

METHODIST WESLEY PLACE MESSENGER

Spring 2012 - Volume 2 Issue 10



Welcome to the Spring Issue of the Messenger

A Letter to the Christians at Wesley Place in the style of the Apostle Paul

From Marian, a servant of Christ Jesus, called by God to preach the good news: I write to all of you at Wesley Place, whom God loves and has called to follow Jesus. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you and I remember you in my prayers. In the time that I have been with you, almost half a year, I have been encouraged by your commitment; your willingness to use your time, energy and skills to serve God through this church and in many community organisations. As I use the vestry as my base in Alsager, I see there are many people who work quietly, behind the scenes to ensure that this church is warm, clean and well maintained, a place worthy of the God we serve. Because they are not often in the limelight, we don't always appreciate them as we should; without them and their work, the church would be a poorer place.

There are those who undertake more public roles, so necessary for an organisation like the Church to function and, for these people, we give thanks to God.

Within the church family are those who have given faithful service over many years who, now, feel that they have less energy than before and are not able to take as active a part as previously but whose life of care and prayer is as strong as ever. For these people, we express to God our deep gratitude.

There are older people, young families, young people and children beginning their faith

journey; there are those who look to those of a maturer faith for an example and encouragement. There are those of us who are older who look to the younger members admiring their enthusiasm and passion. Together we explore what it means to trust in God, to be loved unconditionally and to respond to the call of Jesus to follow him.

For all the church family, for all the experience, skills, gifts, talents, energy and enthusiasm offered to God and committed to God's work, we give thanks.

Now, my sisters and brothers, as I have been asked to reflect on my time here, there are some things that trouble me, things that I have been asking myself questions about . . .

So much time, energy and commitment is expended in so many ways by so many people, it's a busy church with busy people and I'm reminded of the gospel writers who tell of a family in Bethany, just over the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem. Martha, Mary and their brother. Lazarus, provided a place for Jesus to relax. I can imagine him kicking off his sandals, having his hot, dusty feet washed and breathing a sigh of relief after a day of walking. Martha was the one who fed him, who, perhaps, did his washing and, maybe, cared for the disciples who were far from home as well. She was busy, occupied with her many tasks. Mary, on the other hand, put down whatever she was doing when Jesus arrived then, sat at his feet, listened to his every word. Jesus was obviously comfortable in their presence and Martha even had a moan at him about how she felt that her sister wasn't pulling her weight. Surprisingly, perhaps, Jesus

responded that Mary had chosen the better part (Luke 10: 38 - 42).

I wonder if the story is told to remind us that we need 'balance'. Methodists have always been people who were prepared to 'get stuck in', to get involved, to 'do' and that's good, yet, if we are to find a balance we need to learn to 'be'. As in every place that the church has asked me to go, there are people here who take on too much . . . and others who let them! Perhaps it's easier to be Martha than it is to be Mary. How do we achieve the balance within ourselves?

Wesley Place is a good place to be, with so many talented people, so much commitment and, as I reflect after being with you for a few months, I hope that, when spring comes, there will be an opportunity for small groups of people to go away for a Quiet Day and reflect on life, the universe, God and everything!

I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Peace!

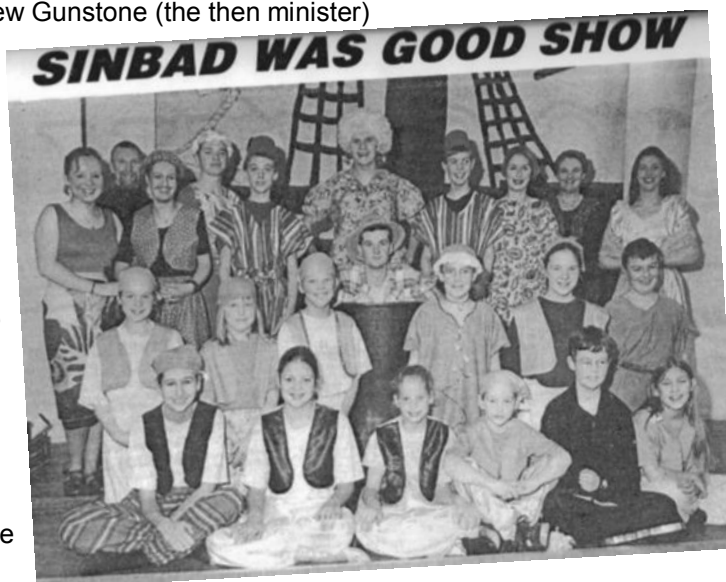
Marian



The Wesley Place Pantomime Tradition

In 1992, when Andrew Gunstone (the then minister)

