



Fulwood Methodist Church
Annual Church Meeting
Monday 7th October 2024
7pm

September 2024

Dear Friends

I am writing to invite all members of Fulwood Methodist Church to attend a short meeting of the General Church Meeting (GCM) on Monday 7th October at 7pm, prior to the full Church Council Meeting at 7.30pm. At this meeting we will appoint the Leadership Meeting Stewards and appointments of members to the Church Council and representatives to the Circuit Meeting.

Our work as a church should be focussed on our Mission of spreading God's love throughout our community and we urge you to be part of that mission.

The Church Council and Leadership Team are pleased to present the following reports of the activities which make up the life of our church at this time. Also attached as a separate document is the audited accounts for 2022/23 which have now been presented to the Charity Commission. Please read the reports and support groups in any way that you feel able. This could be by your prayers, or volunteering to help with some of the activities either on a regular or occasional basis. We are always looking for new ways of reaching out to our community and if you have any suggestions please do bring them to us for consideration by the Church Council.

Margaret Squire
Governance Steward

Church Activity Reports

Pastoral Work

On 28th August 2024 a Pastoral Meeting took place, this included Rev Jane Wild and members of the Pastoral team Denise Johnson and Caroline Hothersall as well as members of the Church Family.

This meeting was an open meeting for all members of the Church Family, to give everyone an opportunity to discuss Pastoral care.

During the course of the meeting, we looked at the list of names of the Church family and identified anyone who may need more care. Many people do belong to different church groups so their absence will be noticed, but other people may slip through the net because they quietly slip out on a Sunday and live alone.

The way we care, in many different ways, was discussed and whether we need to make changes. Pastoral care is a mutual responsibility and a change from a Pastoral visitor with a list.

It was felt that a change in the wording of the notices would remind people of the need to tell the ministry team of concerns. Our Pastoral concerns also support those who come through the doors on the various activities we offer to the community.

We continue to care in many ways and thank everyone who plays their part in the caring of this community.

Sue Penrith

Pastoral Steward

WORSHIP There's something going on!

The Sunday worship stewards and I meet to check on how we are communicating with each other and with the preachers. Sue Salisbury acting as First Contact steward would at the beginning of each quarter contact all the preachers visiting us to let them know what music provision there would be.

We do need more Sunday stewards so if you are interested in helping on a regular basis please contact me.

Taking an over-view of all the opportunities for worship I feel we need to better inform ourselves so that we all know what is on offer and are able to explain to and encourage each other, our friends and newcomers to try some of the different ways we can meet. There is more to the church than Sunday morning worship important though that is.

My suggestion would be to put together a leaflet listing all the possibilities and a brief description of each style of meeting with a personal note from someone who attends each one. There is wonderful work going on and we need to celebrate it, engage with it and support it.

Let us look out!

Mavis Fletcher
Worship Steward

Alternative Church

We've had another fulfilling and enjoyable year. We continue to meet most months at the Black Bull pub, usually on the 3rd Monday (the date is always in the notices). Rev Jane always leads a thought-provoking discussion on either a current topic, bible story or questions to generate a discussion. The group is quite mixed, and we all respect our thoughts and points of view. There is never a right or wrong answer. We enjoy lovely food and fellowship in a relaxed environment. The bonus being you don't have to wash up or tidy up at the end of it. Please join us as it's good fun!!

Wendy Bennett

Christian Aid

During Christian Aid week in May, three churches in Fulwood delivered envelopes that had to be dropped off at 3 possible points in Fulwood - Booths, the Co-op and the PO. The total amount raised by these 3 churches was around £1,500, of which Fulwood Methodist was responsible for £765. The overall figure is a little lower than last year, but much lower than in the past and it also requires a large amount of work. During the year I have tried to alert the leadership team and the general congregation to the fact that we need to find new ways to raise money for Christian Aid's important work and that it is the responsibility of the whole church, and I look forward to receiving more support in raising awareness of and money for Christian Aid.

