



SWANBANK



July Magazine 2026

Giving Thanks for Ruth

As many of you will know, Reverend Ruth Jeffries will soon be leaving her ministry role among us. While Ruth, together with Nick and the girls, will continue to be part of our church family for the coming year, she will no longer be serving as minister here.

As we approach this transition, it is important that we take time to acknowledge Ruth's faithful service and ministry over the years. Ministry is not confined to what happens on a Sunday. Alongside the work that many of us have seen, there has been a great deal that has taken place quietly behind the scenes: planning, administration, preparation, pastoral conversations, practical support, and prayer and much more besides. These hidden acts of service are often unseen, yet they play an absolutely crucial role in the life of a church, and we are grateful for all that Ruth has contributed in these ways.

Ruth has served with commitment and generosity, giving her time, energy, gifts, creativity and care to the work of the gospel among us. Through times of joy and challenge alike, she has sought to serve Jesus and to support the ministry and mission of our church with real endurance.

As a colleague, Ruth has been a hugely valued member of the team, and on a personal note I am deeply thankful for her friendship, encouragement, kindness, love and support. It has been a privilege to serve alongside her and to share in the work of ministry together.



While we will miss Ruth's contribution in this role, we are thankful that she will remain part of our church family for the year ahead. We look forward to continuing to share fellowship and worship together albeit in a different way.

As a way to say thank you, there will be a collection for Ruth. If you would like to contribute, please place your gift in an envelope clearly labelled "Ruth's Gift" and return it via the church office or the black box at the back of the church.

We will formally give thanks for Ruth's ministry at all three services on Sunday 2nd August. Following the 10.30am service, cake will be served as we gather together to mark this occasion and wish Ruth and her family every blessing for the future.

Please join us as we give thanks to God for Ruth and pray for God's continued guidance and blessing upon her and her family for this new chapter.

Kathryn

Cook and Eat Course- Update

The Community Grocery is more than just food! It's also not only about providing affordable food as we are also here to help build a stronger community, equip



members with new skills and create a space for people to explore faith. To support members, on June 8th, we offered a Cook & Eat course led by Howard Dobson Here are some of the participant's comments:

"The cookery course was amazing. Howard was exactly the right person to

deliver the course. Very educational. Thank you."

"I had a fantastic experience and would recommend it to everyone."

"I have really enjoyed the 3-week cooking course. I have tried new recipes and have socialised as well. I would recommend the sessions, thank you for arranging such activities."



Becky from the Green Doctor energy advisory service also attended the last session to offer help and support. She shared about reducing your utility bills, making homes warmer ready for the winter months and taking control of any damp and mould issues.

Nan Hulse

When God Whispers your Name

I'm hoping we haven't had all the sunshine yet and that we still have more to come this summer! It's so much better walking the dog in the evening over dry fields, instead of wet and muddy ones. We are fortunate to have a few good walks near to us and some even have paths that we can use when the weather is not so good.

We meet a lot of people, some we see every day or every week, and although we don't know each other's name we all know the dogs' name and greet each other saying, "Oh, look it's, Pudding or Kim, or Buster."

My favourites are two Staffies, walked by two older chaps. The dogs are called 'George & Mildred' and it makes me smile all day when I've seen them. Maybe you have friends who have nicknames and never use their actual name.

However God knows us all by name, a name he has for us all. We are all his children and as parents know, you don't forget your children's names. Sometimes maybe not in the right order or given to the right child and even the dog's name also gets in there as well!

Reading Max Lucado's book 'When God Whispers Your Name', makes it clear God loves us.

He loves each one of us like there was only one of us and the best is yet to be. Be there when God whispers your name.

"Lord, we thank you for Your love and Grace. May we share it with people we meet on our journey with you Amen"

Sue Woodward



July 2026 - Circuit Preaching Plan

Venue	Time	5 th July	12 th July	19 th July	26 th July
SwanBank	9.00am	Mason	Jeffries	Stephens	Simcoe
	10.30am	Stephens	Jeffries	Stephens	Stephens/Jeffries
	6.15pm	Brabbs	Stephens	Moore	Jeffries
Potter's Church	9.30am	Hancock	Eyre	Hancock	Zinyemba
	11.15am	Hancock	Eyre	Hancock	Zinyemba
Oasis Church	10.45am	Wyatt	Broadbent	Davies	Nixon
Wesley Hall	10.45am	Tattersall	Stanyer	Andrews	Own Arrangement
The Gateway	10.45am	Own Arrangement	Tattersall	Own Arrangement	Wakelin 🕒
Mount Pleasant	10.45am	J Johnson	Dutton	Tindale	Own Arrangement
Packmoor	11.00am	Own Arrangement	Worthington	J Johnson	Brooks
Village Church	11.00am	Jeffries	Nixon	Jeffries 🕒	Cooke
Whitehill	10.30am	Boateng	Cooper 🕒	Shaw	Cooper
	6.00pm	Stephens	Wakelin	Cooke (Q & A)	Cooper 🕒

