, to be the hands and feet of Jesus. If you have a gift or talent and some time to spare, please consider offering to join a team, or maybe start off a new initiative.

The following are some of the current volunteer opportunities:-

- *Stewarding*
- *Refreshments*
- *Housekeeping*
- *Worship and Tech Team*
- *Children's Ministry*
- *Care Homes*
- *Maintenance*
- *Pastoral Care*
- *General Office*
- *Prayer Team*

We have a safe recruitment process in place so it will be necessary to complete an application form, have a DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) check, provide referees and attend a 'Safer Space Training' session.

For more information, please post a note in the white post box in church or speak to Shirley Brooks; a leader of one of the teams; a member of the office staff; a steward or one of our ministers, Kathryn or Ruth.

Shirley Brooks

Volunteer Coordinator





Thoughts on the Stoke-on-Trent Civic Prayer Breakfasts 2017 and 2024

On Friday 10th May, I went with Sheila Skelding to the Stoke on Trent Civic Prayer Breakfast at the King's Hall, Stoke. All sectors of Christian life were represented with a heavy emphasis on Christian congregations, of which there are currently 123 stretching from Tunstall in the north to Fenton and Longton in the south.

There were many familiar faces. Several Swan Bank stalwarts were much in evidence, including both ministers, and the Community shop team. Lloyd Cooke, along with Pastor Norah Chilaka directed the programme of events. In the orchestra Megan played the violin. So, Swan Bank was well represented, as was its place in the network of Potteries' churches.

It certainly brought back memories. Sheila and I last attended the Civic prayer breakfast in 2017. In 2018 I had cancer and was out of action for months. By the time my scans were clear, covid and lockdown had emptied all calendars. I will never forget the help given in prayers, practical assistance, and hospital visits by members of our congregation. Attending the Civic Prayer Breakfast was picking up the threads after seven years. Some of the other participants must have felt the same way.

The basic format had hardly changed with a 07:30am start! By coincidence the joint authors of one of Sheila's religious books, 'The Tide is Turning', sat at our table. A procession of notable places in the region filled the video screen, providing a lead-in to the presentations of the speakers. From Spode to the Etruria marina all stages of the Potteries evolution were portrayed. As in 2017, MP's, councillors, business leaders and academics contributed their support. Due to the greater number of guests, this year's breakfast was self-service, whereas in 2017 our meal was silver service. Though, let it be made clear, the food was just as good!

The change in circumstances was driven home in the opening speech by the Leader of the Council, Jane Ashworth. She turned the spotlight on poverty and the effect of the cuts. Her forecast 'Every day would be a budget day' had proved depressingly correct. The struggle to cope with massive social problems was a hard one with no let up. For example, 1,200 children were in care, more than anywhere else in the country. The cuts hit the early intervention measures that would prevent the ill effects of childhood deprivation from ruining adult lives.

A video followed. 'The Church in the City' showed how the churches were weaving themselves into the

community. The shrinkage of central and local government support had left gaps which the churches and voluntary organisations were trying to fill. In Biblical times synagogues were mini-welfare states. The bestowal of alms was a duty. When Jesus healed a blind man, the blind man's parents declined to admit that a miracle had taken place as they feared being put out of the synagogue. In those times such an expulsion would have amounted to a death sentence.

Even in 2017 the scale and variety of church interaction with the community had been considerable. Now in response to events, food banks and community groceries have been springing up to meet increasing need. Loneliness has been addressed. I treasure the words of Eileen Leese, a recently deceased member of Swan Bank. She said that she always tried to remember Jesus' command, 'Whatever you do for someone else, you do it for me.' The churches have certainly taken this instruction to heart. Swan Bank was represented on the video also. Vera Woodcock appeared at a gathering. Fame at last for one of our veterans!

Jan MacFarlane, Assistant Bishop of Lichfield, gave the keynote speech. She had been born, bred, and educated in the area so was well-informed and spoke our language well. Her comments on our way of life were warm and witty. I was reminded of the speech given by Martin Tideswell, then the editor of 'the Sentinel', at the 2017 breakfast. 'If you love Stoke-on-Trent, it will love you back'.

A lot has changed in seven years. Buildings have gone down and buildings have gone up. Takeaways have proliferated, but underneath it is still the city of Wedgewood and Wesley. It has an inner coherence, a basic sense of community stronger than that in Manchester or any other conurbation.

