

SMC



Encouraging Discipleship

September - November
2021

Somerset Mendip Circuit
The Methodist Church

Charity Registration No. 1134237



The Stream

Superintendent Minister: Reverend Tina Swire
Chairman of Bristol District: Reverend Dr Jonathan Pye
President of Conference: Reverend Sonia Hicks
Vice-President of Conference: Barbara Easton
2021 to 2022

<http://www.somersetmendipmethodists.com>

also on Facebook

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A voice says, "Cry out."
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

"All people are like grass,
and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.
The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of the Lord blows on them.
Surely the people are grass.
The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God endures forever."

Isaiah 40:6-8 NIV Full Chapter

Thank you for your contributions to this magazine.

Please send articles to: The Circuit Administrator at the Circuit Office,

Wells Methodist Church, Southover. Wells BA5 1UG

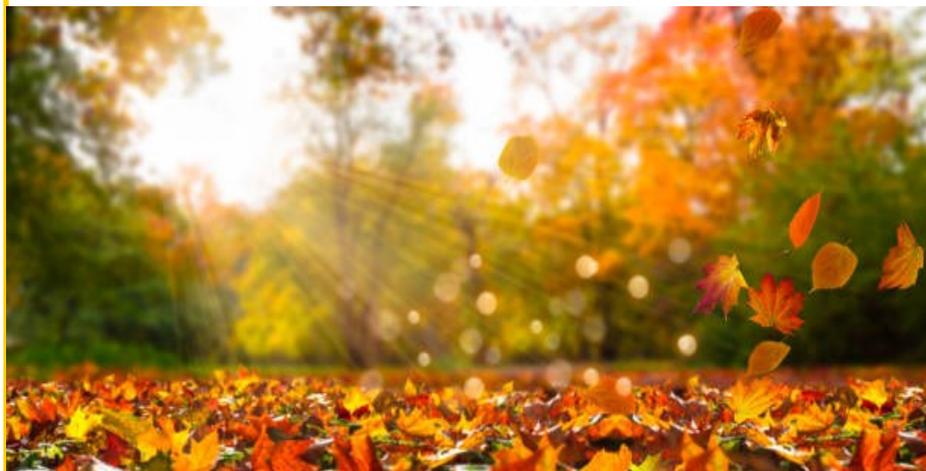
Email: smcwells2019@outlook.com, phone 01749 677106

Articles need to be in by,
MONDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2021

Please note that -

The Stream is uploaded onto the SMC website.

*If you **do not** want your article to appear online, please inform the Circuit Administrator when you submit your article.*





Encouraging Discipleship

The Somerset Mendip Circuit

Mission Statement



OUR VISION

*Our vision is of a circuit
where people experience and share
God's love, justice and joy*



OUR PURPOSE

*Our purpose is to
encourage, support and challenge
one another in fulfilling our vision.*

Somerset Mendip Circuit of the Methodist Church

Charity Registration No. 1134237

Pastoral Letter

Rev Meg Slingo



Hello Everyone,

Do you have a favourite film? One of mine, is "The Sound of Music".

I am not sure if it's the actual story, itself; or the views around Saltzburg; or the songs; or the music?

Right now, I am thinking of the songs!

In the film, Maria is reminded of Psalm 121, as an encouragement to her, at this time in her life story.

Psalm 121's first two verses, tell us to 'Lift up our eyes...to lift them up to the hills.'

Now, when Graham had a BIG Birthday... we found ourselves in New Zealand, and drove to a town called Twizel. Now, the town itself was ok, but ... WOW! It is surrounded by mountains Amazing mountains!

We were there in the late Spring, early Summer, so the mountains were still snow capped, and when I read Psalm 121, I think of those beautiful mountains!

I will lift up my eyes to the mountains....and where do we get help from?

Help comes from the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth.

Psalm 121 goes on to remind us, of the wonderful truths, about how the Lord continues to watch over us, and takes care of us.

I will never forget the Mountains of Twizel. They were so awe-inspiring to me, that whenever I read Psalm 121, I think of them.

Maybe today, you have concerns, or fears? Please remember that we have a BIG God!

A God, who not only created the hills, but the mountains!

I pray you will continue to know His Awesome presence, working in your life!

God bless you all.

