



The Church on The Waits

A newsletter from
St Ives Methodist Church
The Waits, St Ives, Cambs, PE27 5BY
Website: simc.co.uk
Facebook/Twitter
01480 462293 **info@simc.co.uk**
Minister: Rev Nick Witham

Minister's Message

Dear Friends,

Finding room for things can often be difficult, which is why, if you look in my garage you will find all the things that I don't have room for in the house and am not quite sure what to do with. The trouble is that when I put these things in there, they are out of sight and therefore out of mind, they are essentially forgotten.

In the story of Christ's birth, a story you know so well, played out in Nativities up and down the country, the words from Luke 2 v7 will be uttered "There was no room for them in the inn". My first challenge to you this Advent / Christmas is to find time and space to read the Bible and to find time and space to reflect on the amazing person of Jesus as God. Too easily we can put Jesus in the garage because there is no room.... and in garage he is out of sight and out of mind. Let us also make space for Jesus at the table as we share together, for the house must never be too full to make room for him.

The other aspect of the Christmas story that struck me this year is that the whole of Bethlehem was sleeping when Jesus was born; they were all unaware of his birth. In fact, the only people awake were the shepherds in the hills surrounding the town, that's perhaps why the angels go to them to tell of what has happened.

Advent is about being ready, it is about being awake. Advent points to the coming of Christ, not about remembering Jesus birth, but his second coming. Our December Advent readings are about his coming again, and our need to be ready, to be awake. There have been times when I have felt tired when driving, and the first sign of falling asleep is that you begin to drive off course and then if you continue, well that will end in disaster.

We need to be ready and awake, if we begin to doze, we will stray off course. We need to be living in the light, awake and concerned with mission and being people of peace and justice and grace, people who make a difference. So my second challenge to you this Advent and New Year, is that you will make every effort to live a life of readiness for Jesus coming, to live your life in accountability with a commitment to serve and follow Jesus. Don't take your eyes off the road and make every effort to stay awake.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

I finish with a quote, from the book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* by Dr Seuss

And the Grinch, with his Grinch feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages or boxes or bags. And puzzled and puzzled till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something that he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store? What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more?

Have a great Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Rev Nick

The End of Project 200

On 4 September we were delighted to be able to welcome neighbours and friends from around the town and circuit as well as contractors and craftspeople who have worked with us on Phase Three, to have coffee and cake and take a look around the building. The response was very positive and visitors commented on the way in which we had managed to blend the old with the new.

Retaining our heritage was an important theme for the P200 Team. With the guidance of our architect, we tried to preserve as much of the character of the church as we could. As part of that we sought to provide a space where information and artefacts relating to our heritage could be kept safe. We were delighted to receive a generous gift from Barbara Cooper and, with the agreement of her family, that has met most of the cost of the Heritage Cabinet. Barbara was a keen member of the Heritage Group and was delighted when she saw the cabinet in place. We are indebted to Pat and Mick Goates and other members of the Group for the work they have done to create an interesting display.

Other 'Heritage' work included:-

- * re-staining the dark wood;
- * building new cupboards to match the old;
- * re-using original doors (the eagle-eyed amongst you may have spotted that the handles on new cupboards were from doors no longer needed);
- * cleaning up and replacing Edwardian coat and hat hooks in the front lobby;
- * choosing colours to emphasise the architecture of the building;
- * adding windowsills to draw the eye to our beautiful windows;
- * having windows cleaned and repaired to extend their life.

Outside at the front, where the retaining wall was rebuilt, stone was sourced from the same quarries as the original to ensure a perfect match; and we have installed permanent lighting to enhance the view of the Church from The Waits and bring out the cream and gold colours in the stonework.

The Project reached 'Practical Completion' in August and we are now into a 12-month retention period whilst we sort out teething problems and get the finishing work done. We rely on members and friends to tell us if anything is not working or not as you hoped. Please speak to any of the Team and we will do our best to put things right.

