



Wesley Hall

Crookes, Sheffield



www.wesleyhall.org.uk

Wesley Hall Methodist Church is a registered charity number 1150284

Sunday 25th December 2022

We hope you find a warm welcome, particularly if you are with us for the first time. All song words are projected onto the wall at the front or can be found in the books provided. Large print hymn books are available at the back of church along with separate printed sheets for songs that are not in the books.

Today's service **9:30am** **Rev Mike Jones**
The steward on duty is Emma Irons

<i>Sunday 1st January</i>	<i>10:30am</i>	<i>no service at Wesley Hall (but see below)</i>
<i>Sunday 8th January</i>	<i>10:30am</i>	<i>Louise Etherington</i>
<i>Sunday 15th January</i>	<i>10:30am</i>	<i>John Freeman</i>

THIS WEEK

❖ **Worship in the Building – COVID Precautions**

- Please be considerate of those who wish to maintain social distancing and ask before sitting close to somebody.
- We are not passing the offering plate around, but there is one on the hatch where we serve tea/coffee. Please make use of it if you have brought an offering with you today.

COMING SOON

❖ **New Year's Day**

We won't be having a service here at Wesley Hall on Sunday 1st January, but we would encourage everyone to worship elsewhere: Walkley Ebenezer will be having 'Local Arrangements'; Rev Peter Edwards will be preaching at Dore for a united service with Totley Rise; Deacon Jacky Wright will be at Victoria Hall; and David Harris will be preaching at Greenhill.

CHILDREN & FAMILIES

- Thank you to everyone who has helped with the children's work this year; it would not happen without your help, especially over the Christmas period. Looking forward, our next events are a Stay & Play on 14th January, and a Messy Church on 4th February. We are also planning a Funday during the February half-term holiday, on Wednesday 15th February. If you are free to help at this event (even if you don't like children and stay hidden in the kitchen!) then please talk to Neil.

- The current TRIBE rota is at the back of the church. We are struggling to fill spaces on the rota, so if you would like to know more about what we do, then please speak to Neil who can answer any questions.

AND FINALLY...

❖ Offering Envelopes

The new offering envelopes for 2023 are now available at the back of church. If you have any questions or would like to start giving via envelopes, standing order, or any other method, please see Matt.

❖ Christmas Witness

As part of our witness this Christmas, we are distributing small metal hearts which could be hung as a Christmas decoration or attached to a key ring, or however anyone wants to use them. Like last year's stars, they are bagged up in pairs, with a message asking the recipient to "keep one for yourself and give one to someone who needs to know they are loved this Christmas". Each heart has a message that says, "Love is ..." and a picture of the manger, with a 'Happy Christmas from Wesley Hall'.

We have 200 bags (400 hearts), so if you could offer to distribute some around the area - tied on railings, bus stops, passed to neighbours, and any way you like - it would be very much appreciated. Please get some from Liz Jenkinson; and thank you very much for helping to take the good news of Christmas around Crookes.

❖ Christian Aid

Andrea Killingsworth is no longer able to co-ordinate and lead the fund raising for Christian Aid week and was wondering if anyone would feel able to take on this role. The role has changed to what it was, as effectively the street collection side has ceased; all that happened last year was that Rosemary & Andrea dropped off some envelopes with a flyer about the ceilidh (although this would be optional). Over the years, a considerable amount of money has been raised for Christian Aid, on average £1,200 per year, and last year's ceilidh was a tremendous fund raiser. Due to street collections becoming less popular in many areas, churches are fund raising in different ways. Here at Wesley Hall, we have also had afternoon teas which have been good fundraisers. We also normally do a church collection, which involves getting the envelopes and bank paying-in-slips from Christian Aid, and then banking any funds raised. The role would be what anyone makes of it really, doing as much or little as someone feels able to. It involves being a link with the local Sheffield branch, but again that would be what someone makes of it and is partly there for support and sharing ideas. Please get in contact with Andrea (or see her on Christmas Day!) if you want any more information. (Our thanks go to Andrea for all the work she has put into this valuable fund-raising work.)

