

GREASBY METHODIST CHURCH



Annual Report

April 2020 - March 2021



Greasby Methodist Church

CONTENTS

	Page
Our Calling	4
Welcome to Greasby Methodist Church	5
Aims at Greasby Methodist Church	5
The Methodist Way of Life	6
Minutes of GCM held Sunday 28th April 2019	7
LEADERSHIP REPORTS	
Leadership Team	10
New Website	11
Safeguarding	12
WORSHIP	
Methodist Way of Life (Worship)	13
Days of Prayer	13
Pray without Ceasing	13
Say One for Me	14
Worship Report	14
World Day of Prayer	17
LEARNING AND CARING	
Methodist Way of Life (Learning and Caring)	18
Discipleship and Fellowship Day	18
Monday evening ladies housegroup/bible study	19
Monday evening housegroup/bible study	20
Thursday morning housegroup/bible study	20
OASIS	21
Pastoral Report	22
Cradle Roll	23
Flower ministry	24

SERVICE

Methodist Way of Life (Service)	25
Toddler group	25
Methodist Women in Britain	25
Christmas Shoeboxes	26
Compassion	29

EVANGELISM

Methodist Way of Life (Evangelism)	30
Assemblies	30
Hope Journey	31
Christmas Angels	33
Church Walking Group	34

RESOURCES

Resources Committee	35
Treasurers Report	36
Gift Aid and Giving	38

APPENDICES

Accounts	40
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The Methodist Church

The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission

It does this through



Worship

Increase awareness of God's presence and to celebrate God's love



Learning and Caring

Help people to learn and grow as Christians, through mutual support and care



Service

Be a good neighbour to people in need and to challenge injustice



Evangelism

Make more followers of Jesus Christ

WELCOME TO GREASBY METHODIST CHURCH



We believe that we are part of the world-wide church, led by the Holy Spirit. We believe that all scripture is inspired by God, as it says in the Second Letter to Timothy, chapter 3, verse 16.

We love the stories of the Scriptures, as well as the faith stories of people today. Our worship explores the links between the Scriptures and our world today and we have mid-week groups that explore as well.

If you would like to know more about God and the scriptures, please contact us. When things get back to normal and our groups start meeting again, please come, meet us, and we hope that you enjoy your time with us.

May the Lord always bless you and give you peace.

Rev Yangsun Yi

Here, at Greasby Methodist Church, we aim to

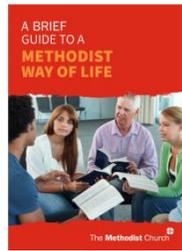
To provide a place where people can come together, united in love, to worship and praise God.

To care for one another and encourage each other to grow in our Christian faith.

To study God's word and learn more of Him.

To engage with and serve our community as we seek to share the good news of Jesus Christ.





THE METHODIST WAY OF LIFE

The Methodist Way of Life encourages us, as far as we are able, with God's help to:

WORSHIP

- ❖ We will pray daily.
- ❖ We will worship with others regularly.
- ❖ We will look and listen for God in Scripture, and the world.

LEARNING AND CARING

- ❖ We will care for ourselves and those around us.
- ❖ We will learn more about our faith.
- ❖ We will practise hospitality and generosity.

SERVICE

- ❖ We will help people in our communities and beyond.
- ❖ We will care for creation and all God's gifts.
- ❖ We will challenge injustice.

EVANGELISM

- ❖ We will speak of the love of God.
- ❖ We will live in a way that draws others to Jesus.
- ❖ We will share our faith with others

May we be a blessing within and beyond God's Church, for the transformation of the world.

The General Church Meeting that was to be held in April 2020 had to be cancelled. However the Annual Report 2019-20 is available on the website

The minutes of the General Church Meeting held Sunday 28th April 2019 await approval

MINUTES OF GENERAL CHURCH MEETING HELD ON SUNDAY 28TH APRIL 2019 AT 12.00PM

1. Welcome

The Rev Viv Gasteen chaired the meeting and welcomed friends and members to the meeting.

2. Attendance and apologies

There were 30 members present and two apologies. A detailed list is held on file.

3. Minutes of the G.C.M. held on Sunday 22nd April 2018

These were accepted as a true record with the following amendment :- Jennifer Bullock and Viv. Pritchard were members of the "Methodist Women in Britain" committee. These were signed by the Rev Viv Gasteen.

4. Matters arising from the minutes.

There was nothing to report

5. Appointment of Church Stewards.

The current six church stewards have agreed to serve for another year and nomination forms have been received to that effect. They are:- Mr. Alan Chamberlain, Mrs. Paula Dewhirst, Mrs. Sue Elliott, Mrs. Sue Farrelly, Mrs. Lyn Jackson-Eves, Mrs. Janis Nuttall. There being no other nominations it was proposed by Rod Sherratt and seconded by June Boardman that they should all be elected and all voted in favour.

6. Appointment of church representatives to the church council.

We have lost two representatives this year. Beryl Henderson has passed away and Elizabeth Smith has gone into care.

The remaining 13 representatives agreed to serve for another year. As there were no further nominations it was proposed by Lyn Jackson-Eves and seconded by Sue Elliott that they should all be elected and all voted in favour. The representatives are as follows with years of service:-

8 years	Mrs Vel Kelly, Mrs. Marion Maher, Mrs. Phyllis White.
7 years	Mrs June Boardman.
6 years	Mrs Kathleen Ashworth, Mrs. Margaret Bennett
4 years	Mrs Jean Chamberlain, Mrs. Francis Davies, Mrs. Jean Sherratt, Mr. Rod Sherratt
3 years	Mr Mike Severn
2 years	Mr Paul Boardman
1 year	Miss Gemma Barber

7. Approval of Church Leadership Team

This comprises “the minister in pastoral charge” i.e. the Rev. Kim Goh, the six stewards (just appointed), the treasurer, Mrs. Roberta Gray, and the worship coordinator, Mrs. Judith Stelfox plus Rev. Viv Gasteen for pastoral support.

The meeting voted unanimously in favour. None against.

