

St John's Methodist Church



2010-2022

St John's Methodist Church April 17 2022

In 2010 we celebrated 50 years since worship first took place in the St John's building. We had hoped for a 60-year celebration in April 2020, but Covid descended and lockdown imposed.

There are a few things to mention about the years between 2010 and 2022. Following our 50th anniversary, we decided to continue the early morning communion service in the Wesley Room followed by breakfast. The once-a-quarter meditative worship was appreciated, as was the breakfast. These services ceased as fewer people came out early on Sundays. The small Bible Study Group continued too, but, after some years, people felt they could not come out in the evening. Sunday morning worship showed similar trends.

Open Doors coffee lounge in the Wesley Room on Saturday mornings was a good opportunity to meet the parents of the children who were attending the Maths and English classes in the Youth Hall. We enjoyed these mornings, with coffee available; and toys for the young brothers and sisters also waiting.

Creative sessions had been held on Saturday mornings at harvest and Christmas. Messy Church was suggested and an enthusiastic team came together. It was decided to move to Saturday afternoon, with the whole premises available. Messy Church took place once a month, pianists accompanied the singing in the worship and Bible story session in the church. Families enjoyed the tea provided afterwards.

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee was celebrated with a tea party, then Joyce's 90th birthday in the same year as Her Majesty's 90th.

Sadly, after ten years of lively and creative times, Messy Church had stop due to lockdown. Even when groups could meet again, the sessions could not be offered in a meaningful way. In addition, there had been the sadness of the loss of a team member and a supportive member of the congregation.

St John's has been in covenant with the two neighbouring churches through Churches on the Hill, Amersham. We joined in Lent courses held for all three congregations. United services have been held each year in January and the Summer. The most recent Cotha service was at St John's, with a good congregation. A small music group came together to play for that service.

St John's continued to support Action for Children through the December Gift and Toy service and with carol singing round the streets of Amersham. Refreshments were provided by different hosts afterwards. This, too, had to stop in 2020. We have supported Action for Children's work in Buckinghamshire by donations since then. We have also supported the Circuit Outreach projects, through quiz evenings and having collecting boxes at home.

Christian Aid's annual house to house collecting and fairs also suffered due to the Covid restrictions, but again donations came in for Christian Aid Week and we were able to make a contribution from St John's.

At harvest time a variety of organisations have been supported, from All We Can (Methodist Relief and Development) to the local food bank last year. We have also given support to Wycombe Homeless Connection. Uniformed organisations at St John's helped by adding to the gifts of tinned and packet food for harvest and toys for the Christmas gift service. Remembrance Parade services have been a priority for the Scout Group at St John's and Scouts have participated by reading lessons and prayers. There were imaginative drama scenes on some occasions.

St John's was the host venue for several years for Amersham's World Day of Prayer. Participants in the choir and presentation of the services came from the various local churches.

We have been active in different ways since our 50th anniversary, but we have suffered the loss of people and the disruption of Covid. Worship ceased for a time in 2020 and in 2021, but the Circuit ministers and a local preacher offered a time of reflection or worship each day, including Sunday, on the Amersham Circuit you-tube channel. The Sunday time of worship on the you-tube channel continues. A worship sheet 'Thoughts and a prayer' was provided for us each Sunday for the twelve months from March 2020. This was a point of encouragement and a way of keeping the community connected.

We re-opened for worship in September 2020. On Christmas Day 2020 service, for the last carol the congregation gathered outside in the arcade and sang 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' – our first communal hymn singing since the March of that year. Singing as a congregation was not allowed until mid-way through 2021. Sunday worship started again in March 2021, offering a

time together every other Sunday. This has been valuable for those who attend, though we have missed our other colleagues.

Various tasks have been undertaken by members of the congregation over the past few years – providing music and flowers for the church, welcoming people to services, providing coffee and tea, ensuring the finances are in order, ensuring the premises are in order and keeping in touch with the congregation through hospitality and the pastoral visitor system. Men's and ladies groups met locally for lunch several times in the year. Bookings and cleaning have been efficiently carried out by our Bookings Administrator and our cleaner.

Our prayers will be with all our congregation and our minister as we move off in different directions, with our memories of times past. We are thankful for the work of God undertaken at St John's and we know that this has already been carried into other places. Now we shall all be scattered, but we pray we will each find good ground in which to flourish.

Ann Cloke, April 2022



Daffodils at St John's
March 2021



Harvest Celebration at St John's
2016