



SWANBANK

June Magazine 2025

Message from our Ministers...



This year Stoke-on-Trent turns 100, a century since six towns officially came together to form the city we know and love today. And what a place it is, full of character, creativity, resilience, and heart.

Here's the fabulous news: the city has asked that the annual Civic Prayer Breakfast be moved to the 5th June, so it can be the launch event for the year of celebrations. What an incredible privilege and a clear sign that prayer still matters in the life of our city. Before the parades and parties, before the speeches and ceremonies, we gather to pray. Together, across denominations, roles, and backgrounds, we'll begin this centenary year by lifting Stoke-on-Trent to God.



At SwanBank, we've been part of this community for longer than the city's official 100 years and we've seen a lot of change. But through it all, we've kept doing what we're called to do: worshipping faithfully, serving generously, and loving deeply. And we're not stopping now.

As we look ahead, our prayer is simple: that we'll keep growing not just in numbers, but in compassion, in courage, and in Christlikeness. We want to keep being a church that shows up, steps out, and makes a difference in this city we call home.

We hold on to the words of Jeremiah 29:7: *"But seek the welfare of the city... and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare."*

Here's to 100 years of Stoke-on-Trent and to all that God still has in store, both for SwanBank and for the city!

Ruth

“Ringmasters” Colour Splash - 2025

Colour Splash is an amazing opportunity for your kids to make new friends and have a lot of fun, as well as getting the chance to learn about Jesus.

Colour Splash, with a circus theme this year, will run from Wednesday 23rd to Friday 25th July. We will be offering full days from 9am - 3:30pm. Please bring your children from 8:45am for sign-in.

The price for the full 3 days will be £25 per child, We will provide details regarding how to pay in a confirmation email. If you have any difficulty making this payment, please do not hesitate to call the office and ask to speak to Nick.

Each day your child will need to bring a packed lunch with them. There will also be an optional tuck shop available during the sessions. Please give your child no more than 50p to spend on tuck each day. We ask that your child leaves anything valuable at home.

Throughout Colour Splash there will be a mix of games, crafts, sports and music, so we recommend comfortable clothes for each day.

Email nick@swanbank.org.uk

To book on-line follow the link below or scan the QR code:-

<https://swanbank.churchsuite.com/events/l9sx1gw9>



Vacancies in the District

The Methodist Church
Chester & Stoke-on-Trent District

The Chester & Stoke-on-Trent District of the Methodist Church is seeking a

**Pioneer for “New Places for New People”
Based at The Haven (Crewe)
and The Dinner Hub (Alsager)
18½ hours per week for £18,500**

Length of contract: 6 years

The Chester & Stoke-on-Trent District of the Methodist Church is seeking a Pioneer in the New Places for New People initiative to work in partnership with The Haven and Dinner Hub to nurture faith development and explore growing church communities.

We are looking for a Christian pioneer to journey with us and lead us into deeper relationships with God and those around us.

For an initial conversation about this post, please contact Revd Rob Hilton before 20 June 2025.

For more information and an application form please email chester.stoke@btconnect.com

Applications by Noon on Friday 20 June 2025
Interviews Wednesday 9 July 2025
Post to begin Monday 1 September 2025

The Methodist Church
Chester & Stoke-on-Trent District

The Chester & Stoke-on-Trent District of the Methodist Church is seeking a

**Pioneer for “New Places for New People”
Based at Temple Street Methodist Church, ST4 4NW
18½ hours per week for £18,500**

Length of contract: 6 years

The Chester & Stoke-on-Trent District is seeking a Pioneer in the “New Places for New People” initiative to work alongside Temple Street Methodist Church in its formation of an emergent worshipping community.

We are looking for a Christian to journey alongside us and lead us into deeper relationships with those around us.

For an initial conversation about this post, please contact Revd Joe Adams revd.adams.joe@icloud.com before 20 June 2025.

For more information and an application form please email chester.stoke@btconnect.com

Applications by Noon on Friday 20 June 2025
Interviews Monday 14 July 2025
Post to begin Monday 1 September 2025



The Community Lounge at Swan Bank

In the 2nd week of January 2025, the Food Bank, Money Matters and the North Locality Connector, moved from the Coffee Lounge into the Lower Hall. The main reason

being more space due to the numbers attending and the opportunity to invite additional agencies with a wealth of knowledge to offer support and guidance, often achieving a very positive and practical outcome. We are so fortunate that all we approached were delighted to join us, and we now have agencies approaching us which is such a blessing and long may we continue to grow.

Available agencies for people to see on a weekly basis are Housing, Anti-Social Behaviour, Employment, CDAS, Number 11, Food Bank, Money Matters, Community Locality Connector, Burslem Community Grocery and Salt Box (with room for more - just!)

