

# **CALNE METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2024**



**Items for future editions can be sent to:**

**Jan Sayers**

**The deadline for the February 2024 issue is**

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January**



God is always speaking a new thing in our lives. In the words of Isaiah: "Behold I am doing a new thing. Do you not perceive it?" At this time of the year the countryside is often barren, frozen with that thin layer of frost. Most of us want to stay indoors as the weather turns increasingly colder. All we want to do is to stay inside in front of a warming fire. Driving becomes more difficult and challenging especially within the confines of our United Area and the distances ministers have to travel on a daily basis.

As we move into the middle of Winter, I think that it is an appropriate time to centre and quieten ourselves after the hustle and bustle, and the distractions of the past Christmas festive season. Now is the time to focus on achieving an inner peace....to rediscover our hope that such a peace, will carry us through the challenges and blessings of the year to come.

The land around us may seem dormant and bare but beneath its surface..... seeds of new hope are storing up energy that will lead to new growth in the coming spring. In a similar way we reflect over the events and challenges of this past year to learn about ourselves and the community and what we can do better this year.

Let us all take the time to focus on the spiritual, for this is where new hope germinates and new possibilities emerge. We can do things in new ways, see our lives in a different light and create hope afresh as we make a new covenant with God, together as one in the Body of Christ. For our coming journey though this year, I wish you all a breath of spiritual holy air that brings hope and peace. Hope and peace that only the Holy Spirit can give.

In your lives, may you discover that hint of spring, the light of new beginnings and the warmth of love, that lightens the cold and the darkness. May all that is within you, reflect such hope and love. Let it spring forth in innovative possibilities bringing new shoots to a life enriched, one born within the depths of the winter past.

The Word has become flesh and dwelt in our hearts and minds. How will that Spirit be manifest within our actions and words? How will the blossoming seeds of truth, love, and peace, shape our lives this coming year? As spring and summer awaken the earth, let us remember with patience, to do more together, and celebrate the many ways this Christian Fellowship can bring joy to our lives, and justice to the world and community around us.

May God's blessings be upon you...and a very Happy New year!

Craig and Elizabeth

## Forthcoming Services:

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 7 <sup>th</sup> January  | Rev Craig Manley – Covenant Service - Holy Communion |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> January | Mrs Joanne Williams                                  |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> January | Mrs Ruth McGregor                                    |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> January | Mrs Jenny Colby                                      |



## Pastoral News

Happy New Year Everyone. May you know Love, Joy and Hope throughout 2024

We thank everyone who placed cards on the Christmas Card Tree in the vestibule sending you all wonderful messages.

We pray for: all who are involved in education in any way as the new term starts; those who have long term health issues and for those who care for and support them; those who are waiting for test results and consultations; those who are caring for

elderly family members.

Throughout January we particularly pray for Eleanor Bujalska's pastoral group: Pauline Appleby, Yvonne Brett, Caroline Foster, Michele and Derek Gard, Beverley and Philip Messam, Jill McCondach, Maisie Price, Jan and Rob Sayers, Angus and family, Mitty and family.

As part of our Christian commitment is to care for and support each other I ask that if you have any Joys or Sorrows that can be shared in our pastoral news please let me know. Thank you. Ursula

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## Refugee Prayer Focus January 2024

May asylum seekers be treated with respect and kindness. May they cease to be treated as political footballs, or forgotten, a vast group hidden in plain sight.



**Dates for your diary**  
All are very welcome to come along and join in.

**Tuesday**

**January 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th**

**Coffee and Chat**

**Time: 10.00am - 11.30am**

**Venue: Church Hall**

**Wednesday January 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st**

**Warm Spaces**

**Time: 10.00am - 4.00pm**

**Venue: Church Hall**

**Tuesday 23rd January**

**Read through of Script of 'Rings of Fire' Musical**

**Time: 7.30pm**

**Venue: Church Hall**

**See this newsletter for more details**

**Wednesday 31st January**

**Police to Pulpit with Rev. Craig Manley**

**Time: 7.30pm**

**Venue: Church Hall**

**Wednesday 28th February**

**The First Forty Years of Photography with Edward Barham**

**Time: 7.00pm**

**Venue: Church Hall**

**Saturday 9th March**

**Craft and Coffee Event**

**Time: 11.00am - 2.00pm**

**Venue: Church Hall**

**Friday May 17th and Saturday May 18th**

**Rings of Fire - A Musical**

**Time: Friday Evening ; Saturday Matinee.**

**Venue: Calne Methodist Church**



## **From the Treasurer...**

Over the past few months there have been a number of highly successful events to raise funds for church funds in general and in particular to meet the costs of the work required to deal with the damp at the back of the church and to replace the church doors. A grand total of £1,887.07 was raised for church funds by: The Face production; September coffee and craft morning; film night; family history talk: pudding night; Olympics talk; and wreath making workshop.