Meg



Psalm 121

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.*

*He will not let your foot slip
He who watches over you will not slumber:
indeed, He who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.*

*The Lord watches over you
the Lord is your shade at your right hand:
the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.*

*The Lord will keep you from all harm
He will watch over your life:
the Lord will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.*



River MacKenzie
Twizel, New Zealand



Harvest

Nature's beauty around us,
God's gift to our world;
Flowers in our gardens,
With soft petals unfurled.

Trees laden with fruits,
Fields golden with corn;
Dewdrops on cobwebs
On a cool autumn morn.

Beans, carrots and peas,
Our baskets to fill,
Pumpkins and marrows
And wheat for the mill.

The harvest is gathered,
God's bounty is stored;
As we sing hymns of praise,
To give thanks to the Lord.

By Barbara Ellis

METHODIST HOMES

Despite the present situation, thanks to the help of various Circuit members, I was able to distribute the envelopes and information relating to the M.H.A. Appeal this year. As you know, M.H.A. cares for people in their exceptionally good Care Homes and 'Living at Home' communities.

One such person is Anthony, from Birmingham, whose picture was on the promotional material. If you did not get to see a leaflet with his story and want to share a 'feel good' story at what is still a difficult time, here it is. *'Anthony is blind from birth and always brought his guide dog Rodney along to activities before lockdown. In recent months he began to lose confidence in leaving the house and started to become isolated.'*

Also, some MHA Communities colleagues found out that on two occasions when he went out walking, he was threatened for money and was also the victim of a pickpocket. This led him to feel, understandably, that he did not want to go out. After concerns about his well-being, the Communities Manager Tanya literally stepped in to help him.

They went for a walk twice a week with Rodney and Anthony's confidence has now grown through the support he's received from Tanya and the MHA Communities team. A kind, simple act, that has made all the difference. MHA supports people in all aspects of their lives. I know things are still difficult Circuit-wise, but please give if you can – we are right to be proud of MHA.

Thank you.

Jean Fraser





News from Transylvania



As many of you know, Duncan and I moved to Romania in the summer of 2017 and are now living in the village of Micești, above the chapel where the United Methodist Church in Romania was born.

It's a very young church – this year marks the 10th anniversary of its officially becoming part of the Methodist denomination – and we have found it a real privilege to be part of a church with such a strong pioneering spirit. So, we hope that you will also be inspired by what we have to share here.

The church in Cluj, in particular, has seen some exciting changes during the past year. For the past few years, it has been meeting in a hotel, renting just two rooms for worship and all its activities during the week. However, it had a 10-year-old vision for a much larger community centre, with a café, rooms for counselling and space for other church groups and NGOs to offer support services to the people of Cluj. And, this year has seen the beginning of the fulfilment of that vision. With the coming of the pandemic, the hotel owner decided to offer the church the use of the entire hotel at a much-reduced rent... and, after much prayer and discussion, the church decided to take out the necessary loans to make this happen!

On 27th June, we celebrated the official opening of the centre, with worship, prayer and testimony.

Patrick Streiff, Bishop of Central and Southern Europe, spoke about ways of sharing the Gospel and how, through our interactions with others, this centre could become a place of real blessing.



Also present, was the lay pastor of an 'Army of the Lord' group which had been meeting in the same upstairs room of the hotel that the church had been using. The Army of the Lord is an evangelical renewal movement within the Romanian Orthodox Church, much like Methodism was in the C of E, and the pastor spoke of his joy in sharing the space with people of a similar vision. He also spoke of the fulfilment of his own vision for a meeting room downstairs – a very real need because of his work with disabled children.

Meanwhile, work has been ongoing in the village of Comșești, about 15 miles from Cluj. This is a village with a lot of Roma families, many of them illiterate and living in considerable poverty. Pastor Samuel began his work here simply by playing football with the children – and hence slowly gaining the trust of their families.

2 years ago, with help from churches in the USA, work began on a chapel and community centre in the village, so that the growing church would have somewhere to meet in the winter and so that the children could be provided with after-school support. This is still to be completed, although the walls, roof and windows do now provide some shelter from the elements – including summer shade!



When we visited earlier this week, for a holiday club (photo on the left), there were thirty or more children present, as well as several mothers.

The church at Sibiu, 114 miles from Cluj, is the most far-flung of the congregations in UMC Romania's single circuit and has seen some considerable upheaval over the past 2-3 years. Not only have they had difficulty finding a suitable meeting place, but, for a variety of reasons, the afterschool children's centre which they had been running had to close.