When our friends arrive with a food bank voucher it is seamless. A sticking point is when someone arrives without a voucher, which now has a temporary fix as we have our very own Community Grocery who can provide some help whilst we put them in touch with a voucher code

provider. Chloe, Nan and Alison attend weekly and explain the work of the Community Grocery. We offer a "pay it forward" system for membership and a 12-item shop, so no one has to leave without food provisions. Our friends then have sufficient to keep them going until in receipt of their voucher code to use the following day.

The community lounge is a space that our local community know about, where help is available from professionals, it's warm, friendly, and inviting and our friends can sit and chat, enjoy a cuppa and a biscuit, or a piece of cake and are always welcomed with a smile, a listening ear, a chat, a sharing of faith. We have success stories from people attending who now volunteer here at Swan Bank. A couple who were in receipt of a food bank voucher, returned the following week to donate food and clothing for us to hand out to others. What a wonderful community spirit!

Liz Thompson

Here's what 5 of our partnership agencies say about the community lounge:-



North Locality Connector

"We have 18 community lounges across the city, placed in various venues. They are all very different based on the need of the area. In all lounges there is a locality connector and some have partners who sit in the lounge. We have a non-judgemental approach, we are here to help/support the residents of Stoke-on-Trent, with whatever their worry or concern is." Learn more by following this link:-

<https://communities-together.co.uk/>



Number 11

"The community lounge at Swanbank is a fantastic initiative and has been a way for us at Number 11 to reach out to people that benefit from our service. The staff and volunteers create a warm and welcoming environment for everyone involved, which, in turn, helps to facilitate meaningful conversations. The community lounges provide a great 'front door' service, and the role that Swanbank plays within the community makes it a perfect place to host one."

<https://number11.org.uk/>

Employment

"The community lounge is a warm welcoming space, where guests can discuss a range of support including financial issues, housing, well-being and employment"

The Community Lounge at Swan Bank continued...



This year the Foodbank became part of the Community Lounge run by our church. This gives people the ability to access information & help with their financial problems, benefits, housing, return to work information and lots more. This help is now more accessible to people as they don't have to travel to find the information and help that they need. Saltbox's Money Matters have worked with us for many years giving help & support to people and continue to do so.

Many thanks to all of you who have given to Foodbank in any way. As you can imagine things are difficult at this time and your contributions are much appreciated. Alkegen, a local company in Burslem, are also very generous to us and have given Easter Eggs a few week

Foodbank

ago and donated toys at Christmas from the staff who work there.

We have a wonderful team of volunteers that make the experience of Foodbank a good one, as it can be quite overwhelming for some people. If you would like to join us, please speak to me as we need people who could help setting up tables & crates, packing food bags etc.

Please pray for us on Wednesday afternoons that we can be God's hands serving people in need.

Blessings,

Sue Woodward



<https://stokeontrent.foodbank.org.uk/>



The Message Trust charity has been established for over 30 years, sharing the love of Jesus in word and action.

During lockdown in 2020, the Message Trust, in partnership with a local church delivered 60,000 meals

and food parcels across Manchester, and it was from that great piece of work that the idea for the Community Grocery was born. There are 26 groceries across the country and each one works in partnership with a local church.

The groceries aim to provide: –

- Food to support local families
- Opportunities for the community to engage with the local church
- Support members to access local services that offer help and support
- Volunteering opportunities, courses, events and friendship
- Reduction of food waste by redistributing surplus food.

Burslem Community Grocery provides a service between the Food Bank and local supermarkets, a bridge which offers members the opportunity to take control of what food they buy for themselves and their families at an affordable price.

The grocery opens Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm. We can offer free 12-month membership with typical shopping options of 12 items of food for £5 (6 extra

Community Grocery

items can be purchased in multiples of £2.50)

In addition, each Wednesday the grocery staff work alongside the Food Bank in Swan Bank's Community Lounge, talking to all their guests about the grocery and exploring how to support them going forward.

Sometimes people arrive at the Food Bank and the Community Lounge without a food bank voucher which they would need to obtain their food parcel from the Food Bank. As an alternative, we offer to take them to the grocery where they can sign up for membership and a free shop.

It's been 5 months since I joined the grocery, and I've met people from all walks of life. I remember one young mum who came into the grocery because she didn't have a Food Bank voucher. She explained that her Universal Credit hadn't arrived, her cupboards were empty, and she had small children at home. The grocery was able to support this young mum with membership, and a free shop. Three or four weeks later the same young mum returned and donated money to help someone else who may find themselves in a similar situation.