asked me to put on a pantomime at Wesley Place, I had little idea that this one-off production was to become part of the Wesley Place scene, and an eagerly awaited event brightening up the winter gloom. Since then, we have explored the repertoire of English pantomime, from favourites such as Aladdin, Jack and the Beanstalk, Snow White, to lesser known ones such as Robin Hood and Rumpelstiltskin. During this time, no less than 3 erstwhile members of cast have gone into the theatre professionally. This year, WPAC, supplemented by a number of very well known faces whose age does not qualify them to belong to WPAC, will be staging Sinbad the Sailor on 9th and 10th March. Please book the dates now!!



But why pantomime? A pantomime is a fairy tale for both children and grown-ups. It is a topsy-turvy world where the principal boy is a girl, and the dame is a man. It does not matter if the giant is only 5 foot tall, the ghost is obviously a young child in a night-shirt, or an old man is a young girl festooned with a long beard. It does not matter if the dancing girls are heavy footed, or the scenery occasionally falls down on the players. In short, it is ideal material for amateur productions, and for young people. It is best suited not to the glitzy professional productions, but when the cast are known to the audience and the jokes are in-jokes. This is why it has become part of the Wesley Place tradition, and has drawn packed houses for the last 20 years. It is also something that brings Wesley Place together, young and old, all sharing in the fun.

After 20 years at the helm, I feel the time has come to draw the final curtain on my role as producer, and pass the mantle on to someone younger. This is one reason why I have chosen Sinbad for this year's performance, as it was always one of my favourites. It was last staged at Wesley Place in 1995: see how many faces you can recognise in the photo (which appeared in the Chronicle).

Job Vacancies - Messenger

Two vacancies have arisen in the Messenger team.

Post 1: Someone is needed to be the 'chair' of the editorial team, arranging meetings, chairing meetings and co-ordinating the articles. Skills needed are, some organisational ability, an ability to supervise meetings and encourage a very dedicated and able team.

Post 2: Someone is required to assemble the magazine and arrange transfer to the printers. Computer skills are needed along with a computer, and experience of using a DTP program would be a distinct advantage.

The posts will be available from 20th of May 2012, although it would be helpful for prospective volunteers to attend the previous month's planning meetings.

If you are interested, please see Andrew Tyrell or Steve Hancock as soon as possible.

Services @

Wesley Place

4th March

10:30am - Mr Paul Jackson
6:30pm - Mrs Bronwen Degg

11th March

10:30am - Rev'd M Jones
(Holy Communion)
6:30pm - Mr Mike Valentine

18th March

10:30am - Rev'd Jim Needham
(Family Service)
6:30pm - @ URC

25th March

10:30am - Rev'd M Jones
6:30pm - Rev'd M Jones
(Holy Communion)

1st April

10:30am - Mrs Bronwen Degg
6:30pm - Mrs Wendy Whittaker-
Large
(Alternative Worship)

8th April - Easter Day



8:00am - Rev'd M Jones
(Holy Communion)
10:30am - Rev'd M Jones
(Holy Communion / Family Service)
6:30pm - Miss Joyce Owen

15th April

10:30am - Mrs Hilda White
6:30pm - @ URC

22nd April

10:30am - Mr Ian White
6:30pm - Rev'd M Jones
(Holy Communion)

29th April

10:30am - Mrs Susan Taylor
6:30pm - @ Nantwich

6th May

10:30am - Miss Joyce Owen
6:30pm - Mrs Hilda White

13th May

10:30am - Rev'd M Jones
(Holy Communion)
6:30pm - Rev'd Kim Stilwell

20th May

10:30am - Rev'd M Jones
6:30pm - @ URC

27th May

10:30am - Rev'd M Jones
(Family Service)
6:30pm - Rev'd M Jones

THANK YOU!

Very many thanks to those who came to help make or distribute the Christingles this Christmas. It was lovely to see so many people and particularly nice to see so many faces that would normally only be seen on a Sunday morning! Thank you all again for making it such an enjoyable thing to do.

Also a special thank you to the Co-operative who so generously donated the oranges for the event.

Harriet Crompton



Fairtrade Fortnight, 27 February – 11th March.