This was in part because the orphanage where most of the children live was threatened with closure. Rather than have the children undergo the trauma of being moved and separated from each other, Pastor Cristian decided to step in and try to save their home (photo below).



There were some very tense months, during which new staff had to be employed and money had to be found for some major refurbishment work. But God showed his faithfulness in so many ways and the future of the children's home is now much more secure. Further, one of the children has said that she feels, for the first time, as if she is living in a home, rather than an institution!

The smallest of the circuit's four congregations meets every other week, here in Micești. We are few in number (usually about 10), but prayer and blessing remain central to our worship and we also provide a venue for baptisms and barbecues!



As for Duncan and I, we see our role as primarily supportive, offering help where we can: supervising children's activities on Sunday mornings and at the summer camps, participating in small groups, helping with practical tasks, being part of a planning team at Cluj and sometimes preaching. During term-time, most of our time is taken up with science teaching (Duncan) and English language teaching (me) – our means of earning a living. Duncan also spends a fair bit of time on the upkeep of the house and Ros enjoys looking after the vegetable garden.

We value your prayer and support hugely and would be particularly grateful for your prayers for Superintendent Rareș (pronounced 'rah-res'), for Pastor Samuel, for Pastor Cristian and for the new projects that the churches here have been taking on. With grateful thanks.

Ros

Songs for the Journey

*God is my caretaker,
I have not drawn the short straw.
He leads me to places of rest:
Green fields and quiet streams.
In him I find refreshment
for my worn out mind.
As is his nature
he points me towards paths of blessing.
But even when I stumble upon darker paths
and danger stalks me,
I will not be afraid.
God is there.
That's enough.*

*Enough to let me give thanks
despite the darkness.
Enough to let me rest
despite the danger.
Enough to let me see I have all I need,
and so much more besides.

I will live my life confident in God's blessing.
Safe in his loving presence.*

The last year and a half has been a difficult one for many, with all of us having to explore new paths through life, worship, grief and celebration, thanks to the pandemic. For me, it has also been a year of further exploration as I have gone through the process of candidating for presbyteral ministry in the Methodist church. It's been a process that has involved reflecting not only on my calling within the church, but what it is that makes me 'me', and what I have to offer to the wider world. It's involved me learning new skills – and some of the churches I've visited during the pandemic will have been witness to my newly acquired, and still very basic, sign language skills, as I've encouraged congregations to sign along when they couldn't sing along. And, as someone who has a tendency to sing her way through life, it has involved finding new songs to sing for a strange new land. Songs like Frozen II's 'Into the Unknown', Fleurie's 'Love Has No Limits' and Philippa Hanna's 'You're Still God'. It has also involved returning to the comfort of some of my old favourites such as Switchfoot's 'All I Need', Chris Tomlin's 'Goodness, Love and Mercy' and, as we get closer to September and my leaving for ministerial training in Birmingham, ABBA's 'Slipping Through My Fingers'.

Singing has always been a part of our Christian worship, whether that's psalms like Psalm 23 (which the poem at the beginning of this article is based on), old classics like 'And Can It Be', or more modern worship songs like some of the songs I've mentioned above. It's something that binds us together and sustains us during difficult times as together we profess in words and music the faith which we share: that God listens, God cares and God acts.

The last year and a half has been a difficult one, but even as we exit the pandemic, there will remain difficult times ahead for Methodist churches around this circuit and beyond, as we continue to face the challenge of how to engage with those outside of our four walls and be a tangible sign of God's love and blessing in our communities with the small congregations we have. We will need to find new ways of singing old songs and new places to sing them. We will need to remind ourselves that our best days are not behind us, but that, in the words of one of my favourite songs by Sheppard, 'the best is yet to come!' Remaining confident in all this that, however much the world changes, our God's goodness, love and mercy do not, and our task as a church to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ remains the same. It is this that I will hold on to as I take my next steps in my journey with God.

I wanted to end this reflection with some song lyrics that sum up my feelings on leaving this circuit. But despite a lengthy search I have yet to find any words that sum up the depth of gratitude I have for the opportunities, support and encouragement you have offered me as I have grown from a (not always well behaved) child to a candidate for the ministry. And that's before I even get to the love I have for you all, all you have achieved and overcome, and your faithful witness through the years, and my hopes and best wishes for you for the future. So instead I will have to make do with these words from Josh Wilson's 'Pushing Back The Dark':

*One million reasons why, you shouldn't even try
After all you're just one heart,
a single candle in the dark
And there are shadows here, feeding on your fears
That you don't have what it takes
- who are you to make a change?
But oh, oh, don't underestimate the God you follow*

***Whatever you do, just don't look back
Cause somebody needs the light you have
Whatever you do, just don't lose heart
Keep on pushing back the dark***

You have been a light to me for all my years here. Keep on pushing back the dark. God bless you all.

