

Newsletter January 2026

This is our monthly newsletter. The newsletter can be received by anyone who has an e-mail address. To subscribe to this service please send your e-mail address to: northstaffscircuit@hotmail.co.uk.

Happy New Year Everyone - So here it is January 2026!

I wonder how it feels to be at the start of this new year. For some it might feel like time has flown by, for others it might feel like time is crawling along. It's strange that we talk of time in such terms when we know it always moves forward at the same pace, but it can feel very different can't it? For some there will be anticipation and excitement about this year and what lays ahead, for others there might be concern, or worry. I know I've spoken to some who've said they are hoping for a better year ahead, maybe you wonder what this year might hold for you? Maybe you have a clear idea and know what it will hold; a significant birthday to look forward to (or dread), an anticipated birth, a special occasion, that long awaiting retirement or event... There may be other things we know about, that will shape the future but in ways yet to be discovered; medical tests, a job interview, or exams... In the great poetic wisdom found in the book of Ecclesiastes we are reminded '*For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven*' sometimes we might embrace the new season, sometimes we might long for a previous time, but one thing is certain time will not stand still but God is with us!

This got me thinking about the life of our churches. I wonder how often we think of the different seasons, or of times of change within our churches, or how often we cling onto what we do, or how we do it? Are there new things to look forward to, or an old thing to let go of this year? Our Christian story is one where creation and birth, death and resurrection where new life bursts forth are central themes, but sometimes we cling firmly to the status quo. I wonder instead what God might be calling us towards this year. In the life of our circuit, it will mean some farewells and welcomes, and it will no doubt bring changes, some anticipated others unexpected. In January we hold our annual covenant services, a chance to take stock and to recommit ourselves to God. I always find it a profound yet challenging service, I am however always struck by the fact that the covenant promise that we make doesn't come from nowhere but is in response to the faithfulness of God '*who was, and is, and is to come*'. The introduction to the covenant service states this: '*The emphasis of the whole service is on God's readiness to enfold us in generous love, not dependant on our deserving.*' So, whatever the year holds, may you know that you are enfolded in the generous love of God.

James

North Staffordshire Circuit (11/22)

Preaching Plan – January 2026

					January			
					4	11	18	25
					Epiphany	Baptism of the Lord	Epiphany 2	Epiphany 3
							Ordinary 2	Ordinary 3
Lectionary Year (A)					Isaiah 60:1-6	Isaiah 42:1-9	Isaiah 49:1-7	Isaiah 9:1-4
(Principal Service)					Psalms 72	Psalms 29	Psalms 40:1-11	Psalms 27:1, 4-9
					Ephesians 3:1-12	Acts 10:34-43	1 Corinthians 1:1-9	1 Corinthians 1:10-18
					Matthew 2:1-12	Matthew 3:13-17	John 1:29-42	Matthew 4:12-23
Please Pray For:					Audley	Baldwins Gate Community	Bradwell	Cross Heath
Cross Heath					N Jones	Singleton CV HC	Parkes	Willis
(23)								
Silverdale					Café Church	Chadwick	Singleton CV HC	Emmaus
(39)								Refuel
Wolstanton					Singleton CV HC	LA	Chadwick	Singleton
(82)								
Audley					Parkes CV HC	X	LA	X
(28)					X	US @ Halmer End	X	Ventom
Bradwell					LA	Ventom CV HC	Rowley	Kirk
(30)								
Halmer End					Irvine	X	N Jones	Ventom CV HC
(20)						Parkes Minnie Pit US		
Madeley					Strachan CV HC	R Jones	LA	Parkes
(23)								
St Luke's					Ventom CV HC	Harrison T	LA	Pritchard
(22)								
Higherland					Pritchard CV HC	Wakelin	LA	Matthews
(36)								Café Church Pritchard
Printed Service for this week prepared by:					Pritchard	Ventom	Singleton	Heap

Eco Tips

Make Small Changes in the Kitchen: ditch plastic-wrapped items; try composting food waste and use homemade cleaners with ingredients like vinegar and bicarbonate of soda.

Go Green in the Garden: use peat-free compost; create habitats for local wildlife; let part of your garden grow wild or create a pond by sinking a bucket into the ground and try growing your own herbs to support pollinators like bees and attract ladybirds.