Fairtrade Fortnight provides a national focus on all things Fairtrade. Major retailers and supermarkets will be promoting Fairtrade products in all of their variety. In 2010 the Fairtrade movement celebrated nearly 3,000 new farmers and miners becoming Fairtrade certified – from Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, Kenya and China – through the launch of gold, pulses and vegetables carrying the FAIRTRADE Mark for the first time. Fairtrade in the UK is now worth a staggering £1 billion which represents a fantastic achievement. But this has to be seen in context. Tesco alone has a weekly turnover of about £1 billion – the same as the whole UK Fairtrade market for a whole year! Fairtrade efforts

have made a difference but there is still so much more that can be done.

Of course Alsager is a Fairtrade Town, and Fairtrade Fortnight will be marked in Alsager as usual by a number of events giving everyone an opportunity to support Fairtrade.

One of the early Fairtrade products was coffee. At that time only a very few varieties were available and unfortunately the quality of Fairtrade coffee was not very good. However, a recent survey of the Fairtrade coffee available from one of our major supermarkets revealed almost 50 products including numerous types of instant, ground and even beans.

On Saturday March 3rd a Fairtrade Coffee Tasting is planned at the Alsager Community Church. Visitors will be able to sample a variety of different Fairtrade coffees. Cakes, jams and other goodies made with Fairtrade ingredients will be on sale. For tea drinkers Fairtrade tea will be represented by several types and blends.

As usual Fairtrade Fortnight will direct attention to local schools some of which will be hosting their own Fairtrade events. Schools will be invited to enter a competition for the best design of a Fairtrade Mug (or T-shirt) with the winning designs to be made into real products. The Alsager Fairtrade Banner designed by pupils from Alsager School will be hung outside the Civic Centre..

Finally, the Ladies Circle are planning a Fairtrade Coffee morning on March 10th.

These are the Architect's computer drawings of the suggested changes to the front of church. At the meeting after the service on the 22nd January, the feeling of the meeting was overwhelmingly favourable and it was agreed to ask the Church council to look into taking it forward.



Where Are They Now?



Some of you may remember Lindsey Riley who was Lindsey Heeks. We are pleased to publish the following article which is very topical, where she explains what she has been up to.

I left Alsager in 1987 when I graduated from Nottingham University. After a few years as a manager at Sainsburys I realised that Food Retail was not for me and moved over to the heady world of.....tax!

This means whenever I come home and go to Wesley Place and the sermon refers to Tax Collectors I see members of the congregation turning to look at me ! Yes we are as popular as Traffic Wardens and the plague-but we do perform a useful function ...honest!

After several years of tax exams etc

I was promoted to be an Investigating Inspector in the Specialist Investigations Directorate at HMRC. We specialise in combating high level tax avoidance by large corporations and wealthy individuals and also in straight forward (it never is!) tax fraud.

Tax avoidance is where companies pay large sums to accountants and solicitors to come up with plans that are legal and which enable them to avoid tax. HMRC will combat this by rewriting the legislation to block legal loopholes or by taking the parties to court and hopefully winning in cases where the legislation has been interpreted by the taxpayer etc contrary to the intention of the legislation.

Fraud is my area of expertise and is harder to explain. It's like an elephant-as an Investigator you

recognise it when you see it! Some of the cases can be incredibly complex, with numerous companies set up on shore and off shore to move profits around. Sometimes it can be very simple such as a £14M yacht bought for a Director and put through company purchases.

I have been out on visits to taxpayers where colleagues in the police and customs would not visit without an armed guard-and my only protection has been my briefcase and a smile. I do find if you assume people are going to behave decently towards you they do tend to. It doesn't stop them from setting fire to their company records to prevent you looking at them though!

As a job it can be incredibly frustrating but on occasion you do feel as if you make a difference in some small way. A lot of people just don't see the relationship between tax and services and consider it's ok to avoid paying tax. If everyone did that there would be no funding for hospitals, roads, police, firemen, libraries etc. You only need to look at the mess the Greek economy is in to see what happens when only a few pay tax .

I do find the job to be incredibly useful at parties. If someone backs me into a corner and is boring me to death I only have to mention what I do for a living and they unaccountably find a reason why they urgently need to be elsewhere! I also need to address a myth-employees of HMRC DO pay tax and no we DON'T get a cut of the tax we bring in. (pity!)



Ian White continues a series of wry looks at life and faith

Easter is the centre of our faith. It is the promise, the hope and essence of what we believe as Christians.

Without the empty tomb, the resurrection appearances and the new life given to his followers (including us) we would be left with the fripperies with which the world views Easter.