Fiona Smith

For those interested, here are YouTube links to all the songs mentioned in this reflection:

Into the Unknown - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIOyB9ZXn8s>

Love has no Limits - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7K3hpb-wijU>

You're Still God - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4LxFx5bnAOE>

All I Need - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LOmjNHb08I>

Goodness, Love and Mercy - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kg7K0-Cd4i8>

Slipping Through My Fingers - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRr7qRb-7k4>

And Can it Be - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tu2uA6U4Fxg>

The Best is Yet to Come - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpBMEuV1Kf0>

Pushing Back the Dark - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66wdK5q_Wr4

REGULAR WEEKLY/MONTHLY EVENTS

Some time in the future



Mondays

At Churchill - Bible study 7.30pm in the Oasis Room - If you are interested in attending during August please contact Jeanette in advance. (Jeanette 01934 852500)

(During Term Time) - Baby & Toddler Group At Churchill 9.30-11.30am in the School Room. (Jacqueline 01934 844134)

1st & 3rd mornings Clicketty Click Knitting group 10-12 noon Wells Methodist Church - **HAVE RESTARTED**

(During Term Time) - Knit & Natter at Keinton Mandeville 2-4pm

Zestful Fitness exercise group (Hi Fit) at Keinton Mandeville 6.30-7.15pm

Tuesdays

(During Term Time) - Chapel Toddlers at Keinton Mandeville 10-12 noon

Drop in Coffee Morning at Congresbury 9.30-12 noon in the Methodist Hall

(During Term Time) - Duke of Edinburgh's Group at Keinton Mandeville 6.30-8pm

Glastonbury Methodist Church Open for Prayer 10.30-11.00am

Sandford & Churchill Fellowship 2.45pm. (Ann 01934 823234)

(During Term Time) - **Tuesday Gang at Churchill 6.30-7.30pm** (Jacqueline 01934 844134)

(During Term Time) - **Little Rascals Toddler Group at Wesley Frome 10-12 noon**

1st Tuesday **11am Bishop Brooke Fellowship Wells Methodist Church**

2nd & 4th **9.30am Occasional Singers Wells Methodist Church**

Village Voices - a fun choir 7.30pm Pilton Methodist Chapel

Coleford Methodists Afternoon Guild 2pm for 2.30pm start.

Wednesdays

Coffee Morning at Norton Down Methodist Church 10.30-12 noon

Zestful Fitness exercise group (strength) at Keinton Mandeville 9-9.45am

Prayer Group at Wesley Frome in the Church 9.30-10.00am

(No meeting in August) - **Craft Club at Churchill in the hall 2.30pm**
(Pam Mitchelmore 01934 852520)

Zest Fitness exercise group (strength) at Keinton Mandeville 6-6.45pm

(During Term Time) - **Guides at Churchill 6.45pm** (Ruth Beadle 01934 852910)

Choir Practice at Churchill 7.30pm (Paul Beechey 01934 514363)

Time for Prayer at Wells Methodist Church 11.30-12 noon

Bruton - Time for Prayer, every 1st & 3rd Wednesday in the month at 2pm

Bruton - craft group called Adult Youth Club, meets every 1st & 3rd Wednesday

2nd & 4th Wednesday **Southover Group, Wells Methodist Church 2.00pm**

Cheddar 1st Wednesday 12am Prayer Meeting (monthly)

Cheddar Knitting for Charity Group 10am - open to all

Thursdays

(No meeting in August) - **Lunch Club at Churchill 12.30pm in the hall** (Janet Brown 07730 406943)

Knit & Knatter at Leigh Road, Street 2-4pm. Bring any craft work or just come for a natter and cup of tea. (Sally 01458 441870)

(Alternate Thursday) - **East Wells Fellowship At Wells Methodist Church 10.15am**

(During Term Time) - **Rainbow Rascals, Somerton's Toddler Group 9-11.30am in the Schoolroom**

