November 2025



The monthly news bulletin of the Herefordshire (South and East) Methodist Circuit

Seasons - Awesome Wonder - By Revd Ruth Eldridge

In September 2000, I started my second year of three at Cliff College in Derbyshire. For me Cliff College was an amazing place, especially as they accepted overseas students. One of those overseas students was a Methodist Deacon, and she was from Guyana, part of South America, but in the Caribbean.

We soon became good friends, and I have since travelled to the Caribbean to work with her in two of her appointments.

Guyana is nothing more than rainforest, so it only gets two seasons, which are very different from here in the UK. Guyana has a hurricane season, and a non-hurricane season. The temperature is pretty much constant, as is the humidity, so when my friend with the grand name, Vincia Celestine came to Cliff College, she was absolutely in awe of our seasons.

She experienced, cold, snow and ice for the first time. Spring with all the new life, flowers, shrubs, leaves springing into life, and dry summer days. But her favourite, was Autumn. She had never seen such beautiful colours on trees, and she watched with interest as the shades of the leaves changed preparing to drop for winter. Vincia was like a child seeing things for the first time. She said to me, "All those hymns I have sung since I was a child make sense to me now...... 'The purple headed mountain', 'Great is Thy Faithfulness, Summer and Winter, Springtime and Harvest', and she listed all the hymns that had meant nothing to her about changing seasons, that now had new meaning to her here in the UK.

Cont.....

The Methodist Church

Herefordshire (South & East) Circuit

We are very privileged in the UK to experience the awesome beauty of 'seasons'. There are many countries that never get to see such diversity of nature.

God created His world for our pleasure to reflect His glory, and for us to take care of, to show us that He is a loving and caring God.

When we sing Hymns praising Him, foe example, 'For The Beauty of the Earth', do we sing the words with our lips only, or do we also sing with our hearts?

Do we have a child like wonder as we sing those familiar hymns about creation and seasons, which are God's handiwork, like my friend Vincia does? Let us this Autumn, actually **see** what is around us with child like we, and lift our hearts and voices in praise with a new enthusiasm. He deserves nothing less.

Psalm 104:19

'He made the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.'



The boiler only worked if the Verger switched it on



The Lay Training Programme was the envy of the district

Words and Actions









MARY WAS VERY EXCITED











Christian Values

Many voices are calling for the return of Christian values. But what are they? This is my attempt at a summary:

Truth – known through divine inspiration or the patience of science. Truth can never be just a matter of opinion.

Law – that moral law is inherent in the nature of things, especially human nature.

Justice – where all are equal before the law and the vulnerable are protected. **Responsibility** – that although we are shaped by circumstance, we are still called to make the most of the hand we are given.

Gratitude – for Creation as God-given and wonder for the gift of life.

Respect - for others and for all living things and for the planet.

Compassion - for the weak, the vulnerable and the struggling.

Community - of family and neighbourhood, widening to encompass country and the world beyond.

Marriage - as a microcosm of society, giving stability, contentment and a safe foundation for children.

Humility - for humanity is raw and unfinished and all things fall short of the glory of God.

Hope - that all can be made new and sometimes even suffering can become redemptive.

Forgiveness - creating room for healing and restoration.

Peacemaking – a crucial ministry of reconciliation.

Love - as the basis and goal of all things.

Today's values include tolerance, individualism and personal freedom. Are these Christian? Christian history has hardly been marked by tolerance – it was the religious wars and the Enlightenment that brought this to the forefront. Clearly the Reformation too helped to create the modern outlook. Yet links can be made – see Jesus' words, "judge not lest you be judged". There is plenty scope for Bible study and discussion as with all of the above.

Some of these values we owe to Judaism; some common to many religions, and some to all humanity. In the world of politics, some are stressed by the right and some by the left. I have kept until last the value that I feel is the most characteristic of Christianity – that of **Service**. Jesus said, "I come as one who serves". It is a mark of Britain's claim to be a Christian country that we speak of a wide range of public services and that those who would lead are expected to be servants to all.