The pancakes are behind us now. I'm pleased and a little relieved about that. Not only do I not like pancakes, I think I may have a morbid fear of them. It all results from an incident many years ago. So long ago was it that I was a cub scout. It must have been pancake day or similar and various cubs were tossing pancakes. Before we knew it Akela was shouting. Who had landed a pancake on the ceiling? I must say immediately that it wasn't me.

But a sense of guilt is sometimes transferable and you feel culpable even when you are not - especially if you are 7 or 8. That moment has lived with me. Let's not look back at pancakes please.

Easter eggs are altogether different. A worldly recognition of Easter and I have always treasured them I could use self discipline (often lacking in me these days) and keep my Easter eggs for a long long time.

Some people live in the here and now. "Let's take what we have and use it today." My brother was a bit like that. In fact he was a lot like that. His philosophy was 'Easter eggs are for eating now'. Not unreasonable, but it did mean that when all of his were gone mine were still there. There have been exaggerated stories that I let my Easter eggs go green before I ate them. I don't recall that but treasure and keep them for a long time I certainly did.

Our symbol of Easter is of course not the Easter egg but the empty cross. Whilst many find a crucifix, with the figure of Jesus, to be a useful aid to devotion it doesn't fully reflect the mystery and wonder of the Easter message.

Christ is no longer tied to one place and one time. As Colin Morris once put it, Jesus is in all places, for all times. That is the power and the glory of the Easter message. No number of Easter bunnies, bonnets or eggs can ever begin to touch that truth.

You can't repackage a truth like that. And you don't need to. Easter is the very brand of christianity. The story, the wonder, the glory is not to be stored up for ourselves but is to be shared.

Do we believe what others are telling us or like Thomas do we demand to see, to experience, for ourselves?

Let's look beyond ourselves this Easter to seek to find and share the greatest of news.

Ian White



This year will be the sixth year I have been to Spring Harvest. We used to go to Skegness but found it was rather cold so now we go to Minehead. Minehead is the larger of the two sites and a better atmosphere is created with more people.

Why do I go to Spring Harvest? Where else can you meet with thousands of other like minded people? The great thing is, although everyone is a Christian, everyone comes from different walks of life. Different ages, different jobs, different parts of the country. This creates a great community atmosphere.

The highlight for any trip to Spring Harvest is the worship. There are several options available but the option we always choose is the one spring harvest are most famous for, the Big Top. At Minehead this sees 4000 people gathered together inside a large circus style tent listening to some of the most inspirational modern speakers including: Jeff Lucas, Steve Chalke, Jackie Pullinger and many others. You also get to sing worship songs with the music provided by famous worship leaders including: Graham Kendrick, Tim Hughes and this year I'm looking forward to Vicky Beeching. They don't just play modern worship songs though, last year one of the most powerful moments was singing How Great Thou Art with minimal musical backing. 4000 voices in unison is a very powerful and moving sound.

As well as the worship there are lots of social activities where you can go swimming or join in the early morning jogs around the site. You can also have lots of fun on the fun fair or go to the cinema, bowling or a tree top assault course. You can happily spend the entire week on

site without needing to leave although we usually spend an afternoon off site taking in the beautiful surroundings of the Minehead beach and local moor land.

The mornings are spent in Bible studies with lots of different zones being provided to suit everybody's taste whilst the afternoons are given over to your leisure or you could attend one of the hundreds of seminars and workshops provided. If you are interested in it there is probably a group for it. I find Spring Harvest a real inspiration and always come back with a whole host of new ideas and having my faith refreshed. It is the place where I feel closest to God and it helps me grow my faith and focus my life. I would highly recommend it to everyone, it's a holiday worth doing once in your life as it needs to be seen to be believed.

Daniel Keen



Stationing for Dummies

I don't know whether you watched 'An Island Parish' when The Rev'd David Easton, Methodist Minister on the Isles of Scilly was featured. Although he was much loved by the islanders, when the District Chair arrived from Truro to chair David's 'Invitation Committee' there wasn't a sufficient majority in favour of him staying for a further term. Because of the critical comments about the Methodist Invitation system following that programme, the system has been tweaked. 'An Island Parish' also showed the minister going to see a

new appointment, this time in Aberyswyth. So, how does a church find a minister? What's the process?

It's fairly complicated, so this is a simplified version!