**Heather Walker, Yasmin Finch, Fiona Fish, Mary Gatehouse, Jim Knell,
Christine Mainwaring, Rachel Young - Project 200 Team.**



'Great To Know You !'

The lady with the long blonde hair (Our new Leadership Steward)

Typically, if you have ever had to describe me, you will have said she is the lady with the long blonde hair - not quite so long at the moment, but definitely the most distinctive thing about me. I am generally quite a shy person (those who know me well find this hard to believe) but I am also incredibly chatty once I get going. So, if we haven't spoken much yet, I thought you might like to know a little bit about the person under the blonde mop.

My husband Tim (aka the tall man with the ginger hair) and I came to St Ives Methodist Church in 2010. We had both graduated and wanted to stay near Cambridge. We actually got together on a MethSoc retreat at the Houghton Retreat Centre, which included a walk to St Ives. We walked in the doors on the first day to be greeted by someone who already knew us as they had been at a party with someone from our old church who had told them we were coming. The Methodist grapevine is strong!

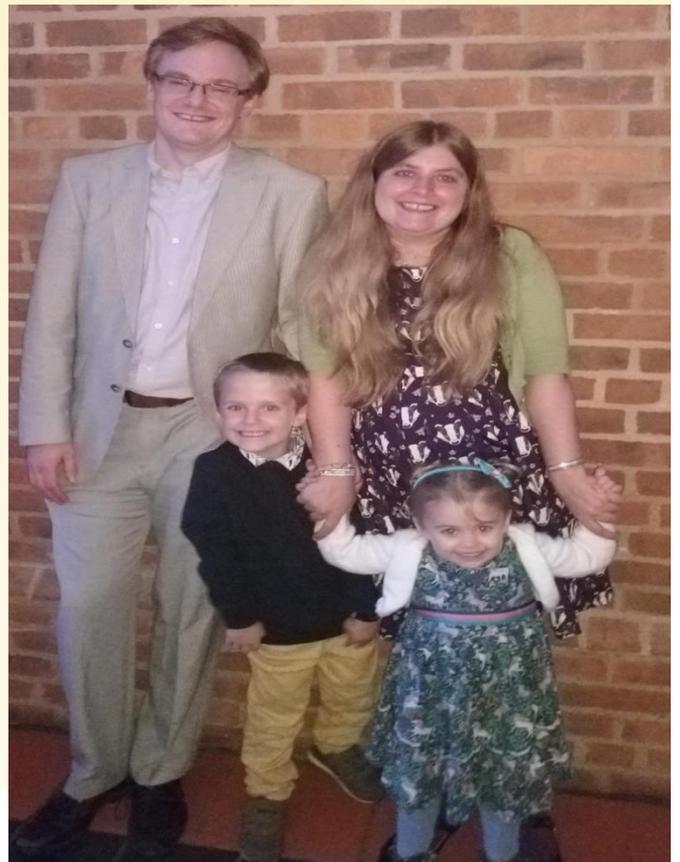
We have always loved the friendly atmosphere of St Ives and it wasn't long before I joined the Café Church band playing clarinet and saxophone. I love playing in a band where I don't have to read music and the observant amongst you might notice I often play with my eyes shut and let the music take me. We were blessed to get married at St Ives in 2012 and arrived in a horse and carriage. We also have a fabulous series of photographs of one of our ushers getting her shoes stuck in the heating grate!

Our time in St Ives has seen lots of changes. We are now in our fourth and (we very much hope) final house. Not sure either us would face that again in a hurry! I started out as a Primary School Teacher then a Dental Nurse and now I teach and assess Dental Nurses as a Tutor and Assessor. A bit of a change, but clearly a teacher at heart. Perhaps the biggest change is becoming parents. In 2015, we welcomed Aidan and in 2018 Joanna who are our greatest blessing and it was a joy to have them both baptised at Church and see them start their faith journey at home and in Sunday Club. At church I have been involved in the band, Café Church and the Nativity for many years and have recently felt called to be part of the Sunday Club team and the Leadership Team.

