



The **Methodist** Church **Stamford Circuit**

Registered Charity :1160930

February 2025



“.....God gave the growth. (1 Corinthians 3:b)

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The Circuit Newsletter exists to build up fellowship across the Stamford Methodist Circuit. Items for inclusion in the Circuit Newsletter should be: Inspiring, encouraging of faith and discipleship to promote the growth of church relationships within the Circuit.

Could you please send any articles for the March Circuit Newsletter by Monday 10th February 2025 to Email: admin2322@gmail.com

Or by post to:

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Pray without Ceasing February 2025



Suggestions for each day of the month. A few spaces have been left for your own concerns.

1. For people with Birthdays or Anniversaries this month
2. Rev Andrew Hollins
3. Market Deeping Church
4. Oakham Church
5. Ryhall Chapel
6. Rev Bekkie Wright
7. Thurlby Chapel
8. Uppingham Church
9. Barn Hill Church
10. Those who use our premises on Mondays
11. Those who use our premises on Tuesdays
12. Those who use our premises on Wednesdays
13. Phil Jones Circuit Mission Enabler
14. Bourne Chapel
15. Empingham Chapel
16. Ketton Chapel
17. Circuit Administrator Rowan
18. **
19. All those in prison
20. Those who use our premises on Thursdays
21. Those who use our premises on Fridays
22. Those who use our premises on Saturday
23. Circuit Officers
24. **
25. All who need to use food banks
26. **
27. Supernumerary Ministers
28. Peace in a troubled world

Any suggestions or requests please let Nina Rawlins know on 01780 753649 or email ninarawlins@yahoo.co.uk

Dear friends,

Pastoral Letter

February brings with it the hope of Winter moving into Spring. One sign of this is the first green shoots of plants poking tentatively above ground. Among the first of the plants to flower are the pure-white snowdrops. These fragile but beautiful flowers are also known as Candlemas Bells, a name derived from them blooming around the time of the Christian festival of Candlemas (February 2nd), which is the popular name for the feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple (see Luke 2:22-38).

The celebration of Candlemas falls forty days after Christmas. As the year moves on, Candlemas symbolises our turning away from the celebrations of Christ's nativity and instead giving our attention to the season of Lent. This will lead us to the sorrowful events of Holy Week and the glorious celebration of Easter (which, this year, falls almost as late as possible – on 20th April – thus meaning that the start of Lent is also 'late' – Ash Wednesday is 5th March).

February brings with it a sense of anticipation. The days are lengthening, and we sense that Spring is just around the corner, with creation awakening and unfolding new life around us. For those of us in the northern hemisphere, this resonates with the cycle of the Christian year as we anticipate the new life and resurrection joy of Easter.

In a Spring Reflection for *Quiet Places*, the newsletter of the Quiet Garden Movement (www.quietgarden.org), Brian Draper began by quoting these words by Christine Caine: **"...Sometimes when you think you've been buried, it's a planting..."** Building on this, Brian Draper noted that, whilst spring can be a gorgeous season, it can also be hard for those people for whom the winter ground has yet to thaw.

The pull of Christian faith is always towards the moments of celebration such as Easter, with its colour, vibrancy, fragrance and joyous Alleluias! But, each year, the path to Easter takes us through the valley of the shadow (Psalm 23:4). The seed must fall to the ground and die (John 12:24). The time the seed spends buried in the dark earth is vital preparation for the plant's breaking forth into the light. Also vital is the weeding and hoeing, the clearing and feeding, the mulching and watering. Cultivated growth is a powerful combination of the innate natural cycle of God's creation and our human contributions.

I can't possibly know how you are feeling as you read these reflections, drawing on those of Brian Draper. You may be feeling excited and energised by the hope of spring. Or you may be creaking and struggling to build up any enthusiasm. Whether you find yourself at those extremes, or somewhere on the spectrum between, the seasons will continue to cycle, and the seeds will sprout from the soil. This happens in the most surprising and unlikely of ways and places. Even out of seeming darkness and death springs new life.

Continued...