(During Term Time) - **Chapel Toddlers at Keinton Mandeville 10-12 noon**

Table Tennis at Keinton Mandeville 7pm

Zestful Fitness exercise group (Hi Fit) at Keinton Mandeville 9- 9.45am

1st East Wells Fellowship 10.15am Wells Methodist Church

Bright Hour (not July & August) 2.30pm - 4.30pm Wells Methodist Church

Cheddar Cornerstone Coffee Morning - free coffee and cake for all



Fridays

(Third Friday each month) - (Not during August) - Coffee for All at Wedmore in the Methodist School room 10.30-12 noon. Pop in for a quick cuppa or stay longer, Tea, coffee & biscuits will be served. Bring along a craft to do whilst chatting if you wish. 'Well behaved pets welcome'

Saturdays

2nd Saturday each month - Coffee Morning 10-12 noon Wells Methodist Church

3rd Saturday each month - Coffee Morning and stalls 10-12 noon Street Methodist Church

2nd Saturday each month - Coffee Morning with a Meet and Eat Lunch



PRAYER PAGE



Many people believe that science and faith are in direct conflict because that is what they have been told. As a former scientist I have never found it so. If the Psalmist could marvel at the stars in the sky how much more reason do we have to be impressed by the immensity and complexity of our universe. Maybe like me you have enjoyed Prof. Brian Cox' TV series on the planets. Most of us owe our survival and quality of life to the NHS and the diligent research of science. All good gifts around us indeed as we like to sing at harvest.

- * GIVE THANKS for the work of scientists worldwide who created effective vaccines against Covid 19. remember those who produce, distribute and deliver vaccines. We give thanks for companies willing to share this resource with needier parts of the world at low or zero cost.
- * GIVE THANKS for the many things medical research has achieved. Pray about the many challenges remaining.
- * PRAY for those who work at the boundaries of science and the moral dilemmas inherent in their work e.g. genetic engineering.
- * PRAY that human knowledge and skill can always be used for the betterment of all creation. We remember situations where selfishness leads to exploitation and conflict.

ROB HASKINS

LECTIONARY READINGS — Year B

5th September - 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23 Psalm 125 James 2:1-10 (11-13) 14-17

12th September - 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Psalm 19 James 3:1-12 Mark 8:27-38

19th September - 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a Psalm 1 Mark 9:30-37

26th September - 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mark 9:38-50 Esther 7:1-6, 9-10, 9:20-22 Psalm 124

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### **3rd October - 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Job 1:1, 2:1-10      Psalm 26      Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12

### **10th October - 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Psalm 22:1-15      Hebrews 4:12-16      Mark 10:17-31

### **17th October - 29th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Hebrews 5:1-10      Mark 10:35-45      Job 38:1-7 (34-41)

### **24th October - 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Mark 10:46-52      Job 42:1-6, 10-17      Psalm 34:1-9 (19-22)

### **31st October - 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Ruth 1:1-18      Psalm 146      Hebrews 9:11-14

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7th November - 32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mark 12:38-44 Ruth 3:1-5 4:13-17 Psalm 127

14th November - 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Samuel 1:4-20 Hebrews 10:11-14 (15-18) 19-25 Mark 13:1-8

21st November - Sunday before Advent

Psalm 132:1-12 (13-18) Revelation 1:4b-8 John 18:33-37

28th November - Advent Sunday - Year C

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 Luke 21:25-36 Jeremiah 33:14-16

WILL CONTINUE AT SOME POINT
‘PRAY WITHOUT CEASING’
REGULAR TIMES FOR PRAYER AROUND THE CIRCUIT

As part of our ongoing Prayer Pilgrimage, we encourage folk to visit and support one another in prayer, whenever and wherever...

AXBRIDGE

After worship and coffee on the third Sunday of the month

BRUTON

First & Third Wednesday in the month, 2pm

CASTLE CARY

Every Wednesday 9.30 to 10am, in the church

CONGRESBURY

First Wednesday of the month, 10.30am to 12 noon

FROME WESLEY

Every Wednesday, 9.30am in the church, or vestry if cold

GLASTONBURY

Every Tuesday 10.30 to 11am

Every Friday at 12 noon, silent vigil for peace in the Market Place
(Ecumenical)

OAKHILL

Every Monday, 9 to 10am

Also 9 am Saturday to 9 am Sunday (24 hour drop-in) every 2nd
Sunday of the month

RODE

Ecumenical Prayer Group Meeting on 1st and 3rd Wednesday evening
of the month 7.45 for 8pm