Since the start of the current financial year (1 September 2023) we have also received a total of £5,600 in donations and external grants for the building work, to add to the £2,660 received in the previous year. In addition, our recent "normal" fundraising events (Harvest lunch, Advent lunch and Christmas fair) have collectively raised £1,679.60.

Over and above all that, we have also received a further grant of £500 from the District plus a donation of £2,000 from the funds from the discontinued Day Centre towards our Warm Spaces work.

In the light of all this you could be forgiven for thinking that our church does not face any financial concerns, but, sadly, that is not the case. It is certainly really good news that it looks as though we shall be able to continue our important work for Warm Spaces for some considerable time to come without causing a drain on church funds. It is also good news that it looks as though we will be able to cover the vast majority of the cost of the recent building work through fundraising and grants. So what is the problem?

What concerns me is that our regular income from freewill giving is going down, and our regular expenditure is going up. Our financial situation is still much healthier than that of many other churches just now, but, to coin a well-worn cliché, we cannot afford to be complacent.

In 2018/19, the last full year before the pandemic, our freewill offering added up to £21,174. During covid lockdowns, when we were also fundraising to replace the boiler and carry out other repairs, our freewill offering nevertheless increased significantly. In 2019/20 it totalled £22,396; in 2020/21 it totalled £24,296; and in 2021/22 it totalled £24,040. However, in the year to August 2023 our freewill offering went down to £21,287, and so far in the current financial year it has remained in line with the previous year. The reason why our freewill giving has reduced is simply because several long-standing and generous members of the congregation have either died or moved away.

At the same time as our regular income is reducing, our regular expenditure is going up. In particular:

- Our assessment this year will be some £1,300 more than last year.
- Our gas and electricity bills are increasingly significantly, not only because we are using the church premises more, but also because the amount we pay per unit for our gas will be 50% more this winter than last. Our total gas and electricity bills for October and November this year came to just over £1,000.
- Whilst we are getting to the end of the major repairs which needed urgent action, we will have to continue to spend significant sums to maintain the premises.
- Inflation is inevitably affecting all our costs.

If this increase in expenditure is not matched by an increase in freewill giving, we shall either have to make up the shortfall with ever-increasing amounts of fundraising or else face the prospect of our limited financial reserves being rapidly eroded until they run out.

I know that for some people financial times are hard and that there is little or no scope to increase what they give. I also recognise that others are already very generous with their freewill offerings and/or contribute massively to the church in other ways. Nevertheless, can I please urge everybody who makes regular donations to the church to review the amount they give with a view to increasing it if they are able to do so.

As Craig said at the Church AGM in November, it is very easy to go on paying the same monthly amount year after year without recognising that its value in real terms has gone down.

If you are not currently doing so, please consider making your freewill offering via a Standing Order or by regular or irregular payments direct to the church bank account. The church bank account details are available from Simon.

You can also make your freewill offerings by cheques, payable to Calne Methodist Church, left in the collection plate at church. Whilst we will, of course, accept cash donations in the collection plate at Sunday services, please make your donations by another method if possible.

If you are a UK taxpayer and do not already allow us to claim Gift Aid on your donations to the church, please contact Derek Gard, our Gift Aid Secretary, so that we can claim Gift Aid on your donations from HMRC.

Simon Purtell

**Calne Food Bank – Please visit their website for details of their opening times - [www.calnefoodbank.co.uk](http://www.calnefoodbank.co.uk)**  
They are currently asking for:

|                  |             |            |              |             |          |
|------------------|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|----------|
| Tinned tuna      | Tinned meat | Tinned veg | Rice pudding | Custard     | Biscuits |
| Tinned spaghetti |             | Treats     | Cereal       | Cereal Bars |          |

**Please make sure that any food donated is in date.**

# RINGS OF FIRE!



CALLING ALL WHO LIKE TO HAVE A GO AT SOMETHING EXCITING

## Rings of Fire!

Script and lyrics by E.Barham. Music by A.M.Brind and G.Hird.