Continued...

Brian Draper concluded his *Quiet Places* newsletter reflection by quoting from the work of the American spiritual writer Richard Bach: **“What the caterpillar calls the end of the world, the master calls a butterfly!”**

God bless, **Andrew**

PS – During January and February this year, the churches of the Stamford Circuit have been focussing on **Soil, Seeds and Seasons** in worship as part of our wider process of discernment and seeking growth. It is my hope that the above reflections are relevant to this.



BOURNE CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Despite the stormy weather and events in the town being cancelled, our Christmas Tree Festival on 7th December went ahead with a steady stream of people admiring the decorated trees in the church which had been donated by local schools and hall users, then enjoying warming refreshments in the hall.

With the money raised from the Christmas Tree festival and our two carol services we were able to send £452 to "Crisis at Christmas".

Grateful thanks to all those who donated trees and helped on the day.



I Was Reading.....

When you squander or lose your money, there's a chance you can get it back. But not when you squander or lose your time.

Procrastination and perfectionism go hand in hand. We say, "If I can't do it right. I won't do it at all!" No, before you get it right you'll probably get it wrong. In every story of success there are chapters of struggle, but they are chapters of learning and growth.

Today is the tomorrow you were talking about yesterday. So stop procrastinating and do it.

Those who hear not the music think the dancer is mad. I will bless the Lord at all times His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

There is no neutral ground in the universe, every square inch, every split second is claimed by God, and counter-claimed by Satan. There is no middle ground. It is only a matter time before you must join one side or another. And it is preferable to predetermine your position with decisive intention than have it selected for you by passive default.

No law will ever cause you to be a good neighbour, but the love of Christ will. You see, a neighbour is not identified by colour or creed. A neighbour is identified by the nearest need.

You personally, must worship God! And regardless of how gifted and talented others may be, no one else can do that for you.

If you live life with the intention of enriching the lives of others, your life will be full, not empty.

Every one of the things of this world, including fame and fortune is temporary. Individual are what matters. Your job, pastimes, and other interests will die with you. People live on.

The true measure of success is not in the number of Individuals who help you, but the number of individuals you help.

To forgive means to admit to ourselves that the other person is not perfect, and neither are we. To fail to forgive is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die.

The reason many couples come to a point where they are contemplating divorce, is that instead of having conversations; their interactions disintegrate into sermons and monologues.

Many of our failures result from our failure to pray. As we examine our mistakes, we discover a forsaken prayer altar and an unopened Bible.

You do not have because you do not ask God. Because, while we are waiting God is working. Sometimes He is working on the thing we have asked Him for: other times He is working on us and our desire and attitudes.

Our vision becomes very limited. And instead of playing to win, we start playing not to loose. We all love doing what we are good at, but being good at something requires us to keep our skills sharp.

Continued...

Light is only useful when it encounters darkness.

As it turns out, escaping from darkness is as easy as turning on the lights.

Guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irrelevant babble and contradictions of what is falsely called "knowledge". For by professing it some have swerved from the faith.

Faith does not require explanations. It require simple obedience and trusting in the goodness of God.

Maybe we should stop asking God to get us out of difficult circumstances and start asking Him what He wants us to get out of those difficult circumstances.

Claiming to love is not enough. Love is not sentiment, but deeds.

When you encounter someone who tries to "cut you down to size", remind yourself they are probably trying to "cut you down to their size".

As a rule instead of staying where you're tolerated, go where you're appreciated

KLP

Wednesday Fellowship in February at Stamford Methodist Church

At 2pm in the downstairs hall

5th February: Speaker Mrs Nina Rawlins, Subject 'Humour'

12th February: Speaker Mrs Carry-Ann Gates, Subject 'Life Story'

19th February: Speaker Rev Dr Peter Stevenson, Subject 'Retirement/Farewell'

26th February: Speaker Rev Dr Rhonda Knight, Subject 'Prison Ministry'

Everyone is welcome to our Fellowship. There is no pressure to come every week. If you are interested in any of these subjects do come along.