Those who know me, know I am rarely to be found sitting still. As a Mum to two small people, life is never dull and together we love to craft, bake, play board games, play outside and be dinosaur princess, builder, knights who live under the sea. If you ever want to know anything about sea creatures - ask Aidan, he will be sure to know! I keep myself busy and love to bake a lot (Tim's work colleagues appreciate this greatly). I have been learning to ride a horse for the last 2 years, I run when I can, love to craft and we are both involved in AmDram. This year our pantomime is Treasure island and I am busy learning my lines, dances & sea shanties. Oh yes I am!

We love being part of such a welcoming and caring church family at St Ives. So now you know a bit more about us, the lady with the long blonde hair and the tall man with the ginger hair would love to get know you more too.

Chrissie Kelby



Lockdown Memories and Thoughts

A thought from Lockdown 1 from Joy Hadley

My retirement from 39 years of teaching took an unexpected turn with lockdown 1 and, of course, the ensuing and seemingly relentless Covid restrictions and regulations. Gone, the plans to travel, for example. Apart from a week's holiday to Avignon and the beautiful surrounding Provençal area late September 2019, our plans for a late spring/ early summer trip abroad disappeared into the ether! Needless to say, our sojourns since March 2020 have been very local indeed.

However, Lockdown 1 did give me time to 'be', to learn how to slow down from the working 'me' and to appreciate using time differently. Whilst I know that for some, lockdown was an isolating and difficult experience, for me, it was a time to feel restored and to rediscover spending time at home and in the garden, as well as to learn how to keep in touch with people via Zoom. To enjoy quiet walks at 6.30 in the morning and to take in the renewed energies of the wildlife around me.. To be thankful.

Was I in such a contemplative mood by lockdown 2 and beyond? No absolutely not!

Being in the right place at the right time!

Rev Nick happened to be in the queue at Lloyds chemist, when he overheard the pharmacist raising his concerns over how he was going to ensure medicines could be delivered to all the vulnerable during the first lockdown of the Coronavirus pandemic. This is when Nick spoke up and said, "We can help". I happened to be standing in church amongst other members when Nick was relaying this event and I was able to say, "We can help". Jim had also signed up on the NHS Volunteer App and this broadened the scope of collections and deliveries. We could be called upon to collect from Lloyds chemist at Kings Hedges or in the town centre, from Boots and also Sainsburys in Huntingdon. Deliveries could be just around the corner from where we live, at the other side of St Ives or even as far as Warboys. As folk began to trust us and we built up relationships we were also able to do occasional shopping. Looking back at that first lockdown, I remember the sun shining and the smiles of gratitude when we called at people's doors (having first placed the package of medicines on the doorstep and taking a few steps back for social distancing, of course). I remember having lovely conversations with people who had not seen or spoken to anyone face to face for days. I also remember the good feeling of being out and about on our bikes or walking - with a valid reason to be out should anyone ask! **God Bless Lesley Knell**



My Sunflower In 2019 I bought some sunflower seeds, planted them out, and then in the autumn collected seeds. I put the seeds in an envelope and forgot about them. Come the long, dark days of lockdown in early 2021 and I tidied my little shed, [Please understand I don't do that very often. I was driven to it by lockdown madness] . There were the forgotten sunflower seeds. I had some little pots and some compost so I planted them. During those really difficult weeks, I watched them grow and was thrilled that so many germinated. I gave away little sunflowers to friends. I planted little sunflowers in a pot at church. I planted little sunflowers in my own garden. I watched with delight as lots of big, smiley sunflowers opened and started to turn their faces to the sun. And I reflected that all this beauty emerged from the dark and difficult days of pandemic suffering. When we follow the Light of Christ, beauty and delight are not far away.

