



The Link

CHANDLER'S FORD Methodist Church

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December 2024 / January 2025

<https://www.cfmetho.dist.church/>

CCL 30794

Staff Team

- Rev Ruth Fry** Minister – Day off Friday
ruth.fry@methodist.org.uk (01962 882 828)
- Jane Padley** Pastoral Assistant – day off Monday
cfmc_jane@hotmail.co.uk (023 8026 6180)
- Glenn Stephens** Property Manager
property@cfmethodist.church (07753 167 098)
- Ellie Purkiss** Youth Worker – day off Monday
ellie@cfmethodist.church (07708 501 191)
- Weekly notices** by noon on Wednesday – also *The Link*
richardwright@outlook.com (07905 115 140)
- Katrina Neale** Church Centre Manager
katrina@cfmethodist.church (023 8026 0128)
- Room Booking** bookings@cfmethodist.church
- Sonia Craig** Circuit Administrator
weradmin@wermethodist.onmicrosoft.com

We have accounts on the following social media channels
(you can just search for Chandler’s Ford Methodist Church):

Facebook – @ChFordMethodist

X – @ChFordMethodist

Instagram – @Chandlers_ford_methodist

We post different things on each so if you use any of the above,
please “like” or “follow” as appropriate and most importantly
then “share” or “retweet” our posts so we can reach others
and increase our online congregation.

For activities for Children and Young People,
see the **CFMC Youth and Children’s Work Facebook** page.
For Boys’ and Girls’ Brigades, adult activities and *The Link*
see our website: <http://cfmethodist.church/>

From our Minister

Dear friends,

Rev Ruth Fry

This year at CFMC we are using the resources from *Hush the Noise*, the Methodist Church's Christmas campaign for 2024. This is based around the well-known Christmas Carol "It came upon the midnight clear".

The way we as a nation choose to celebrate Christmas is loud, isn't it? So much expectation. So many voices. Telling us how to celebrate. What to wear. What to eat and drink. What to watch and what to buy.

So, instead, this Christmas at CFMC we're inviting everyone to hush the noise. The invitation is to stop and listen for the love song that the angels bring, this and every year. They sang it for the first time more than 2,000 years ago, on the midnight clear. They're just waiting for us to join in. This doesn't mean that our Worship Services will be less festive and joyous. The focus is simply going to be about trying to cut out the distracting noises, pressures and messages that surround us at this time of year so that we can all hear the voice of God amid the hubbub.

Let's remember too this year that for people of faith Christmas begins on 25 December. That is the first day of the Christian festival we call Christmas. Until then we are in Advent, a time of preparing, waiting and watching.

Hush the Noise takes us from the first day of advent through to the festival of the Epiphany. If you want to find out more about the campaign, you can find more information here:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/faith/hush-the-noise/>

All that remains is for me to wish you all a very peaceful and blessed Advent, Christmas and Epiphany.

Ruth

Services

DECEMBER

- Sunday 1** 9.30 am Breakfast Church – Rev Ruth Fry and
Advent Ellie Purkiss – BB/GB Rededication Service
11 am Sunday Worship – Rev Ruth Fry
- Wednesdays 4, 11 and 18** 7.30 pm Advent Meditation in Church
- Thursday 5** 10.30 am Midweek Service in the Ambrose Chalk
Room – Graham Hepburn (*not on Zoom*)
- Sunday 8** 9.30 am Holy Communion – Rev Ruth Fry
11 am Gift Service – Barbara Hillier
- Sunday 15** 11 am Sunday Worship – Rev Ruth Fry
6.30 pm One Achord at St Andrew's, Eastleigh
(*see page 7*)
- Sunday 22** 11 am Sunday Worship with Holy Communion
– Rev Kate Cambridge
6.30 pm Carol Service – Rev Ruth Fry
- Tuesday 24** 4 pm Christingle Service – Ellie Purkiss
- Wednesday 25** 11 am Christmas Worship – Rev Ruth Fry
- Thursday 26** 10.30 am Short Service – Anne Heath (*see page 7*)
- Sunday 29** 11 am Sunday Worship – Anne Heath and friends

Midweek Services are subject to change due to building work:
5 December: in the Ambrose Chalk room (not on *Zoom*)
12, 19 December: cancelled