When a circuit is looking for a minister the circuit stewards, in consultation with representatives from the churches looking for a minister prepare a profile. This contains details of the churches – their size, geographical location, distance from the manse, particular emphases and opportunities. It outlines Churches Together groups in the area, details of the manse, schools, hospitals and transport links. By the end of September in the year before the appointment is due, the profile is passed to the District Chair and the District Lay Stationing Representative who, just occasionally, make some amendments in the light of their knowledge of the system. At the same time, ministers looking for an appointment prepare their profile. Both sets of profiles used to be produced in printed form with a yellow cover (known as 'the yellow book') now, however, the profiles are sent by email usually some time in October, but the name has stuck, and circuit stewards and ministers are invited to go through the entries, selecting the six that seem to be a good match (there are somewhere between 70 and 90 entries). There are always more appointments than ministers available.

In November, the Stationing Committee meets to begin the 'matching process'. In our peculiar Methodist way, ministers (now called 'presbyters') are 'stationed' in circuits by the Methodist Conference. At the

Regional Stationing Committee, each District Chair has a list of appointments to be filled in their District, lists of presbyters selected by the Circuit Stewards, a priority list and a list of which Chair (what a silly name! A chair is an inanimate object, created to be sat upon.) has first pick! The process is repeated in December and January until each presbyter has a circuit to visit.

At relatively short notice, a date is arranged for the presbyter to visit the circuit and to meet representatives of the churches for conversation. This is an opportunity to see or 'feel' whether this seems the right place to be. Following the meeting, the circuit's Invitation Committee decides whether or not to issue an invitation and the presbyter has a couple of days to decide if this is the right place to be.

This process can be repeated until all presbyters have been 'stationed' but no appointment can be confirmed until the Methodist Conference in June.

The Methodist year ends on August 31st and presbyters begin their new appointments on September 1st.



If no presbyter is available, some churches look to appoint a Lay Worker or a Supernumerary Presbyter, i.e. someone retired, to fill a gap . . . so you're landed with me for this Methodist year!

Marian

Church Family Committee News

The Church Family Committee has been busy with outline plans for social events in Spring and Summer.

BREAKFASTS

We would like to continue with breakfasts before the family services and offers to organise one or help out would be wonderful Please see one of the stewards if you can offer support. There will be an Easter Sunday Breakfast, once again at at 9.00 am. Many people appreciate the opportunity to spend time with the church family on this special day.

CARNIVAL AND JUBILEE

Summer is always busy at Wesley Place but this year we have even more to plan for. We need ideas and offers of help and support for the Alsager Carnival, the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations, the Church Celebrations, the Olympic s and the Summer Holiday Club. Not much to ask is it?

We know that many of you join in with the Carnival and Church Celebration events and even more support those who are taking part. The current thinking is that we include the Church Celebration in the Jubilee planning in some way since they take place around the same time.

JUBILEE

There will be an open meeting for anyone interested in the planning of the Jubilee events. Some ideas

have been put forward to fit in with local and national initiatives such as a workshop for the people of Alsager to come and make bunting to put up in the town, a lunch on Sunday 3rd of June to coincide with the national 'Big Lunch' initiative [We hope we will have our own Adventurers Queen and retinue in attendance] and opening the church to show the BBC Jubilee concert on the 4th. If you have any other ideas or suggestions, or would like to be part of the organising group, please keep an eye on the pew leaflet for contacts. We would welcome new people who would like to get involved.

CARNIVAL

The theme for the carnival is 'Films' We had to opt for a film for our float entry early in February to ensure we got our first choice. Hopefully some

of you made suggestions to help us choose after the pew leaflet appeal. There is a lot of work needed to make it happen. We have a very able team comprising of the Marshalls, Tyrells, and McKies but they need others to help with the multitude of organisational and practical tasks.

HOLIDAY CLUB

We are pleased to say that we will be hosting a Summer Holiday Club for 5 -11 year olds from 23rd – 27th July It will run each morning between 10 and 12 am.

All the things that we do socially to promote friendship and fellowship within our church are open to everyone and all ideas and offers of help and support are welcomed and appreciated. Please don't feel you cannot get involved. Lastly don't forget to invite your friends.



Bibles being Stamped

Raising funds for the Bible Society takes many forms, but this is a photo

of a Stamp Party which was held to sort and process stamps collected from the Christmas appeal.

One of the party-goers commented afterwards,

"We all had a good chat, drinks and cake and trimmed and sorted several hundred used postage stamp to go to Bible Society".



