

Affinity



SUMMER 2026

OADBY TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH

Oadby Trinity Methodist Church

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Cover photograph "Symonds Yat" courtesy of David Calow.

Oadby Church Picnic

5th July 2026

Save the date!

Picnic to take place in the Manse garden following all age morning Worship at Trinity. This will be our last Church picnic with Derek and Chris before they leave us to move to Oxford to start their retirement. We can enjoy good food and happy memories of Chris and Derek's eight years with us.

Come, bring and share food. No need to sign up. Just turn up on the day with a plate of food; whether it is savoury or sweet, there is sure to be plenty of variety.

Teas and coffees will be available. Feel free to bring soft drinks to share.

Garden games available.

[We will meet in the Hall if the weather lets us down with rain!]



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Storytelling Jesus,
You invite us to make your story, our story.
Your story reminds us God so loves the whole world.
Teach us, Jesus, your arts of storytelling, singing and dancing that
open up paths of healing and renewal.
Help us, Jesus, to lean into and learn from your story;
to make it our own, so justice, loving kindness and mercy may join
hands around the world that God so loves. Amen.

I have included this prayer in this issue of Affinity as it has been offered by Deacon Karen McBride who is Warden of the Methodist Diaconal Order. Karen is taking up her appointment as Deacon in Leicester Trinity Circuit in September and will be based at Bishop Street Methodist Church.

The prayer has been sourced from the Methodist Church website, but can also be found on page 71 [day 20] of the current Methodist Prayer Handbook—"Our Story, Our Song"

Heather Corlett [Editor]

JUNE SERVICES

Sunday 7th

8.30 Rev Derek McLean -Holy Communion

10.30 Rev Daniel Pratt Morris-Chapman –all age Worship

6.00 Circuit Summer Service at Wigston Magna [preceded by refreshments at 5.00 pm]

Sunday 14th –MHA Sunday

10.30 Rev Derek McLean –Holy Communion

6.00 Rev Derek McLean - online circuit service

Sunday 21st

10.30 Rev Liam Dacre-Davis

6.00 Rev Liam Dacre-Davis - online circuit service

Sunday 28th –Conference Sunday

10.30 Conference Worship Live

6.00 **No online circuit service**

Midweek service on 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 11.30am. All welcome

Saturday Prayers 10.30-11.00am weekly with various leaders. All welcome

JULY SERVICES

Sunday 5th

8.30 Rev Derek McLean -Holy Communion

10.30 Rev Derek McLean –all age Worship

12.00 Manse Garden party

6.00 Circuit Summer Service at Wigston Magna [preceded by refreshments at 5.00 pm]

Sunday 12th

10.30 Rev Derek McLean –Holy Communion

6.30 Rev Ian Hu - Circuit farewell service for Rev Derek McLean and Rev Liam Dacre –Davis at Trinity [also available online]

Sunday 19th

10.30 Colin Haddon

6.00 Rev Ian Hu -online circuit service

Sunday July 26th –Action for Children Sunday

10.30 Howard Smith

6.00 Rev Kim Alexander

Midweek Worship on 2nd & 4th Wednesday [in July only]

AUGUST SERVICES –BIBLE MONTH

Sunday 2nd - Philippians 1

8.30 Rev Ian Hu -Holy Communion

10.30 Service led by Graham Austen & Ian Bell

6.00 Circuit SummerService at Wigston Magna preceded by refreshments at 5.00 pm. **[not online]**

Sunday 9th –Philippians 2

10.30 Service led by Anne Dodge & Lesley Green

6.00 Rev Andrew Farrington - online circuit service

Sunday 16th -Philippians 3

10.30 Tricia Lockley

6.00 Rev Ian Hu - online circuit service

Sunday 23rd –Philippians 4

10.30 Heather Corlett

6.00 Dr Miriam Stevenson - online circuit service

Sunday 30th

10.30 Circuit Welcome service for Rev Shirlynn Toppin and Deacon Karen McBride at Trinity [also online]

6.00 Rev Andrew Farrington –online circuit service

Diary Dates – Ministers leaving and Ministers arriving

5th July There will be a picnic in the manse garden following the All-Age Service

12th July This will be Derek's last Sunday here at Trinity. He will lead a Communion service at 10:30. During the service we will also acknowledge Chris' contribution to the life of this church and circuit over the last eight years.

