

STANNINGTON

Autumn 2020 Issue sixteen



AN INTERVIEW WITH JANE WALL

NOT ALL DANDELIONS



BEING A CURATE IN LOCKDOWN

A magazine for everyone in Stannington



**What's on at Christ Church
Church Street, Stannington**



CHRIST CHURCH IS ACTIVE!

SUNDAY WORSHIP

09.00 Communion Service in Church.

Seating capacity is limited due to Coronavirus social distancing requirements. To book a place please phone Sarah Zadik on 07768 293 406

Face masks must be worn in church.

10.30 Sunday Service is recorded each week.

The recordings of the services and sermons are available on YouTube from the home page of the website.

www.christchurchstannington.co.uk

The church building is closed Monday to Saturday.

For more information:

Like our page: www.facebook.com/ChristChurchStannington

Website: www.christchurchstannington.co.uk

E-mail: info@christchurchstannington.co.uk

Parish Priest:

Revd. Tim Fletcher,

The Vicarage, 214 Oldfield Road

Tel: 234 9247

E-mail: tim906fletcher@btinternet.com

Curate:

Revd. Alison Cook

Tel: 234 3463

E-mail: alison42cook@hotmail.co.uk

Parish Office:

info@christchurchstannington.co.uk

Christ Church mission statement:

To know and share God's love for all, growing in Christian community

Revd Tim Fletcher writes:

'Cast all your cares on him because he cares for you'

(1 Peter 5:7)



As I write we have begun to see restrictions lifted regarding lockdown but with the very real possibility that these restrictions may be reintroduced, with increasing numbers of coronavirus cases being reported.

These are uncertain times and anxious times as we seek to keep safe and play our part well for the wider community. Many face difficult decisions trying to weigh up often conflicting advice and to wade through vast amounts of information on this subject. Many are simply at the end of their tether and struggling to cope with loneliness and isolation. Personally I face similar dilemmas with my elderly parents in Manchester and I can see the challenges of those starting school & college as my son begins his course in Leeds with Perspex screens separating him from his fellow students.

In these anxious times can I encourage us to pray as the above verse from the Bible (one of my favourites) urges? Sometimes we don't feel like praying:

We don't feel good enough to pray

We don't feel God is interested in the minor things going on in our lives

We don't feel we have the 'right words' to say or the 'right theology'

We don't feel clever enough to pray

We don't feel God wants to hear from us or even cares

But the opposite is true:

God loves and cares deeply for each one of us

There is no such thing as the 'right words' to pray (the simpler the better!)

The Bible talks about God loving us as his children and we are encouraged to approach God as our heavenly father. When I visited Jerusalem some time ago I was waiting at the bus station and a child ran across to meet his father calling out, 'Abba, Abba!' - Abba is Aramaic for an intimate word for father (more like 'Daddy'). Jesus referred to his heavenly father as 'Abba' and in the Bible we are encouraged to call our heavenly father, 'Abba'. Think for a moment how children are with a good father. Think for a moment how a good father would feel if his children didn't tell him if they were worried. God wants to hear from us including our worries and will be sad if we don't share these in prayer.

The prayer can be as simple and short as you want, but be assured that God listens and cares. Let's be encouraged to cast our cares on him because he cares for us.

Yours

Tim

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Editorial

Once again this magazine is being published in digital format only. Circumstances do not allow us to organise printing and delivery to all 5000 households in Stannington as we have done four times a year for over three years.

Does a digital version work for you? Tell us what you think about that, or any other views on the magazine. You can leave a post on Christ Church's Facebook page, or send a message to info@christchurchstannington.co.uk.

We are very aware that some in our community cannot easily access information online. If you know of anyone in this position, please help them to see this magazine.

AND to our advertisers; please contact our advertising manager (see p11 or 14) about your business needs. We realise that these may have changed as a result of the pandemic.

CHRIST CHURCH HAS REOPENED. Christ Church has assessed the risks to our congregation. In order to obey social distancing guidelines the number who may attend the 9am service on Sundays is limited. A booking system is in place. Please see page 2 or the website for details. Funerals and weddings are covered separately. The church hall remains closed. **Please watch our website for updates.**

Alison Cook's ordination as priest, 26th September 2020



Alison with her family



Alison with Bishop Pete (right), Bishop Sophie (left) and other clergy who attended the service

See article page 5

PARISH REGISTERS

Funerals

We offer sympathy to the family and friends of:

24th March	Jacqueline Capper
17th July	Betty Street
31st July	Fred Baker

To arrange Baptisms, Banns and Weddings please contact the clergy.

Burial of Ashes

We offer sympathy to the family and friends of:

8th March	Joyce Ryalls
18th March	Sonya Saxby
17th July	Mavis Brown
15th August	Frank Edward Finley
3rd September	David Kingsley Wood
28th September	Raymond Trigg
13th October	Jean Wilson

ALISON COOK reflects on how her first year as a curate in Stannington has been affected by the Coronavirus.