Graham

Around the Circuit

Bromyard News

We are happy to report a lot of successful work on our property in recent months and we go forward into the winter confident that we will remain dry and warm despite whatever the weather throws at us. Our premises are providing good facilities to many groups, Young and the 'More Mature', in the town and local area. It's good to have many complimentary comments coming from folk as they come and go. We pray that our 'Message' and example will continue to be appreciated by our local population as we open our doors in welcome.

Our 'Warm Space' continues on Wednesdays 10am to 2pm and is very well attended, this month we extend our time from 12 noon to 2pm.

We are very grateful for the support from members of St. Joseph's Catholic church who are there every week working alongside us helping to make it a very successful venture.

Ledbury News

As always, our church was beautifully decorated for Harvest at the end of September – and this year, that extended to flowers around the car park signpost outside the church! There was a lot to take in during the service as Rev Phil guided us through traditional Harvest to the day's news, as well as incorporating All Age Worship elements. Having one of our younger children so beautifully do a reading was a real added bonus.

The churches of the town decided to have a combined harvest service in October, but by the time we learnt of this, the service in our own church on that day had already been arranged. However, a few of us joined the other churches for a shared light lunch after both our services had finished.

The Women's Breakfast Retreat Day went well by all accounts – there is a separate item on that elsewhere in In Touch, so I won't attempt to cover it! However, following our own Church Awayday in August, the men are clearly getting jealous and we are thinking whether some form of Men's Breakfast might be possible. Watch this space....!

We are grateful to Martyn Sanders for leading the Bible study on the "I Am" sayings of Jesus, a series which continues into early November. Numbers have been a bit volatile, but the sessions have been greatly appreciated by those who were able to come.

The recent Church Council meeting covered the usual wide range of topics – from Junior Church and Christmas arrangements, to LED lighting and potential "sound baffling" to make it easier to hear each other in the Activity Room. It was also noted that Barclays Bank, who have been using one of our rooms to provide a service to their customers, are withdrawing that facility, and so we will be losing them as a tenant. Apart from the financial loss to the church, this is a sad ending of a service to the town.

On a personal note, can I also thank so many people around the circuit for their messages of sympathy and support following the death of my wife. Cheryl was (until recently) one of Ledbury's representatives to the Circuit meeting, as well as being on our own Church Council. Thank you for your kind words and prayers. Brian Hudson

St. John's

November...how did that happen? It seems to me that October was just getting started when thoughts of November sneaked in.

As a child I loved the Thomas Hood poem "November" having been introduced to it by my inspirational teacher, Mr Hooper, whose love of words inspired a class of 52 errant 10-11 year olds in a northern industrial town to look beyond the obvious. (Look it up)

Back to the present, we reflect on the passing of October. Early in October St. John's played host to events around 'The Baton of Hope'. More of that overleaf.

Several of our congregation have been involved in challenges of health and we pray for each one that they will know the strength which comes from those prayers to sustain them when pain or worry overwhelm.

We were left a legacy of Tea Church by Joyce Wayman when she moved to Newcastle. The next one is on November 16th. She is delighted to know it continues to thrive with numbers varying according to health or weather or both.

There is to be an extra afternoon talk on November 2nd when Mark Jackson speaks and shows accompanying slides to reflect on his recent extended visit to Australia. All are welcome. Donations will go to the Amenities Fund at the MHA home where Joyce Wayman now lives.

May your November be blessed with good health and clear skies. Pat Peden

The Baton of Hope

'We believe that deaths by suicide are preventable, right up until the point of action; and that all of society has a duty of care. Through campaigning, public education and awareness, a series of pledges and lobbying, we will create change.

By working with partners, fellow charities and communities we will work tirelessly to make suicide prevention a top priority.

We will give hope and save lives.'

This year the Baton of Hope came to Hereford as part of a nationwide tour.

The Town Hall had an access problem as their lift broke, so St. John's to the rescue! The church and halls were full all day with collegeage youngsters engaged in making artwork and music. The Senior Steward thoroughly enjoyed his time there, and Phil said he'd never seen the church so full!