JANUARY

- Thursday 2** 10.30 am Midweek Service – Rev Bob Kitching
- Sunday 5** 9.30 am Breakfast Church – Ellie Purkiss
11 am Sunday Worship – Elizabeth Britton
- Thursday 9** 10.30 am Midweek Service – Rev Andrew de Ville
- Sunday 12** 11 am Covenant Service with Holy Communion
– Rev Ruth Fry
- Thursday 16** 10.30 am Midweek Service – Rev Ruth Fry
- Sunday 19** 11 am Sunday Worship – Methodist Women
in Britain (MWiB)
6.30 pm Evening Service with Holy Communion
– Rev Ruth Fry
- Thursday 23** 10.30 am Midweek Service – Rev John Archer
- Sunday 26** 11 am Sunday Worship – Rev Ruth Fry
- Thursday 30** 10.30 Midweek Service – MWiB and
Barbara Hillier

FEBRUARY

- Sunday 2** 9.30 am Breakfast Church – Marion Carter
11 am Sunday Worship – Sam Barnes
- Thursday 6** 10.30 am Midweek Service Rev Ruth Fry

DECEMBER

- Friday 6 1.30 pm Dovetail Group in Meeting Room 1
Reflections for Advent
- Thursday 12 2.30 pm Good News Group in Ambrose Chalk
Room – Carols led by Chris Warren
- Thursday 19 1 pm Lunchtime Communion at Colden Common
Peter Castle – *Reflections on Christmas Gifts*
- Friday 20 1.30 pm Dovetail Group in Meeting Room 1
- Saturday 21 7 pm Puppet Christmas Show in the Church Hall
(see page 7)
- Monday 23 7 pm Puppet Christmas Show in the Church Hall

JANUARY

- Friday 3 1.30 pm Dovetail Group in Meeting Room 1
The journey of a Lifetime – Childhood
- Friday 17 1.30 pm Dovetail Group in Meeting Room 1
The journey of a Lifetime – Adolescence
- Sunday 19 Christmas lunch after Morning Worship
(see page 7)
- Wednesday 22 Deadline for items for the February edition
- Saturday 25 9.30 am Who Let the Dads Out in the Church Hall
- Thursday 30 1 pm Lunchtime Communion at Colden Common
Peter Castle – *Reflections on Covenant*

<p>Dovetail Café Monday to Friday 9.30 am (Saturday 10 am) until 12 noon</p>



Message Board

The next edition of *The Link* will be for **February**.

Send items by **Wednesday 22 January** to:

Richard Wright (richardwright@outlook.com)

The next **Thursday morning Service**, on **Thursday 5 December**, will be the last Thursday Service before Christmas. If anyone would like to choose a favourite **Christmas hymn or carol**, preferably one which you might normally not find included in the main Christmas Services, please let Graham know. Whilst the preacher's decision will be final, he hopes it will be first three come, first three served! - Graham Hepburn (07849 928 430).

Advent Meditations will be held in church at 7.30 pm on **Wednesdays 4, 11 and 18 December**. A time for quiet preparation in the run up to Christmas. Please join Margaret Smithson and Anne Heath who will be leading them.

Hush the Noise – A Christmas Love song, Expectation and Expectancy. On **Saturday 21 December from 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday 22 December from 2 pm to 6.30 pm**. Come along to the Church and see the story unfold through an array of Nativities from around the world. Suitable for all ages, we are using these models to help us through the stable door, to explore and tell us the deeper things so that we can know you, and that you know us. Hush the Noise, Love is born again. We are really grateful to Jacquie Aubrey for sharing her Nativity collection with us, donations to *30 Years On*. Love to see you there.

Anne Heath will be holding a **short act of Worship** on the morning of **Thursday 26 December** at 10.30 am in the Dovetail Centre, and drinks and biscuits/cakes will be available.

Stand Up for Christ Puppet Christmas Show on **Saturday 21 and Monday 23 December** at 7 pm in the Church Hall, by the *Hand in Hand Puppet Team*. Tickets available on the door (cash only) at £6 (child £2.50, under 3s free). There will be a short interval with refreshments. If you can help with stewarding or refreshments, please contact Sarah Sprack at handpuppetteam@gmail.com.

One Achord choir are performing 'Let there be Christmas' at St. Andrew's, Eastleigh on **Sunday 15 December** at 6.30 pm. No tickets required, donations to **Christian Aid Middle East Crisis**.

