

Issue 34

Affinity



February /March 2021

OADBY TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH

February /March 2021

Oadby Trinity Methodist Church

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Christian Aid Online Conference: Change makers 22-26th February 2021—Real people, real change.

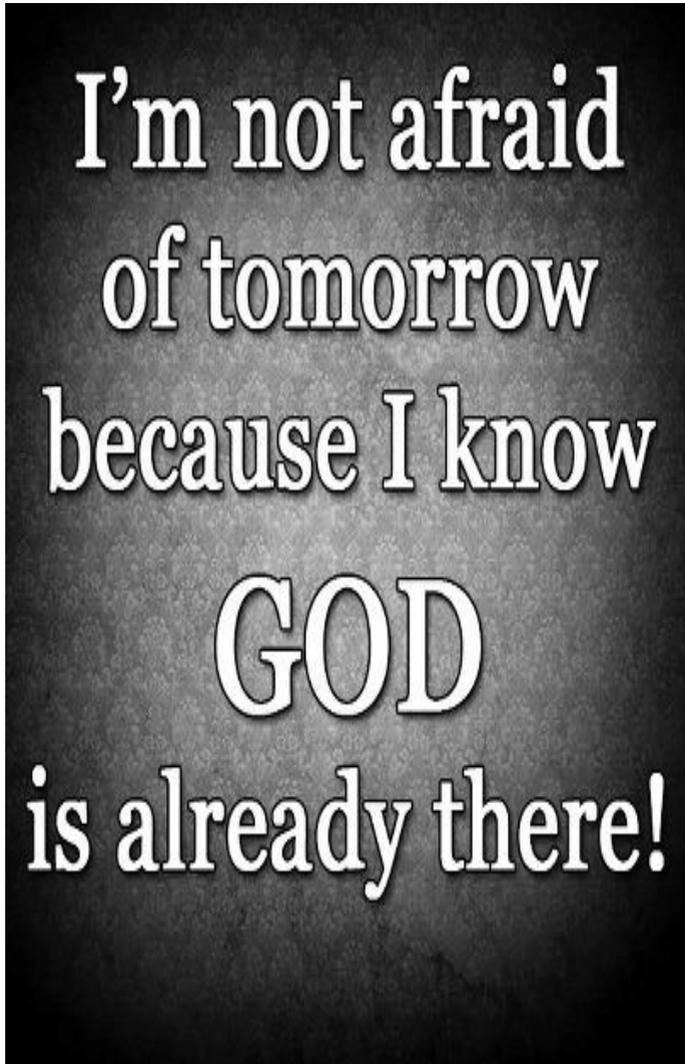
This is a conference to equip and inspire supporters of Christian Aid’s work. Sessions will be on Zoom.

Do please have a look through and see which one’s you think you’d like to attend. To see the conference programme and to book onto a session, please go to <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/events/changemakers-conference-programme> and find the session. Click on the Green “Register” button and follow the steps.

Jez Gowers-Crombie [Church engagement and fund raising officer for the East Midlands will be running the “East Midlands Supporter Gathering” session which runs on Tuesday evening and Friday morning. Please choose one of these (as they are repeats). It’ll be a great chance to get to know others in the East Midlands, and to share ideas and opportunities.



During this Pandemic, so many people have experienced fear, wondering what the next day will bring. As God's people we have no need to fear, for he is walking in front of us leading the way. Praise his name!



FEBRUARY SERVICES

Sunday 7th

10.30 Mr Matthew Forsyth [from “All We Can”]

6.00 Rev Derek McLean [Circuit service]

Sunday 14th

10.30 Rev Colin Smith

6.00 Rev Fran Rhys [Circuit service]

Sunday 21st –Lent 1

10.30 Rev Neil Richardson

6.00 Rev Jenny Impey [Circuit service]

Sunday 28th –Lent 2

10.30 Mr Richard Cawthorn

6.00 Rev Gordon Webb [Circuit service]

Revs Colin Smith and Neil Richardson were originally invited to preach at Trinity to cover Derek’s sabbatical, and we are delighted that they are able to join us remotely.

PLEASE NOTE: Services will continue to be predominantly online. We hope at some stage to resume mixed-mode worship, with the service projected onto screens in both Oadby and Glen churches; but we will continue to be cautious and follow Government and Methodist advice. Our priority is keeping people safe. In-person worship will not resume before 28th February in Glen and 7th March in Oadby.