Anne Garsed

Sunday Club

We are fortunate at Fulwood that numbers in Sunday Club continue to be resilient and there are 57 names on the register although weekly attendance averages about 20; this reflects the attendance pattern of the whole church. We are able to work in different age groups now named: *Seekers* -preschoolers; *Explorers* – Key Stage 1 (4-7 years); *Pathfinders*, Key Stage 2 (7-11 years); *PathfindersPlus*, over 11 years. This year we have also been able to re-establish a group for those at high school led by Ben Philips with support from other leaders. It is however a challenge to find a time which works for this age group. The different groups follow the same theme apart from *PathfindersPlus*, who follow the lectionary. We are grateful to have 10 leaders who are able to lead and support the groups, all of whom have completed DBS (safeguarding)

clearance. We also have one junior leader. Our staffing profile enables us to meet guidelines for best safeguarding practice when working with young people. The commitment and enthusiasm of these leaders is much appreciated.

From September 2023, we have followed the following three themes although the groups use age-appropriate approaches to the work: 'God and me' (Psalm 139), 'Prayer', and 'the Early Church'; in addition, some sessions focus on the major celebrations of the Church eg Christmas and Easter. Where possible we try to launch a new theme at Breakfast Church and then develop it in the Sunday Club sessions and 'Altogether worship' services. The Advent Celebration was again highly successful and involved the whole church family.

This year, we have spent a lot of time improving our publicity and communication strategies and hopefully all our families now receive information via WhatsApp (a closed group), Facebook and general emails. Attractive information is available around the church building and can be sent out to new families. At the end of June, we also introduced 'Forest Church', when we worshipped God in Highgate Woods; feedback about the session has been very positive.

Our challenges for the coming church year are to develop our current publicity so that we are able to provide packs of information for new families and also grow numbers in Seekers (Pre-school children) via targeted publicity to 'Toddlers' and also to families of children who have been baptised. Additionally, we wish to contribute to the provision of creche facilities; this a challenge for the whole church however.

Our overall aim continues to enable children and young people to grow in faith and the knowledge that they are loved by God, they are lovable and they can love and care for others, following the example of Jesus. Sunday Club is a vital part of the whole church and, as always, we rely on your prayers and support.

Janet Wales
Sunday Club Co-ordinator

Messy Church 2024

Our 2023-24 year at Messy Church has been another happy one. Our theme for the year has been looking at special Celebrations within the Church, Harvest, Funerals (remembrance), Baptism, Communion and Weddings. A highlight for me was the Communion meeting, when we designed our own tablecloth for our very large table with our handprints and prayers for each other and the World. We decorated glasses for our drinks and enjoyed a bring and share tea. We followed this with Communion shared around our meal table.

We have celebrated with the Church in Messy Nativity and led a morning Worship as a Messy Church. Our Good Friday Messy Church was well attended and some of the Friday Toddlers joined us.

There are some slight changes to our planning for 2024/25, we are going to run on the third Tuesday of each month beginning in October and our theme will be based on selected ideas from the Methodist Way of Life programme.

We have welcomed Olivia Parkinson on to our team which is great and Hope Wild has helped us when she is around. Thanks to all the team for their support and ideas and to all those who remember us in their prayers. Please encourage any families that might enjoy our style of meeting together to join us. Look out for our adverts!

Delma Whitman

Youth and Family Work Report

Escape is now running with an attendance of 25/30 youngsters of mixed age, we will evaluate in Sept/Oct to see if there is a need to open the older Youth group again.

3generate - we have six youngsters' attending the full weekend and about four going on the Saturday for the 4–7-year-old session.

Puppets – Lunchtime session is working well at Ribbleton Avenue. The group take part in school assemblies.

WLTD0 (Who Let The Dads Out) is going well, even though numbers are small the importance of men getting together and talking is essential and one of the objectives of the group.

Nice Human Beings (11+ youth group) meets monthly and is run by Ben and me with a wide range of sessions offered, we have solved murders, rapped with Lindsay, played bonkers games, and eaten lots of food.

Breakfast Church runs every 6-8 weeks and usually starts the new theme for Sunday Club, we share breakfast, do craft, a quiz and have a reading and this is open to all.

Connexions is our new Sunday morning gathering again open to all and we take a bible passage chat about it, answer questions, and build with Lego whilst having coffee and pastries.

Toddler group is very busy and in September we celebrated our 60th birthday with a Teddy Bears Picnic.

Uniformed organisations are all doing well, and I have regular contact with them to see how there doing and visit them when the opportunity arises.

A full programme of summer activities were well received again this year.

Darren Arnold
Circuit Youth, Children's & Family Worker.

WOW

The WOW ladies have continued to keep in touch mainly via WhatsApp during the year. We have met once so far for an evening of pottery painting which was lovely for us to catch up. We also support some church events with coordinating raffle prizes. We are quite good at hampers. Although we don't see each other on a regular basis we are always there if we need support.