A few weeks ago my spiritual advisor gave me this prayer,

'Lord, give us the courage to launch out into the uncertainty of not knowing. Surprise us into new ways of understanding, for you are the God who calls us on to live under the provisional as we discover the riches of your love.'

I feel it really sums up how this last year has been for me.

I was ordained deacon at the end of June 2019 so there had been the opportunity for quite a few months of training before fears of Covid 19 and lockdown occurred. I had been focusing on pastoral work, visiting and supporting people on their faith journey. I had begun to take baptisms and funerals alongside preaching and leading Sunday services. As an after thought, "if I have time for it" I had slipped a few lines into my training plan about improving my tech skills. I just wanted to keep up with general changes. How little I knew about what I was saying.

Then the storm broke. I have lived through storms before, I was in Jamaica in 1988 during Hurricane Gilbert. I remember hearing people referring to the coronavirus as a storm and thinking about my experiences in Jamaica. We prepared, we locked down, though just for 24 hours, and then we dealt with the aftermath. Similarly, the main difficulty with Hurricane Gilbert was the lack of communication. The winds had brought down the telephone lines so we were unable to let our families in England know we were all right. In the same way communication was crucial during lockdown, and since lockdown, as restrictions have impacted the way we meet face to face. However, technology has moved on considerably. Suddenly the church was faced with needing to move the mainstay of communications online and someone needed to work out how to do this.

At the same time my child-minding business whilst open for key workers was only operating a couple of days a week. So, I was the one with time to look into things. I also love playing, it works well with being a childminder. Play is the way we learn whether we are adults or children, being willing to have a go, experiment, explore new possibilities so I found it exciting and interesting to discover how to update the church website page, start using some of the less used Facebook facilities, like live streaming. If I remembered that little comment about upskilling myself in technology, then I smiled at the steepness of the learning curve. Once the website was dusted down and working with a lot of help from others who knew a little more, I began to help with the service videos and started encouraging other members of the congregation to send in clips so we could see and hear from

different people in each service. I set myself the task of learning how to do one new function with the video editing soft ware a week. This was extremely time consuming, but when I heard people say how much they appreciated it I felt it was valuable work and enjoyed the challenge.

Meanwhile much of the pastoral work that I had been doing transferred on line as we built up the resources section on the website. I kept in contact with people via phone calls as I could. So much of what was happening felt a positive reaction to a difficult situation.

But there were losses as well. My ordination as priest was postponed from June to September. That wasn't too much of a loss given the huge difficulties other people were facing. However, my elderly mother died at the end of July. Mum had prayed for me and supported me all my life. There was a feeling of incompleteness that she wouldn't be there to see me finally ordained as priest, something I had been working towards for so long. But then that is part of bereavement. I needed to take some time out in August and it was wonderful to see others step forward and take over the tasks I had been doing. I did feel it was good to be able to receive from the services and see them in a different way. Now that we have returned to having some services in church and my childminding is busier I am grateful to those who are continuing to produce the weekly online service allowing me to focus on other things.

So yes, it has been a year of uncertainties and change, but it has been rich in discovering those new understandings many of which have been very practical and technological. God has continued to be a God of surprises as well as a God who has constantly supported and guided me, whether through a psalm that spoke to me, or someone in my family who could solve a technological problem. It has certainly been a year of learning not just to live with change but to embrace the change and gain an understanding of working with it. I am simply left looking forward to what the next year will bring.

See pictures on page 4



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Pioneer Minister **Jane Wall** was interviewed by **Carol Ritson** about her life, faith, involvement in Stanwood Methodist Church and the Stannington Food Bank.

Where did you grow up? And when did you become a Christian?

I was born and grew up in Staffordshire, where, throughout my childhood I went to Sunday school, even staying on into my teens. For me being part of church was a place to meet my friends, a club where you had to be good, not about knowing Jesus. However some seeds must have been planted because eventually, after some years out of church, I felt compelled to go back. By this time I was married and living in Sheffield. The local church had quite a few young couples/families, who all lived nearby and socialised together. We felt very welcome and became regulars both on a Sunday morning and at various midweek activities. Then one day someone challenged me with the question 'how is your walk with Jesus?' I had no idea how to reply, as I had no idea what they were talking about! My lack of an answer prompted the asker to invite me to a meeting which was taking place in their home. At this meeting someone shared their testimony of how they had met Jesus and I just knew I wanted to meet him too. Shortly after this, I accepted Jesus as my saviour.