MARCH SERVICES

Sunday 7th –Lent 3

10.30 Rev Derek Mclean

6.00 Rev Kate Cook [Circuit service]

Sunday 14th –Lent 4 /Mothering Sunday

10.30 Rev Derek Mclean

6.00 Rev Paula Hunt [Circuit service]

Sunday 21st - Lent 5

10.30 Rev Derek Mclean

6.00 Rev Daniel Yovan [Circuit service]

Sunday 28th –Palm Sunday

10.30 Rev Derek Mclean

6.00 Dr Miriam Stevenson [Circuit service]

All morning services in March will be led by Rev Derek McLean. In addition to following the regular pattern of Lent themes, there will also be a focus on “The Methodist Way of Life” resources, which draw on the priorities which we emphasise on the Membership tickets.

Great Glen and Houghton are planning to resume having in-person services approximately once each month when conditions permit. Potentially a Communion service led by Rev Derek on 28th February at Glen and in person services at both chapels on 21st March.

Glen –service led by Douglas Beoku Betts

Houghton - service led by Graham Tenant.

Editorial



Heather Corlett: Editor

Welcome to the first edition of Affinity for 2021. Let us hope and pray that 2021 will be a better year for everyone than 2020 was. Now that the Covid vaccination programme is being rolled out, we do have a glimmer of light at the end of what has been a long dark tunnel for so many people.

Apologies to those members of our Church Fellowship who do not have online access, and thus are unable to read the electronic version of Affinity. We shall endeavour to restore printed copies of the magazine at some time during the coming months.

The deadline for the April /May issue of Affinity is **Sunday March 14th**. All contributions to Heather Corlett [Editor], Email: telroc@talktalk.net Articles need to be 250 words [1 page], 375 words [1 1/2 pages] and 500 words [2 pages]. **Please** try to keep articles as close as possible to these lengths.

Heather Corlett [Editor]



Rev Derek McLean

Greetings from the manse.

Dear friends,

“How to Rage” is the title of an event which I’ve recently seen advertised. It is sub-titled “Theology, Activism and the Church”. It reminds me that I’ve still got the book “Just Mission” by Helen Cameron sat on my reading pile. I will not attend the event, nor will I read the book – yet. However, both of them remind me of the vital role that the church needs to play. We need to be more prophetic. The events of the last twelve months have contained so many illustrations of that need.

Our Food Bank has been incredibly busy, but why is it needed? We’ve raised funds to provide Tablets so children can access school online, but why should access to education require charity? We’ve recognised the continuing discrimination that exists based on race and included a focus on this in our worship, but why does our society continue to discriminate unfairly?

We’ve passed the milestone of 100,000 Covid deaths, but here too we recognise that it has disproportionately affected the poorest and those from minority heritages, even amongst health workers. Why is our society so unfair?

We are witnessing a wider anger here too. Some blaming the Government for inadequate action, some blaming others for their failure to follow the rules. The “debate” about vaccinations becomes more strident.

I recently spoke to a rabbi in Haifa to better understand what is happening in Israel. The Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) and Palestinian citizens of Israel are the two groups most severely impacted by Covid. They are also the two groups who are often viewed with suspicion by others in wider Israeli society. Like here, prejudices are being reinforced, divisions are becoming starker and dialogue more difficult.

Anger is often one of the emotions we experience as we mourn. As a church community we seemed to get off comparatively lightly in the first wave of Covid. We saw relatively few infections and those we did see were mostly relatively mild – even in those with severe underlying health conditions. Our recent experience has been much worse. We are mourning the loss of loved ones.

Rage and anger can be helpful emotions.

The question we face is how we direct that anger. We are reminded that Jesus didn't rule out the possibility of tipping over a few tables when it was needed. He was ready to challenge people in stark terms. Scripture speaks of God's wrath at injustice.

So let us be willing to rage in the face of suffering... but let us channel that rage toward making the world a better place. To confront division and not to reinforce it.

God bless you.

Derek

Numbers

I love numbers. I'm grateful for BBC's 'More or Less' for highlighting some of the significant numbers in 2020. I thought I'd share some of their "favourites":

- 13.9% of young BAME Britons lost their jobs or had their hours reduced as a result of the pandemic. The equivalent was 6.7% of White Britons.
- Three-fifths of the world population has access to adequate hand-washing facilities. The fact that two-fifths do not was particularly shocking in a year of Covid.