The breakfast ended with the hymn 'Love Divine, All Loves Excelling', which Sam Taylor used as the main hymn the following Sunday morning at Swan Bank. We socialised, introducing ourselves to strangers. Among others I met a nice young lady from Fenton church. If it were not for events like this one, our circles of Christian friends would not expand or overlap.

Next year the Civic Prayer Breakfast will be held on the 5th June. Be sure to book early as this year's attendance was the highest ever and next year's might be even higher!

Margaret Brown

Focus on Re-launch of Sunday Night Young Adults

From 7:30pm on Sunday evenings, young adults are welcome to meet at SwanBank for discussion groups, teaching, and socials after the evening service. We encourage young people from other churches and other denominations from across the city to join us.

Many of us have spent our childhood in and around children's work. As we moved on from youth work, we still wanted to meet and socialise in church with other young people. Excited by this idea we decided to launch a young adult's session that follows from the evening service, it's called Sunday Night Young Adults (SNYA). The sessions stand in addition to the other work offered such as the 18-30's home groups.

Since we started planning in the Summer of 2022, we have had the pleasure of helping to run six evening service events at SwanBank where the SNYA have led the worship, hosted

and brought The Word. The most recent was May 12th when two of our members shared their faith story and what it means to follow Jesus. We have welcomed in guests who have lead sessions on youth and evangelism, worship ministry and best life practices.

It is our aim help to encourage one another to ask the deeper faith and life questions in our discussions, in order to equip ourselves with answers for questions raised by living a life in faith and service. In our socials we have met for movie nights, sports, bowling, and we love to share food together.

The next time we will be hosting and leading the evening service at SwanBank will be advertised and we'd love to encourage you all to come along and if you are a young adult we'd love to invite you to join us at SNYA.

Ethan Blood

Colour Splash – 24th -26th July



Colour Splash will be running this year from **Wednesday 24th - Friday 26th July**, for anyone who is just finishing school years Reception to Year 6. Throughout each day there will be a mix of games, crafts, sports and music, so we

recommend comfortable clothes for each day. Also, each child will need to bring along a packed lunch. It's £25 per child for the three days or £10 per day. Click the link to book a place,

<https://www.swanbank.org.uk/churchlife/coloursplash/>

To find out more, you can also email **Nick Jefferies** on - nick@swanbank.org.uk



Christian Resources for Life

crfl.co.uk

In association with Potteries Christian Bookshop

Christian Resources for Life (CRFL) is the online presence of the Methodist Book Centre (MBC) one of the oldest and largest independent Christian bookstores in the country. They have been in Gitana Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, for nearly 80 years!

All the staff members are Christians, of varying denominations, and are supported by the Methodist District of Chester and Stoke-on-Trent.

They are more than happy to supply materials for large events, churches and individuals as well as small house groups. If you want to see what they have available, then why not pop in or follow the link below. They're open Monday to Saturday, 10am to 4pm.

<https://www.crfl.co.uk/>

June- Circuit Preaching Plan

Venue	Time	2 nd June	9 th June	16 th June Fathers' Day	23 rd June	30 th June
Swan Bank	9.00am 10.30am 6.15pm	Brabbs Brabbs Jeffries	Stephens Stephens (Baptism) Stephens	Stephens Stephens Stephens	Worthington Jeffries (All age) Jeffries	A Johnson A Johnson Jeffries
Potter's Church	9.30am 11.15am	Cooke Cooke	Price Price	Hancock Hancock	Price Price	Eyre Eyre
Oasis Church	10.45am 6.00pm	A. Johnson	Tindale	Brabbs	Eric (Nixon)	Community Sunday
Wesley Hall	10.45am	Mason	Hancock	Own Arrangement	Andrews	Tattersall
The Gateway	10.45am	Tattersall	Brooks	Own Arrangement	Tattersall	Wakelin
Mt Pleasant	10.45am	Tindale	Stanyer	Own Arrangement	Mason	Tindale
Packmoor	11.00am	Batho	Zinyemba	Tindale	Wakelin	Own Arrangement
Village Church	11.00am	Nixon	Jeffries	Jeffries	J Johnson	Brabbs
Whitehill	10.30am 6.00pm	Dutton Wakelin	Cooper Cooke	Boateng Stephens (Q&A)	Shaw Cooper	Nixon Wyatt

Quiz Night Photos



What's on at Church

Performance of the Symphonia Verbum Orchestra at Swan Bank

on 21st June



SVO Symphonia Verbum Orchestra

Presents its first

Relaxed Concert

Join the SVO in an informal afternoon concert featuring a mixture of well-known classical music and arrangements of popular songs.