You will get a very warm welcome and light refreshment before you leave.



STAMFORD PRISON FELLOWSHIP – ANGEL TREE FUND

The donations from our Circuit for 2024, amounted to £620.

Thank you all, again, for your generous giving.

This is very helpful for the families of the people in prison at Stocken.

Our Prison Fellowship were able to send 46 presents in December.

Every blessing. Maurice Wade

Stamford and Rutland Circuit Diary

Date	Time	Event	Venue
Monthly			
Every Thursday	8.30am	Circuit Staff Team Meeting	Via Zoom
FEBRUARY 2025			
Saturday 1st	10am	Meeting of Church Treasurers	Ryhall MC
Tues 4th	1pm	Doorstep Crime & Fraud Awareness Training (see page 10)	Ryhall MC
Tues 11th	7pm	Circuit Meeting	Via Zoom
Thursday 13th	8.30am	Circuit Staff Meeting	5 Rycroft Close Deppings
Thursday 13th	7pm	Circuit Leadership Team Meeting	Bourne MC
Saturday 15th	9.30am	Online Church Meeting	Via Zoom
Tuesday 18th	10.30am	Sabbatical Support Meeting	Empingham MC
Tuesday 18th	2pm	Circuit Farm Weekend Planning	Ryhall MC
Tuesday 18th	7pm	Local Preachers & Worship Leaders Meeting	Via Zoom
Wednesday 19th	12noon	Soup Lunch	Ketton MC
MARCH 2025			
Saturday 1st	10am	Pancake Morning (see opposite page)	Ketton
Sunday 2nd	6pm	Circuit Service	Uppingham MC
Tuesday 18th	7pm	Circuit Leadership Team Meeting	TBC
Wednesday 19th	12noon	Soup Lunch	Ketton MC
Saturday 22nd	9.30am	Foundation Module Safeguarding Training (see page 11)	Ryhall MC
Sunday 23rd	6pm	Oasis Worship	Stamford MC
Tuesday 25th	7pm	Foundation Module Safeguarding Training part 1	Zoom
APRIL 2025			
Tuesday 1st	7pm	Foundation Module Safeguarding Training part 2	Zoom

Annual Pancake Morning



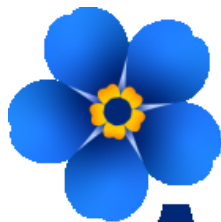
At
Ketton Methodist
Church

Saturday March 1st

10 am to 12 noon

Admission £3.50 for pancake and
coffee - more available to purchase!

All proceeds for



**Alzheimer's
Society**

FREE Doorstep Crime & Fraud Awareness Training

for Pastoral Visitors and all those across our Circuit who support Church members

**Tuesday 4th February 2025 from 1pm until 3pm
at Ryhall Methodist Church – Mill Street in Ryhall**

Learn about how criminals worm their way into people's lives, how they groom the elderly and vulnerable and then exploit them financially. Understand the methods they adopt and, most importantly, how to spot the signs if someone is already a victim of crime.

The session covers all areas of fraud including internet/cyber fraud; mass marketing fraud (including mail and telephone fraud); romance and courier fraud, social media data harvesting, and doorstep crime including: bogus officials, distraction burglary, and criminal (rogue) traders.

We hope to run another session in the spring if this is popular – so don't worry if you can't make this date.

**Limited spaces: please book as soon as possible by contacting
Charlotte Davis our Circuit Safeguarding Officer)
on 0797 606 4410 or
at SMCSafeguarding@gmail.com.**



OAKHAM METHODIST CHURCH

Gift Weekend

SATURDAY 15TH/SUNDAY 16TH MARCH

CELEBRATING TALENTS AND CREATIVITY

Saturday 10.00am—2.00 pm

***Come and "have a go" at creating something you haven't done
before, and enjoy a bowl of soup for lunch***

Sunday 10.45am

Café Church

Rev. Andrew Hollins

Safeguarding Training

Come along to our session of learning, discussion and reflection:

Saturday 22nd March 2025 9:30am – 12:30pm at Ryhall Methodist Church

or

Both Zoom sessions on Tuesday 25th March & 1st April 7pm – 8:30pm

We will be sharing information, discussing, and taking part in activities that together will help us to improve our safeguarding practice in our churches.