More upbeat:

- 5½ million years is the total time people spent on zoom in 2020. Technology made such a difference to us all
- 49 was the total number of Covid deaths in Rwanda, despite having a population comparable to Belgium. They have universal healthcare and are practiced at addressing communicable diseases. It also reinforces the sad reality that the disproportionately high death rate amongst Black Britons is down to economic disadvantage not genetic weakness.
- 332 was the number of days between the first sequencing of Covid virus and the first public use of a vaccine. An extraordinary achievement.

The whole programme is available here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p093g9vk>

Derek

Circuit Series on Evangelism

In Feb and March we will be focusing on Evangelism every Wednesday 6pm. During this eight weeks, we will have an opportunity to listen to the members of Connexional Evangelism and growth team. All are welcome.

Please find below the zoom details

Meeting ID: 488 436 7286

Passcode: 2405

Rev Daniel Yovan



Tablets for Schools

Knightsbridge Estate Agents in Oadby were raising funds so that Tablets could be supplied to pupils studying at home so that they could access online learning during the pandemic. Each Tablet costs £50.

Thanks to generous donations from Members of the churches at Oadby, Great Glen and Houghton we were able to fund the purchase of 33 of these tablets.

They are not Tablets of stone and they are not inscribed with the 10 Commandments, but despite that, there is a continuity between this generous giving and the story of God's gift on Mount Sinai all those thousands of years ago. God loves people. God has a particular care for the disadvantaged – many of the commandments are especially important in the protection of the weakest. God wants us to learn and wishes us to find instruction.

These were being supplied to local schools and I hope that we will be able to supply further information about which schools they've gone to in subsequent editions of Affinity.



Lesley presents the donated Kindle Fire tablets at Manor High School, Oadby.

Y

“So that I may not cause one of them to fall.”

This is the outline of the sermon which I preached on the 24th January, on the basis of the passage entitled “Food Offered to Idols” in 1 Corinthians 8. Thank you for the positive feedback which prompts me to reproduce it here. Rev Derek

Surely this passage is irrelevant? We don’t have meat sacrificed to idols so why does it matter to us today?

Perhaps on another occasion we will come back to it to reflect on vegetarianism: it is Veganuary after all. Perhaps we consider it during a debate about Halal meat. But for today, I want to think about alcohol, and about immunisations!

In St Paul’s original context most of the meat which was available had been slaughtered in pagan temples. If you wanted to eat meat that was the only available source for people living in cities like Corinth. So did it matter that they were eating something which was contaminated by its association with these rituals? On the one hand, those gods had no power, so it didn’t matter where the animal had been butchered. On the other hand, some people were understandably nervous about the association with the religion which they had given up. St Paul advised that it was better to avoid the meat, not because it actually mattered that it had been dedicated to a non-existent god, but because Christians should care about the impact their actions had on others.

This is essentially the rationale for the Methodist position on alcohol on Methodist premises. It isn’t hypocrisy when we admit that many of us do drink alcohol. It is about creating a safe space where people can go knowing that there will be no alcohol. It is why we have so many AA groups meeting on Methodist premises up and down the country .

It is also why in places like Oadby and Leicester generally, our buildings are particularly welcoming to those of other faiths who take a stricter view on alcohol than we do.

This differentiation between what we *can* do safely and what *should* do has been extremely important during the Covid pandemic.

Up until now, that has largely been a question of asking younger, fitter people to restrict their lives in order to protect older, sicker people.

We have now moved into a new phase.

If we are offered the vaccination and there is no medical reason not to take it, we should ask whether our moral responsibility is to do so.

Once people have had the vaccine they will be much safer but may still be able to infect others. What is their responsibility to others?

Derek

The Young Person's Project.

On pages 16 & 17 are two posters from the YP Project provided by Hannah Shah –Young Persons Intervention Worker. The YP Project seeks to help and support young people who are abusing a family member, or who are being abused themselves by a family member or someone they are in a relationship with.

Because of the pandemic the face to face contact between support workers and young people is much less, but the support offered by the YP project is still crucial for those in abusive relationships. The posters provide contact details for anyone who feels they need the support of the YP Project.

The YP Project



Are you being hurt by your child?