Cheryl Ann Hudson

19 July 1947 - 20 September 2025

Cheryl grew up in Crouch End, North London. Secondary school never suited her, but trips to the London Theatre kindled a life-long love of theatre and AmDram.

On leaving school, she completed a 3-year hairdressing apprenticeship but then decided to see the world by joining the Army. On discovering the only part of the world she'd see was Aldershot she bought herself out after 3 months!

She offered to help with the local Cub Scouts and it was there that she met and married Brian. With their two daughters, Lorraine and Kate, they first lived in Enfield but then moved to Ware, in Hertfordshire.

Being a mum was her top priority but later she became a teaching assistant in a Special Needs School, then worked in a jeweller's and finally went back to special needs education in her local secondary school.

In her 'spare time' she was a steward and pastoral visitor at Leaside Methodist Reformed Church; a telephone Samaritan; chairperson of the local Action for Children group; and on the Scout Appointments Committee.

She also joined Ware Dramatic Society; she was on stage once or twice, but mostly was prompt for their productions.

She moved to Ledbury following Brian's retirement and became a member at Ledbury Methodist Church where she has been a steward and pastoral visitor.

She joined LADS (Ledbury Amateur Dramatic Society) and prompted for many productions, especially their 'legendary pantos'. She also joined U3A, Ledbury Walkers Group and was a steward at the Heritage Centre.

In December 2019 she was told she had bile duct cancer. Since then she had five major operations, but still continued to do as much as she could. She died on 20th September 2025 in St. Michael's Hospice after the original cancer returned, but was inoperable.

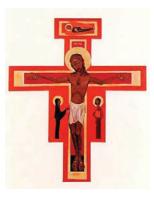


Remember the enthusiasm, the smile and the 'infectious laughter'.

Taizé Worship

All Saints Church, Hereford

Friday 7th November
Friday 5th December
12.10pm



Bible Study

Our meetings will now revert to Zoom, starting at 7pm on Wednesday 12th November and fortnightly thereafter. Let Sallie Hopper know if you would like to receive an invitation to the meetings.



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praying house fish bread opened gifts visitor ashamed snake stone given better neighbour egg find knocking scorpion need seeking parents bed asking good friend



Yes, it's that time of year again!

The Hereford Cards for Good Causes shop is now open, as always it's at All Saints Church and Café, and it's open Monday - Saturday, 10.00am till 4.00pm.

Christmas Dinner

Marc and Zoe Cripps and family have offered to cook lunch on Christmas Day at St. John's.

It will be a 2-course meal with tea, coffee and mince pies, at the cost of £15 per person. We will sit and eat together as family.

If you are interested please speak to Brenda Philipps as soon as possible to see if it's feasible.

Seasons of My Soul

'Seasons of My Soul', published by Methodist Publishing, is a resource for constructive Christian conversations about the potentially creative stage of the second half of life. It has come about from a partnership working with a number of groups, but especially under the Covenant shared by the Church of England and the Methodist Church. Appreciated by several house groups in the Circuit, a copy may be borrowed from Ursula Davies

Tea Church at St. John's

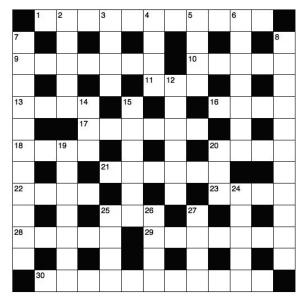
4.00pm on the 3rd Sunday

16th November

21st December

ALL WELCOME!