Wendy Bennett

AM Club

The AM Club is named due to it's meeting time at 10:30on alternate Tuesdays. After breaking off for the Summer we resumed on the 10th September and over the winter we will be providing a variety of different and interesting speakers.

We recognise that the time restricts people who are still in employment but there is no lower age limit to joining us on a regular or occasional basis. We start to assemble from 10 o'clock with tea and biscuits. Feel free to just turn up or speak to Ray Armstrong, Roy Smith or Dave Topping for information.

Dave Topping

Friends at Fulwood (formerly Tuesdays@Two)

The group began in 2021 after the Covid restrictions were lifted with the joining together of the Ladies' After 8 group and the Women's Fellowship and we now meet on alternate Tuesday afternoons at 2pm. We began life as the Tuesday@Two group but this summer we have decided a more appropriate name would be Friends at Fulwood. We welcome all to our meeting but especially the ladies of the church who we hope will find an interesting programme throughout the year. Many of our speakers have been members or friends of our church who have come to give us an insight into their life stories, friendships and connections with Fulwood over the years. We continue with our programme this winter with different speakers, members meeting and a

Christmas Communion. As always our meetings end with a chat and a cuppa, so please come along and learn a bit more about our Friends at Fulwood!

Knitting Group

What a great year for our knitting group, new friends have joined us, and our group gets larger all the time.

We have been very busy with lots of projects and we are sure you will all remember the magnificent Christmas tree outside the front door last year! It survived the rain, is clean and packed away ready to be used again this year. We also knitted Christmas ornaments for the tree as gifts for our wider community and most of those were taken.

We have knitted everything you can imagine to cover a chocolate orange: from robins, emojis, minions, rabbits and pumpkins to name a few. Look out for our latest Christmas project in about November. We did our normal poppies for Remembrance Day and the post office on Garstang Road asked if they could have some to sell. We made over 300 and a good profit, half of which was sent to the British Legion. We are well on with this year's supply!!

Baptismal blankets were made for all the children who have been baptised in our church and they seem to be very much appreciated. We've made hearts for RPH and very recently answered their request for squares so that their "blanket fairies" can make blankets for very poorly people.

In all of this activity, members still have time for their own projects and donations of wool just keep on arriving!!! This is all put to good use, and we have helped out a group of Afghan ladies to get a knitting group started.

We have been fortunate enough to give donations to Tender Nursing Care and Rosemary and Time and considerable sums to church to help with increasing costs.

Church council asked if we would like to name the next charity for the £1000 donation. We couldn't decide between Rosemary and Time and Tender Nursing Care, so we asked for £500 each. They are both small local charities and our church has kindly decided to give them £1000 each. We were delighted.

So, if you have a spare couple of hours on a Thursday afternoon pop along. Knitting is definitely not a requirement as there is plenty of chatting and a nice cup of tea.

Jan and Veronica

Book Club

The Book Club has continued to meet regularly over the last twelve months and has a full programme planned for the next twelve months. We meet on a Tuesday evening, at 7.00pm, in the Cedar Room and usually we are around 12 in number. New members occasionally join us and we hope we make them very welcome.

Our aim is not to demonstrate our literary talents, if any, but rather to use books as a way of engaging with each other, to enjoy each other's company and to broaden our horizons. Just occasionally, our reading and discussion is illuminated by our faith or even serves to add to it. Oh, we also enjoy consuming chocolate biscuits and even cater for the vagaries of alternative diets.

This coming year we have once again consulted with each other to devise a programme which caters for the wide variety of readers in our group. Different types of books, different topics and tastes add to the fun. In addition, we ask people to tell us of other books which their current reading brings to mind, to provoke memories and to stimulate wider reading. It is interesting, to say the least, not knowing what will emerge every time we meet.

Each year, one session is taken with a discussion about the Bible book chosen by The Methodist Church for wider reading in the Connexion. This past year it was the Book of Genesis and the Rev Jane Wild helped us to explore some of the wider themes of the book and some of the techniques by those who generated the text we now know. We will know the book for next year shortly.

The programme for this year is now available in the Willow Grove.

Ken Wales

Welcome Wednesday

Welcome Wednesday has been running now for 13 years. It has been a huge success. We have welcomed many people through our doors and new friendships have been made. Support has been given and overall it expresses its title to welcome all to our church community.