Are you afraid of your child? Is your child verbally or physically abusive towards you? The YP Project can help.

The YP Project was established to support you as a parent or carer if your child is using abusive behaviours in the home.

We recognise it is extremely difficult when family relationships begin to breakdown. We can offer support and guidance for you and your child.

If your child is aged between 10 - 18 years, please get in touch.

 0116 254 0101

 info@jenkinscentre.org

 www.jenkinscentre.org/the-yp-project



Support will be subject to an assessment to obtain suitability. The YP Project is hosted by the registered charity FREEVA. The YP Project works throughout Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Self referrals can be made but if you have other professionals involved with your family then contact with them will need to be made.



The YP Project



Are you hurting your parent or partner?

The YP Project was established to support you as a young person. We recognise that it is extremely difficult when family or dating relationships begin to break down because of violence and abuse.

If you are using abusive behaviours at home or in a dating relationship we are here to support you.

If you are aged between 10 - 18 years old, please get in touch.

 0116 254 0101

 info@jenkinscentre.org

 www.jenkinscentre.org/the-yp-project



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Questioning Believers, affiliated to Progressive Christianity Network

Our group has continued monthly during the last year on Zoom, which has enabled us to keep in touch and be supportive to each other, especially these isolating Covid days.

We are now a group including friends at Trinity and also a mixture of Baptist, Quakers and Anglicans with different backgrounds, but all trying to make sense of faith in the modern world.

We bring issues that have troubled us or inspired us. We have found the magazine from PCN “Progressive Voices” rich in thoughtful material.

We looked in detail at 5 Films which have been professionally produced by PCN about 5 people and their faith journeys.

You might like to have a look at these short films. The link is below

<https://madeofstories.uk>

Any interest or comments would be very welcome

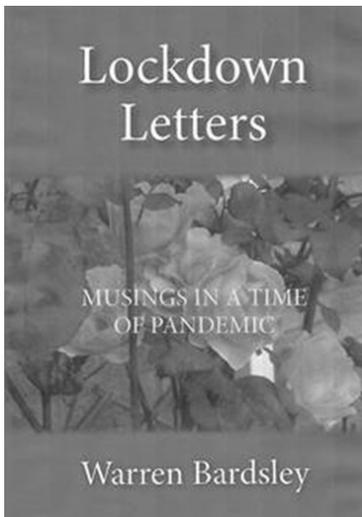
Keith Baker

kbaker@cix.co.uk

Lockdown Letters

"Lockdown Letters" were originally written as weekly pieces, sent to friends and acquaintances during the first five months of the national lockdown, following the spread of the global COVID19 virus in March 2020. Personal reflections on the positive and negative effects of the lockdown, the letters are a kind of commentary on this strange time which has the potential to change our lives, society and the world, for years to come. Price £6.50. Profits from sales of 'Lockdown Letters' will be equally divided between Medical Aid for Palestinians and The Fund for Human Need, a small, effective Methodist charity. Copies can be obtained from Warren at w.bardsley39@btinternet.com or 01543 255292.

This is a limited print run. There will be a small discount on orders of five copies or more.



FOR ALL THE SAINTS

As I record my Family History I like to include amongst the records a photo of the church where each couple was married. I also throw in the odd Register Office as well or (as my cousin Tracy Borman, the TV historian did) the Tower of London!

All of my mother's family for many generations were from Lincolnshire and several couples were married at St Hybald's Church in Hibaldstow. Who's he?

Back in the 7th Century Saint Oswald died in Northumbria and his niece Queen Osthryth decided that he should be buried in Bardney Abbey in Lincolnshire which he had conquered earlier and thus 'owned'. She therefore loaded him into a cart and off she went.

However the monks at the Abbey had no love for Oswald. Hybald, their abbot, whose only claim to fame so far was that he had forecast the date of death of his friend St Chad, tried to stop the burial. He had taken over as the abbot from Chad when he died (which seems rather suspicious that he could foretell his death – 'Who has the most to gain from Chad's death?' Morse would have asked)

Hybald and his monks did not see why Oswald should be buried in their abbey when he had taken it by force of arms so when Osthryth arrived at Bardney with her cart and the remains of her uncle the monks locked the gate and wouldn't let them in even though they knew Oswald was a holy man.