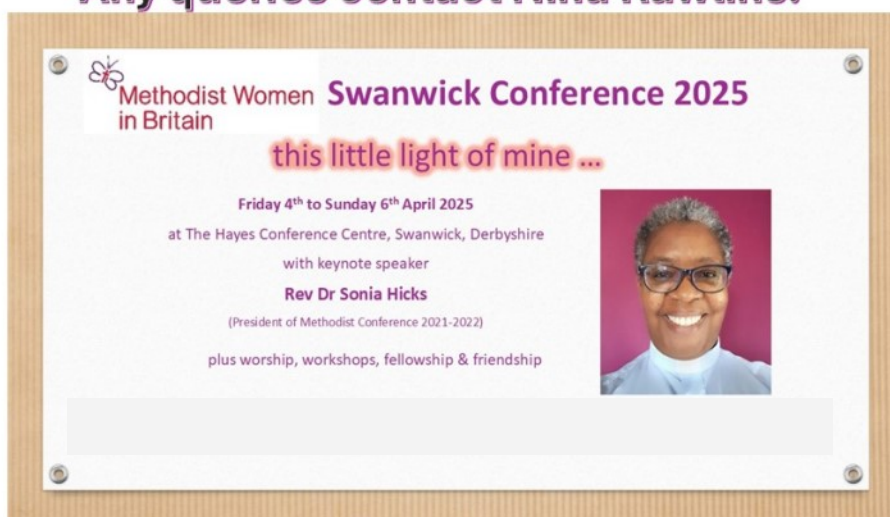
This session is designed for anyone who is a member and/or in a volunteering capacity as part of our Methodist Circuit and is recommended for anyone helping at church groups or events (for children and/or adults), as a pastoral visitor, steward and anyone who wants to know how to help keep our members and attendees safe within our churches and its wider events.

You will receive a Safeguarding Certificate for your attendance
(to be updated every four years).

Please book via Charlotte Davis

SMCSafeguarding@gmail.com or 0797 606 4410

**Methodist Women in Britain invite you to join them
for a weekend of fellowship and fun with our
Chair of District as keynote speaker.
Please refer to the MWiB website to make your booking
Any queries contact Nina Rawlins.**



Methodist Women in Britain **Swanwick Conference 2025**
this little light of mine ...
Friday 4th to Sunday 6th April 2025
at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire
with keynote speaker
Rev Dr Sonia Hicks
(President of Methodist Conference 2021-2022)
plus worship, workshops, fellowship & friendship

Serenity Flutes

Julie Dearden and Ann Wright *flutes*
Fergus Black *piano*

Enjoy a leisurely Saturday afternoon with a recital of sparkling and tuneful music.

After a start in London, courtesy of one of Bach's sons (JC, "the London Bach"), we go round the world on a boat conjured up by Debussy: we visit the forests of Russia, gather flowers with a Hindu Princess, take in an art gallery in Japan, and waltz till night falls in America. Intrigued?

Bourne Methodist Church

Abbey Road, Bourne, entrance at rear of Church; there is access from the car park

3pm on Saturday 8th March

for about 75 minutes

includes light refreshments afterwards

Free Admission with Retiring Collection in aid of church funds and charities



P Parking in the main Bourne car park (PE10 9EX) is free for two hours (access from Hereward Street or Meadowgate); some free parking on surrounding streets.

TREE OF LIFE

Let me draw from Your living water,
completely fed and nourished.

Let my arms reach out to bless others,
touching their heart.

Let me blossom with the fruit of Your Spirit,
be beautiful for You.

Let me be a shelter for those who search
for comfort and peace.

Let my roots dig deep, strong and unshakeable
with trust and hope.

Through all the seasons of my life, let me stand tall
in the heat of joy or the coldness of fear.