❖ A Story of the Year 2022 (Updated)

Sharing stories is one way to demonstrate how God is working in our lives, our churches and our communities. The Sheffield District have been exploring the importance of sharing these stories over the last year, so for the first time, they have created an annual report style collection of stories showing how they are fulfilling the District mission strategy 'For Such a Time as This'. Each circuit is featured so they'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to this magazine and have made it possible. We now have printed copies of these to take away at the back of church.

Minister Mike Jones 07485 779 262
Centre Manager Matt Irons 0114 267 9040

Families Neil Thompson 07412 124 310
Pre-teen & Youth Jane Lasonder 07401 980 794

❖ **Christmas Fair**

Thanks for everyone who came to, helped and supported our Christmas Fair. The money has not yet been fully counted but it looks like we raised almost £1,000 for church funds, which is fantastic!

❖ **Thanks for J G Graves Trust**

A very big thank you goes to the J G Graves Trust who have awarded us a grant of £1,250 to buy a new commercial fridge for the Church Hall. Our old fridge (which was also bought some years ago with a previous grant from J G Graves) stopped working recently and the Lunch Club and Drop Inn have been having to make do with the much smaller fridge inside the kitchen. Following this good news, a new fridge has been ordered and will be with us shortly.

PRAYER POINTS

- ❖ Please continue to pray for a resolution to the war in Ukraine, that peace may prevail.
- ❖ Please pray for Jane as she continues her new job as our Pre-teen and Youth Worker, that she would settle in quickly and soon feel part of the team.
- ❖ Please continue to remember Mike and his family in prayers, as he returns to work; that he is able to strike the right balance as he continues to recover
- ❖ Please pray for Wesley Wigglers, which runs on a Thursday; we have had a couple of new mums attend; please pray that they continue to come, and that Wigglers will continue to grow.

If you have any prayer points to include in the newsletter, please pass them on to the Editor (see contact details at bottom of page).

From Sheffield Circuit Superintendent Revd Romeo Pedro...

Dear Friends,

We all know that Paul was speaking about the Cross when he wrote these words in 1 Corinthians 1: 20, "Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ... For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength."

The truth is that they are equally true about the "foolish" birth of Jesus. Paul says: "But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God." (1 Corinthians 1:27-28).

One cannot be blamed when thinking that God must be foolish to choose to be born into poverty within a country under aggressive foreign occupation. Jesus required liberation before he could start his liberating work.

A refugee child on the run is how Jesus' life began – this is of course relevant as we heard a few days ago that four people who have died after desperately trying to cross the Channel in a small boat.

Isn't it foolish for God to choose to be born as a "nobody"? Why not come as someone powerful or at least popular? Why did God not come as someone who could "get the message out" far and wide? Why did the Divine not come as one who had access to important people with money and who could sway the real decision-makers?

What a foolish God indeed.

As it was at the start, so it was with Jesus' birth. God specialises in creating out of nothing – what a message of hope. All through scripture we see God doing wonders with so-called nobodies. Now this is affirming news when we feel like nobodies; and it is also a reminder that the Divine, more often than not, comes to us

from the unwanted margins of society. Those ignored and maligned, down-trodden and forgotten, are who God uses to turn this world right-way-up. Christmas invites us to take our lead from the despised and marginalised.

So, the call to us this Christmas is to see God in the peripheral places of society (in "warm spaces" and food banks), to allow God to use us in our weakness, our vulnerability and our brokenness, to bring hope and healing to the places where we are.

I end this letter with a Prayer, written by David Blanchflower (1987):

Pray this with me this Christmas...

CHRIST THE HUMBLE CHILD AMONG US

Humble child of Bethlehem, whose parents found no room in the inn,

we pray for all who are homeless.

Humble child of Bethlehem, born in a stable,

we pray for all who live in poverty.

Humble child of Bethlehem, rejected stranger,

we pray for all who are lost, alone, all who cry for loved ones.

Humble child of Bethlehem, whom Herod sought to kill,

we pray for all who live with danger, all who are persecuted.

Humble child of Bethlehem, a refugee in Egypt,

we pray for all refugees throughout the world.

Humble child of Bethlehem, in you God was pleased to dwell,

help us, we pray, to see the divine image in people everywhere. Amen.

Wishing you a blessed Christmas,

Romeo.