Church cleaning – Volunteers are needed to help with Church cleaning. They dust or vacuum about once every 2 months at a time of their choosing, and are usually part of a team of 3 or 4. If you could help fill some of the gaps left by retirees, Daphne Waite (023 8025 3611) would love to hear from you.

On **Sunday 19 January 2025** after the Morning Service, we are planning a **Christmas Lunch**. A three course meal will be served in the Dovetail Centre. Suggested donation £15 per person, any profit will be for Church *30 Years On* project. Everyone is warmly welcomed. So please put the date in your new diaries.

Our **Church Council** will meet at the Church on **Wednesdays 12 February and 14 May** at 7.30 pm. All are welcome to attend.

A Rocha Eco-tips

Celebrate a Greener Christmas. Find ways to make your Christmas festivities both a joyous celebration of Christ's coming and environmentally conscious. Explore A Rocha UK's twelve tips for a greener Christmas at <https://arocha.org.uk/our-twelve-tips-for-a-greener-christmas/>. Do look these up. There are some interesting ideas.

Heating

Linking the two new boilers, pumps and heat exchanger with the existing heating system was never going to be a straightforward affair. So it has proved. On the positive side, new valves controlling the large number of radiators have been fitted and seem to be working. Those fitted to the radiators in the Dovetail Café are fixed permanently on setting three. It is a pleasure to walk into a demonstrably warm space. However, there still seems to be some ‘teething’ problems with the steady heat for the Sanctuary and the Hall. Our Contractor is addressing the problem.

Accessibility and Sustainability Phase

As I write we are just four weeks into the Contract with R H Hammond and Sons Ltd. They have made very significant progress. The noisy work of modifying some walls, creating new doorways and toilet areas, breaking through the floor and creating the lift shaft is complete. While I recognise – and apologise for, the discomfort that some people have experienced while this work carried on, it is good to see the shape of things to come.

Plumbers and electricians are now on what is known in the trade as ‘second fix’. Within a few days, plasterers will be able to start their work. At the mid-November Site Meeting we were assured that the Contract is on time.

Celebration Open Day Saturday 8 February 2025 – A date for your diary!

We are planning a day of celebration of the renewed premises and the addition of a lift for the first-floor suite. The Open Day will be a morning event – 10 am to 1 pm. The primary aim is to invite people to come to see the refurbished toilets and the newly installed lift, but of greater importance is just to have an open house to thank people for their generosity, their understanding during the disruption, and to thank everyone for making it all possible. We envisage printing invitation cards in the New Year to be given to members of the Sunday and Thursday Congregations, members of both Church groups and User groups and to as many of the ‘fringe’ people of our Church as possible. There will be complimentary coffee (not specialist) and tea, cakes and savouries. We shall use the Hall for serving drinks etc. as well as the Dovetail Cafe and have open doors for people to look round. We hope that our regular Saturday morning café clients will feel welcome too.

Above all, we hope that it will generate not just interest in what we have achieved but also excitement about the future.



Christmas Complete

This year the Church is again supporting SCRATCH, the local charity fighting poverty. There will be a collection box in the Dovetail Centre in the first week of December only. At the **Gift Service on 8 December**, we will be receiving your gifts. They will then be collected by SCRATCH (this is the last day for donations). For more details of how to contribute, see:

<https://www.scratchcharity.co.uk/projects/christmas-complete.htm>

They are seeking donations of new toys and books, please leave unwrapped. Gifts of wrapping paper, sellotape, batteries (all sizes), books, board games, puzzles and soft toys. Age relevant toys (no guns or war type toys), colouring books, pencils, pens, stationery items. Teenage gifts. Gifts for babies and toddlers. Sweets and chocolate in their original packing, sale by date must be at least to end of January 2025.

Methodist Women in Britain

Barbara Hillier and Joyce Powell

The District Project “Extending Dignity”

The Leprosy Mission, Nepal.

The Leprosy Mission is a Christian Charity. Prayers and worship are held every day in all their facilities across the world. So please hold everyone involved in your prayers.

As I said in the last edition of *The Link*, there are some Good News stories about sufferers of leprosy in Nepal. The Community Health Worker Volunteers are known and trusted in the villages of Nepal. They can go into homes when there are no men present. They pass on knowledge and so educate the people. It is known that the disease is carried in water droplets – by coughs and sneezes not by touch. Mostly it affects people who live in poverty so have little resistance.