Church and Charity



As a church we are responsible for the upkeep of a couple of students through COPA in the Dominican Republic. We often have our favourite charities and many of us support a range of charities on a regular basis. In these times of financial difficulties, here are a few charities with which members of our church are fully involved:



It started in a stable - not in Bethlehem, but in one of London's poorest slums. It was in Lambeth in 1869, a Methodist Minister, Thomas Stevenson turned a disused stable into a home for orphans and abandoned children.

In 2012, 143 years later, they continue to care and support children, young people and their families. It is sad that this work is still needed.

Action For Children, which began its life named The National Children's Home, now offers a wide range of innovative services. They work with over 52,000 children and young people of all ages on 425 projects across the UK. As well as Outreach Work in homes, the services include Adoption, Fostering, Family Support Services and Specialist Schools.

Locally, we support with our fundraising "The Staffordshire Shared Care Project", which provides a range of respite services for children and young people with disabilities, residential short breaks for children and young people aged 8 to 17 years old. Also one to one support to enable children and young people to access leisure activities in the community, youth clubs and group activities.

To enable Action For Children to continue this valuable work, they need our continued support.

An invitation to everyone who wants to learn more about Christian Aid, the way it works and what it does to attend a Road Show presented by



the N.W. staff at St. Mary's Church, Alsager on Tuesday 7th February 2012 6pm - 9pm.

Food will be provided, so for catering purposes please ring the Warrington office 01925 573 769, your church rep. Christine Harper 877595 or Margaret Snowdon 873504 to book a place.

Alsager Ladies' Lifeboat Guild 1953-2012



The Royal National Lifeboat Institution was founded in 1824. Today it provides a 24 hour search and rescue service up to 100 nautical miles from the coast of the UK, Ireland, Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, on the tidal reaches of the River Thames and on selected inland waterways. Plus a seasonal lifeguard service on appropriate beaches.

Alsager Ladies' Lifeboat Guild, founded in 1953, raised an average of £9,500 a year over the last five years and in 2011 our contribution was £12,000. Seven of our members have been awarded badges for long and loyal service. On two occasions, namely our 40th anniversary and the 175th anniversary of the founding of the RNLI, Congleton Borough Council gardeners designed a floral display in Milton Gardens, Crewe Road in the shape of the Lifeboat badge. In 1974 this Guild was represented at a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the RNLI. A legacy left by our former Vice Chairman was used to build a new boat house for the Appledore lifeboat in Devon where there is a commemorative plaque for all visitors to see.

Our annual fundraising consists of a Coffee Morning, House to House Collection, sale of RNLI goods at the Carnival and Charity Market, a Supermarket Collection and an event at the Civic Centre later in the year.

The RNLI is unique in that it is committed to providing the Lifeboat service, which international law demands of Governments, but which is, in our case, manned completely by voluntary crews and receives absolutely no funding from the UK Government.

The RNLI believes that an efficient voluntary service cannot be equalled. There are 4500 volunteer crew members providing 24/7 lifesaving whatever the weather. This work would not be possible without the generosity of the general public. Our member acknowledge with gratitude the loyalty of our supporters in this area, whose help and interest continues to be a great source of encouragement to us in our work.

Edna G Weatherby



Cystic Fibrosis Save the date!



Just when you thought your children or grandchildren were having all the fun – now it's your turn (and you can help raise funds for a very worthy cause too)! Wendy Whittaker-Large and her husband Andy have recently established a Cystic Fibrosis support group in Alsager with the main aim of raising much needed funds for a charity close to their heart – The Cystic Fibrosis Trust. **Alsager Friends of CF** will be hosting a 65 Roses Ball to raise funds on **7th July 2012** at Keele Hall, Staffordshire from 7.30pm to midnight. Having two sons with Cystic Fibrosis has meant a lot of heartache and tears in the ten years since the boys were diagnosed, but has also reminded them how life needs to be celebrated! And they would love to see as many people as possible from Alsager joining them for this event!

Beginning with a fabulous drinks reception followed by a three course meal and coffee, you will then be entertained til midnight with a band, an auction and a raffle! It will be a night not to be missed. Tickets cost £50 each or table of ten for £450 (a saving of £5 per ticket). Could you buy a ticket for a present for someone else if you can't come? See the website for more details www.65rosesball.co.uk or phone Wendy on 01270 882231.



Registered Charity No. 1079049





United Christian Broadcasters is a Christian media ministry within the United Kingdom and Ireland formed to promote the good news of Jesus Christ. Readers may be aware that Barbara Haughton works for the organisation and has submitted this account of their activities.