During the night a strange thing happened. A beam of light emerged from the cart and went straight up to heaven. Immediately Hybald and the monks 'enthusiastically' decided to let them in praying 'those relics, so beloved by God, might be deposited among them'. Thus Oswald was laid to rest in Bardney Abbey.

Hybald's change of mind was very much to his advantage. He was now a witness to two miracles, the death of Chad and the beam from St Oswald so he also became a saint and because he was a friend of Chad he became a 'premier saint'. As a result he decided to follow Chad and become a hermit.

He also carried on as Abbot of Bardney and travelled as a missionary preaching the Gospel and teaching about the founders of the early Church (multi-tasking!)

In the mean time the monks at Bardney Abbey decided to remove the 'Great Doors' from the Abbey so that never again would they be able to shut anyone out. This gives meaning to the well known (in Lincolnshire) complaint 'Do you come from Bardney?' when someone comes in and leaves the door open.

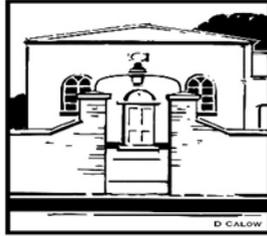
When Hybald died he was buried at Hibaldstow (which means 'The Village where Hybald is buried') in a shrine which became a place of pilgrimage. However this, and the church building, fell into disrepair but in 1864 his remains were found and he now rests in the re-built Hibaldstow church.

Also named after him are three other Lincolnshire churches where again my mother's forebears were married. These are at Scawby, Ashby de la Launde and Manton.

Eric Orbell



St Hybald's Hibaldstow



HOUGHTON ON THE HILL

Following the end of the second national lockdown in early December we reopened the Chapel for weekly Wednesday afternoon services and even managed one Sunday service in December. Christmas was always going to be very low key and we knew we would miss the usually well-attended carol service (with visitors from the village and beyond) on Christmas Eve. But we had other plans....

Our little borrowed Christmas tree (which has grown about a foot since it's last trip down Main Street to the Chapel last Christmas) was decorated and lit and the bushes in the front garden, and the arch over the gateway was decked with lights so that the particularly dark area of Main Street sparkled for passing walkers (and there have been a lot of walkers in this village in recent times!). The Chapel was decorated inside (sadly not our usual big Christmas tree – social distancing would have made that a bit difficult to put up) for advent, and our Wednesday Service on 23 December was designated the 'Christmas Special' by Derek McLean. The church council voted to make the customary charity donation, normally made at the carols service, to Action for Children.

Our service consisted of readings, reflections, carols and other Christmas music played on the organ and a vocal solo from the organist who accompanied himself! The day had been particularly rainy but at the end of the service the rain cleared away and we went outside and stood, socially distanced, in the garden at the front and sang two carols (with harmony!) attracting the attention of surprised passers-by and a huge congregation of jackdaws in the big tree opposite. An occasion to remember in spite of everything, and best of all we raised £330 for Action for Children. Some of our congregation, who were sensibly shielding at home and not able to be with us, generously sent donations to our Treasurer making a great contribution (along with Gift Aid forms) to the total.

Our Wednesday service on 6 January fell on Epiphany and was another quite meaningful occasion, probably for some of the wrong reasons, because after that service it was decided that the Chapel had, once again, to close. The severity of the recent spread of infection made our attempts at keeping the building open for services seem unreasonable and sent out all the wrong messages. Back we went to on-line services in the fervent hope that by the time the next edition of 'Affinity' is due we will be able to gather together in some way again.

Mary Moore

[Photos of Houghton on the Hill Methodist Chapel during Advent 2020]



Swanwick 2021 –Methodist Women in Britain

Following the huge disappointment of having to cancel the weekend at Swanwick in 2020, we have been determined to offer something in 2021; but sadly we have made the decision not to meet face to face at Swanwick because of the ongoing uncertainties of life with Covid 19, and the need to keep everyone as safe as possible.

However we are delighted to be able to invite you to “Together with Hope on the Way”, an online conference taking place on Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th April 2021. It will be different from our previous conferences, but nevertheless an is an exciting new venture which will be accessible to a wider audience.

Our keynote speaker, Sister Imelda Poole will be joining us virtually from Albania to talk about her work educating and training young people to help prevent them from becoming trafficked. There will also be worship, prayer and Bible study, plus news and information on the work of the World Federation and a chance for us to celebrate ‘together’ the tenth anniversary of MWiB.