A few months later as a very new Christian we moved to Stannington and decided to find a new church near to our new home. Stanwood was nothing like we had known before, especially as the congregation was mainly middle aged, but we felt it was where we were meant to be. I was involved in lots of children's work and also the Stanwood Kitchen lunch club, but being so busy working for God left little time for faith development and I don't feel that I grew much as a Christian in the following years. Eventually I realised I was hungry to know God more and so, as the new millennium began, I gave up all the work I was doing, left Stanwood and began a new leg of my journey of faith. As I studied God's word and listened to preachers and teachers I began to discover who I really was and to believe that Jesus really loved me for who I was, not for what I could achieve. At this point I truly became a new creation. Faith was not about rules, or about being good, it was about knowing I am loved, which changed everything.

How did you become the Pioneer Minister at Stanwood Methodist Church?

With my new confidence, I enrolled on a course at Cliff College and when I graduated I applied for the job of Children and Families worker at Stanwood. Somehow I had always felt I would be back. As I developed the role and began new projects, building a team of volunteers, the Methodist church changed my job title to Pioneer Minister and increased my hours. Although my job title has changed, those of you who know me, know I am happy surrounded by toys and games, paint and



glue, and plenty of folk of all ages to have a good natter with! I am looking forward to the restrictions being lifted and seeing what God has in store for me in the next leg of my faith journey.

When you get the idea to start the foodbank? And how can people access or donate to it?

Joe Cooper and I met up and he began to share my ministry. I was reminded again of the vision God gave me of the church as the centre of the community, a place of healing for body mind and spirit, where all are welcome. It was out of this vision that we decided to begin the foodbank. We started in January this year and were just beginning to gain confidence in what we were doing when we were hit with lockdown. Suddenly no-one was allowed inside the building, so instead of chatting to folk over refreshments, we were on the doorstep, handing out pre packed standard food parcels, with the option of additional fresh goods, and our opening time was reduced to just one hour (12 noon until 1pm on Mondays).

We have seen an increase in the number of folk using the foodbank during the lockdown and particularly an increase in the number of families. As the economic crisis bites we expect to see a further rise in the number of foodbank clients. We are so thankful for the amazing generosity of the people of Stannington who give faithfully week by week. If you haven't donated before and wish to do so, check out our list of requirements which is updated weekly on our Facebook page, then take your items to the donation box at 18 Ashurst Place, the Go Local shop or Morrison's store... or pop in to Stanwood on a Monday from 10am, we would love to see you.



CHRIST CHURCH HALL

School Lane, Stannington



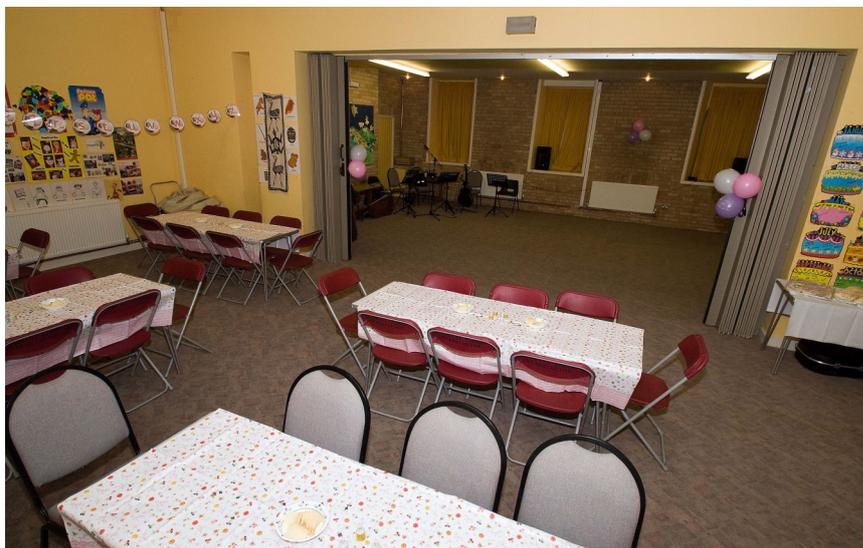
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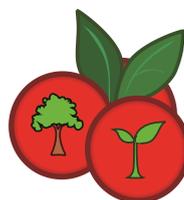
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“Not all Dandelions” by Carolyn Gibbs

On my walks and bike rides around Stannington, one thing that I have been aware of is the range of wild flowers in the grass verges.

Just at the moment, there are lots of yellow flowers. I remember that celandines and primroses are spring flowers, and I can recognise buttercups, so I initially assumed the others to all be dandelions.

However, a closer look reveals hardly any that are really dandelions – there is far more variety, which I needed the internet to help me identify. When I started researching, I was amazed by the enormous number of possibilities for yellow daisy-like flowers, so I’m sorry if I have made some mistakes!

I think this is mouse-ear hawkweed. The petals are flat at the ends (not rounded), and look as though someone has snipped them into little fringes. They also grow on longer, thinner stems, and the soft, hairy oval leaves (which can’t be seen on this photo, but apparently give this plant its lovely name!) are different to the jagged dandelion ones.