The last five months have been hard work but a real blessing too.

Nan Hulse



<https://communitygrocery.org.uk/burslem/>

June 2025 - Circuit Preaching Plan

Venue	Time	1 st June	8 th June (Pentecost)	15 th June	22 nd June	29 th June
Swan Bank	9.00am 10.30am 6.15pm	TBC Stephens (Baptism) Stephens/Jeffries	Stephens Stephens Jeffries	Wakelin Stephens (Baptism) Stephens	Brooks Jeffries/Brabbs Taylor	A Johnson A Johnson Cooke
Potter's Church	9.30am 11.15am	Cooke Cooke	Hancock Hancock	Price Price	Phillips Phillips	B Barber B Barber
Oasis Church	10.45am 6.00pm	Law	Owens	Brabbs	Jollley	Own Arrangement
Wesley Hall	10.45am	Wakelin	Tattersall	Brooks	Own Arrangement	Own Arrangement
The Gateway	10.45am	Tattersall	Worthington	Batho	Wakelin	Own Arrangement
Mt Pleasant	10.45am	Tindale	Tretheway	Own Arrangement	Leese	Tindale
Packmoor	11.00am	Boateng	Tindale	Cooke	Own Arrangement	Brooks
Village Ch	11.00am	Jeffries	Brabbs	Jeffries	Own Arrangement	Boateng
Whitehill	10.30am 6.00pm	Leese Wakelin	Wakelin Cooper	Cooper (Baptism) Q & A	Andrews Cooper	Shaw Wakelin

My Life in God's Hands

My name is Mercy. I am a woman of faith, a mother to two beautiful daughters, and a widow—having lost my husband at a young age. That season of grief was one of the most painful chapters of my life, but it was also when I experienced the depth of God's love and grace like never before. His presence became my comfort, His Word my strength, and His promises my hope.

Though I came from an engineering background, God had a different path for me. In His divine wisdom, He called me to train as a mental health nurse, serving some of the most vulnerable people in our society—those with complex and challenging mental health needs. It's a role I never expected, yet one that has become a sacred space where I see God's heart in action. The work is often tiring, emotionally and physically, but deeply rewarding.

Through every long shift, every moment of compassion shared, I know I am walking in God's purpose. His grace empowers me daily, and His love continues to heal and guide me. My life is a testimony that God can transform pain into purpose, and His plans are always greater than our own.

Mercy Macheka



Prayer Focus

Dear Heavenly Father,

As we look around us and see the beautiful creation of the trees of many shapes and colours, the flowers with their various scents and the creatures buzzing around them, we give thanks for your gift of creation. Help us to not take this beautiful planet for granted and help us be the stewards you intended us to be.

We thank you Lord for the gift of our families, friends, and our church that reaches out to the lonely, those who are battling addiction and those who struggle with everyday life due to the cost of living. Help us Lord, to continue to give generously to those in need, not only with our gifts of money, but with our time.

Lord, we are aware in this country we have peace but there are so many war torn countries with so much loss of life, starvation and cruelty. We pray your peacemakers may enter in and bring the much-needed supplies and pray that governments will come together in prayer before you to show them the way, as you are the Way the Truth and Life. Call us to live in peace and to love others as you love us. We ask this prayer in the precious name of Jesus.

Amen

Karen Snape



Our Network of Care Stories (...to be continued again next month!)



Michelle, Sandra and Michael Parker

For over 39 years, our Christmas day has been spent with the Swanbank team. We helped to provide hospitality for up to 400 people, take away meals and people joining us for a meal at the church. Great times together.

In 2019, our circumstances changed, and we faced challenging health problems. The positive side is we get to spend Christmas day together as a family. We worship at the 9.00 am service, where Michelle joins us when she's home.

Best wishes from Michelle, Sandra and Michael Parker.

"Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of a friend springs from their heartfelt advice."
Proverbs 27:9



Bernard and Rose Cope

From Rose and Bernard Cope.

Swan Bank is so welcoming and an extension of our family. Our ministers are so helpful and engaging and always know what's going on, which Rose says is "wonderful." As well as coming to Church, we feel that the Dementia Activity Group and Chatty Café are a lifeline. To meet with lovely friends and learn new things together is really special. It's great to be a part of such groups.

"He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth"
Luke 1:14

Regular Activities at Swan Bank

Sunday

Sunday Services at 9am, 10:30am and 6:15pm.
Sunday Night Young Adults – Fellowship Room, 7:30-9pm.

Monday

Bible Study – Coffee bar, 10-11:30am.
Hope & Hospitality, Soup Kitchen – Coffee Lounge, 10am-12noon.
Dementia Activity Group – Coffee Lounge, 1-3pm.
Gospel Choir – Fellowship Room, 7:30-9pm
2nd & 4th Mondays of each month.