Contact Bill Jackson on 01373 830411 for further details.
The Group becomes a Study Group which meets weekly
during Lent (6 weeks) and Advent (4 weeks)

SOMERTON

Every Tuesday, 10.30 to 11am

STREET

Last Tuesday of the month, 1.30pm

WELLS

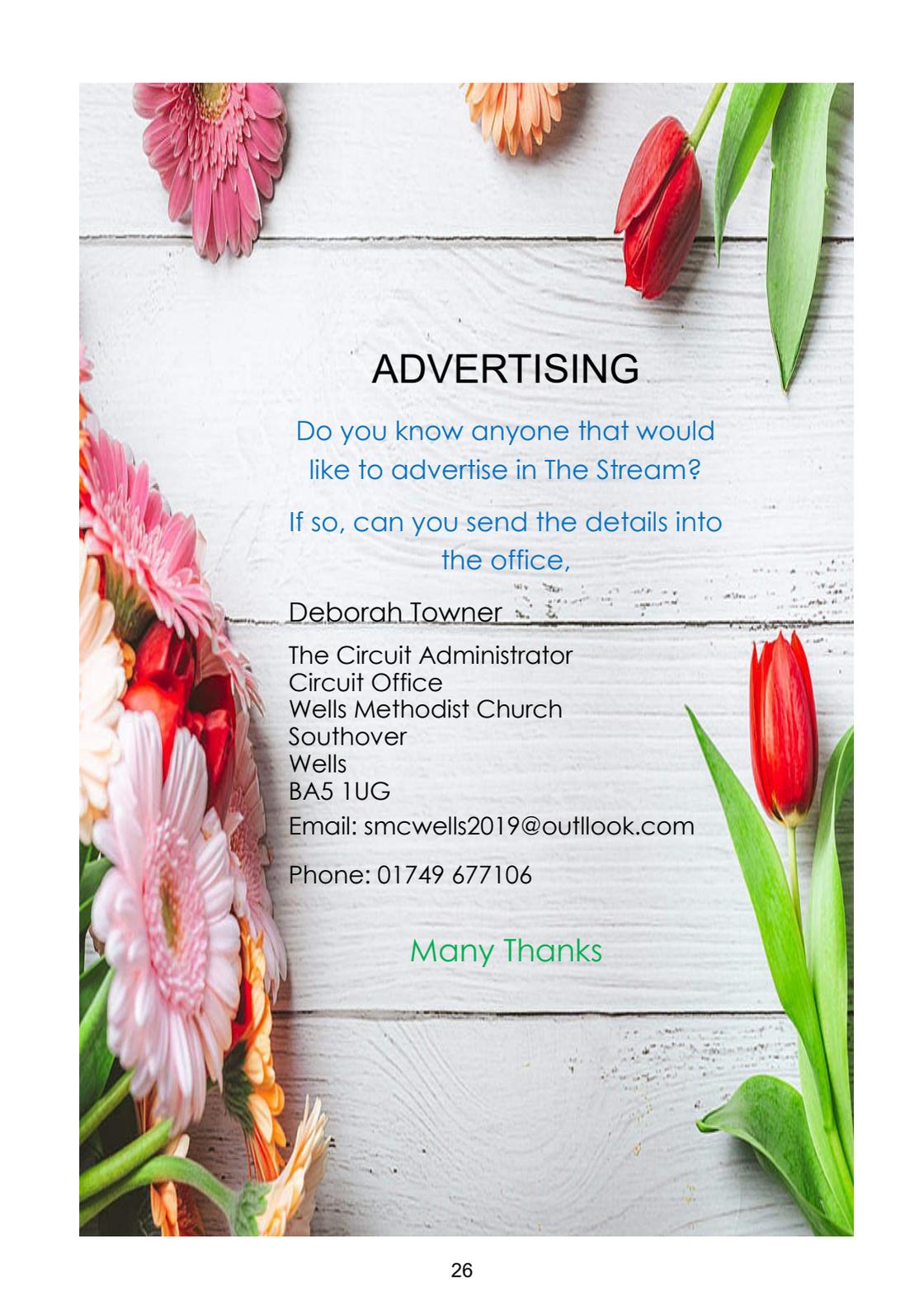
Every Wednesday in the church, 11.30am to 12 noon



*If there are any changes, omissions or additions to make to this list, please
let The Circuit Administrator at the Circuit Office in Wells know, to include
in the next edition of The Stream.*

***All opinions expressed in 'The Stream'
are those of the author***





ADVERTISING

Do you know anyone that would
like to advertise in The Stream?

