



# SWANBANK

## August Magazine 2025

### Message from our Ministers...

Dear friends,

Recently, I had the privilege of attending the Methodist Conference – the national gathering of British Methodism that traces its roots back to 1744, when John Wesley first convened a group to reflect on doctrine, discipline, and the life of the Church. What began as a small advisory group has become the decision-making body of our Church today.

Most attendees are elected from across the District – lay and ordained – and, with a young family, I'd never quite felt able to commit to a full week away until now. It was a real experience! One of the great joys was reconnecting with friends from across the Connexion – people I've trained or served alongside over the years.

For a first-timer, Conference has its own language and rhythm to learn, but eventually, things begin to click. The worship style may feel unfamiliar to our SwanBank family – and not always my personal preference! – yet there was something deeply moving about the emphasis on our global church and our shared calling within it.

A standout moment was hearing Bishop Christian Alsted speak powerfully on *Fractured World, Fractured Church*, particularly in light of his experience of the war in Ukraine.



What strikes me as one of the best things about Conference is the very thing that can sometimes frustrate us: the process. Every member called to Conference can speak, ensuring every voice is heard – a principle that echoes through to the local Church Council. It may not always be quick, but it is faithful.

At the heart of it all is the belief that all are valued in the Kingdom of God, each voice can and should be heard, just as each has their part to play; one body, many parts. This is core to the organisation of the Methodist Church and is a key reason why all, especially the marginalised and excluded find a home here, a truth for which I will always be grateful.

*Ruth*



*The central weekend of Conference also includes the Reception into Full Connexion and Ordinations of the cohort of ministers who have completed their*

*Probationary period. This year had a special connection with SwanBank, not least in that Kathryn helps lead the very precious 'pre-ordination retreat'*

*for these ministers, but also because Ruth was invited to be the supporting minister for Hayley Edmonson, who spent 2 years of her training on placement with us. It was incredible privilege for Kathryn & Ruth and SwanBank as a whole to be a part of Hayley's journey.*



## History of Methodism in the UK

As we move forward with God, we can remember the amazing part of Methodist heritage we have at Swan Bank!