8. Approval of “Methodist Women in Britain” committee.

The meeting approved the following:-

President	Vel Kelly
Secretary	Pat Garratt
Treasurer	Pam Ogden
Committee	Joan Appleby, Jane Bright, Jennifer Bullock, Sue Elliott, Sue Farrelly, Marion Maher, Viv Pritchard, Eileen Wardle, Phyllis White.

9. Presentation of annual accounts

The accounts were as shown in the annual reports booklet. Roberta pointed out that the annual gift aid refund had not been received by the end of the financial year and so there was a deficit of £2262 on the year’s accounts. As our income for the year is used in the calculation for the next year’s assessment our assessment for the coming year 2019/2020 will be less than this year’s. The gift aid refund of £9000 for

2017/2018 has now been received and will show in this year's accounts. Our current balance stands at approximately £32000.

A special vote of thanks was offered to Roberta for all work in keeping excellent church accounts.

10. Annual Reports on all aspects of church life.

This was issued in booklet form for general circulation. There were no particular comments or questions.

Viv Gasteen thanked all who contributed to the life of the church in all its activities. She specifically commented that she sensed the very prayerful and spiritual nature of the church. That we shine God's message in this church. She thanked the church for making her feel very much at home and was disappointed that she would not be having full pastoral charge of the church next year.

11. Observations by the Rev Viv Gasteen.

She said how much she valued Janis's piano playing and what a blessing she is to our church worship.

On future activities she thought we might consider something for youngsters after school such as 'Lego Church'.

AOB

- a. Henry asked a question concerning the decoration of the front of the church. He felt that the wall the congregation face for Sunday worship was very 'bland' and could something be done about it. He thought it should have more life in it. After a short discussion it was recommended that the Resources Committee consider this at their next meeting.
- b. Communion stewards. The meeting was asked to approve June Boardman and Joyce Scoffield as new communion stewards. The meeting approved the appointments unanimously.

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

LEADERSHIP TEAM

As we look back over the past Church year we have seen a dramatic contrast to that which most of us have ever experienced. Not since the Second World War has the nation experienced such disruption to its way of life. Now as then we have pulled together and will see brighter days ahead. The nature of the enemy has changed but thanks to God and our scientist we have the resources available to us to confront the enemy and defeat it. We offer our grateful thanks to God for the internet that has allowed us to remain in contact with each other, the vaccines that will lead us to safety and the brilliant minds that have discovered these wonders of God's creation.

Our regular church life has come to a dramatic halt and yet we have found new ways to meet together and communicate with each other. It has also made us realise how much we all need the personal contact, the human touch, which we have possibly to often taken too much for granted. Our hope is that when we can meet again the bonds of our church community will be even greater.

As a leadership team we have continued to meet regularly throughout this past year endeavouring to guide the church these very trying times and more recently preparing for life after Covid. To this end we held a "Vision Morning" lead by Steve Carpenter where we listened to his views of how the church should and could be responding to the gospel in a post pandemic era. We followed this up with a session of our own in order to "put flesh" on those ideas in our own situation.

They met together praising God and the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. Acts 3 vv 46-47

**Alan Chamberlain
Senior Steward**

NEW WEBSITE

<https://greasbymethodistchurch.org.uk>

Following months of preparation, we were pleased to be able to launch the new website in November 2020

Church Council has endorsed the new website management team including Martin Dewhirst (lead manager/services), Judith Stelfox (worship), Paul Boardman (general), Paula Dewhirst (prayer co-ordinator), Caroline (admin/notices etc) and myself (schools mission, children and families). The team completed an intense training programme and would welcome your contributions to the website at any time. We hope you will agree the new website looks modern, utilises enhanced facilities, is easier to navigate and more user-friendly to manage

We intend to regularly update the news pages, publish letters/news to the membership, maintain the calendar for upcoming events (including zoom activities), publicise worship services and upload past services to listen to at any time, upload the weekly newssheet for access from home, share good news stories with the community and, most importantly, share the gospel through thoughts, reflections and prayers

Say One for Me requests can now be received electronically and confidentially. There is a new email address (sayoneforme@[greasbymethodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:sayoneforme@greasbymethodistchurch.org.uk)) which only the prayer co-ordinator can access, as with the Say One for Me cards.

Please do have a look at the new website and share your thoughts and contributions with any member of the team.

Sue Elliott
Website Management Team



Safeguarding Policy,
Procedures and Guidance
for the Methodist Church in Britain



The Methodist Church 

SAFEGUARDING

Following my appointment as Safeguarding Officer (Children and Adults) at Church Council 18th February 2021, I wish to thank Alan Chamberlain for the maintenance of relevant records in the past year

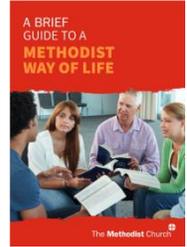
This year has been a very difficult time for all of us with three lockdowns with the loss of cherished members of our church family, the isolation from each other, not being able to meet socially as we would normally do. This has meant that our activities in Church have had to be curtailed; our services of worship and prayer, Oasis, Toddlers, Hope Journey, Teddy bear services. We have managed to provide some of these activities via Zoom most notable Sunday morning services, Oasis and Hope Journey.

I have completed the audit on our Safeguarding procedures, which has been returned to Brenda Bishop, the Circuit Safeguarding Officer. There have not been any updates of DBS certificates due to the Covid restrictions and any overdue or lapsed certificates have been extended until June 2021. There are a number of members of the church who will require DBS checks and all who require these will be informed as soon as possible so that we can reopen our various activities as soon the present restrictions are lifted.

There have been limited opportunities for training over the last year and all who require updated training will be asked to attend when dates of courses are available.

Paul Boardman
Safeguarding Officer

WORSHIP



- ❖ We will pray daily.
- ❖ We will worship with others regularly.
- ❖ We will look and listen for God in Scripture, and the world.

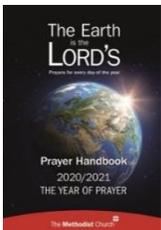
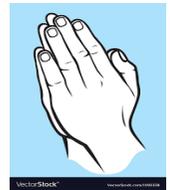
DAYS OF PRAYER

This past year we have not had a day of prayer as in previous years but instead, we have had the church open for quiet contemplative prayer on a few Tuesday mornings through a period when the church was not open for worship, through November and into December. These times have been received well for those seeking a place of quiet sanctuary. A powerpoint with written prayers and pictures allowed reflective prayer, as we all looked to concentrate on our present situation living through the pandemic.