Heather Walker

Dear All,

I just wanted to introduce you all to our new Mission & Vision Statement, which is underpinned by the principles outlined below. As you will see, the connecting factor in all of these is welcome and relationship. The heart of what we do as church is about being generous in our love for each other, our community, all of which is motivated and sourced from our loving relationship with God himself.

We want everyone to experience the amazing love of God and the incredible difference that he makes in our lives. We know that we are not perfect and that we do not have all the answers, but this guiding statement provides a framework where we can journey together in encouragement and support as we share and discover more about God's love for all.

If you have any questions about this statement, or would like to know more, then please do not hesitate to let me know. Take care & God bless. **Rev Nick**

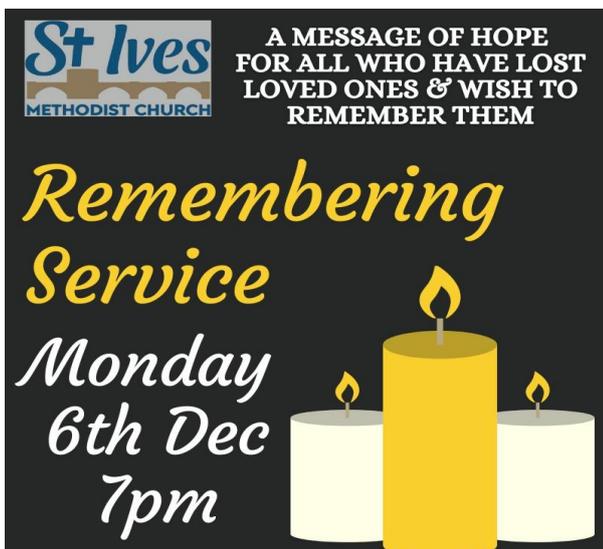
St Ives Methodist Church aspires to be a place of welcome and radical hospitality. We are a church family of all ages who want to make a difference by living out God's love in worship, mission & in service to each other and our community.

St Ives Methodist Church's purpose is to make a difference by:

- **Bringing people to a loving personal relationship with Jesus**
- **Serving one another and our community**
- **Equipping the Church family for ministry within the Church and for mission in the world**

WE WILL:

- **Celebrate God's presence in worship.**
- **Communicate God's salvation through evangelism.**
- **Connect people and incorporate them into our fellowship through discipleship, learning, caring and praying together.**
- **Commit to discerning how God wants us to live and how he wants us to reach out with the love of God to others.**



St Ives
METHODIST CHURCH

A MESSAGE OF HOPE
FOR ALL WHO HAVE LOST
LOVED ONES & WISH TO
REMEMBER THEM

*Remembering
Service*
Monday
6th Dec
7pm



St Ives
METHODIST CHURCH

A MESSAGE OF HOPE
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*Remembering
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Monday
6th Dec
7pm



WORSHIP



Midweek

Holy Communion.

There will be a short service at 12.15 on Thursdays 18th November and 16th December.

Climate Sunday Services were held on Sundays August 11th and September 19th.

Christian Aid are organising a local demonstration as part of a '**Global Day of Action**' to encourage the U.N COP 26 Conference in Glasgow to make important decisions.

Climate Change and the Prayer Corner

In the beginning God created the World and it was perfect. He gave us the task of caring for the world. We have made mistakes, we have not made a good job. What can we do? There are many things we can do, and the Church will be supporting various initiatives—BUT everyone can pray! Why not take a look in the Prayer Corner to get inspiration to get ideas and encouragement. The display has been based on the theme of a river, and will inspire you to think again. The Prayer Corner is for everyone to use we would encourage you to make the time to look, and to pray. **Rosemary, Lesley and Vanessa**

Bible Study Groups.