However, things change and since Covid we have had to rethink our service. Also, we are struggling to operate with fewer volunteers, especially cooks and helpers. This is mainly due to age, illness and bereavement of our once well supported staff, valuable members of our team. The ethos of Welcome Wednesday is about caring and sharing, opening our doors to everyone. This takes commitment, if we are to show our love in a practical way. Although we do not provide the lunches we once did, we do a very good Brunch!! Coffee, Scones, Bacon and Sausage Butties, Soup etc and excellent Fruit Crumbles – all at a very reasonable price.

Our New 2 You stall provides a wonderful recycling facility and a much-needed income for our further afield outreach, having taken something like around £6,000 pounds last year alone.

Please spread the news and consider volunteering to help manage Welcome Wednesday.

Anytime would be very much appreciated and a rewarding activity to do.

Edna Armstrong

Farmers' Market

The Farmers' Markets continue on the 4th Saturday of January, March, May, July, September and November each year; with the New to You stall now opening at the same time. There is a dedicated following of people from the local area, though footfall varies from market to market and within the timespan of each market. There is generally a very nice atmosphere which stallholders and visitors alike appreciate. The kitchen is generally busy and the volunteers there are much appreciated. The refreshments take quite a lot of money for the church, backed up by the stall fees. The role of youth club in setting out tables on Friday night is invaluable, but more help would be appreciated in packing tables and chairs away at the end, as all of us are getting a little older.

Anne Garsed

Community Choir

We meet on a Wednesday evening in the Cedar room at 7pm during school term times. Our songs are based on a wide range from Musicals of the 60's 70's and 80's along with some traditional tunes. We do not take ourselves too seriously and it is more important to be able to enjoy the company than have a fine singing voice. There are usually anywhere between 12 and 20 including some from outside of the church family. All are welcome, just turn up.

Dave Topping

Uniformed Organisations

4th Fulwood Scout Group

Following on from the success of last year, it has been great to see each section continue to provide a fantastic and memorable experience for all our young people within the group. From section evenings to days out and district/county events and camps, there has been lots of variety, which has provided an action-packed adventure.

This year we welcomed back our Family Camp which was held at Waddecar. The Camp was an action packed, fun filled weekend and all families who took part had a fantastic time. There was

lots of activities and bases on offer and parents were also able to participate in all the activities on offer, such as: Archery, Canoeing, Kayaking and many more! The weather was also fantastic, which made the weekend even better! The camp was organised by Ketran, section leader with the Squirrels, who did an excellent job of planning, organising and leading the camp and I'd like thank Ketran for putting together such a memorable weekend.

Also returning this year, was Red Rose 2024. This was a special camp to celebrate 50 years of Scouting within West Lancs. The week-long camp, held at its usual location at Westmoreland Showground in Cumbria, hosted around 3,000 Scouts. We as a group were proud to take part, with 3 of our newly invested Scouts, who have only just moved up from Cubs attending for the full week, led by myself and the Preston District contingent. They had a fantastic and memorable experience taking part in all of what Red Rose had to offer, from adrenaline, aqua and culture trips out around the country. The Beavers and Cubs also joined us for a two-night mini's camp, participating in the Mission to Mars theme and getting involved in all the onsite activities. We were also joined by the Squirrels on the Wednesday to take part in all the fun!

The group currently has 75 young people, which is a slight increase from last year. It is fantastic to see the group growing and thriving, providing the skills and opportunities for all our young people to enjoy. Our waiting list also is beginning to fill up with those awaiting their new adventure and we aim to provide a place as quickly as possible.

The Trustee Board has continued to meet and approve big expenditure as well as liaise with the Group Lead volunteer as to where support is needed within the group. We continue to give thanks to the Church for providing us with a safe environment for our sections to meet and are grateful for the storage space we are able to use too. The leaders of our group are all awesome volunteers. Some are around every week, some less, but we value and thank them for the time and effort they put in every week.

Dave Ryan

4th Fulwood Group Scout Leader

39th Preston (Fulwood Methodist) Guide Group

Rainbows

At the end of the summer term we had 8 Rainbows. We have had several applications for places in September and hope our numbers will rise to 11 girls then.

After several years of invaluable help and support Charlotte Harrison left to go to university. We are very grateful for all that she did for us. We have been extremely fortunate to have Olivia Parkinson join us as a Young Leader. Her enthusiasm and commitment is a great asset to our unit. We thank Susan Parkinson for enabling her to attend and also for supporting a cinema trip. Alice Wright, the daughter of our adult leader, Lisa, has also joined us as a junior unit helper. We look forward to her making a greater contribution to our unit as she gets older.