Across

- 1 The sixth disciple (Matthew 10:3) (11)
- 9 'And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the -- ' (Matthew 6:13) (4.3)
- 10 Love intensely (Song of Songs 1:4) (5) 11 From Mt Carmel to Jezreel, Elijah all the way (1 Kings 18:46) (3)
- 13 One of the Midianite leaders who was captured and killed after Gideon's victory in the valley near Moreh (Judges 7:25) (4)
- 16 Metallic element (4)
- 17 At line (anag.) (6)
- 18 'Cursed is everyone who is on a tree' (Galatians 3:13) (4)
- 20 Where Samson killed a thousand Philistines with a donkey's jawbone (Judges 15:14) (4)
- 21 He succeeded Moses (Deuteronomy 34:9) (6)
- 22 'When he saw him, he took on him' (Luke 10:33) (4)
- 23 'For is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction' (Matthew 7:13) (4)
- 25 'The god of this has blinded the minds of unbelievers' (2 Corinthians 4:4) (3)
- 28 Fear or terror (Psalm 31:22) (5)
- 29 'We, who are many, are one body, for we all of the one loaf' (1 Corinthians 10:17) (7)
- 30 Assyrian ruler assassinated by his sons while worshipping his god Nisroch (2 Kings 19:37) (11)

Down

- 2 'For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made ' (1 Corinthians 15:22) (5)
- 3 'After supper he the cup' (1 Corinthians 11:25) (4)
- 4 The request of a man of Macedonia in Paul's vision: 'Come to Macedonia and help us' (Acts 16:9) (4)
- 5 He disobeyed his father Judah by refusing to impregnate his dead brother's wife (Genesis 38:9) (4)
- 6 I veto me (anag.) (7)
- 7 Fourth king of Judah (1 Kings 15:24) (11)
- 8 Priest of God Most High, who blessed Abram (Genesis 14:18) (11)
- 12 'I have made you for the Gentiles' (Acts 13:47) (1,5)
- 14 Implore (1 Samuel 15:25) (3)
- 15 'Out of the eater, something to eat; out of the , something sweet' (Judges 14:14) (6)
- 19 'I am the most ignorant of men: I do a man's understanding' (Proverbs 30:2) (3.4)
- 20 'Sin shall not be your master, because you are not under —, but under grace' (Romans 6:14) (3)
- 24 Native of, say, Baghdad (5)
- 25 The last word in the Bible (Revelation 22:21) (4)
- 26 Heroic tale (4)
- 27 'Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you —' (John 8:32) (4)

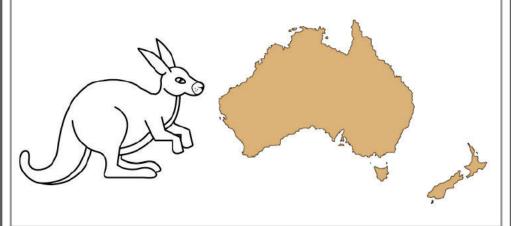
Australia-themed afternoon and tea



Come and join us in St. John's Lower Hall for a light-hearted afternoon with Mark Jackson, with memories and slides of his visits to Australia, followed by tea.

Donations welcome in aid of Methodist Homes.

Sunday 2nd November at 3pm



Safeguarding Sunday

Sunday 16th November will be Safeguarding Sunday at St John's. Our service will help us to reflect and act on what it means to make our church a safe place for everyone.

If you have been affected by abuse in the past this might raise issues for you. There will be people available after the service for you to talk to if you wish

Kath



Stained Glass Tour

Wednesday 12 November, 1.30 pm

Discover more about the beautiful stained glass in Hereford Cathedral with this special tour. The tour will last around 1.5 hours and end with an opportunity to view up close a selection of medieval stained glass fragments from the cathedral's Library and Archives in Old Chapel.

Tickets cost £10 - Advanced booking is essential for this tour due to limited capacity. Tickets can be purchased via the cathedral's website or by calling the ticket desk (01432 374 202)

Christian Aid Christmas Appeal 2025

"Peace on earth" expresses hope for a world without violence and conflict, yet there is great turmoil in our world just now. In response, Christian Aid continues to provide emergency aid to families displaced in conflict and give financial assistance and support to communities in crisis.

Your donation will help towards this vital work. For details, please go to christianaid.org.uk>give>ways to donate.

To make a one off donation by phone, please call 020 7523 2269 or send a cheque (with a note to say that it is for the Christmas Appeal 2025) to

Christian Aid, 35 - 41 Lower Marsh, London SE1 7RL.