The Performances will be Friday May 17th & Saturday May 18th.

**THE FIRST READ THROUGH OF THE SCRIPT WILL BE  
TUESDAY JANUARY 23RD AT 7.30pm in the CHURCH HALL.**

**Please come along and see if you would like to be part of the action on stage or part of the action backstage as the technical team.**

**Many enjoyable melodies for those who like a good tune to sing.**

Below is a short synopsis to whet the appetite.

Two people time-travel from the Greece of 500 BC.

An old sorcerer has sent them to experience a vision he has had of a great future city in the North called Lon-don where the sacred Games of the 681<sup>st</sup> Olympiad (1948) are to be held.

Sadly he has got a few things wrong. It's 2024, the time travellers are dressed to 'blend in' for the era of the London Olympics of 1948 - and they have landed in the tiny Republic of Slobodia.

But all is not lost. Their hosts tell them that they can see the whole thing on television. It turns out that the Slobodians' only interest in sport is as spectators. They do no sports or games whatever - on principle. Having got over their shock the two Ancient Greeks

decide that something must be done. It's too late to get a team into the Games, but they manage to get the passage of the Olympic torch re-routed via Slobodia.



Five Slobodians must be found and trained to carry it, one kilometre each, through the republic (it is very small).

The five volunteers turn out to be citizens who don't do sport because of disability or social disadvantage and not 'on principle'.

Their training - shown with amused incredulity on television - begins to engage more and more of their couch-bound compatriots until at last everyone in Slobodia is exercising.

At the end the torch is carried, passed from hand to hand, by all five in line abreast for the whole distance, with all the citizens of Slobodia running behind them like a huge marathon start. And the two time-travellers vanish. The new anthem of the Republic is then sung - ***Faster, Higher, Stronger!***

Look forward to seeing you at  
**THE FIRST READ THROUGH OF THE SCRIPT**

**TUESDAY JANUARY 23RD AT 7.30pm in the CHURCH HALL.**



This item was submitted to our Church Newsletter in November 1999 by Betty Brind (Ursula's Mum). Although it refers to the WI, I think it could equally be applied to our Church.

### A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

MENDLESHAM  
BY SUFFOLK W.I

#### Make a Difference Pie

A firm base of continuity and experience filled with a blend of fellowship, facts and fun.

#### INGREDIENTS

2-10 handfuls of members  
A few live wires  
Plenty of opportunities  
A programme full of variety  
A good helping of tolerance and goodwill  
A venue large enough for comfort.

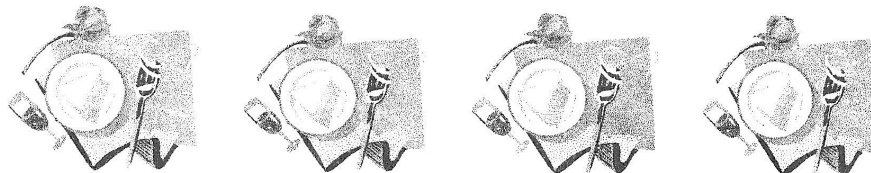
#### METHOD

Combine ingredients with care and tact. Mix well to develop friendships. Add members views for a smooth result. Spread with opportunities for learning and fun. Put in a measure of success for each member. Keep in a pleasant environment to mature. Finish with a generous dusting of the spice of life for a perfect result.

#### SERVING SUGGESTION

To sample this most delicious pie  
Why don't you come to our W.I.  
We are sure you will find delights galore  
And just like Oliver, come back for more.

submitted by Betty Brind - 1999



The poster features a light beige background with a decorative border of green ferns, white daisies, and purple flowers. The text is centered and uses various colors and bolding to create a visually appealing layout.

# **SPRING CRAFTS**

## **CRAFTS, CAKES & COFFEE EVENT**

**SATURDAY 9<sup>th</sup> MARCH, 2024**

**METHODIST CHURCH HALL  
SILVER STREET, CALNE**

**11.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m.**

**CRAFT STALLS,  
HOMEMADE CAKES & MORE.  
FAIRLY TRADED TEA & COFFEE  
REFRESHMENTS**