Monday Afternoon Group. Members are continuing to enjoy our fortnightly study of John's Gospel. It has been particularly focused on the themes of light and darkness that run through this Gospel. **Marion Rutherford.**

Wednesday evenings. Those participating have been studying Nehemiah. **Rev Nick**

Thursday evenings. Love has been the theme of the Thursday Study Group's conversation recently and will be for the remainder of this term. We are studying the book of Hosea and learning much about the politics of his time and his own difficult marriage. We are being reminded that lust and sex are not in themselves a good basis for long-lasting wholesome relationships, and through Hosea, God called the people of Israel and of Judah to set aside the worship of other 'gods', remember his passionate love for them which is faithful and long-suffering and turn back to him. Hosea's prophesy makes for strong reading but it contains some beautiful poetry too. Look up Hosea 11:1-4 to see for yourself. The Study Group is open to all.

Heather Walker

St Neots and Huntingdon Methodist Circuit

Circuit Advent Service on Sunday December 5th at 3 pm at St Ives Methodist.

Circuit Advent Bible Studies 'Lights for Christ-travelling' Details on a separate sheet in Church.

Circuit Advent ECO calendar to be circulated by e-mail.



ACTION FOR CHILDREN and Action for St Ives Methodist Church?

Like many charities through the pandemic 'Action for Children' has suffered financially, and sadly the local school has had to close, and some of their fundraising has changed.

I have been responsible for 'Action for Children' which is a Methodist charity for 6 years. With the wonderful help of my dear friend Barbara Cooper, who was in charge before me but has since passed away, we have managed to raise commendable funds.

There is so much opportunity for children and younger adults to get involved and have fun while participating. I am now in my mid-80s and feel ready to step down although willing to help as Barbara did for me, but am now unable to do the charity justice, and am therefore asking and hoping that there is a younger person who feels God calling to take charge.

There is a delightful rep called Holly who is pleased to advise, and can be easily reached by phone.

Money boxes mostly taken by the older folk brought in a lot of revenue, but sadly many have passed away, leaving only 13 people. Rev. Nick, who is a keen supporter of 'Action for Children', is organising a carol singing group to tour the streets of St Ives. The money collected will go to the charity, replacing the boxes. I am hoping to do Christmas cards this year, but they have to be ordered and paid for before delivery.

This is a rather sad report for those who have supported this charity over the years, but I know there is much potential if we can get younger people involved. **Penny Franklin**



Thursday 16th December
Carol singing
for 'Action for Children'
around St Ives (6pm – 7.30pm)

WELCOME to Café/All Age Worship

**2021— held on second Sunday of the month
(but not Remembrance Sunday)**

2022—moving to 3rd Sunday of the month from January

**Suitable for all ages—this is a chance to relax and
discover more about faith whilst sipping a coffee/tea.**

St Ives ST IVES METHODIST CHURCH
METHODIST CHURCH

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Christmas Cafe Service - All Age
Sunday 12th Dec at 10.30am

3rd Sunday of Advent
Sunday 19th Dec at 10.30am

Carol Service + Nativity
Sunday 19th Dec at 6.00pm

All Age Christmas Celebration
Christmas Eve at 4pm

Midnight Communion
Christmas Eve at 11.30pm
at Hilton Methodist Church

Christmas Day Party Service
10am - for the whole family

HAVE A GREAT CHRISTMAS
FROM EVERYONE AT ST IVES METHODIST CHURCH
COME ALONG AND JOIN US

Check us out on Facebook  St Ives Methodist Church
or our website : simc.co.uk

St Ives METHODIST CHURCH

JOIN US FOR A WONDERFUL
NIGHT OF CAROLS &
NATIVITY

CAROL SERVICE

DECEMBER 19TH
6:00 IN THE EVENING
AT
THE METHODIST CHURCH



Christmas Stocking Fillers

All made from the old oak communion rail, and now being sold for Church funds. Contact Tony Walker for samples and to order: info@simc.co.uk

Hand Cross £6

Pocket Cross £4

Keyrings £4

Caring for our World

From a little acorn a mighty oak will grow.

