

Blandford Methodist Church: Sunday 29th April

Good morning and a very warm welcome to our All Age Morning Worship which is being led by Deacon Alison McMillan. The Stewards are John Cornish, Rona Downes and Stephanie Bishop. Thank you to our musicians, Eric Phillips and Roger Cook, and to Jean Peck for the flowers. Refreshments will be served in the hall after the service, so please do stay for coffee and a chat.

Today's reading is: John 15:1-8

Events Sunday 29th April to 6th May

Sunday	3.00 pm	Dementia friendly service, Parish Church
Monday	9.45 am	Baby and Toddlers' Group
Tuesday	12.45 pm	Lunch Club
Wednesday	7.30 pm	Prayer walk, starting at the Evangelical Church
Thursday	10.00 am	Coffee Morning
	7.00 pm	Church Council Meeting
Friday	12.45 pm	Lunch Club
	7.00 pm	Close Encounters Youth Club (ages 8 – 12 years)
Saturday	7.30 pm	'The Bible in 55 Minutes', Verwood URC
Sunday	10.45 am	Morning Worship led by Reverend David Ellis
Monday 7 th May	10.00 am	Georgian Fayre – Church will be open for refreshments etc.

Bible in One Year: 30th April – 6th May: 1 Kings 6 – 22 and Luke 20:27 – Luke 23

Diary Dates:

Monday 7 th May	Blandford Georgian Fayre: church open for refreshments, book stall and quiet contemplation
Thursday 10 th May	Bible Study, The Manse, 7.00 pm
Sunday 20 th May	Pentecost Ecumenical Service, URC, 9.00 am
Thursday 24 th May	Bible Study, The Manse, 7.00 pm
Thursday 21 st June	Bible Study, The Manse, 7.00 pm
Thursday 5 th July	Bible Study, The Manse, 7.00 pm
Thursday 19 th July	Bible Study, The Manse, 7.00 pm

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING: There will be a Church Council meeting on Thursday May 3rd at 7 pm to which you are warmly invited. This Church Council has less of a focus on "business" and more of a focus on the life and witness of the church. Amongst other things, we will be talking about how to follow through ideas from our recent Away Day at Holtwood; the setting up of membership classes; a new Bible study time plus a time for prayer; social events through the summer months.

Some may read this and think, "This isn't for me". Please reconsider. We are a small church numerically and we need as many people as possible, members and non-members alike, to take an active interest in our planning and conversations. Copies of the Agenda are on the table in the Narthex.

Gwyneth Owen

Flower Rota: If anyone would like to be included on the June to August flower rota, then please have a word with Becky Gransden.

Georgian Fayre, May 7th: A big thank you to those who have volunteered in any way to help with the Georgian Fayre. The response has been great. It would be wonderful to see as many of our congregation as possible supporting us on the day (why not bring a friend) by popping in for coffee and cake or a filled roll.

Immediately after coffee on Sunday 6th May we need to clear the back store room as well as putting out tables and chairs in the hall in readiness for Georgian Fayre Day on Monday 7th May. If you can stay and help that would be so appreciated.

Joyce Wild

Pentecost Ecumenical Service: There will be an ecumenical service on Pentecost Sunday, 20th May at 9.00 am at the URC. This will be a great time of worship together with other Christians in Blandford. Do put the date and time in your diaries now. We will then have our normal service at 10.45 am here at the Methodist Church. Please speak to Alison for more information.

Film time: Come and join us in the church hall on Saturday 26th May at 2.00 pm to watch Paddington 2 followed by a tea. All are welcome to join us for this fun time together. Hope to see you there.

Gwyneth and

Alison

Universal Credit (UC) is driving families to food banks: *"Most people who struggle because of Universal Credit will not visit a food bank or knock on a church door. The food bank clients we see are only the tip of the iceberg, a warning sign that must be heeded if we are to prevent disaster for many families." "A benefit system that allows families to go hungry is a benefit system that is failing."*

Both quotes are from Paul Morrison who advises a group of national Christian Churches on poverty. The Trussell Trust's report on the impact of Universal Credit is clear - families are being pushed into financial crisis and towards food banks. The Government's drive to reduce spending and to focus on work incentives means we have lost sight of the purpose of a welfare system – ensuring that families are able to meet their most basics of needs – including food. Cuts to Universal Credit have been justified as providing an incentive to work. It is now clear that reducing and delaying the incomes of some of the poorest families has significant consequences, including hunger.

If this has raised your interest, then please read more at <http://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/news> or talk with John Cornish about the work we are carrying out here at Blandford Methodist Church.

John

Cornish

The Link: if you would like to contribute to The Link in any way - perhaps you would like to share a recent experience; perhaps you help with one of the activities / events at church and would like to let others in the congregation know what has been happening; perhaps you have been on a church outing or event; perhaps you have a poem or bible passage you would like to share – then please send articles to me at mags@woodview.me.uk. Alternatively, please give handwritten articles to me on a Sunday. Don't forget – this newsletter is not just to inform you of upcoming events, but is a place where we can share with others our ideas, thoughts and experiences – somewhere where we can link people together.

Margaret Cornish

Prayer for the week:

*Lord God, through the death of Your Son, You have given us life forever.
Help me to share this gift of grace with someone today.*

Minister: Rev Gwyneth Owen – Telephone Number 01202 883461

Deacon: Alison McMillan – Telephone Number 01258 456525