Can you or your church give more to Foodbank?



I am aware demands on our goodwill giving becomes greater and greater as times are hard for all. However I am appealing for help once again.

Newcastle Foodbank has given **three days food supply** to **5820 adults** and **3088 children** in the **past twelve months**, which equates to **68,992 kilogrammes of food** providing **164,267 meals**.

At the moment we have 66 organisations on our system who refer clients to us, having determined them as someone in crisis. **No one is given food without that assessment.**

£40,000 was spent on buying food in the past twelve months to supplement your generous donations. **Sadly this is not sustainable long term, hence this appeal.**

Would you consider giving one item a week to help us to help those less fortunate than ourselves?

Or, if it is more convenient to you, can you help us financially on a regular or one-off basis?

We would love to hear from you if you want to know more.

I leave you with a few ideas as to what you may be able to contribute

Items we are short of include:

Bags for life

Jam

Tinned fish

Biscuits

Long-life milk

Tinned soup

Coffee

Tinned spaghetti

Toothpaste

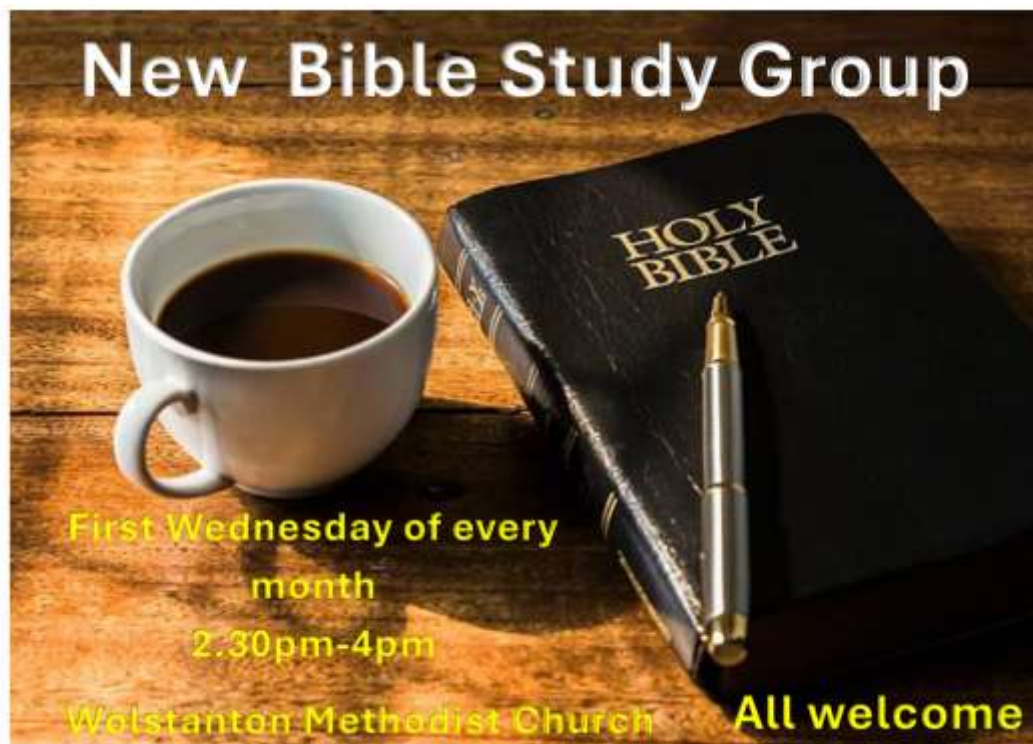
Nappies

I can guarantee your contribution will be used wisely and be much appreciated.

Take care and look after yourselves too. If you would prefer contact details for our warehouse team I can supply them.

Thank you

Marion Reddish (Foodbank Volunteer) 01782 613265
marionreddish@btinternet.com



Godly Play as Bible Study at Cross Heath Methodist Church

Story is one of the most ancient forms of knowing. It is the way our Christian heritage has been passed down to us. And story forms the foundation of Godly Play. It invites you to sit as part of a circle and listen as the stories of the Bible are told through word and action. It allows you to immerse yourself in the stories as an act of meditation and prayer and ultimately to encounter God. As the stories are told you sit and listen and at the end of the storytelling you are invited to consider a number of 'I wonder questions'. Questions posed by the storyteller that ask you to reflect on what you have heard. Questions like:

I wonder what part of the story was most important to you?
Or
I wonder where you are in the story?
Or
I wonder if there is a part of the story we can leave out and still have all the story we need?