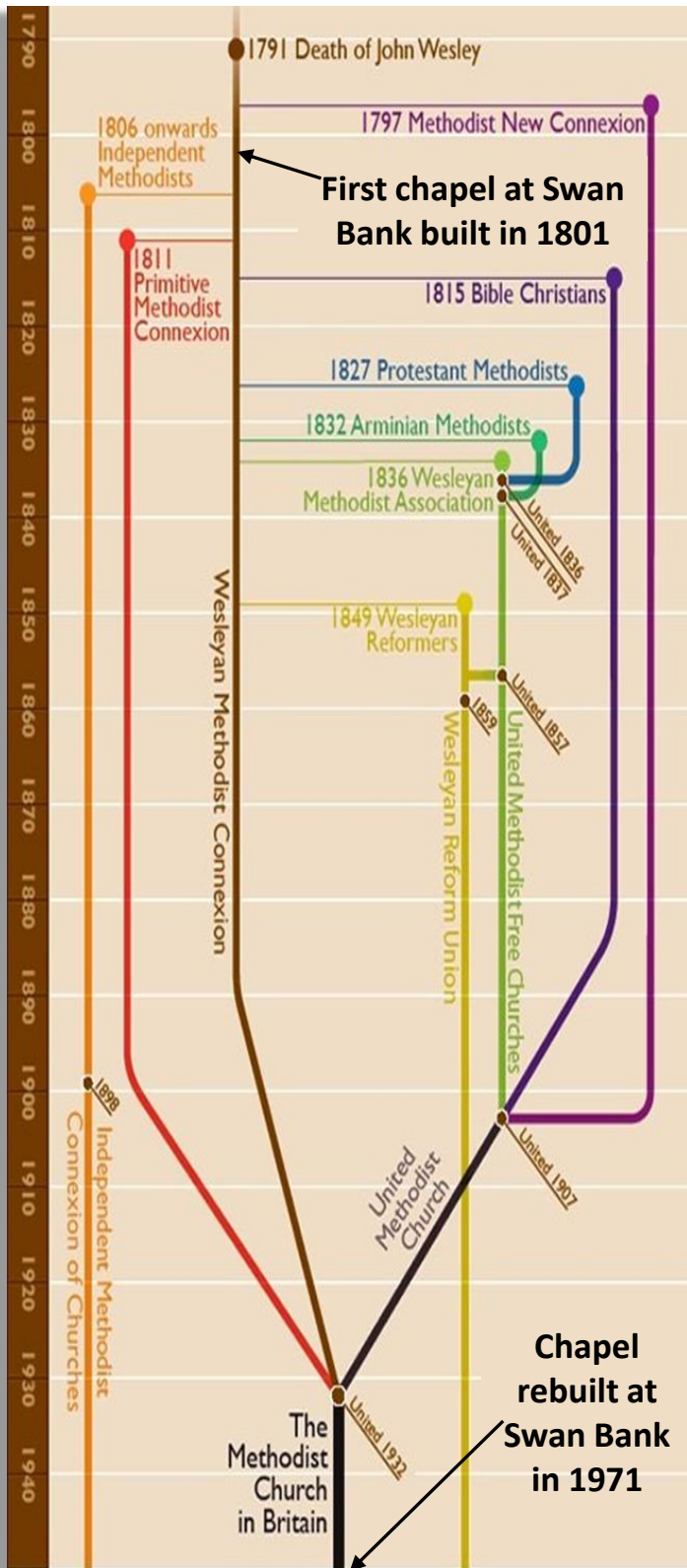


Image courtesy of Methodist Heritage.  
To learn more, follow the link below.

<https://www.methodistheritage.org.uk/methodist-history/history-of-methodism>

## 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  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of each month (*restarts in Sept.*)

### 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 – next date is Sat. 4<sup>th</sup> Oct.*) Breakfast included and only £1 per child!  
Women's Walking Group – (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month). See Liz Thompson for details.

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



## Dates for the Diary

**FOUNDATION  
SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

For ALL volunteers within the  
Stoke on Trent Mission circuit,  
who **MUST** renew every 4 years  
Swan Bank Church,  
Fellowship Room  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025  
7pm to 9:30pm



To book a place  
Scan the QR Code or email:  
shirley@swanbank.org.uk  
officeassistance@swanbank.org.uk

**Stoke-on-Trent  
UNITED CELEBRATION**

Sunday 14 September - 6.15pm

Swan Bank Church, Swan Square, Burslem,  
Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 2AA



CITY VISION  
MINISTRIES



SALT BOX  
Strengthening Our Communities

## Vacancies in local Methodist Districts



**Cheshire South  
METHODIST CIRCUIT**

Cheshire South Methodist Circuit  
Require a

**Property Administrator**

14 hours/week, £13.10-£14.60 per hour/£9,536.80/£10,628.80 (depending on experience)

Length of contract-2 years.

The Cheshire South Methodist Circuit is seeking a Circuit Property Administrator to manage property on behalf of the Circuit.

We are looking to appoint an organised person who is a good communicator and who can keep clear, accurate records to ensure that the Circuit looks after their property in accordance with Methodist guidelines.

The position is home-based.

A car will be required to visit properties across the Circuit.

For more information, please contact: laycoordinator1@gmail.com

Applications by-12 August 2025 12 noon, interviews-21 August 2025, role to begin-1 September 2025 (or as soon as possible thereafter).

If you would like an informal chat about this post, please email our Lay Coordinator on: laycoordinator1@gmail.com

For more information follow the link -

[www.cheshiresouth.org.uk/vacancies.html](http://www.cheshiresouth.org.uk/vacancies.html)

**The Methodist Church**

## Update – Colour Splash 25

What an amazing three days: Colour Splash 2025 was a spectacular success, with nearly 60 children joining us as we stepped into the ring - the Circus Ring that is. Together, we followed the hilarious and heartfelt journey of Cuddles the Clown as he pursued his dream of joining the circus.

The week kicked off with quite the adventure (and a fair bit of chaos). Poor Cuddles had a disastrous audition, accidentally let a monkey loose, custard-pied himself, and even took an unexpected dive into the pool! Despite all the mishaps, the children couldn't help but love him for his heart and determination.

Over the three days, we explored some big themes: how we see ourselves, how others see us, and – most importantly – how God sees us. We looked beyond appearances and talked about how God sees deep into our hearts. Through the stories of Moses at the burning bush (unsure of himself and asking for help), Zacchaeus (rejected by many but seen and loved by Jesus), and David (chosen by God for his heart, not his height!), the children were encouraged to consider how God sees them.

And Cuddles? It all worked out for him in the end! Though he wasn't much of a clown, it

turned out he was the perfect Ringmaster. When the circus was in crisis, his heart and willingness to step up made all the difference. The children were reminded that we all have a unique part to play – just like Cuddles.

A special highlight was our visit from Circus in a Box, who wowed us with their incredible skills before giving us the chance to try some ourselves. Thursday's water fight left us soaked and smiling, and on Friday, our sports day brought out the athletes in us all – watch this space - Los Angeles 2028!