Friends in Fellowship Group

Our group began as a craft and knitting group called 'Knit and Natter'. Over time it naturally changed into something more social. Our members found themselves spending less time knitting and much more time talking, drinking tea and coffee, and enjoying each other's company. When I asked whether everyone wanted the group to continue or finish, we all agreed that we wanted to carry on as we were. Because the group was no longer focused mainly on crafts, we felt that the name needed to change. New people were always welcomed, and anyone could still bring knitting, crochet or another craft if they wished, but the main purpose had become friendship and fellowship. After discussing ideas with Janet Bagnall and my husband Alan, the group chose the name "Friends in Fellowship." Recently our group also took on a special project after I saw a Facebook post shared by Sarah Dobson. It explained that the hospital needed hats for newborn and premature babies. Our members began knitting straight away and produced around 230 hats. These will be taken to the Maternity Unit by Dorothy Pearl, through a contact at the toddler's club. The hats are important because premature babies need to be kept warm, especially their heads. The group made a range of sizes so they could be used for



both premature and newborn babies. Sandra Parker, although not an official member, also contributed knitted items including baby blankets. Today, Friends in Fellowship remains a warm, welcoming weekly group. Members still do small projects, such as card-making twice a year, but the heart of the group is friendship, conversation and the fellowship they share. Everyone is welcome. We meet every Wednesday from 10am to 11:45am in the Fellowship Room of course!



Rita Taylor

BE A PART OF SOMETHING SPECIAL. JOIN POTTERIES MEN SING TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR AN INCREDIBLE CAUSE - DEMENTIA STOKE



POTTERIES MEN SING

40 MEN WANTED

We want YOU to perform live on stage in six major venues from around the six towns which make up the city of Stoke-on-Trent

A 10 WEEK PROJECT STARTING FROM SCRATCH IN SEPTEMBER 2026

- ✓ Your chance to learn to sing
- ✓ Experience singing in a male voice choir
- ✓ No experience required - just a warm welcome!
- ✓ Have fun and sing together
- ✓ Rehearsals are completely free of charge
- ✓ Professional direction and support



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT SHAUNEY CONNOR ON 07562 670 430, EMAIL INFO@POTTERIESMENSING.CO.UK, OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

WWW.POTTERIESMENSING.CO.UK

POTTERIES MEN SING IS SUPPORTING DEMENTIA STOKE. LAUNCHING IN SEPTEMBER 2026.

Why not challenge yourself by trying something new! Be part of a Stoke on Trent 6 Towns Project supporting the Lord Mayor's chosen charity, Dementia Stoke.

This popular singing project will give 40+ local men of all ages the opportunity to get involved and do something extraordinary, and you could be one of them.

Over the 10 weeks you will work towards the goal of fantastic live performances in all six towns. You will learn to sing, meet new people and perform live on stage to raise money for an important charity.

Tuition is completely free and no previous singing experience is necessary. Get stuck in and have a go - everyone is in the same boat and it's all about an exciting journey.

Last year, similar projects around the country and in Wales proved to be an overwhelmingly positive experience for the men that took part, comments include:

"Fantastic experience from the first rehearsal"

"What an amazing feeling - I'm so grateful to be part of it all - I would do it all again tomorrow!"

Potteries Men Sing starts with a session where you can meet the team and some of the other men who will be taking part. **This is not an audition - and there's no big red button!** It's just an opportunity to find out more and get involved.

Visit www.potteriesmensing.co.uk today to book your place. Times and Dates will be provided once you have registered on the website.

The concerts supporting Dementia Stoke will be held in each of the six towns around the Stoke-on-Trent area in November 2026 at 7:30 pm. The concerts will be run in conjunction with the Lord Mayor's 2025/2026 charity.