Tuesday

Little Treasures (0-4 years old) – Lower Hall, 9:30-11am (*term time only*).
Chatty Café – Coffee Lounge, 10am-12noon.
Tuesday Club – Coffee Lounge, 1:30-3:30pm.

Wednesday

Knit & Natter – Meeting Room 1, 10am-12noon.
Changes – Coffee Lounge, 10am-1pm.
Community Lounge/Foodbank – Lower Hall, 2-4pm (*To receive a food parcel an E-voucher will be required from a referral agency*).

Thursday

Prayer Time – Prayer Chapel, 9-9:30am.
Hope & Hospitality, Soup Kitchen – Coffee Lounge, 10am-12noon.
Younger Youth (School years 3-6) – Upper Hall, 5:45-7:15pm (*term time only*).
Youth Club (11-16 years old) – Upper Hall, 7:30-9pm (*term time only*).

Saturday

Messy Church (Primary school aged children) – Lower Hall, 10am-12noon (*first Saturday of each month*) Breakfast included and only £1 per child!
Women's Walking Group – (*3rd Saturday of each month*). See Liz Thompson for details.

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

SWAN BANK NOTICEBOARD

**Whitehill Methodist
Community Church**
Mid-Week Services

4th June - Pastor Lynn Tindale
 11th June - Rev Arthur Wakelin
 18th June - David Bowers
 25th June - Pastor Glynis Cooper

Whitehill Road, Kidsgrove, ST7 4DS
 Every Wednesday commencing at 10.15am

Pastoral Network of Care

Your help is needed! Please pray for our Dementia Activity Group. Several members are not able to attend our Monday meetings, due to declining health. Please pray for the practical aspects of transport to the increasing number of medical appointments, for appropriate care and interventions and for strength and peace for our members and their partners. We miss them and hope to see them back with us soon.
 Thanks, **Janet Bagnall**.



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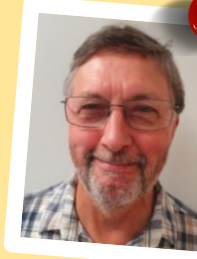
In Store

Online

<https://www.crfl.co.uk/>
 Gitana Street, Hanley, ST1 1DY
 01782 212146

Church Events

If there are any church groups or events
 (at Swan Bank or even further afield)
 that you would like advertising on
 the noticeboard, then please contact
 either **Shirley** or **Nigel**



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 magazines, please contact
Shirley Brooks or **Nigel Johnson**
 directly or email :-

officeassistance@swanbank.org.uk.

And now for something completely different!

If you fancy doing a spiritual retreat from the comfort of your own home, then check this out...



The Community for Spiritual Formation

Friday 18th & Saturday 19th July 2025

An online overnight retreat
with Bishop Sidwell Mokgothu

Reawakening Sacramental Living

How do we lead lives that are 'outward and visible signs'
that convey God's grace to the broken world?



Rev Dr R Sidwell Mokgothu is the Bishop of the Limpopo District of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa in Pretoria. Sidwell is a passionate trainer, speaker, coach and retreat leader who has presented at international platforms. He is a former liberation struggle activist, and an ecumenical leader grounded in social justice. He is an ardent proponent of a spirituality that balances the contemplative with prophetic action. Sidwell is the co-founder and advocate of the Sedibeng Spiritual Experience, whose formation was influenced by the Academy for Spiritual Formation. He is the current chairperson of the Africa Upper Room Ministries [AURM].

Programme for the event

Friday 18th 7:00 – 8:30pm [UK time]

7pm Gathering, welcome & orientation

- Short shared silence
- Listening and Learning 1 – including questions for overnight reflection
- Night Prayer
- Disperse (participants spending time in silence if they wish/are able to do so)

Saturday 19th 9am – 1pm [UK time]

9:00am Morning Prayer

- Plenary – reflecting on the questions & theme together
- Listening and Learning 2
- An hour of silence (individually off screen)

12 noon Plenary sharing together

12.30pm Midday Prayer and close

Further Information

To register for this event please email:-

registrar@communitysf.org.uk

by **Monday 30th June**

Worship material will be sent by email in advance. It is important to be present for the whole event.

Cost: Donations to the Community are invited with a suggested minimum amount of £10.

This can be Gift Aided; forms and bank details will be shared when you register.

To find out more about the Community for Spiritual Formation please visit:

<https://www.communitysf.org.uk>

Leadership team for this event: Sheryl Anderson, Sally Graham, Val Reid