Be still and know that I am God Psalm 46:10

Paula Dewhirst
Prayer co-ordinator

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING 1 Thessalonians 5:17
(ESV) **8.30-9.00am EVERY MORNING**



When we cannot gather physically together, we can pray together in the Holy Spirit. This year we have invited all to join me in corporate prayers at 8.30-9.00 every morning, from the comfort of your home.

The Methodist Prayer Handbook suggest we focus prayers on

- The Church worldwide, our country and local
- The Nations and their leaders

- As well as concerns for friends, family, neighbours and ourselves. You may wish to focus on the prayer needs within the weekly newsheet.

Please continue to join me in prayers without ceasing

Rev Yangsun Yi

SAY ONE FOR ME



We have been offering this service to the community for over three years. We have had several requests although less have been posted recently and even in this present pandemic we have very few new prayer requests. I would encourage everyone to continue to pray for our community; our schools; shop owners and workers; GP surgery and health centre; library workers and businesses who have been affected by the present COVID-19. Let us remember we are not alone and in God's strength we can share this hope and truth with our neighbours.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13

Paula Dewhirst
Prayer co-ordinator

WORSHIP REPORT

Last years report ended with us going into Lockdown and I said then that only time would tell where we went from there regarding our worship. I hoped and prayed that because we had been forced out of the building, we would continue to reach people, just where they were, with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Little did we know then that, except for a few short weeks, we would be worshipping every Sunday via something few of us had ever heard of 'zoom'.

Yangsun and Paul Boardman soon had us up and running with our virtual services and we were joined by West Kirby and Irby church every Sunday morning. Unfortunately, this did mean that those without the technology have been unable to join us. It is possible to join in via phone, which some have attempted, but it is not an easy option especially for those who are hard of hearing. We have delivered printed services to those unable to join us throughout this time, but I am sure, that whilst they were grateful, it is not the same as being together.



For a few weeks in the autumn, we were able to meet in church under strict Covid restrictions and while it was good to be together – but apart – it was very frustrating not being able to chat with one another.

We enjoyed opening our Advent services with a specially written series of monologues which related to how we can find Peace, Love, Grace, Joy, and Hope

during these difficult times.

We managed to celebrate Christmas with a Christingle/Nativity/Carol service on the 20th December where we were thrilled to welcome four families thanks to Sue Elliott who hand delivered invitations to all the families with whom we have contact. On that occasion we were able to accommodate 58 worshippers - socially distanced of course.



We were also able to have a service on Christmas day and a Covenant Service on January 3rd which included our first Holy Communion service since last March.

Unfortunately, due to the tightening of restrictions in January, and even though legally we could have continued to meet in church, the leadership team felt that for the safety of all concerned we would revert to holding our Sunday services on Zoom with Irby and West Kirby.

We are grateful to all our preachers who have had to get used to preaching to a computer and not knowing if what they said had been well received or not because the congregation were all muted (microphones off), learning how to use Zoom, grappling with sometimes unreliable technology, dodgy sound, phones ringing during a service and people forgetting they were 'muted' or not as the case maybe, and trying to tell people how to turn on their video camera so we could see them!!

A Student Pastor in London wrote this recently...

“Being on Zoom with lots of people can offer many positives if you feel isolated, but it can also give you an empty feeling after you've closed down the room (screen). It's a strange feeling for the body, because even though your mind knows you've been together with people, your body hasn't felt it”

Whilst we have enjoyed 'going to church' wearing our slippers and holding a cup of coffee, it will be great for all of us to see one another in the flesh once more and God willing when you read this we will be back in Church. Even though we will be two metres apart, unable to sing, wearing masks and covered in sanitising gel, we will be able to see each other in the flesh. More importantly those who have not had the facilities to join us online will once more be part of the body of the church.

We can worship God wherever we are – whatever our situation and that has been the case during this last, hugely different year. I leave you with these words from the Message version of Psalm 34 in the hope that we can all join in and say with the writer David...

“I bless God every chance I get; my lungs expand with his praise. I live and breathe God; if things aren't going well, hear this and be happy: Join me in spreading the news; together let's get the word out”.

**Judith Stelfox
Worship Co-ordinator**

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FRIDAY 5th MARCH 2021



This year the service was prepared by Christian women of Vanuatu – an archipelago of 80 islands 2000 miles east of Australia. The prayer focus was on their people, a developing nation with many challenges. The theme explored this year is ‘Built on a strong Foundation’, the bible reading being Matthew 7:24-27, ‘build your house on the rock’.

Unfortunately because of Covid-19, it was thought not wise to hold a service in Greasby. However there were services that could be accessed on line and we were able to follow the service on YouTube filmed at Neston Parish Church. After a short film clip from a beach in Vanuatu with lively music, song and dance, a small group of Neston ladies (all following government regulations) brought forward symbolic items, placing them on the decorated table at the front. After a welcome from the vicar, the service proceeded following the order of service printed in the booklet. The ladies came forward as they read the various parts and three or four ladies seated apart in the choir stalls sang the hymns accompanied by the organ.

Within the service was an act of commitment to build our lives on the strong foundation of Christ, the instruction in the booklet was for everyone to take hold of the stone which they had selected on entry into the church and now exchange it with the person sitting alongside them as a reminder to continue to remember them, Vanuatu and this day throughout the year ahead. However because of current restrictions this act could not be done. Instead the service leader said to think of stones, the different sizes, shapes, colours and flaws, of how they were all unique like each one of us, but all can be built together on the strong foundation of Christ. Let us remember and pray for the people of Vanuatu.

I found this prayer in last year's Tearfund prayer diary (on 29 February 2020)
Pray along with this young person from Vanuatu

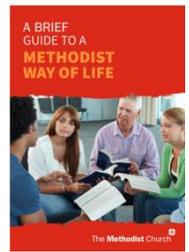
*O Jesus, Be the canoe that holds me in the sea of life,
Be the steer that keeps me straight,
Be the outrigger that supports me in time of great temptation.
Let your Spirit be my sail that carries me through each day.
As I journey steadfastly on the long voyage of life.
Amen.*

Roberta Gray
World Day of Prayer rep



LEARNING AND CARING

- ❖ We will care for ourselves and those around us.
- ❖ We will learn more about our faith.
- ❖ We will practise hospitality and generosity.