You can find more information and register your interest now on the MWiB website.

<https://mwib.org.uk/index.php/2021/01/15/swanwick-2021-together-with-hope-on-the-way/>

I hope you’ll consider joining us– and please pray for the conference as we continue to prepare and as we meet online.

Volunteering opportunities

We are currently seeking two volunteers to work with us as we lead this exciting and growing movement into its second

decade: Communications Co-ordinator and Website and Social media Co-ordinator.

Could this be you? Or someone you know? Perhaps a younger person or someone not directly connected with MWiB?

You can find information and application packs for both roles on our website.

<https://mwib.org.uk/index.php/2021/01/11/looking-for-a-new-challenge-2/>

And Finally..

Keep in touch with MWiB and the World Federation on our Facebook page: **Methodist Women in Britain**, and via Twitter, @MethodistWomen.

Judith Simms

Communications Officer

Methodist Women in Britain.

“The Last Train to Tomorrow”

As Diane and I listened to Derek’s – very moving – service on Holocaust Memorial Day, I found myself remembering what turned out to be a particularly special visit to Prague. We spent a long weekend there in October 2013. Walking round the city on the Saturday morning, we came to the Municipal House, Prague’s main concert hall. Outside, we saw publicity for a performance of Smetana’s ‘Ma vlast’. It was to take place the same evening. We thought we couldn’t miss the opportunity of hearing that piece played by the Czech National Symphony Orchestra in Smetana’s own city – performed in the Smetana Concert Hall as it happens, very grand, very elaborate. The conductor was going to be Carl Davis, another incentive. We didn’t think we’d get tickets, but we did. We were very pleased. We also saw, on the publicity, that the first item on the programme was to be a performance of an opera – unfamiliar to us - composed by Carl Davis and performed for the first time in Liverpool the previous year: “The Last Train to Tomorrow.” This performance was to be its premier in Prague. The singers were to be from the Children’s Opera, Prague. We arrived at the concert dressed in the only kinds of clothes we had with us, holiday ones, and were struck straight away by the formality of dress of the great majority of people coming in with us. A few others were as we were – probably visitors too – but most were very formal, many in black. We thought this must be the way that Czechs went to concerts. There was a formality even to taking coats in the cloakroom, an underground hall full of ornate rails. It was also something about the bearing of the people that struck us. We came out of there, up sweeping stairs and into the main hall to find we had to step over a lot of cables: the performance was going to be televised. I remember the seating – old-style cinema tip-up seats, wooden framed, leather padding. In

their own way, part of the place's grandeur.

I can hardly remember the performance of 'Ma vlast' – heard it so many times – but that performance of "The Last Train" I/we won't forget. We sat surrounded by all these Czech people, a number of them – it was obvious – quite possibly old enough to remember or even to have been part of what that opera was about: the rescue of nearly seven hundred Czech – mainly Jewish - children, organized by Nicholas Winton just before the outbreak of the Second world War, known as the Kindertransport. We had a translation we could follow so we could understand the story, but it was hearing the children of their generation singing in Czech, accompanied by that orchestra, in Prague's central concert hall, performing that piece for the very first time in their country that gave a power and depth to the evening that made it utterly unforgettable. But it wasn't only the performance. At the end, absolutely everybody stood – and it was packed – to applaud, and the applause just went on. What I could see around me was many of those that stood had to be helped to their feet and helped to stand because of their frailty, and they were determined to stand, and there were so many in tears. So were we. We found ourselves living inside the memories of those people. And because so much of the story involved Nicholas Winton, and the way English families took the children in and cared for them, as English people ourselves we became a part of it too.

Vincent Price



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Deadlines for Affinity in 2021

April /May -March 14th

June /July –May 16th

August September—July 11th

October /November –September 12th

December '21 /January '22 –November 14th

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To check the prices that we charge for hiring rooms in our church please either contact Eliza or come into the church where we have a leaflet stating the prices that we charge for various rooms including hourly rate. We do have a Safeguarding Policy to protect children and vulnerable adults that we expect you to adhere to and uphold.

If you wish to advertise your business in our magazine our rates are £42 for a quarter page advert, £72 for a half page and £144 for a whole page. We have 6 issues a year and our distribution covers houses in Oadby, Wigston, Knighton, Great Glen and Houghton on the Hill.

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