All tickets are completely free for everyone!

FRIDAY 21 JUNE 2024
2PM AT
SWAN BANK CHURCH
BURSLEM, ST6 2AA

cover

www.svo.org.uk
[symphonia_verbum_orchestra](https://www.instagram.com/symphonia_verbum_orchestra)
[SymphoniaVerbum](https://www.facebook.com/SymphoniaVerbum)
[@SymphoniaVerbum](https://www.tiktok.com/@SymphoniaVerbum)

For more information, and to purchase tickets, please visit www.svo.org.uk or call 07938 579 926. Alternatively, tickets can be booked directly through the TicketSource website.

 ticket source

Regular Activities at Swan Bank

Sunday

Sunday Night Young Adults – Fellowship Room, 7:30-9:00pm

Monday

Prayer Time – Meeting Room 1, 9:00-9:30am

Bible Study – Meeting Room 1, 10:00-11:30am

Dementia Activity Group – Coffee Lounge, 1:00-3:00pm

Gospel Choir – Main Church, 7:30-9:00pm
2nd & 4th Mondays of each month

Tuesday

Little Treasures (0-4 years old) – Lower Hall, 9:30-11:00am *(term time only)*

Chatty Café – Coffee Lounge, 10:00am-12noon

Tuesday Club – Coffee Lounge, 1:30-3:30pm

Wednesday

Knit & Natter – Meeting Room 1, 10:00am-12noon

Foodbank – Coffee Lounge, 2:00-4:00pm
(To receive a food parcel an E-voucher will be required beforehand from a referral agency)

Thursday

Younger Youth (School years 3-6) – Upper Hall, 5:45-7:15pm *(term time only)*

Youth Club (11-16 years old) – Upper Hall, 7:30-9:00pm *(term time only)*

Saturday

Messy Church (Primary school aged children) – Lower Hall, 10:00am-12noon *(first Saturday of each month)* Breakfast included and only £1 per child!

Women's Walking Group – Rendezvous usually at Swan Bank before going to the start of the walk *(3rd Saturday of each month)*. See Liz Thompson for details.

Contact the office on 01782 575129 for further details of all our regular activities

For tickets or more information, visit www.svo.org.uk or call 07938 579926.

Tickets will also be available on the door.

What's on Further Afield

MOW COP PLAYERS PROUDLY PRESENTS

THE VICAR OF DIBLEY

A stage play by Ian Gower and Paul Carpenter adapted from the original TV series by Richard Curtis and Paul Mayhew-Archer. With kind permission of Tiger Aspect Productions

AT THE MITCHELL ARTS CENTRE
BROAD ST, HANLEY, STOKE-ON-TRENT, ST1 4HG

SHOW DATES**JUNE**

Thursday	20th	7:30pm
Friday	21st	7:30pm
Saturday	22nd	2:00pm & 7:30pm


**BOOKING**

www.ticketsource.co.uk/mowcopplayers
mitchellartscentre.co.uk
01782 409307

TICKETS

£12

 @MowCopPlayers

 @Mow_cop_players


Winterley Methodist Church & Community Hall
Crewe Road, Winterley CW11 4RP



Winterley Methodist Brass Band

in CONCERT



all proceeds to

Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy & the
Inclusion Project at Winterley

Saturday 6 July - 7:30 pm

Tickets: Adult- £10 Child- £5 (including tea/coffee & cake)

Available from 01270 254920 or Band Members

Raffle

Swan Bank Church, Swan Square, Burslem, ST6 2AA

Office hours:- 10am - 4pm, Tuesday - Thursday



01782 575129


admin@swanbank.org.uk

www.swanbank.org.uk

Sunday 10:30am Service, live stream links:


www.youtube.com/@SwanBank/streams

www.facebook.com/swanbank/?locale=en_GB

Future Articles

If anyone has any stories or articles to be considered for inclusion in future newsletters, please contact Shirley Brooks or Nigel Johnson directly or email :-

officeassistance@swanbank.org.uk.