This third one has large clusters of yellow flowers on taller stems. It’s ragwort, and is definitely worth recognising if you have anything to do with horses, as it is poisonous to them.



Another bigger plant, however has much more aggressive spiky leaves – I think this is a prickly sow-thistle. Although the shape of the leaves is similar to dandelions, they are glossy, and grow out of a taller stem, rather than forming a rosette flat on the ground.



For comparison, here is a real dandelion – I struggled to find one in flower at this time of the year.



Why do names matter? Well they give each plant its identity, and help us to know its properties and characteristics. Mouse-ear hawkweed is no problem growing just through the fence by a pony paddock, but ragwort is. I could pick dandelion leaves to add to a salad, but I wouldn't want to try to pick a prickly sow-thistle!

Names matter to us too. In my class at secondary school, among the seventeen girls, there were two Carolyns, two Carolines and a Carol! We, of course expected the teachers to know who was who, and got annoyed if they mixed us up. At Christ Church, we have Carolyn (rhymes with Lyn), Caroline (rhymes with line), Caryl, Carole and Carol; all look and sound different, but all contribute in different ways to the life of our church and community. When people say and spell our names correctly, we feel known and valued.

In Isaiah 43: vs 1, God says "I have called you by name; you are mine". He knows you as an individual, with all your characteristics – both talents and weaknesses. At baptism, when our failings are washed away symbolically by water, we are addressed specifically by our name. This is the name by which he claims us – clean and pure – and the priest declares this using God's three names; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Do we realise how intimately God knows us? Or do you think he just looks quickly and treats us all the same? Psalm 139 is worth reading – it spells out how he knows us better than we know ourselves. In verse 6, the writer expresses it like this: "Your knowledge of me is too deep; it is beyond my understanding."

God doesn't make the mistake of thinking we are all identical dandelions. He knows whether we are prickly and defensive, soft and vulnerable or occasionally poisonous to others. But what he sees is the beauty of our flowering.



STANNINGTON METHODIST CHURCH

at Knowle Top Chapel, *Stannington Road S6 6AN,*
a Dementia-friendly church.

Minister, Revd Sally Coleman, 266 4637



Knowle Top Chapel, Stannington Methodist Church, is currently closed because of coronavirus and there are no plans to re-open until the situation eases. Reluctantly the congregation has come to the decision that we will have to close the church for good next year as we are no longer viable, being mainly elderly and few in number and finding the responsibility of maintaining the buildings too much.

We do not have a final date for closure but it is likely to be in the autumn/winter 2021.

Please be assured that the graveyard will be kept and maintained for the future

We will let everyone know as soon as we have details.

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Stanwood Methodist Church



Our minister is **Rev Sally Coleman 0114 266 4637**

Services

To protect our vulnerable members and in keeping with Methodist circuit guidelines we will not be having Sunday services for this quarter (September – November). However we will be open for focused, reflective prayer, led by our minister on Wednesday mornings from 9.30 till approximately 10.15 starting Wednesday 23rd September and then fortnightly.

The Stannington Foodbank

A joint venture with Christ Church, the foodbank is open on Mondays between 12 noon and 1pm. All are welcome, there is no need to be referred. The foodbank is made possible by the generosity of local people, if you would like to make a donation of food, please see the foodbank Facebook page for our up to date requirements. Donations can be brought on Monday mornings from 10am; during Slimming World sessions; or left in the box at 18 Ashurst place, or at the Go Local store, or at Morrisons.



Boy's Brigade and Girl's Association

BBGA will be moving to a new day, MONDAY and a new time 3.30-4.30. We do plan to re-open in October.



Youth Group

We hope to re-open our group for young people in years 6,7 & 8 soon (subject to local and national restrictions), so look out for the publicity around the church and on Stannington Facebook page.

Unfortunately due to the coronavirus restrictions the **following groups are suspended**

Lego Club (a joint venture with Stannington TARA),

Small Fry (stay and play for under 5's and their carers)

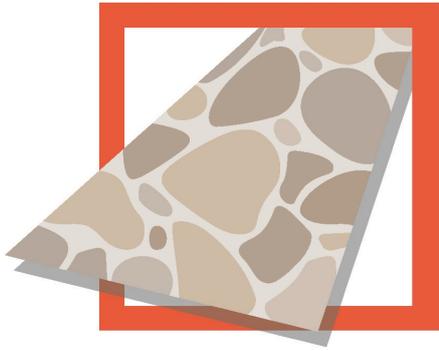
Snack 'n' chat (a light lunch and dessert),

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Sunday Breakfast club (for families with young children)

Half term Family Fun Days (crafts and activities around a biblical theme)

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December 2020 Magazine

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Email: info@christchurchstannington.co.uk

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