As cases are found people give them a list of their contacts. These are then screened and can be given a course of antibiotics to prevent the development of the disease. Maya, a 7-year-old, was cured because of this contact tracing. She was saved from a

life of discrimination, stigma and exclusion. So here was healing and giving back dignity.

It only costs £28 to train one of the health workers to do this work, giving hope particularly to women and girls.

On **Sunday 19 January** the MWiB Circuit team will be leading worship at Chandler's Ford and I'm sure will feature this project. They will also, along with Barbara Hillier, lead the Service on **Thursday 30 January**. I hope you will be able to come and share in one or both of these Services.

The Advent Calendar is now available for you to take home and use every day until Christmas. I hope you will find the links between leprosy, the Nativity and ourselves helpful as you prepare for the celebration of Christ coming to earth to share the Good News of God's Kingdom. Please let us have your donations by Sunday 19 January. Cheques should be addressed to MWiB Southampton District.

Much research is going on at Anandaban Mycobacterial Research Laboratories (see below) but a vaccination against leprosy is still a way off.

About TLM Nepal (contributed by Barbara Lowe)

The Leprosy Mission (TLM) is a UK based international non-government organization active in 34 countries. It started its work in Nepal from 1957 with establishment of Anandaban Hospital in Lele, the southern part of Lalitpur.

However, from 2005 TLM Nepal has been working as independent NGO in partnership with TLM international and the Government of Nepal to provide specialist tertiary care and technical support for leprosy control programs.

It also undertakes internationally recognized research into leprosy and implements disability inclusive community development programs through its own activities and strategic partnership.

Being one of the largest NGOs in the country working in the field of leprosy, TLM Nepal mainly focuses in working with and for people affected by leprosy. Its development interventions focuses in the areas of health, capacity building, education, sustainable livelihoods, community development, advocacy and research working towards equity and inclusion of people affected by leprosy and disability in the development process.

Thank you for your support both financial and prayerful. May Joy and Blessings be yours this Christmas.



Women's Fellowship

Penny Criswick

29/10 **Rob Hart**, General Manager of *Eastleigh Lakeside Steam Railway* was here to talk to us today – and what a treat it was. Rob's enthusiasm and knowledge made this a most fascinating afternoon. We began in 1993 with the bleak, dull former gravel pits that have now become a lush wildlife country park boasting the miniature railway with the longest tunnel in the UK! Some 60,000 visitors a year come to enjoy a ride on one of twenty-two unique steam engines – lovingly maintained by an army of sixty volunteers. Rob can tell you about the history of each and every train, and the evolution of the railway from its first quarter of a mile track operated out of an old shipping container, to its present magnificence: complete with tunnel, signals, station, cafe and cakes!

5/11 **John Archer** was our speaker today and began by warning us that today it would be a “religious” talk. However, true to form John held our interest with a seasoning of amusing anecdotes. We began with a reference to the parable about hiding your light under a bushel, as told by Matthew and by the end John was encouraging us to do the little things which will draw others to the light of Christ.

It was a chill, grey November afternoon and we finished with a hymn that matched the weather, being “The day thou gavest Lord has ended”. Perhaps if we’d had the talk in spring, we could have sung “This little light of mine”.

12/11 Today **Bryan Coates** gave us a wonderful talk entitled “In the steps of Livingstone”. We learnt of Livingstone’s very humble origins, working long hours in a cotton mill from the age of ten, with two hours schooling tacked on the end. Despite this, he went on to qualify not only as a doctor but also a theologian. He then embarked on an arduous journey to become a missionary in Africa – almost losing an arm to a lion! Bryan interspersed the story with his own boyhood, admiring such heroes as the Arctic explorers, the dam busters and of course, Livingstone.

Then we heard of Livingstone’s many journeys in Africa, spanning thirty-two years. He was the first European to see the Victoria Falls, discovered the source of the Nile and with his missionary zeal against slavery, became known as the “Friend of Africa”. He was feted as a hero on his two visits to England – not only by Queen Victoria but also the Royal Geographical Society becoming a best-selling author along the way. Then this extraordinary man finally succumbed to exhaustion and illness at the age of 60. His remains were treated with the utmost respect before finally arriving at Westminster Abbey.

19/11 Who would have thought that behind Williams Garage in Otterbourne lies a magnificent 8-acre conservation area, which has become a haven for many of our native species of birds and animals and attracts wildlife photographers from all over Europe? **Pete Whieldon**, from *Otterbourne Hides and Studio*, was here today, accompanied by his wife and three beautiful, incredibly tame owls. For owls are his greatest passion. Over sixty visit his reserve.