DISCIPLESHIP AND FELLOWSHIP DAY SATURDAY 11th SEPTEMBER



We are looking forward to the next Discipleship and Fellowship Day to be held on Saturday 11th September when Mark Thomas has agreed to lead on the theme '**Defending the Faith**'.

Always be ready to give an answer

1 Peter 3 v13-17

The aim of the day is to introduce disciples of Jesus to the study of Apologetics. By the end of the day we will be able to give a reasoned argument for the existence of God, the divine nature of Jesus Christ and the authenticity and authority of the Bible. The draft outline for the day is

- 9.30 Arrivals, tea/coffee, fellowship
- 10.00-11.15 Session 1: The Case for God
- 11.30-12.45 Session 2: The Case for Christ
- 12.45-1.30 Lunch
- 1.30-2.45 Session 3: The Case for Scripture
- 2.45-3.30 Refreshments (tea/coffee/cake), Plenary and Closing worship

It promises to be an exciting day of learning through discussion, reflection and fellowship with one another and will include refreshments and a light lunch.

Please save the date and join us for this exciting opportunity to learn through discussion, reflection, worship and fellowship with each other

**Sue Elliott
Steward**

MONDAY EVENING LADIES HOUSEGROUP/BIBLE STUDY

The Monday evening ladies house group meets fortnightly at the home of Vel Kelly. We arrive for 7.45pm and eight people usually attend. The purpose of the meeting is two-fold in that we meet to study God's word together in an informal way and also to help each other grow in faith and as Christians. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and the current restrictions we have been unable to meet for the past year.



This year, I am sure we would all agree, has been different from any other. There has been suffering and tragedy and hardship and isolation for many. We have as a nation been worried and fearful but in this, by God's grace, we have sometimes had glimpses of hope and encouragement.

Prior to the pandemic the group were looking at Women of the New Testament. We looked at 'a sinful woman - a forgiven heart'. The woman who came to the house of Simon the Pharisee and poured perfume to wash Jesus' feet and dried them with her hair and found great forgiveness. 'The Canaanite Woman - persevering in prayer - a gentile mother who had great faith and refused to give up. Our next study is Mary and Martha facing death and grief. Women with major problems whom God met and today through His word He is meeting us through their stories to build our faith, encourage us and teach us something more about himself.

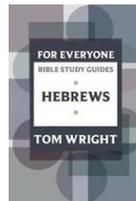
'Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6.

For He is faithful - Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

**Janis Nuttall
Housegroup leader**

MONDAY EVENING HOUSEGROUP/BIBLE STUDY

We started our housegroup at the beginning of March 2021, studying the book of Hebrews, based on Tom Wrights book, “Hebrews for everyone”.



The book of Hebrews is important because it clearly lay out the ministry of Jesus as the son of God and as a human. Although Jesus exceeds all others, angels and humans, He became the same as us, to live and die in sacrifice for our salvation. He overcame death by his resurrection to offer hope to all who follow him.

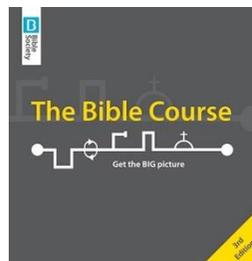
All are welcome to join our study and discussions on zoom on Monday evenings at 7.00pm. we hope to be able to meet physically as soon as we can in the near future.

Paul Boardman
Housegroup leader

THURSDAY MORNING HOUSEGROUP/BIBLE STUDY

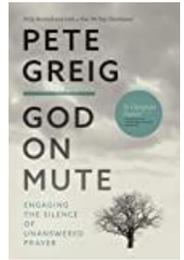
When we went into Lockdown last year our group had just started ‘The Bible Course’ led by Andrew Ollerton and produced by the Bible Society. The series consisting of videos followed by a discussion, gave us an overview of the Bible which helped us to see the bigger picture from Genesis to Revelation.

As we were unable to meet in my home, we decided to wait until the pandemic passed before re-commencing our studies as one of our number was unable to access the internet.



However, as time went on, and there was no sign of us being able to physically get together, we decided to continue the course using Zoom in September. As a result, nine of us were able to complete the course which we all found to be very informative and helped us put certain parts of the Bible into context.

We had completed Prayer Course 1 last year, so when we discovered that Prayer 24/7 had produced a second course we decided to go with it. This course is entitled 'Unanswered Prayer' and is led by, and based on a book by, Pete Greig called God on Mute. Not an easy subject but one which affects us all from time to time. It, like the first one, consists of a video followed by discussion and prayer. We have one new member so are now ten in number, and we meet every two weeks on a Thursday morning at 10.45 am.



Small groups, where we can learn together, share together, and be completely honest with one another are to be recommended as a safe place in which we can grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

In Hebrews 10 v25 it says that we should not neglect meeting together but encourage one another. If you are interested in being part of a Bible Study group, please have a word with myself, Paul Boardman or Rev Yangsun Yi.

Judith Stelfox
Housegroup leader

OASIS



OASIS, our lunch club with a message, has kept going through the last year by weekly on line Zoom meetings. We have been blessed by the dedication of our regular speakers, Rev. Yangsun Yi , Judith Stelfox and Paul Boardman and Yangsun invited Rev. Heather Cooper who shared short stories with a message.

Also, because of the remote sessions, we have been able to have the added blessing of speakers from farther afield. Mike Ellis's friend, Derek Linley, shared with us about the Christian radio Flame where he has regular radio programmes. Yangsun invited her friend and colleague

Rev. Pingting Chen who spoke to us from Birmingham about Christianity in mainland China. We look forward to how this may develop.

From Wednesday 7th April the time of the sessions will change from 12 noon to 10.30-1100 am every Wednesday.