If so, can you send the details into
the office,

Deborah Towner

The Circuit Administrator
Circuit Office
Wells Methodist Church
Southover
Wells
BA5 1UG

Email: smcwells2019@outlook.com

Phone: 01749 677106

Many Thanks



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Find us at www.kcbritton.co.uk

CARING FOR THE EARTH

The Environmental Policy of the Methodist Church

Christian mission includes caring for God's earth and sharing in God's creation

God's way, revealed in Christ, is a generous sharing of the divine love



Methodists are encouraged to: conserve resources in the Church and at home, develop more sustainable lifestyles and become involved in local, national and global environmental issues.

ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

To promote awareness within the Methodist community of the issues and to ensure commitment on the part of office holders to them.

To ensure efficient use of energy and to avoid the pollution of water.

To reduce waste and ensure of its responsible disposal.

To use sustainable materials and locally-made goods wherever possible, to offer electronic communication where appropriate, to maximize the use of recycled resources, and to show concern for the environment in food production and distribution.

To conserve and enhance the natural and the built environment, and to be aware of the impact of church activities on the local environment.

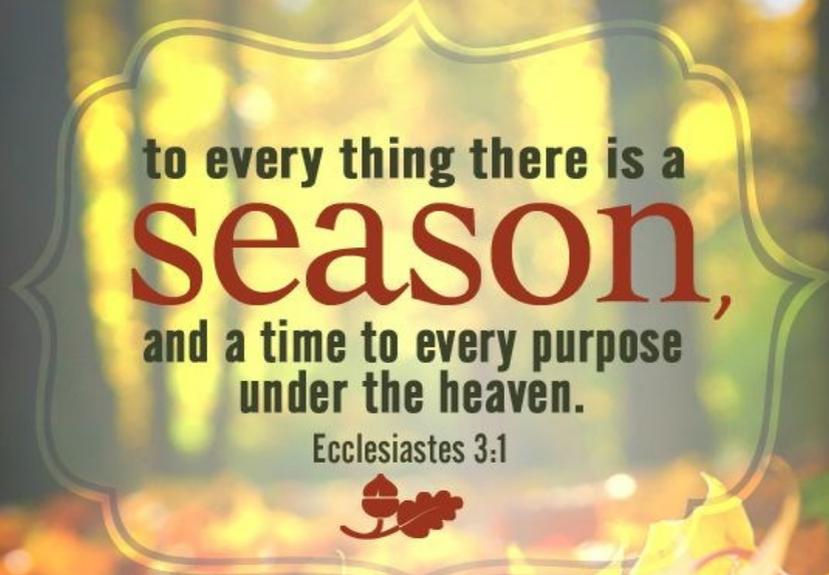
To make every effort to reduce air pollution and energy consumption by reducing and sharing car travel and by supporting public transport.

Submitted by Barry Speddings and the working party.

PROTECTING OUR PLANET STARTS WITH YOU

<p>BIKE MORE DRIVE LESS</p>	<p> reduce REUSE recycle</p> <p style="font-size: small;">Cut down on what you throw away. Follow the three "R's" to conserve natural resources and landfill space.</p>	<p>choose sustainable</p> <p>seafood</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Learn how to make smart seafood choices at www.FishWatch.gov.</p>	<p>Trees provide food and oxygen. They help save energy, clean the air, and help combat climate change.</p> <p>PLANT A TREE</p>
<p> EDUCATE</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">When you further your own education, you can help others understand the importance and value of our natural resources.</p>	<p>CONSERVE WATER</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">The less water you use, the less runoff and wastewater that eventually end up in the ocean.</p>	<p> -SHOP- WISELY</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Buy less plastic and bring a reusable shopping bag.</p>	<p> Don't send chemicals into our waterways.</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Choose nontoxic chemicals in the home and office.</p>
<p> Volunteer!</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Volunteer for cleanups in your community. You can get involved in protecting your watershed too!</p>	<p> Long-lasting light bulbs - ARE A - BRIGHT IDEA</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">Energy efficient light bulbs reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Also flip the light switch off when you leave the room!</p>		

oceanservice.noaa.gov



to every thing there is a
season,
and a time to every purpose
under the heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