If everyone does something Climate Change will slow. Lots of Eco News in the next Newsletter.



Children and Families Work

It has been a very busy time with families attending in presence to Sunday Club and Baby and Tots group. Our Coffee on the Waits on a Thursday morning 10am -12 noon is a time for us to meet and talk while the children can play. Every group needs planning and setting up for each week, which does take a lot of time and energy – especially with all those chairs to move – I should be a size 10 soon!!!

Baby and Tots Group

It has been a great start back this term with a register that grew to 54 Children. We have had to compile a waiting list due to the high numbers. I am so grateful to have very loyal and dedicated staff to help each week who help make this group a real success. We have just celebrated Harvest where families brought tinned food for our Church Charities and Rev. Nick came to thank everyone and said a few words about Harvest. We are definitely getting the vibe that those attending this group feel it's becoming their church and want to join in with our activities. We will continue to advertise our special services especially over Christmas. We are already seeing the transition of some Tots families coming to Sunday Worship.

There will be no Baby and Tots Group on **21st and 28th December** – we will be back on Tuesday **4th January 2022**. Our Christmas Party will be on **Tuesday 14th December**.

Sunday Club

Wow what a great start to our launch of Sunday Club and going out to OUR space in the hall. This is proving to be a great success and with weekly numbers ranging from 9 to 21, it is making planning fun – just waiting to see who turns up and we have had many visitors too. We have a register of 21 children that started in September with extra coming to Café worship on top of that number. We have a creche area set up too and three different activity tables for different age groups which is working well and a new team of staff who are working so hard together to make this a success and again without them this would not work. We are working from Scripture Union books to keep us all together on the same theme but different activities organised to suit the different ages.

There will be no **Sunday Club on Boxing Day – 26th December 2021**.

Extra Activities Planned

Here are a list of dates and activities to look out for – extra information will be given out nearer to the time of each event. I would love some extra help too!

31st October - Light Party in our church from 4pm – 6pm (an alternative to a Halloween Party)

4th December - Going to a Pantomime as a group together

16th December - Carol singing for Action for Children around St. Ives (6pm – 7.30pm)

19th December - A Nativity from our Children within the Carol Service (6pm – 7pm)

24th December - Christmas Eve all Age Event 4pm - 5 pm

9th January - Sunday Club Christmas/New Year Party

Please continue to look at our facebook page 'SIMC Children and Families' for all updates. Also if you have any queries at all please do not hesitate to contact me.

Elaine Witham

Children and Families Worker

A NEW NATIVITY by Alan Titchmarsh

1. When all those long, long years ago
A child came down to earth below,
To save the likes of you and me
From evil, harm and misery

3. You see, today we all recall
The baby in the ox's stall
The ass, the stables, shepherds, Kings,
All ancient, rural, rustic things.

5. If Christ was born in Walthamstow,
Would builders drop their tools and go?
Would Wapping printers stop their presses?
Would supermodels ditch their dresses?

7. Had given birth to a baby boy,
Not at the Dorchester or Savoy,
But in a garage, there's the rub,
Round the back of the local pub.

9. Just a joiner; nothing grand,
No previous form, their records scanned,
The police confirmed when sent to see,
The saviour of humanity.

11. For now it's hard to be impressed
With goodness, gentleness and blessed
With something more than mere sensation,
A baby, born to save a nation?

13. No shepherds, no kings, no golden parcel
No prince from inside Windsor Castle
Following the star with brightest glow,
To the garage behind the pub in Walthamstow.

15. To see the child who saves the world,
In some old oil drum safely curled;
The nativity for the millennium.
Would anyone out there like to come?

2. Do you suppose that even then
There were some doubting, heedless men
Who rather than believe the word
Just turned their backs and never heard?

4. But what if here, this very night,
It happened.....on the Isle of Wight.
Would we rejoice and all be merry?
Would we dash off and catch the ferry?