For details on how to join the on line Zoom sessions contact the church office 677 5127 or Paul Boardman on 07846713810

Sue Farrelly
OASIS co-ordinator

PASTORAL REPORT

We have a wonderful caring group of ten Pastoral Visitors, known as our Pastoral Links. Each link has 6-8 people in their group, and they are responsible for keeping in touch, with each person in their group. This can be done at church (in normal circumstances). As you can appreciate, the Pastoral team have been extra busy during these very difficult past 12 months, as all home visits have taken place on doorsteps! Yangsun has kindly delivered flowers to people, standing at the front door. Other contact has been by phone or e-mail.



For our folk who cannot access our Zoom services, their visitor has been collecting the weekly church notices and delivering them each week, so to let them know we are still thinking of them, and praying for them, despite not seeing them on a Sunday.

We have sadly lost two of our lovely Pastoral team, Beryl and Pat, to our Lord during the past two years. We miss them greatly. Their groups have been re-allocated to other people.

We generally meet every 3 months, throughout the year, and for the past few years we have made our summer meeting into an 'afternoon tea' for everyone and partners if they wish. This is held in someone's beautiful garden, and we all enjoy this meeting.

It may begin to seem that Pastoral care is just a matter of being there, and indeed being there giving attention to another person, listening prayerfully, is both a great gift and a privilege. Allowing other people to feel heard and cared for, enabling them to find their own answers to questions and problems, providing an opportunity and a safe place to explore, is at the heart of Christian ministry of Pastoral care.

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34

Lyn Jackson-Eves
Pastoral Secretary



CRADLE ROLL

I continue to hand deliver birthday cards to each child on the Cradle Roll register up to their 5th birthday.

Sadly we were not able to invite children to have a Breakfast with Santa this year. However I designed, printed and hand delivered a greeting card with an invitation to Wirral Tots Together, an advent themed daily activity/message on Facebook produced by the Wirral Circuit Children and Youth Team. This included a description of the activities and the QR code to access it from smartphone/iphones at a convenient time. In addition I distributed a knitted angel and a personalised invitation to the Carols/Christingle service and it was a joy to welcome four families as a result of this outreach.

I look forward to when we are able to welcome these families back to our monthly Teddy Bear Service and Picnics again. Please pray that all these families will grow in faith as they have made their commitment to the Christian upbringing of these precious babies and children.

Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it' Luke 18 v16-17

**Sue Elliott
Cradle Roll Secretary**

FLOWER MINISTRY

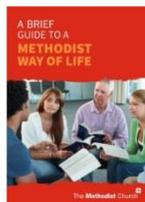
Under normal circumstances the congregation donate flowers to enhance our weekly worship. Easter, Harvest and Christmas are also times when we celebrate and decorate the church with flowers these flowers have then been given to those who may benefit from the flower ministry.



Sadly, due to guidelines and restrictions during the pandemic, we have not been able to meet regularly in church or decorate the church.

It seems very strange and sad that this will be the second Easter when there will be no flowers in the church. In normal times we celebrate Easter by decorating the Church and on Easter Day we bring flowers to decorate the Lenten cross which is crowned with a floral diadem. Last year the cross was erected outside the building and adorned with so many flowers that I think it looked even more beautiful and was a wonderful witness that although the building is closed Greasby Methodist Church is alive and active.

Jennifer Bullock and Sue Farrelly



SERVICE

- ❖ We will help people in our communities and beyond.
- ❖ We will care for creation and all God's gifts.
- ❖ We will challenge injustice.

TODDLER GROUP

We do miss the regular attenders at Toddler Group. However following a review of the register, I identified 9 parents/grandparents and distributed greeting cards and angels with invitations to join Wirral Tots Together on Facebook and our Christmas services. Whilst many families joined Wirral Tots Together it is difficult to know how many joined as a result of our invitation, but we have actively sown a seed.



The future of the Toddler group has been discussed at leadership team. In addition, we have explored the possibility of re-instating plans for Church Mice/Preschool worship as a new outreach programme. Please pray for Gods wisdom and guidance as we seek a way forward with this aspect of our mission

Sue Elliott
Toddler group

METHODIST WOMEN IN BRITAIN (MWiB)

The District Project for this year is The Whitechapel Centre in Liverpool, a leading homeless and housing charity for the Liverpool region, and it is anticipated that the project will be carried forward to 2021-22



In the summer Pam raised funding by selling plants in planters, which would normally be sold at our coffee mornings and mini marts. Having raised £75 it was decided to donate the money to Steps of Hope who, like the Whitechapel Centre, seek to support homeless in Liverpool

We do look forward to meeting together again to plan a programme of activities for 2021-22 as soon as we are able to

The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'. Matthew 25 v45

Vel Kelly Pam Ogden
President Treasurer

CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES



For many years now, Greasby Methodist Church has collected shoeboxes, filled with gifts, for the poorest children of Eastern Europe. Along with many other churches in the Wirral Circuit, we join in the T4u (Teams for You) organisation, based in Wrexham. T4u was started by Dave Cooke, who came to one of our Cafe Church evenings, and told us his story of how he became involved, which was very moving.

For the past 2 years, I have ordered the boxes already made up, which has proved very popular, especially for busy Mums, who can just take a box or 2, and fill it. At Greasby, I place the boxes in the atrium, towards the end of September, beginning October, as our church has many groups of people passing through our doors. Slimming World, Ballet classes, our own nursery, to name a few. I usually order 200 boxes which this year cost 35p each. You are very welcome to wrap your own shoebox, and a few still do, but the advantage of the bought boxes are that every child receives a box the same size. Age ranges are Boy/Girl 3-5 years, Boy/Girl 6-11 years, Boy/Girl 12 plus. Every box has the essentials of toothbrush, toothpaste, wrapped soap, face flannel, comb. Then come the fun part, a cuddly soft toy, writing pads, crayons, a game and a favourite, a tennis ball. Scarves, hats and gloves are so needed

too. The most popular boxes are for girls 3-5 (easiest to fill) and the least popular are for teenage boys! (hardest to fill). Also a bag of sweets, not chocolate. For the past 2 years we have also had a Homebox for the Mum of the family, in which you can put clothes pegs, soap, mugs, and a lovely scarf or something personal for her.