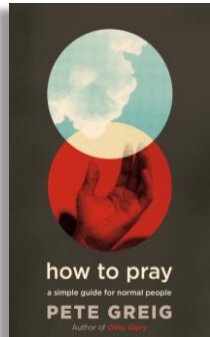
Practice sessions will be held at the Methodist Central Hall, 32b The Strand, Longton, ST3 2JH

Numbers may be limited, so do it now!



Book Review – ‘How to Pray’ by Pete Greig

I have been asked to review a book that’s been significant in my daily life during and since the Covid lockdown. The book is titled ‘*How to Pray*’, a simple guide for normal people by Pete Greig.



During lockdown, our small church group were introduced to the book during our weekly Zoom meetings. Each week we checked in on each other then discussed a chapter we had read and put into practice the advice given. The book provided very simple

techniques which were positive and easy to remember. Finding a place to pray was the first challenge, mine was early morning, looking out onto my garden before I put the television on to catchup on the dreadful Covid news. Others found a prayerful walk in nature a great connection. We all felt the routine was a great help when praying. The book looks at different styles of prayer and the ways we think and prepare ourselves before prayer.

Meditating on the Psalms was my favourite and encouraged me to engage Jesus in conversation throughout the day. Sending quick prayers for thanks, praise or help. We found the regularity of our prayer time helped us to feel closer to Jesus; our prayers less formal and more natural and conversational.

A development from the small group was a prayer triplet (myself, Janet Bagnall and Sandra Hearson) meeting online each Wednesday morning - the only time I’m grateful for social media. We have an hour where we pray about, whatever is on our hearts or comes into our minds, beginning with a Psalm which has become a familiar starting point for our prayers. We keep a note of the areas of prayers and concerns prayed about and are always stunned at how God answers our prayer and requests. What an amazing God we have. We also all have the Lectio 365 App on our phones which is a daily prayer devotional aid which repeats the practice found in the ‘How to Pray’ book. Using the app and the book together enable participants to transform their prayer life. Both are inspiring. Try them!

The structure is straightforward. Together we will pray (P.R.A.Y.) very simply each day:-

‘P’ - PAUSING to be still.

‘R’ - REJOICING with a Psalm and REFLECTING on a Scripture.

‘A’ - ASKING God to help us and others.

‘Y’ - YIELDING to his will in our lives, come what may.

Jane Sheeran



If anyone else would like to do a small review about a book they have read, then please have a chat with Shirley or Nigel to see if we can include it in future editions of the magazine.

Where is our Treasure?

As a child I used to accompany my dad to Hanley Cemetery where his parents are buried. You can learn a lot from reading inscriptions on gravestones. Here’s an inscription close to my grandparent’s grave.

‘Sacred to the precious memory of Richard Poole, 1819-1883.

‘A sincere Christian, an effective lay preacher, an apt and unwearied visitor of the sick and dying.’

‘He went about doing good, he was loved alike by rich and poor, ignorant and learned.’

‘When he entered into rest, many lamented him as a guide, a comforter and a brother.’

‘In grateful remembrance of his conspicuous worth, this monument has been erected by spontaneous public subscription.’

A reminder to us all that in the final analysis it will be treasure in heaven that will count rather than treasure on earth.

Ian Clarke

Colour Splash 22nd – 24th July



Colour Splash will be running from 22nd to 24th July (9am to 3:30pm). Prayers for a successful three days would be appreciated. However, it has proven so popular that all spaces are already booked, but it does mean that Nick will need LOTS of helpers and volunteers. If this is something you would be interested in doing, then please speak to Nick or email him on nick@swanbank.org.uk. It doesn't have to be for the whole three days, even ½ a day would be a great help. He is also after LOTS of clean recyclable materials (all sizes of cardboard boxes, plastic items etc. –**BUT PLEASE NO GLASS**).

Network of Care Team

Thank you to everyone on the Network of Care team who delivered our Summer gifts to the people they visit as part of our Pastoral links network. We are after new volunteers to become a part of this wonderful team, so can you spare an hour a month, perhaps to make a telephone call to show people they are loved and cared for. If this is something you're interested in doing, then please contact **Jan Bagnall** via the church office.



Hope and Hospitality

The Hope and Hospitality team want to thank everyone for their kind donations of fresh clothing for those in need. As always, we do need to re-stock some of the items that we give out. In particular, we need help with the following items:-

Men's Clothing

- Boxer Shorts- (small, medium and large)
- Roud neck T shirts (small)
- Jogging Bottoms (small and medium)
- Jeans (30" and 32" waist)
- Hoodies (small and medium)
- Jackets (small and medium)
- Trainers (Size 10 and 11)



Women's Clothing

- Pants (size 10 and 12)
- Trainers (size 6)
- Jogging bottoms (size 10)



Also, any spare sleeping bags or rucksacks would be really appreciated. Please leave any items with the office labelled for Hope and Hospitality.