This year we have achieved badges on the themes of colours, first aid and awareness of pollution in seas and oceans. We have had 2 cinema trips organised by Girlguiding. Lisa and Becky, a Brownie leader, have recently taken a group of Rainbows to the Sea Life Centre in Blackpool by train.

Members of the church leadership team have joined us at Easter and Christmas to lead sessions reflecting on the significance of these Christian festivals. We appreciate their input and we hope to continue this tradition.

We would be very pleased to receive enquiries from parents/carers of girls aged 3 and over.

Jayne Myatt

Rainbow Leader

News from the Brownies

This year has been as busy as ever in Brownies. Two of our adult leaders went off to university over the summer but Isabelle Hibberd has joined us as a Young Leader.

In September 2023, 10 of our girls enjoyed a Wild West Day at Silver Sapling campsite in Silverdale. They did lots of outdoor activities despite the rain causing an early finish. The church minibus was used and enabled the girls to get home without getting too wet (well, some of the girls anyway).

October saw all 26 of us at the Owl and Birds of Prey centre with the Guides. The Kookaburra was very noisy, but the rest of the birds apparently decided not to sing/hoot. Nevertheless, the girls were allowed to stroke one owl, and this was the highlight of the evening especially for the two girls who were enrolled on site.

We filled 22 Christmas boxes in November and had a tombola stall at the Christmas Farmer's Market (with the Rainbows). During the term we completed lots of activities towards the Brownie Programme and the term ended with a trip on the Santa Special steam train and a Christmas disco with the Rainbows. We had a guest visitor to do the Local History badge with the girls and celebrated Burns' Night with a bagpiper. We completed the "Know Myself" theme by Easter, with science activities and construction work after our "Circus Skills Sleepover" at half term in February. Since Easter we have had a Brownie Holiday at Waddecar with plenty of outdoor activities and not much rain, we had a dance challenge with Mr Smith, a music night with Mr Bird and a "Sporty Saturday at UCLan Sports Arena with Rainbows, Guides and Rangers. We also had a visit from our own minister and two other people to talk about different jobs and 28 of our girls completed their Jobs badge. We are currently at capacity with 30 girls.

Diane Bird
Brownie Leader

Guides and Rangers

Over the past school year 39th Preston (Fulwood Methodist) have completed a wide range of activities and gained badges. Below is a list of some highlights from the Guides and Rangers meetings last year.

Guides: Autumn/Winter 2023

We completed a variety of different seasonal activities including looking at constellations, Halloween activities and making handmade items over the course of 6 weeks to sell at the Church's Christmas market. The Guides also worked on their campaigning badges where they picked a cause to support and researched into it, we finished this off later in the spring.

Spring 2024

The Guides completed 2 different challenge badges in the unit meetings. The first one completed was Girl Power in partnership with Electricity NorthWest which involved looking at energy production and renewable energy where they got to make lights work out of potatoes and wires, as well as generating static electricity. They also completed a badge called Sea Savers in partnership with Sea Life where they looked at the ocean and pollution, in one meeting they made ocean animals out of plastic waste from their homes. We also made Easter Eggs out of coloured chocolate.

Summer 2024

The summer weather meant we could spend more time outside, we went to local parks to play wide games and walked round the local area completing one of the activities towards a badge. The Guides went on a couple of events outside the meeting place, they went to watch Inside Out 2 and participated in Sporty Saturday at the UCLan arena. Our last meeting of term was a picnic in the park.

Rangers: Autumn/Winter 2023

Our Rangers took part in a meeting activity which explained how stars are formed through sensory play. They also explored different parts of personal identity and how that fits into society. We took them on an annual trip to the Manchester Christmas markets. At this point our Rangers meetings ran twice a month.

Spring 2024

The Rangers also took part in the Electricity NorthWest Challenge badge, they completed a few more complex tasks such as making circuits and looking further into renewable energy. The meetings started running every week in the Spring term as per the Rangers request.

Summer 2024

As the election was getting nearer we looked into self-advocacy and what mattered most to them. We also made the meetings more relaxed as it was GCSE time for the girls, so we did more mindful activities and watched a few films. The Rangers also came to the picnic in the park.

Lucy Fitzsimmons
Guide/Ranger Leader