At Greasby we aim to have our shoebox service in the middle of November, which means that the lorries can start their long journey in time for Christmas. We use a warehouse in Birkenhead, where all the churches drop their boxes off. Here, there is an army of wonderful volunteers, in freezing cold conditions, who check every single box to make sure the gifts are correct.

This last Christmas was SO different because of lockdown. We did not think we could do it at all, but Dave was determined that we tried our hardest. Of course no one had been able to go shopping to buy their gifts, but due to more wonderful people, lots of knitted goods arrived and we were able to fill the boxes. It turned out that we had 48 hours notice, to collect and deliver all our boxes to the warehouse, and they DID make the journey. This year they were taken to rural communities in Moldova, Romania, and for the first time, parts of Africa.

The children who receive our boxes have absolutely nothing. The team always make a video of the children receiving their boxes, which we always show in church, and it can move you to tears, when you see the pure joy and wonder on their faces as they open their box. We can never see the face of the child who receives our box, but surely this is a wonderful example of our mission, to show them God's love in a simple shoebox.



Here you can see the boxes that were blessed by our minister Rev Yangsun Yi before they started their journey

Postscript

I have received the latest news from T4u. Dave Cooke tells us that despite huge difficulties this year, the teams distributed 48,756 shoe

boxes throughout Belarus, Bosnia, Moldova and below is the clip from Romania. I felt these words summed up the whole mission of the shoeboxes.

Romania

Your shoeboxes were distributed in the Arad and Bihor counties of Western Romania, through schools, churches and within communities, as restrictions allowed.



Romania has always ranked highly within the EU for the percentage of its people at risk of poverty. With the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been heightened concerns about the effects on a country that already has higher-than-average rates of social exclusion. The economic impact of lockdown restrictions has also been extreme with tens of thousands of people losing their income.

“I’ve distributed over 10,000 gifts into dozens of towns and received thousands of smiles from children I’ve never known. The joy hidden in these little colourful and sparkling gifts can only be told by the children who waited for them, with expectation and emotion in their hearts. One boy even told me he thought his gift came directly from heaven.”

Raul Gherle, Project Lead in Bihor, Romania.

Lyn Jackson-Eves
T4u Shoebox co-ordinator

COMPASSION – RELEASING CHILDREN FROM POVERTY IN JESUS' NAME.



We have continued to support not only our two sponsored children Joseph and Amos, but many other children through your generosity over the last twelve months.

We have particularly been able to help support their crisis fund allowing money to be given to the most needed areas. We held a successful 'bake off' in November raising over £420 by baking to order with the current restrictions not permitting our usual cake sale. This incredible amount including many donations and the regular giving through direct debit, has meant we can continue to support this very important ministry. We have provided not only the financial support to meet their educational, medical and dietary needs but also their spiritual and emotional support through letter writing and cards around Christmas and birthdays. The family gifts we have been able to send have also had direct benefit to the families and it has been a joy to see the photos and letters that have been received.

Thank you for your faithful giving and support that is making such a difference to these boys.

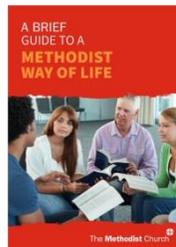
***For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat..Matthew
25:35-40 (NIV)***

Paula Dewhirst

EVANGELISM



- ❖ We will speak of the love of God.
- ❖ We will live in a way that draws others to Jesus.
- ❖ We will share our faith with others



ASSEMBLIES

It has been a very exciting year for assemblies! The Ecumenical Assemblies Team regularly prepare video recorded assemblies to send into the three local schools so that 640 children continue to hear the stories of Jesus told through drama; a message; singing an action song and finishing in prayer.



This year we have focussed on Jesus calling the fishermen to be His first disciples; Jesus at a wedding changes water into wine (His first miracle); Jesus healing a paralysed man; Jesus feeding 5000; Zacchaeus – a changed person; parable of the wise and foolish builders as well at the Christmas and Easter stories and messages. I do have copies of assemblies which can be shared with members, upon request

It is a blessing to be allowed to share the gospel in this way and a privilege that the schools will facilitate this for us. Please pray that the children and staff will reflect on the messages and come to know Jesus as a personal friend and saviour for themselves

***“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”
Matthew 4v19 (ESV)***

**Sue Elliott
Ecumenical Assemblies Team**

HOPE JOURNEY



Hope Journey is an exciting, interactive and engaging way of partnering with local schools to deliver some areas of the Religious Education syllabus. Through a multiple workshop format, children participate in up to six workshops, each incorporating a different learning style which allows every child to engage in some way with the session. Whilst children hear the Christian believer's view, the purpose is to deepen understanding, not convert. All are welcome regardless of faith or belief. Hope Journey is funded and supported by Wirral Methodist Circuit and we now offer seven of the Hope Journey programmes

This has been a very exciting year for our Hope Journeys! I am delighted to report that, with the support of the Wirral Methodist Circuit Children and Youth team, all planned Hope Journeys have been successfully delivered as virtual events and, as requested, I have written extensive reports for the weekly news sheets in addition to uploading detailed news reports onto our new website. To summarise



Cre-8 used Google Meet to target Year 4 children at Brookdale and Greasby Junior School. The parables were shared with over 90 children in October 2020. Through the schools I have been able to distribute the usual gift bags and this year I exhibited a display of children's work in the foyer to all to enjoy. The

schools were eager to work with us, the evaluation forms were outstanding and it was a real blessing to us all

Remembering used Microsoft Teams to target Year 6 children in Brookdale and Greasby Junior School. We focussed on 'What and why do we remember', 'Wartime Experience in the Anderson shelter' and 'Anne Frank' and nearly 100 children attended the three events in November. Again we



were able to distribute the usual gift bags and the children's written prayers were included in zoom worship the following Sunday. Schools sent photos of the Wreath of Hope which I uploaded onto the website.

Following on, it was also a joy for several members of our community to receive individual letters from Year 6 children at Brookdale Primary School as they too seek to build relationships with friends at Greasby Methodist Church



Meet The Characters used Microsoft Teams to target Year 2 children at Brookdale and Greasby Infant School. The children met the Angel Gabriel, Mary and the Innkeeper & donkey who retold their stories and nearly 100 children engaged enthusiastically, asking the most imaginative questions of each character. Gifts bags were shared including invitations to the Carols/Christingle service. It was a blessing to know another 90+ homes received the *God Became Like Me* Scripture Union Christmas story book and our prayer cards to share with the family and a joy to welcome some families to the Christingle service.