SWANBANK 

ONE STEP FORWARD

MEN'S WALKING GROUP

Join us on the 2nd Saturday
every other month
at 2pm

Come along for a wander,
a chat and a coffee

Next walk:
11th July – Knypersley reservoir
Please meet at Knypersley reservoir car park
off Greenway Bank.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/3nrvfHjvP7rbhv7D6>



Speak to Matt Nixon for details

Belonging

My name is Lynne and I live in Market Drayton. I live with my two Nigerian lodgers (Christiana and Israel), who are more like family to me (you may sometimes see them with me at church). I have two grown children, the eldest of whom (Billie-Mae) sometimes comes along to SwanBank, with her beautiful wife Marianna. Marianna is an asylum seeker from Brazil. Please chat to them when you see them.

I am so pleased to have joined SwanBank. I've been occasionally dipping my toes in over the last couple of years but decided to make the move and became a member towards the end of last year. This was not a joyous occasion for me - it was one of the most painful things I think I've done as I wanted to leave and walk out halfway through!

It took me a while to make this commitment as I have had what can only be described as a truly terrible experience of church 'family', prior to coming here. I honestly thought I would never be able to be part of a church fellowship ever again. We have some amazing leaders and team members who are slowly helping to mend my very broken heart, where church family is concerned. I'm slowly starting to trust that love and care in a Christian church family can be genuine and safe.

So, whilst I have always been incredibly passionate about relationships in general and what it truly means to care, and to be 'seen' and known, my above experience has heightened that even more.

There is a danger with any large vibrant church that people can feel alone, invisible, lonely, missed etc. and this really pains me. I have always been mindful of challenging my own behaviours and trying (and regularly failing!) to hold them against the wonderful example of Jesus, as our perfect role model. I'm a particular fan of the woman at the well. Time and again Jesus models what love and care looks like, often to the marginalised, judged, isolated etc and truly 'saw' them.

I've been challenged throughout my Christian life that Church has to be more than a group of like-minded people meeting weekly to sing, listen, meet friends, and drink tea (I love tea!!). I have a phrase I've been using for years "If we can't love

the people inside our church then how on earth are we going to love some of the more challenging people, outside of the church". Human nature leads us to gravitate towards those we already know and those we really 'click' with, but we cannot fail to be challenged by the example of Christ. What does love for our whole SwanBank family look like to each of us?

'Welcome' is incredibly important to me, and at SwanBank we have a wonderful team of volunteers making sure everyone gets a welcome when they arrive. I have recently taken up a volunteer post at SwanBank as Welcome and Engagement Co-ordinator. I have some ideas of how we can develop our welcome further to ensure we are continually showing the care, love, concern to all who are new to SwanBank and anyone who feels they may have fallen through the cracks.

We are also incredibly blessed to have representatives of many different countries attending SwanBank. Some people do not have any family members around and so being a part of our SwanBank family really matters. I'd love us to think about how we ensure we are continually getting to know our newer members and am open to ideas on additional steps we can take to do this.

The first idea I had is to hopefully arrange a lunch following one of the morning services, and maybe a tea (evening meal - I'm a northerner!) before an evening service, for anyone who would value the opportunity to share in a meal with their SwanBank Christian family. Giving an opportunity to get to know people a bit better and build relationships. If this is something you would value coming to please let me know, drop me an email at lynnieloodle@hotmail.com

To finish, I only know a small number of people at SwanBank. It can be quite overwhelming when you come alone and don't know people. I'd love it if you (all ages!) would introduce yourself to me please.

Lynne Dorricott



Whitehill
Methodist Community Church

Whitehill Road, Kidsgrove, ST7 4TR

Flower Festival

A Week in the life of the Church



FRIDAY 10TH JULY 2PM TO 8PM

SATURDAY 11TH JULY 10AM TO 4PM

Sunday Services 10.30am and 6pm

Refreshments available on Friday and Saturday – Tea, Coffee, Sandwiches and Cakes

15 Groups showcasing their activities in Flowers

Regular Activities at SwanBank

Sunday

Sunday Services at 9am, 10:30am and 6:15pm.
Sunday Night Young Adults – Fellowship Rm, 8-9pm.