UCB is one of the largest and most established Christian media charities in the UK with affiliates around the world. We continually strive for excellence and integrity in communicating the reality of life in Jesus Christ in all that we do.

Our vision at UCB is changing lives for good, through the power of God's word.

It all began in 1986 in the borrowed bedroom of a flat in Stoke-on-Trent. In 1987 UCB signed a contract to begin broadcasting for four hours each night on the Isle of Man. Shortly afterwards a terraced house was donated and this became UCB first office building.

During this time Christian broadcasters were unable to apply for National Radio Licences and so in 1993 UCB pursued and acquired National Christian Radio licence through Satellite.

As a special thank you UCB began producing The Word For Today written by Bob Gass to give to our supporters, free of charge. We currently distribute over 3 million

copies of our daily devotional booklet The Word for Today and over half a million of the contemporary version The Word 4U 2Day each year. These booklets aim to encourage you in your everyday life.

In 2004 UCB purchased an additional building in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, which is our Operations Centre and in 2009 UCB applied for, and attained a National DAB licence, enabling UCB to broadcast Christian radio to the whole of the nation. In addition UCB TV is available nationally on Digital Satellite channel 0125. During 2010 UCB launched the world's first mobile Christian TV channel on Yamgo, a mobile service provider.

UCB Prayerline takes thousands of prayer requests each week. Christians and non-Christians can telephone our prayerline and volunteers are ready to pray and listen to anyone with health problems, depression, and all manner of concerns or anxieties.

The Book of Hope communicates the Gospel message to young people of all ages. In 2010 over 830,000 of these free booklets were distributed to schools and churches around the UK.

UCB's LookingforGod.com website has been set up for people who don't know God or where to find him. We have seen amazing results with over 400 people giving their lives to God in 2010.

More details are available from our website www.ucbmedia.co.uk.

If anyone would like to receive a free copy of The Word for Today by post please contact

Barbara Haughton 01782 764973.

Alsager Girlguiding

Girlguiding in Alsager and Rode Heath is very successful with 2 Rainbow units, 4 Brownie packs, 3 Guide units and a Senior Section unit. In order to continue with this success we need extra leaders/helpers to support the existing units, but particularly in the Guide units that meet on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. You can give as much or as little of your time as you want, from a couple of hours a month to a couple of hours a week. No experience is necessary, full training will be given and there is always help and support available from existing leaders.

If you are female aged 18 and above you can be a Leader and make a difference to the young lives of many. We would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to join the adventure please contact 01270 884461 or 878258 for a chat or email girlguidingalsager@gmail.com or find us on www.facebook.com/girlguidingalsager

Teresa Longhurst

CONTACT US

**Wesley Place Methodist Church,
Lawton Road, Alsager, Cheshire.
www.wesley-place.org.uk**

Find us on Facebook! 
Wesley Place Church

**Minister: Rev. Marian Jones
07840 334351
Snr Steward: Geoff White
(01270 872544)**



The Alsager Support Group of St Luke's (Cheshire) Hospice

presents

"A Celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee" In music and song by the U3A Light Orchestra and friends with soloists Gill Barrow and Lynne Evans. It is on Saturday, 17 March at 7.30pm at the Alsager Civic Centre. Tickets are £8 and are available from Glennis Roper or Barbara Haughton or by ringing 01270 872813.



Christmas Tree Festival.

The weekend of 25th-27th November 2011 saw the return of the Christmas Tree Festival to Wesley Place. Timed to coincide with the turning on of the Alsager Christmas Lights, the church was full of people as they gazed at the trees, looked at photographs, listened to music or consumed scores of bacon sandwiches and slices of cake washed down with gallons of tea and coffee.

The overall profit to Wesley Place as things drew to a close was an amazing £1769.24. In addition to this, £209.74 was raised for COPA and £444.59 for the Donna Louise

Trust. None of this would have been achieved without the help of a committed and hard-working team of volunteers who did everything they could to ensure that the weekend was a success, and our thanks must go to all of them.

But was the weekend really the success that it seemed to be? If we only measure success in terms of profit, then yes, it was a huge success. But what about the trees? Did they reflect the fact that for Wesley Place, Christmas is a time when we remember the birth of Christ. We must remember that this once a year occasion to get a large number of people through our doors is also an opportunity to tell them what Christmas is all about. Next



year's festival must be used as a means of ensuring Christ gets put back into Christmas.