Following on, we were delighted that Greasby Infant School sent Christmas cards to all those they had missed seeing at Hope Journey and those who had knitted Christmas Angels. I know they were very much appreciated by all



Epiphany – Journey with the Kings used Microsoft Teams to target Year 1 children at Brookdale and Greasby Infant School in January. On this occasion some of the children were not in school due to lockdown 3 restrictions, they were home learners. With support from the schools we were able to share recorded videos of the Three Kings puppet sketches and 'Gifts we can give to Jesus' (via a link to OneDrive). For me this opens up fresh opportunities for mission in lockdown, which I will continue to explore. Again

we were able to distribute gift bags, including the Scripture Union books and Epiphany prayer cards. The Journey to School pictures from Brookdale were displayed in the foyer for the enjoyment of all

It has been refreshing to see God at work in new and different ways. As I write there are plans in place for

1. **Cross Factor** (Year 5)
2. **Explore** (Year 3) May 2021
3. **Sharing The Parables** (F2) June 2021

in order to achieve our ambition to share Hope Journey with over 700 members of the Greasby community this year.

Please thank God for these innovative opportunities to serve Him and pray for future success as we review and plan a programme for 2021-22 which continues to build relationships with schools so that we can welcome children, staff and parents back into our buildings again, as soon as that is possible

Sue Elliott
Hope Journey co-ordinator

CHRISTMAS ANGELS

This year it was a joy to distribute an amazing 566 angels throughout the week before Christmas. Each Angel carried a new laminated label which read *'I bring Good News'....This angel is a Christmas gift from Greasby Methodist Church. We know this Christmas will be very different but we wanted you to know that we are praying for our whole community* and included a QR code to take recipients straight to our website where there was an invitation to all the Christmas services.



We received lots of thank you letters from the headteacher and children at Greasby Infant School which were displayed in the atrium.

I would like to thank all those who knitted angels, some of whom have started to knit for Christmas 2021. Please pray for continuing and further opportunities to share the Good News with children and families, as we seek to fulfil our mission here in the Greasby community

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23

**Sue Elliott
Co-ordinator**

CHURCH WALKING GROUP

The pandemic has sadly terminated our programme for the whole of the current year. At the time of writing it seems quite likely that we may be able to resume our walks in the early summer. When we are ready to do so we will announce details in the Church notices.

In the meantime, we have maintained our fellowship, with those members who are able to do so, through periodic Zoom meetings.

We are keen to resume our programme and we look forward to sharing it with any new members who would like to join us. We normally meet at Church on the first Saturday in the month. We usually walk for about six or seven miles, mainly in Cheshire or North Wales, sharing cars to the start point and attracting an average of fifteen or so members, and led by different members of the group.

Arthur Stott

RESOURCES

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

This Church Committee has responsibility to the Church Council for Property and Financial matters, and it must always ensure that a balanced budget is set for each year, so that our income at least equals our expenditure. If it becomes clear during a year that we cannot do that, we need to report to Church Council that extra income is needed or expenditure reduced.

In a normal year, the committee meets 3 or 4 times a year and looks at all repair and maintenance work required, prioritising where necessary. However, this year it met only once due to Covid and so only essential work has been done. However, just before lockdown, we did get the new electric front door installed and I think people had chance to appreciate it's advantages before lockdown.

The committee always discusses how income is coming in during the year in relation to the budget, and looks at lettings of the premises and reviews the lettings fees on a regular basis, changes to which, require Council approval. Lettings and usage of our premises are an important aspect of our income. Therefore, we are fortunate that Members have continued their regular giving by standing orders so, although total is less, which is due to the death of several members.

In regard to lettings, the Church had to prepare Risk Assessments, which users had to agree before any resumption of lettings last August but that ceased after further lock-down in the Autumn. Pre-School has continued throughout the academic year after we able to agree a programme of opening that met all Risk assessment requirements. We thank Gill Charo and her team for their hard work which has provided the Church with continued income when all other lettings ceased with the exception of Blood Donation sessions.

The committee also has responsibility for Employees, Health and Safety matters, and Fire Safety policy, all of which need to be reviewed and reported to Church Council if there are any major changes. The committee is authorised by Council to spend up to £500 on any job, but

above that are required to seek Council approval before proceeding.

Our employees were furloughed April-July 2020, but in August, our Administration Assistant, Caroline Coyle resumed work, either in the office or at home and that continues to date. She does an excellent job in managing and controlling all necessary church work. Lynne Jones, our cleaner resumed on a limited schedule of work but that ceased when 2nd lock-down started and has been furloughed for some additional months.

My thanks to Alan Chamberlain as Resources committee chairman and Senior Property steward for all the work that he does throughout the year, Roberta Gray as Treasurer and to all members of the committee.

John Postles
Secretary Resources Committee

TREASURER'S REPORT

For the financial year

1st September 2019 to 31st August 2020



God is good, let us give Him our thanks and praise! Despite the building being closed for five months due to the covid19 pandemic lockdown, the Church has ended the year with a smaller deficit than was budgeted, £114.46 rather than £3400.00! This has come about for several reasons: Firstly, the government set up a furlough scheme allowing for 80% of wages to be claimed; consequently, the building being closed, the two employees were put on furlough and four months government money has been claimed and received. Secondly, instead of paying the annual insurance payment in one lump sum in June, it has been possible to spread the cost over ten months, thus only three instalments have so far been taken from the account. Thirdly, a very big thank you goes to the pre-school playgroup who has given a generous donation of £2000.00.

A sincere thank you also goes to members and friends for their continuing regular giving, both by standing order and on the Sunday offering plate. It is always very sad to lose loyal members of the Church; however it is with much thankfulness to three people who have left gifts during this year, Beryl Henderson, Graham Cubbin and Elizabeth Smith.