Monday

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

Tuesday

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

Wednesday

Friends in Fellowship – Fellowship Rm, 10 -12noon
Community Lounge/Foodbank – Lower Hall, 2-4pm
The Edge (School years 7-11) – 7 -8:30pm (*term time only*). See Nick Jeffries for details

Thursday

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

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.
One Step Forward (Men's Walking Group) – (2pm on 2nd Saturday *every other month*). See Matt Nixon for details.

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

One for the Road...

SONGS OF LAUGHTER, LEARNING AND LEAVING
WITH RUTH JEFFRIES AND PETER SHONE

Friday 3rd July 2026
at 7pm

Tickets just £5
(includes an interval ice-cream!)

The Village Church
Outclough Lane
Brindley Ford



Tickets are available from Gillian Carey -
Mobile No. 07886 354774



SWANBANK NOTICEBOARD



Fairtrade Stall

There will be a Fairtrade stall open at Church on Sunday 7th July at 10am and 12noon. Please bring along cash as card payments are not possible.

Mid-Week Service

The Stoke-on-Trent Mission Circuit hold a mid-week service at **Whitehill Methodist Community Church** (Whitehill Road, Kidsgrove, ST7 4DS) every Wednesday starting at 10:15am.

All are welcome!

1st July - TBA

8th July – Martyn Leech

15th July – Sarah Gidman

22nd July - Pastor Lynn Tindale

29th July – Ann Worthington



SCAN ME!

TO HELP US TO KEEP YOUR CHILD SAFE AND TO PROVIDE THE BEST EXPERIENCE WE CAN, PLEASE SCAN THE QR CODE AND REGISTER THEIR DETAILS WITH US

These details will be securely held, according to our data policy which you can find on the website www.swanbank.org.uk

Unique Refreshments Co-ordinator Opportunity!



Every Sunday we provide refreshments after each of our services with the help of a fantastic group of volunteers. It would be great if someone could step forward to organise the rotas of the refreshment teams. To learn more please speak to **Shirley** if you feel this is something you would like to do.

shirley@swanbank.org.uk

Wednesday Volunteering

We are often very busy in the building and at our reception door on Wednesdays. Could you offer the occasional 2 or 3 hours of time to help out?

For more information, please speak to **Liz** who will explain what might be involved.

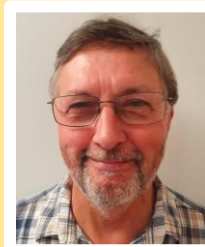
Gateway Coffee Morning

The next Gateway Coffee Morning in Goldenhill is on **Saturday 11th July** (10am till 12 noon). All are welcome!



Church Events or Articles for the Magazine

If there are any church groups or events (at SwanBank 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**



Past issues can be also found at <https://www.swanbank.org.uk/newsletter/>

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 or



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

Issue No. 33



Safeguarding is an important part of the work we do at SwanBank. Here are a few contact details if you have any concerns or need guidance or help.




The **Methodist Church** 

Safeguarding Contacts

Emergency contacts

Police 999

Local Authority Stoke on Trent
Safeguarding
SOT Child Office hrs 01782235100
SOT Adult Office hrs 08005610015
Out of hrs child & adult 01782234234 


Helplines

Police non-emergency ... 101
NSPCC 0808 800 5000
Childline 0800 1111
Action on Elder Abuse ... 0808 808 8141
Family Lives 0808 800 2222
National Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 2000 247
Samaritans 116 123

Reporting safeguarding concerns, help and guidance

Church/Circuit Safeguarding Officer

Shirley Brooks - Circuit & Swan Bank Adult
E: shirley@swanbank.org.uk

Dan Moore - Swan Bank Children & Young People
E: admin@swanbank.org.uk
T: 01782 575129 

Minister in Pastoral Charge


Kathryn Stephens
Ruth Jeffries
E: admin@swanbank.org.uk

Regional Officer for Safeguarding

Thomas Simm
E: SimmT@methodistchurch.org.uk

Local Authority - Staffs/Newcastle

Adult Safeguarding
Staffs/Newcastle 03456042719
Emergency Out of hrs 03456042886

Child Safeguarding
Staffs/Newcastle 08001313126 

Information about safeguarding in the Methodist Church

Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for the Methodist Church
www.methodist.org.uk/safeguarding

Location of church/circuit safeguarding policy:

Church notice board in foyer & Noticeboard In Office

Somewhere to make a few notes (or to release your inner doodler!)