When I am stripped bare of strength let Your love empower me
to begin again with You.

By Beryl Teasdale



The Well at Barn Hill ~ Stamford Methodist Church

Volunteers needed!!

We are having a bit of a challenge trying to cover holiday times with volunteers particularly on a Wednesday. We are open from 10am to 2pm so if anyone would be able to help us for some or all of those hours on the odd occasion when we need help we would be very grateful.

Please contact Jan on 07557105083 or janhetherington2@gmail.com.

Please PRAY for:

Bourne

We pray for all people affected by the extremely cold weather that we have experienced recently, especially those who are homeless, or too frightened to put on their heating because of cost.

We pray for the people of Los Angeles affected by the wild fires and have lost everything. We pray for the peace deal in the Middle East between Israel and Palestine that these two countries put aside their differences and people are able to rebuild their shattered lives.

Deepings

We pray for God's guidance regarding how we respond to the challenge of growth and the preaching themes of Soil, Salt and Seasons

For those in our Church family who are recovering from illness and time in hospital.

Building repairs taking place at the Church this month.

Empingham

We give thanks for the young families of our Church family, we pray for the children who have asked to be baptised, that their faith will continue to grow.

We give thanks for our ecumenical prayer group as we pray together for our community.

Please pray for the opportunity to share our faith in the village coffee morning on

Wednesday's at St. Peter's and afternoon on Monday's at the Methodist Church.

Ketton

We pray earnestly for the situation across America with the wild fires...for all those who have lost everything, but especially loved ones.

We are very mindful in this bitterly cold weather of those who are homeless and hungry and pray that each of us in this New year will make a concerted effort to do more in whatever way we can.

We thank you for the recovery of friends but continue to pray for those awaiting diagnosis and treatment.

We continue to pray for our Ministry Team as they seek to serve all of us in the very best way possible.

Oakham

We give thanks for our upgraded projection system which has enhanced our worship and meant that video clips and other visuals are much more easily seen than previously.

Particular thanks to the team who worked so hard to have the system ready for use by Christmas. We pray for a few more people to learn how to operate it, and so share the load.

We pray for our different groups that meet during the week, especially those that are a doorway into the church community, that each may reflect the presence and love of Jesus.

Ryhall

Lord, we praise you for the blessings that you have heaped on our small congregation through the last year.

We thank you for the lead of the ministry team.

We pray for the elderly in our congregation as winter bites.

We pray with our neighbours in the village as the district council seeks to close the library, a focus for village life and a warm hub for those who struggle to heat their homes.

We bless you for the energy and enthusiasm of the young.

Strengthen us all we pray as we commence a new year with you as our shepherd.

Lead us on easy paths and make our load a joy.

Please PRAY for:

Stamford

Lord we pray for our stewards, leaders of our Church and all who minister to us. Give them insight and wisdom in everything they do and help us to value all that they do for us.

In our time of reflections on “Soil, Seeds and Seasons” make us aware of Your message to us as individuals, and as a Church.

We pray for those we know who are in need through trauma, illness or bereavement. Come close to each one Lord, and uphold and strengthen them.

Lord, we ask that you will guide us and empower us all to work together for You, as a family here in the Church and in the community.

Thurlby

During this cold weather we pray for those who are homeless, those whose houses are difficult to warm and those who find the cost of heating too much to manage.

We pray for those who have been flooded also. We will endeavor to do our utmost to help where we can. May we offer a warm welcome into our homes and churches at this time.

Uppingham

Please pray for olive who is facing more difficulties with her application to stay please pray for the warm space and those who come along that God will bless them. Help us as a church to bring Christ to our community around us.

I wondered lonely as a cloud.....

By William Wordsworth

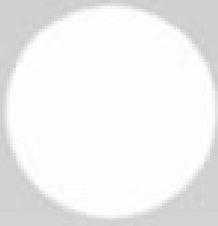
I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.





Save the Date!

The Circuit Farm Weekend 2025 will be

17th/18th May

At Normanton Lodge Farm

Watch this space for more information
and details of how you can get involved!