Regarding expenditure, the only categories that exceeded their respective budget figures were cleaning materials and general maintenance. Buildings and grounds need regular maintenance and not all jobs can be forecast. Also during August preparation work was done for re-opening in September, this has added cost to both maintenance and cleaning materials. It is good to report that two expensive but essential items were bought from the special maintenance money, even though little was left for the hoped for, but not yet scheduled decoration of the atrium. A glass panelled fire door costing £815.00 was purchased in December to replace an old wooden one that had become difficult to close. Then in March the wooden main door whose closing mechanism had become a safety hazard, was replaced with a glass sliding door with an automatic opening function, at the cost of £6,708.00.

Adding the proceeds of a modest sale to specific collections, £1161.02 has been raised for charities including Methodist Women in Britain (Methodist Missions and the local project), Steps of Hope (to help homeless people in Liverpool), Forum Housing (for young adults in Wirral), and Action for Children. Two Oasis lunches at the beginning of Lent enabled £150.00 to be sent to Christian Aid and £500.00 from the Mission budget was donated to the Circuit project FUSS/FUPS (to administer the provision of free, recycled school uniforms). Also through money donated and raised for the Compassion charity, the two boys Amos and Joseph have continued to be sponsored and extra donations sent.

1st September 2020 to 28th February 2021

Despite fluctuating restrictions and recommendations on meeting together, the Church finances are not faring too badly with many thanks to all who donate regularly and the Pre-school's continuing rental income, also to Slimming World and Ballet while they were able to meet. This has led to no serious concern regarding the budget.

It has been a difficult year for everyone and the future is unknown, but let us believe and say, whether together or apart, the text from Lamentations chapter 3, verses 22-24 (ESV) ***‘The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.”***

Roberta Gray
Treasurer

GIFT AID AND GIVING – 2019/2020

giftaid it

For the tax year April 2019 / March 2020 the church received a total gift aid refund of £9,283. This comprised £7,566 from those donors who give regular offerings by direct debit (and pay income tax) and £1,717 via GASDS (gift aid small donation scheme).

	2018/2019	2019/2020
Direct Debits	35237	34637
GASDS Cash *	6034	6895
Gift Day	2630	-----
TOTAL	43901	41532
Gift Aid	8440	7566
GASDS	1571	1717
TOTAL	9732	9283
G.A. as % of Offerings	22.86%	22.35%

*Plate Offerings + Sunday coffee + Oasis

We lost a few more donors in the year ending March 2020, but income from GASDS (2019 – 2020) was well up despite there being no plate offerings, Sunday coffee or Oasis during the month of March). However, as there have been only a few services in church between April 2020 and Mar 2021 income from GASDS will be very much down in the current year.

Many thanks must go to those of you who donate to the church by bank direct debit. This reliable source of income enables the church to keep going and plan for the future. I am happy to report that nobody has felt obliged to cancel or reduce their direct debit donations due to lockdown. In fact we have two new donors this year.

The church is deeply grateful to you for your direct debit giving. Had it failed the church would be in danger of running out of money and closing down as regular bills still have to be paid. If anyone else would like to join the scheme I would be delighted to advise them. Please keep in mind that if you wish the church to claim gift aid on your donations you must pay enough income tax for the government to refund 25% of your church donation out of the tax you have paid. If you don't pay income tax, or do not wish the church to claim gift aid on your giving, this still does not bar you from giving to the church by direct debit.

Joyce Scoffield
Discreet Fund and Gift Aid Secretary

APPENDICES

CHURCH ACCOUNTS 2019 TO 2020

2018-19	2019-20	<i>Totals</i>	Surplus/ Deficit
£	£	£	£
<u>GENERAL ACCOUNT</u>			
<i><u>Income</u></i>			
40,040.67 Offerings	37560.25		
27,882.00 Lettings	17230.00		
19,468.10 Gift Aid Refund	7,490.85		
1,200.00 Toddlers	841.21		
1,381.86 Oasis	745.48		
1,920.92 Donations - defibrillator			
409.32 Tea/Coffee	219.65		
1,560.11 Church Donations	4526.00		
179.62 Interest	168.27		
93.34 Printing Income	132.57		
9.25 Miscellaneous Income	36.00		
94,145.19	<i>TOTAL</i>	68,950.28	
<i><u>Expenditure</u></i>			
41,209.00 Circuit Assessment	40576.00		
1,317.96 Mission	1147.55		
350.10 Stationery, Books etc	112.40		
487.37 Printer	455.63		
4,659.60 Cleaner	3464.20		
5,649.00 Clerical	4283.80		
2,936.68 Gas	2647.77		
2,683.95 Electricity	2143.78		
866.06 Water	555.06		
521.35 Cleaning Materials	582.54		
635.41 Telephone	378.25		
2,981.21 Insurance	907.24		
1,157.80 Music and Worship	748.42		
6,893.11 Maintenance	10041.75		
10,212.64 Maintenance - Special	815.00		
3,277.81 Chairs + Defibrillator			
43.41 Tea/Coffee	55.35		
450.00 Donations	150.00		

86,332.46	<i>TOTAL</i>	69,064.74	
7,812.73	SURPLUS/DEFICIT		-114.46

CONTRAS

Income

	For Charities	1161.02	
	Miscellaneous	230.00	
0.00	<i>TOTAL</i>		1391.02

Expenditure

	For Charities	917.81	
	Miscellaneous	230.00	
0.00	<i>TOTAL</i>	1,147.81	243.21

BENEVOLENT FUND

Income

	Donations in	0.00	
0.00	<i>TOTAL</i>		0.00

Expenditure

	Donation out	30.00	
0.00	<i>TOTAL</i>	30.00	
0.00	SURPLUS/DEFICIT		-30.00

COMPASSION FUND

Income

300.00	Receipts via discreet Account	375.00	
805.00	Cake Stalls + donations	400.90	
150.00	Gift Aid	0.00	
1,255.00	<i>TOTAL</i>		775.90

Expenditure

600.00	Sponsorship - 2 boys	660.00	
120.00	Donations	500.00	
720.00	<i>TOTAL</i>	1160.00	
535.00	SURPLUS/DEFICIT		-384.10
95,400.19	TOTAL INCOME	71,117.20	
87,052.46	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	71,402.55	
8,347.73	TOTAL SURPLUS/DEFICIT		-285.35