He told us the story of how he developed the reserve, after the serious fire struck the garage in 2015. The area is now landscaped with 10 hides and three reflection pools, three of them for kingfishers. These give photographers unique opportunities to photograph the birds. There are three reflection pools, and props and perches are constantly reviewed to enhance photographers' opportunities. It is impossible to do justice to the information Pete shared with us but suffice it to say he pays a £16,000 food bill a year to provide food to attract and sustain all the wildlife there, leaves home at 7 am each day for the hour and a half it takes to distribute the food, which he does again at the end of the day. There was a dazzling and wide-ranging display of bird and animal photographs to accompany the talk, including some incredibly cute dormice with entwined tails. He is able to rescue injured birds and cure sick ones and thinks of his work as giving back to nature. His family, children and grandchildren are all part of the business, and they are happy if the income generated from the photographers meets the cost of the food bill!

We meet on Tuesday afternoons at 2.30 pm in the Dovetail Centre:

December

- 3 Carol Service
10 Christmas Party

January

- 7 Joyce Powell “12th Night”
14 Ellie Purkiss
– Update on Youth Work
21 David and Mary Turner
– Return to Myanmar
28 John Hughes – Lay Pastor
at Alresford Methodist Church

Southampton Eco District Webinars

Creation Mondays 7.30 – 9 pm

Helping our District reach net zero by 2030. For information and to register, go to: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/cc/southampton-eco-district-events-2606229>. Email: ecodistrict@sdmc.org.uk.

Monday 16 December: Action for Hope: *How can we become net zero by 2030?* – Hamish Leese, Action for Hope Implementation Officer.

Monday 20 January 2025: Eco Church – Venturing beyond bronze – Jim Gillings, Salisbury Methodist Church and Rose Gosling, Summerbridge Methodist Church.

Huge success for Ukraine Winter Appeal

Roman

The autumn/winter appeal for hats, scarves and gloves for Ukraine has closed. We were overwhelmed by the generosity and response – we received a total of 1,701 items! So, a big, big thank you for all your help in making the appeal such a big success

If you want to know what we collected: 798 hats, 419 scarves, 484 pairs of gloves. We also received: 110 knitted teddies, 2 knitted fish, 1 knitted ‘pocket pal’. Finally – thank you once again for your help, kindness and generosity to people in Ukraine!



30 Years On

Chris Goodhead, Church Treasurer (023 8025 2405)
chrisgoodhead@btinternet.com

I am pleased to report that we have now reached a fundraising total of £152,000, over three quarters of the way towards our target of £200k.

Thank you to all who have contributed so generously to enable us to reach this point. The Lloyds Bank account details for *30 Years On* are:

- Name – Chandlers Ford Methodist Church
- Number – 55866960
- Sort code – 30 92 94

30 Years On Fund-raising events

There is a Cake Day this month on **Thursday 12 December** in the Linkway. If you have any donations of biscuits or cakes, please bring them along on the day. Remember to price them up beforehand. Speak to Caroline Husain or Anne Heath if you have any queries.

Just Puzzles – Ann Fielder is holding a sale of puzzles on **Thursday 12 December** in the Linkway. All proceeds go towards *30 Years On*.

Scout Post for Christmas

Post for the SO53 area – posting box in the Dovetail Centre

Instead of posting **SO53** Christmas mail in a traditional Royal Mail post box, the 1st Chandler's Ford Scout Group are running a local Christmas postal delivery service – Scout Post. This is the second year that we are running Scout Post and hope this Christmas to be able to make it even bigger, better and wider reaching!

Scout stamps are only **35 p per card**, less than half the cost of a Royal Mail second class stamp. Our special Christmas Scout Post boxes will be in a variety of locations across Chandler's Ford from **25th November until 22nd December**. Any cards and the money for stamps can be posted together in the Scout Post boxes, and we will attach stamps before delivery. We simply ask for the full delivery address, postcode and any special instructions to be clearly written on each envelope. All post will be delivered by members of our Scout Group by 24th December at the very, very latest.

All profits from Scout Post will go towards Brickfield's Big Build, which is the 1st Chandler's Fords project to replace their current Scout hut on Brickfield Lane with a community building, activity centre and Scout HQ. Further information about this project can be found on our website:

<https://www.1stchandlerfordscouts.co.uk/>