There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions, they are a means by which you are invited to wonder deeply about the story and what it says to you. Then when the story is put away there is time to respond to all that you have heard and wondered about. It may be that you want to re-read the story again for yourself, paint, draw, model or write a response - the choice is entirely yours.

At the end of the response time we gather back together for refreshments before drawing our time together to an end. If this is something you think you might like to try then our next Godly play session will take place on **Monday, 19th January at 6.30 pm** at **Cross Heath Methodist Church**. Come and see, wonder, and reflect deeply about stories you thought you knew.

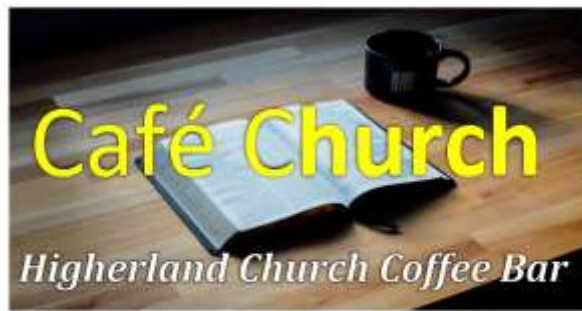
Karen Barnett

A Time for Prayer

In these uncertain times it seems as though the world needs prayer more than ever.

So on Saturday 24th January 2026 you are invited to a time of prayer for the world and for peace at Wolstanton Methodist Church at 10.00am.

You are invited to stay for as long as you wish but it's envisaged that our time together will last approximately one hour with the option to stay longer if you wish.



*Friendly Chatter & discussion,
welcoming smiles & a good laugh,
Songs, poems, thoughts & Prayers
Drinks & biscuits.*

Come along @ 6pm

Sunday 25th Jan

Higherland Church Coffee Bar
2pm-4pm on Monday 26th Jan



Everyone welcome to come and

Join in the chatter

Free snacks, cakes & drinks.

SPRING TABLE TOP

**AT AUDLEY
METHODIST CHURCH**

**SATURDAY 21ST MARCH
10:30AM TO 12:30PM**

£12 per table
to book - contact office
01782 722755 or email
audleymethodist@btconnect.com

**refreshments
available
free parking**



**Book Swap
at
Bradwell Methodist Church**

There is a new free book swap library outside Bradwell Methodist Church. Please take a look and if you have any unwanted books please pop them in.



**Coffee Morning's at
Audley Methodist Church**

Refreshments, in a
welcoming
"WARM SPACE"
await you

Join us
every
Tuesday
10am to
midday



Coffee Morning

10.30am – 12.30pm

Every Wednesday at
Wolstanton
Methodist Church

Madeley Methodist Church
invites you to join us at our



**Warm Space
Elevenses**



On Wednesdays at 11am

Chat

Free
Refreshments

Activities

Everyone Welcome


There's nothing like a good cuppa coffee and a friend like you to share it with!



Let's catch up!

**WHY NOT CATCH UP
WITH FRIENDS OLD
AND NEW**

**BRADWELL METHODIST
CHURCH**
THURSDAY'S 10 - 12



 Christian Resources for Life
@ Methodist Book Centre
Support your local, independent
Christian bookshop



In Store

Online



www.crfl.co.uk
Gitana Street, Hanley, ST1 1DY
01782 212146

MAGIC MOMENTS
St. Luke's Methodist Church
Severn Drive
Clayton
ST5 4BH

MAGIC MOMENTS

FREE ENTRY

Crafts

Activities

Games

Tea, Coffee & Biscuits

Bingo

Quiz

Stories

10.00am - 12.00 noon, last Thursday of every month.
Fun, explore together in lots of creative, interactive and fun ways.
A great opportunity to enjoy some time together.

For more information please contact Phil or Joannette Hodges
on 01782 634766 or look on our Facebook page.

Blessed are those who
TRUST in the LORD,
whose confidence
is in him.

Jeremiah 17:7