6. In Hampshire and in rural Kent,
Would shepherds by an angel sent
Walk miles to see a newborn child,
Whose mother, unmarried, although mild,

8. The boy's dad hadn't been to college,
And of the child he claims no knowledge;
Saying that an angel came
To tell his wife the baby's name.

10. If Jesus Christ was born today
In newspapers instead of hay,
I doubt He'd even come to be
In the 'News at Ten's 'and finally'

12. 'Some tearaway: two homeless louts'
The newspaper proprietor shouts;
'Just print the story, headlines large:
Christmas Baby Born In Garage.'

14. And yet I like to think that we,
Despite the e-mail and DVD,
Would know to go, when star shone bright
And make that journey through the night



Pastoral Meeting. There is a Pastoral Friends meeting on November 9th at 7.30 in the Church.

Keeping in Touch! -

I am currently updating our **Communication Contact Lists** to ensure that we are able to keep in touch with each other and to make sure that people receive items such as the SIMC weekly notices, church news and information and so on. If you would like to be included in the Church Directory (which will be shared with others in the directory), or would like to check if you are already there, or update your current contact details, please let me know via email: info@simc.co.uk . If you know of someone who needs a paper copy of any information sent from SIMC, please also let me know or ask them to give me a call. Thank you for your help with this. We are aiming to have accurate and recent contact details. Finally, if you are not on the Church **Circulate email list**, and would like to be, please let me know.

Thank you, **Joy Hadley**

Church Lettings

I am delighted to say that more groups have returned since the last Newsletter – U3A Philosophy, Table Tennis, Country Dancing and Singing for Pleasure, as well as Eddies, a social evening club for adults with learning disabilities, a Music Group, the St Ives in Bloom AGM and a small group beginning a film night early next month.

The building is now used most days and is an asset to the local community.

Rosemary Duroe-Mayo is our Lettings Administrator and can be contacted via our new website or email : lettings@simc.co.uk Jim Knell



The A/V team checking equipment.

Craft and Chat

Saturday mornings

10-12

Come and join us for tea, coffee, cake and laughter.

The current theme is Christmas!



Church officers from September 1st 2021

Children & Families Worker – Elaine Witham

Leadership Stewards – Joy Hadley, Chrissie Kelby, Jim Knell,

Vestry Stewards Lesley Knell (also Jim Knell, Christine Mainwaring, Maggie Redgrave, Joan Tucker)

Church Secretary – Sue Ralph **Treasurer** – Lesley Knell

Pastoral Secretary – Joan Tucker (also **First Aid & Craft n’Chat**)

Flowers & Kitchen Elizabeth Granville **Safeguarding** - Karen Pickin

Lettings – Rosemary Duroe-Mayoe lettings@simc.co.uk

Teams

A/V Team – Derek Murphy, Dan Buddle, David Ward, Stuart Wilkinson, Michael Young

Communications – Joy Hadley, Mary Gatehouse, Joan Tucker

Eco – Mary Gatehouse, Rev Heather Walker

Music for Services - John Finch, Fiona Finch, Karen Pickin, Dan Buddle and many others!

VACANCIES There are still significant vacancies e.g. 2 Leadership Stewards, 2/4 Vestry Stewards (Sundays for Worship), at least 4 Pastoral Friends (to keep in touch with small group of church folk), volunteer to work with Don on Property Team, and of course **CLEANERS**.



Did you know we have Cleaning Angels at our church? There are not many of them, but they are a bright, shiny bunch who are spreading their wings for an hour or so each week; donning cloths and dusters, mops and buckets to keep our lovely premises clean.

Can you be a Cleaning Angel? It would be wonderful to have some more. Apply to Jim Knell for your Wings.



We also need Door Hosts and refreshment volunteers for Sunday mornings.

Contributions for the **Spring Addition** issue to reach the team no later than

Monday March 14th.