We're incredibly grateful to all our wonderful volunteers who worked tirelessly to give the children such a joyful experience. Thank you to those who gave financially – your generosity made it possible for many families to be part of this event. And finally, a heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported us in prayer. We truly saw God's blessing over these three amazing days. Now... time for a well-earned nap!

**Nick Jeffries**



(see the next page for photos of what we got up to!)



## Update on Colour Splash 25





## Who doesn't like Coffee &amp; Cake?



**Coffee Morning**  
Come and join us for free cake, coffee and a chat.



**Date** - 30th September  
**Time** - 10.30am - 12pm  
**Location** - The Coffee Lounge, SwanBank Church, Burslem  
Working in partnership with Chatty Café

**THE GATEWAY METHODIST CHURCH  
GOLDENHILL  
COFFEE MORNINGS 2025**



**2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of every month  
August 9<sup>th</sup>, September 13<sup>th</sup>,  
October 11<sup>th</sup>, November 8<sup>th</sup> and  
13<sup>th</sup> December  
10am – 12 noon  
All welcome**

## Two great stories from our Community Grocery



**My name is Josh,** and I have been volunteering at the Burslem Community Grocery. I have gained a number of skills while volunteering at the Grocery, for example, working with the customers that come in gaining vital communication skills to help customers as much as possible,

I have also gained a great understanding of my local community and what the grocery can do for them whether it's helping a family in need, a customer fallen on hard times, or just simply carrying some heavy shopping bags to a car for the customer.

I am forever grateful for my volunteering opportunity that Nan has given to me and how proud I am to be part of the Burslem Community Grocery and giving back to people everyday when visiting our amazing Community Grocery.



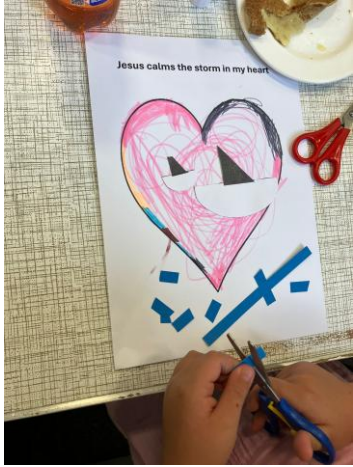
**Hi, my name is Ant.** I'm currently a volunteer at the Community Grocery Burslem. I have known Nan for a number of

years and when I learnt that she needed volunteers at the grocery I asked if I could volunteer and Nan said yes.

Over the last few months, I have had a hard time and have had to move house. I lost my confidence, so volunteering in the grocery store is helping me gain my confidence back and to move forward with my life.



## What's been happening at Messy Church? .... Lots Apparently!



Messy Church is an awesome, family-friendly group that happens on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month, and it's loads of fun for everyone! It's a place where kids and adults can come together to do crafts, play games, eat tasty food, sing songs with actions, and learn a bit about God in a fun and relaxed way.

One of the best things about Messy Church is the food – there's always a great selection for both breakfast and lunch, and if you have any allergies, don't worry! There are allergy-friendly options too, so everyone is included.



The crafts are amazing and there's always something new to make, whether it's painting, gluing, or creating something unique. There are also fun games that get everyone involved, and the songs are catchy and full of energy – it's hard not to sing along!

What makes Messy Church really special is how welcoming it is. No matter who you are, you'll be made to feel part of the group. It's a great way to spend time with family, meet new people, and enjoy learning more about God in a creative and fun way.



Come along and see what Messy Church is all about – you'll love it! **Abby**

**Next Messy Church is 4<sup>th</sup> October!**





## August 2025 - Circuit Preaching Plan

Venue	Time	3 <sup>rd</sup> August	10 <sup>th</sup> August	17 <sup>th</sup> August	24 <sup>th</sup> August	31 <sup>st</sup> August
Swan Bank	9.00am 10.30am 6.15pm	Jeffries Jeffries Stephens	Stephens Stephens (Baptism) A Johnson	Stephens  Stephens Stephens	Brabbs Brabbs Jeffries 	Wakelin Stephens/Jeffries Jeffries
Potter's Church	9.30am 11.15am	Hancock Hancock	Graham Graham	Cooke  Cooke 	B Barber B Barber	J Johnson J Johnson
Oasis Church	10.45am 6.00pm	Boateng	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	Own Arrangement
Wesley Hall	10.45am	Mason	Tattersall	Zinyemba	Cooke	Boateng
The Gateway	10.45am	Brooks	Wakelin 	Own Arrangement	Tattersall	Stanyer
Mt Pleasant	10.45am	Wakelin 	Own Arrangement	Own Arrangement	Tindale	Brooks
Packmoor	11.00am	Tindale	J. Johnson	Tretheway	Stephens 	Tindale
Village Ch	11.00am	Stephens	Cooke	Andrews	Own Arrangement	Jeffries 
Whitehill	10.30am 6.00pm	Cooper Bowers	Cooper  Cooper	Brooks Q & A (Wakelin)	Dutton Cooper 	Cooper Wakelin