Involving the local schools far more and giving preference to charities is one idea that the Christmas Tree committee have decided upon; having a theme for decorating the trees, e.g. to represent Christmas carols, is another. However, ideas from you, the church members are important, so please come forward with them and help to make next year's event even better.



Brownies

During last summer Wesley Place brownies celebrated their fortieth year with a 70's celebration weekend at the guide hall.

The brownies walked to Wesley



place chapel, for a morning of activities, had a fancy dress disco and were joined by past leaders for a birthday party.

A fantastic weekend was had by all.

A big thank you to all our friends who helped to make it so special!

We began our autumn programme with a visit from Amy Longhurst; she had spent the summer in Armenia



with Girl Guiding UK and returned armed with lots of funny stories and Armenian sweets!

As part of our finding your way badge the brownies managed to read those tricky timetables and get us to Crewe and back by bus and train. (a great adventure; we are now thinking about London!)

They have also drawn maps and given directions to local venues. No one got lost and we all managed to find our way to the chip shop at the end of the meeting!

The brownies always love crafty meetings and they really tried hard



with their blanket stitch!

All the trees looked so stunning, it will be hard to better them for next year but we are up for the challenge!

Wesley Place Brownies were very excited to learn their Christmas tree, 'Have a Wesley Christmas', earned second prize at the festival.

Belated 'Happy New Year!' from Wesley Place Brownies

Wesley Place Photo Competition

The photo competition which was run in conjunction with the 'Christmas Tree Festival' was less well patronised than the last, but coming just before Christmas, that is understandable. The standard of entry however was just as high, and we have included the three category winners for your delight and edification.

Oh what a wonderful world

Colin McKie

Spirit of Christmas

Ian Marshall

Winter Wonderland

Doug Bennett

Lent, Holy Week and Easter at Wesley Place

February 22nd 2012

7:30pm Ash Wednesday

Service of Holy Communion

Wednesdays at 7.30pm

February 29th, March 7th, March 14th,

March 21st, March 28th

Exploring Mark's Gospel

April 2nd, 3rd, 4th at 7:30pm

Holy Week Reflections

April 5th

Maundy Thursday

United Service at St Marys

April 6th

Good Friday

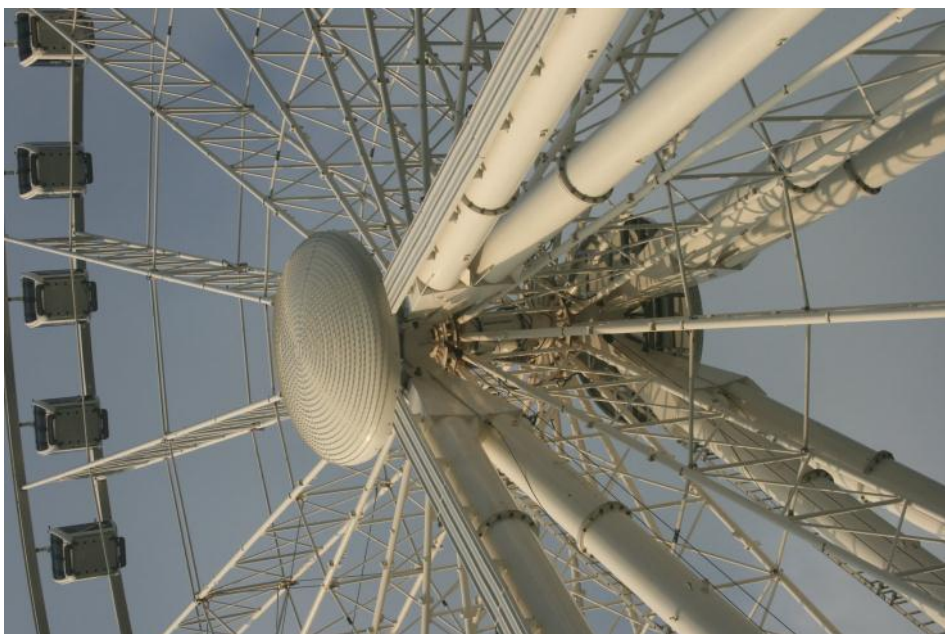
service at 2pm

Easter Day

8am Holy Communion

followed by breakfast

10:30am Family Communion



Summer Messenger - THE DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES IS 22nd April. Please either send your articles to our email address - wpmessenger@live.co.uk, or give your article to one of the editorial team.