Thankyou.



Remembrance

This time of year as the days grow shorter lends itself to the telling of stories. Stories offer more than just entertainment, they can teach, they can bring us closer to each other, and they help us to remember. Remembering not just what has happened in the past, but also what we value.

November is a month full of remembrance. For the Church it starts with All Saints' and All Souls' when we remember those in the faith who have gone before us. Then across the UK we mark Remembrance Sunday and Remembrance Day, recalling those who have lost their lives in war, as well as echoing the call from after the First World War of "never again". As the month comes to an end the Church marks the beginning of Advent, a time of preparation before Christmas.

Christianity is a religion of remembrance. Each week we meet together to worship and during that time we share stories from the lives of people from 2000 or more years ago. These same stories are shared time and time again, year after year. In these stories there are heroes and baddies, good deeds and bad deeds. We are often tempted to place ourselves in the role of hero but even within the stories we find ourselves challenged to see that's not always the role we fit.

That's what good stories do, they don't just entertain, they also challenge. The purpose of hearing the same stories time and time again, to remember events of the past, is not just to wistfully look at them and leave them there. It is to learn from them, be challenged by them, perhaps even be transformed by them. But the challenge of remembrance is to recognise that our past is full of both good and bad and we need to acknowledge that. If we don't we risk our transformation being incomplete and will struggle to move forward.

So as we take time to remember this month let us listen closely to the stories we tell and let us be challenged and changed by them.

Ethan Ottershaw



The Hereford Nativity

Bringing the Christmas Story to Life at Hereford Cathedral

Following the outstanding success of The Hereford Passion in 2024, Hereford Cathedral is delighted to announce a theatrical production, The Hereford Nativity directed by The Revd Canon James Pacey on Wednesday 26 & Thursday 27 November.

This original theatrical performance will retell the story of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, with a special focus on the relationship between Mary and Joseph and the real human struggles faced by people living in ancient Judea. Presented as a fully staged production within the stunning setting of the cathedral, The Hereford Nativity promises a fresh, dynamic, and deeply moving exploration of the origins of Christmas, appealing to both Christians and non-Christians alike.

Performances will take place on Wednesday 26 and Thursday 27 November at 7.30 pm (doors open at 7 pm). Tickets are priced at £10 for adults and £6 for children, with a group discount available - purchase ten tickets and receive an eleventh free. Tickets can be purchased in advance via the Hereford Cathedral website, at the Ticket Desk, or by calling 01432 374 202.

The production is suitable for audiences aged 10 and above.

Prayer Handbook, 2026 - 2027

"Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy." (John 16:20)

Our prayers hold the sorrows and joys of our lives, churches and communities across this world.

For 2026/2027, the words **Sorrow** and **Joy** are chosen like grid references on a map, compass bearings. As with many paradoxical word phrases – faith and doubt, life and death, light and darkness, noise and silence – 'sorrow' and 'joy' are like ingredients mixed and baked in a batch of bread, blended and distilled, creating the unique flavours of our lives.

We invite you to respond in prayer faithfully and fruitfully as peace-makers and reconcilers to each other and the world.

In our collective life of faith, we want to recognise and support Methodist people who may need a boost of joy in the Lord to keep being and doing what we are called to be and do.

We invite prayers for people who give freely of their time to serve the Church in a voluntary capacity and for people who minister in diverse and often challenging circumstances.

May our prayers recognise that sorrow and joy run and flow through each other and through each one of us, because maybe one is the way to the other, because Jesus holds them both with us

Prayers should be submitted before 16th January 2026 at the latest. Full details of how to submit a prayer can be found at Submission Guidelines - The Methodist Church

Women's Breakfast Fellowship

On the last Saturday of September we enjoyed a reflective day together at Holland House Retreat Centre near Pershore. This was led by Jude Levermore, Head of Mission for the Methodist Church. The theme was 'Practising Hope'. We spent time reflecting on the story of the couple on the road to Emmaus – how they encountered Jesus at a time when they were so sad; they had hoped that Jesus was the Messiah, the saviour. We pondered together on what God might say to us when we can feel so hopeless about the world's crises. All sorts of different responses emerged including seeing the light where it shines, refuelling our own batteries so that we continue to shine light in dark places, being together and being thankful.