## Shining bright for the church

The role of a pastoral link visitor is a very important role and brings so much pleasure to so many, either in hospital, their own homes or in nursing or care homes. Dilys Johnson, who lives at Hempstalls Hall, face lights up when she sees her pastoral link visitor, Nigel Johnson (no relation!). They sit chatting together over coffee and biscuits and the occasional cake and Nigel fills her in with news from the church and any other subject that Dilys might raise. It's amazing what a little chat can do, it's the church stretching its arms out to members and non-members.

**Karen Snape**



## Little Treasures



With a little tear shed, we said goodbye to quite a few of our big Little Treasures in July as they get ready to start school in September! We've had so much fun together over the years - playing, learning, and growing. We're going to miss you all so much, but we know you're going to be amazing in your new schools. Don't forget Little Treasures runs every



Tuesday morning in term time and is for 0-4 year olds.

**Nick Jeffries**

## Our Network of Care Stories

(...to be continued again next month!)



**Margaret Brown**

Hello, Margaret Brown here.

I was brought up in Wolstanton and went to the Congregational church there and, since then, have been an active member of SwanBank.

I'm still living in Burslem and hoping to move home shortly but remaining in Burslem.

I enjoy walking, reading and frequently writing letters in the local press.

Meeting friends for fellowship is one of the high spots of my week.

'Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.'

1 Thessalonians 5:11



**Carol Dawson**

Carol celebrated a special birthday in early September. She had a wonderful weekend. Her two children, who both live away, came to stay. In total, 19 members of her family had a wonderful time with Carol, which she thoroughly enjoyed.

She's had some health problems this year, but they seem to be under control. Carol describes SwanBank as home!

'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change'

James 1:17

## Prayer Focus

After some storms in life, we can be left traumatised, physically and emotionally drained. Remember the past is a place of reference not residence. We can feel that we are changed by circumstances, but we don't need to be defined by them. We can not alter the past, but we can bring the past to God's altar. He will take us as we are and lead us to where he needs us to be.

God has purpose for our future despite the pain of the past. The bible encourages us:

*"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See I am doing a new thing!*

*Now it springs up; do you perceive it ?*

*I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland"*

(Isaiah 43:18-19)

### Prayer

*As we bring our past to our Lord, we ask that our past will not define our future. We leave our past with you Lord.*

*Heal us from any hurt or pain of the past.*

*Renew a right spirit within us and begin a new thing.*

*Change our heart Lord and pour out your Spirit to create a new thing for our future.*

*May your peace fill our lives as we confidently walk life with you.*

*Thank you Lord, that you promise to always walk beside us.*

*In Jesus name,*

*Amen.*

**Sarah Dobson**





## SWAN BANK NOTICEBOARD

## ADVANCED SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

For volunteers within the Stoke on Trent Mission Circuit, who **MUST** renew every 4 years

Swan Bank Church,  
Fellowship Room

Saturday 18th October 2025

9:30am to 4pm



To book a place

Scan the QR Code or email:

shirley@swanbank.org.uk

officeassistance@swanbank.org.uk

## Gospel Choir

Just a reminder that the Gospel Choir restarts in September.

## Messy Church

There is no Messy Church in September so the next one will be Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October.

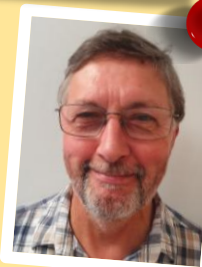


## Office Hours

During the month of August, the office opening hours will vary, please see the notice on the door and church notice board for specifics.

## Church Events or Articles for the Magazine

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



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

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

01782 575129



[admin@swanbank.org.uk](mailto:admin@swanbank.org.uk)



[www.swanbank.org.uk](http://www.swanbank.org.uk)

Sunday 10:30am Service, live stream links:-



[www.youtube.com/@SwanBank/streams](https://www.youtube.com/@SwanBank/streams) or



[www.facebook.com/swanbank/?locale=en\\_GB](https://www.facebook.com/swanbank/?locale=en_GB)