It was a special day – and very good to deepen our connections and to encourage one another with our stories and faith.

In December, we will have been going for a year already! Our group is open to all women and meets on the first Saturday of the month at Ledbury Methodist Church. We have women from our churches and from other local churches and from no church at all. All are welcome! The group starts at 9am and finishes at 10.30am with time to linger until 11am.

Margaret Kunzer

Church Services in November

Sunday 2nd November Ordinary 31

Bromyard 10.30am Revd. Phil Warrey Holy Communion
Ledbury 10.30am Dr. Gillian and Mr. Stephen Chowns
2.30pm Revd. Phill Warrey Relaxed
St John's 10.30am Rev. Roy Crew Holy Communion

Sunday 9th November Ordinary 32

Bromyard 2.30pm Revd. Ruth Eldridge Remembrance Ledbury Revd. Dr. Nigel Williams Remembrance

6.00pm Gillian/Stephen Chowns Taizé

St John's 10.30am Revd. Phil Warrey Remembrance

Sunday 16th November Ordinary 33

Bromyard 10.30am Mr. Tony Pitt

Ledbury 10.30am Revd. Phil Warrey Holy Communion
St John's 10.30am Revd. Kath Baldwin Safeguarding
4.00pm Mrs. Rosi Taylor Tea Church

Deadline for December/January In Touch

Sunday 23rd November Sunday before Advent

Bromyard 2.30pm Revd. Phil Warrey Tea Church

Ledbury 10.30am Ms. Lisa-Jayne Lewis St John's 10.30am Revd. Phil Warrey

Sunday 30th November Advent Sunday

Bromyard 2.30pm Mrs. Linda Williams

Ledbury 10.30am Revd. Martyn Sanders AAW

St John's 10.30am Revd. Phil Warrey Gift service



Lectionary Readings

2 November

Ordinary 31

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4

Psalm 119:137-144

2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12

Luke 19:1-10

9 November

Ordinary 32

Haggai 1:15b - 2:9

Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21 or Psalm 98

2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17

Luke 20:27-38

16 November

Ordinary 33

Isaiah 65:17-25

Canticle: Isaiah 12:1-6 2

Thessalonians 3:6-13

Luke 21:5-19

23 November

Sunday before Advent, Christ the

King

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Psalm 46

or Canticle: Benedictus (Luke

1:68-79)

Colossians 1:11-20

Luke 23:33-43

30 November

1st Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2: 1-5

Psalm 122

Romans 13: 11-14

Matthew 24: 36-44

7 December

2nd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12





Diary Dates in November...

Saturday 1st November

9.00 - 10.30am Women's Prayer Breakfast at Ledbury

Sunday 2nd November

3.00pm Australian-themed afternoon and tea, St. John's

Friday 7th November

12.10pm Taizé service at All Saints' Church, Hereford

2.00pm Concert at St. John's

Wednesday 12th November

7.00pmpm Zoom Bible study

Wednesday 26th November

7.00pm Zoom Bible study

7.30pm Hereford Nativity, Cathedral

Thursday 27th November

7.30pm Hereford Nativity, Cathedral

..and into December

Saturday 6th December

9.00 - 10.30am Women's Prayer Breakfast at Ledbury

Keeping InTouch

Circuit contacts:

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e: phil.warrey@methodist.org.uk

Rest day: Usually Friday

Circuit Website: www.herefordshiremethodists.org.uk

Circuit Administrator: admin@herefordshiremethodists.org.uk

The deadline for the December/January edition of In Touch is Sunday

16th November; ideally, please send material by email to

hfdscircuitnews@gmail.com

Or by Post to 18 Southbank Close, HEREFORD HR1 2TQ