There will then be a Circuit leaving service here at Oadby (Trinity) at 6:30 pm. This will give us opportunity to say goodbye to Revd Liam Dacre-Davis as well as Derek

19th July will be Liam's last Sunday in the circuit with his final service likely to be at 10:45am at Bishop Street

30th August 10:45am Circuit Welcome Service for Revd Shirlyn Toppin and Deacon Karen McBride, which will be held here at Oadby Trinity. Shirlyn will be the new Superintendent for the Leicester Trinity Circuit, and she will also take over Pastoral Care for Trinity MC Oadby. Karen will focus on city centre ministry, primarily based at Bishop St, a role which will include Chaplaincy at the University of Leicester



Heather Corlett: Editor

Editorial

Welcome to the Summer 2026 issue of Affinity, which covers the months of June, July and August. It will be an eventful three months as we say “Goodbye” and Thank you” to Rev Derek and Chris Mclean in July and prepare to welcome our new Presbyter and circuit Superintendent, Rev Shirlyn Toppin in September. This will be Derek’s last “Message from the Manse” for Affinity. Thank you Derek, for your pastoral care, and the words of encouragement and uplifting ministry that you have shared through the magazine during the past eight years. Thanks also go to Chris who has made a massive contribution to Junior Church, Foodbank and to Zeph’s Café where she has been a regular volunteer serving food to customers. We pray God’s blessing on Derek and Chris and wish them well as they begin this new phase of their lives.

The deadline for the Autumn 2026 edition of Affinity , which covers the months of June, July and August, is **Sunday August 16th**. All contributions to Heather Corlett [Editor] by that date please. Please use the same email as for the weekly notices and state that your contribution is for Affinity.

Articles need to be 250 words [1 page], 375 words [1 1/2 pages] and 500 words [2 pages]. **Please** try to keep articles as close as possible to these lengths.

Heather Corlett [Editor]

Email: notices@oadbymethodist.org.uk



Rev Derek McLean

Message from the Manse

Eight years ago, I received an email from Heather Corlett, inviting me to contribute something for Affinity magazine.

Some things stay the same: Heather is still the Editor, and I am grateful for the enormous amount of work that she has put into the magazine and to the weekly notices throughout that period. In other respects, we've all changed a lot in that time. The Affinity folder on my laptop indicates that I've contributed 191 articles (excluding this one) to the magazine in my time here.

I haven't gone back and re-read them all, to see whether my opinions have changed in the interim. That first introduction did say that I was looking forward to supporting a different Premier League football team. (That went well, didn't it?) It didn't anticipate how much I would enjoy watching Leicester Tigers.

It also emphasised a couple of aspects of my previous ministry which I thought would continue in my time here. First, I wrote then about my commitment to Inclusion; to the belief that God loves everyone regardless of whether "the world" sees them as important. (Or sometimes, the church.) Throughout my time here, we have kept coming back to that.

Chris and I were delighted to find that Bamboozle were the charity for WOW in our first year here, and we've continued to support them since. We've been less involved in Disability inclusion than we might previously have expected, but it has been important.

It has been no surprise that Interfaith work became more prominent here than in my previous appointment. That has taken many

forms: regular visits to the mosque; joint work hosting events or acts of solidarity in the face of terrorism or hostility; welcoming diverse people into “our” buildings; chatting to people in Zeph’s; attending festivals such as Leicester Diwali.

The work of Inclusion has involved significant conversations about Gender and Sexuality, partly because of a wider public debate, but primarily because it became possible for Methodist churches to host Same-Sex Marriages: I was delighted when that became a reality for our church, rather than just a theoretical idea.

The second theme in that introductory letter was my interest in Israel-Palestine. I’ve long been committed to combatting antisemitism, and some of you have heard many sermons from me lamenting the way in which parts of the church continues to use Scripture as a weapon of hatred against Jews and Judaism. I’ve valued the work of the local CCJ (Council for Christians & Jews), St Philips Centre (Interfaith), and the members of the Jewish Community that I’ve met locally, and when I’ve been made very welcome at each of our local synagogues.

I hold firm to that fight against antisemitism whilst also speaking up for Palestinian rights. At that time, I’d just returned from a trip to Palestine to witness the work of Christian Aid. I would probably have been surprised that I’ve only been back once since. However, that trip was my extended visit when I spent my Sabbatical in Al Khalil/ Hebron which was delayed by Covid, and subsequent trips have proved impossible in the face of war and conflict. Instead, I’ve been involved in Amos Trust visits to Oadby, links with Palestinian students here in Leicester, and with various Leicester-based organisations campaigning for Palestinian rights.

Despite all the change, there is much that is constant.

We faithfully follow the example of Jesus. He noticed and reached

out to the weakest and most vulnerable. At times, that involved standing up to mobs, to people in political authority, and to those religious authorities who clung selfishly to power, or who excluded those who didn't match their definition of purity.

That faithfulness has been present in our worship, in the times we have rejoiced together, and in times of loss and lament. We've known Jesus alongside us.

During the morning Communion service on 12th July, I will particularly reflect on those life changes: baptisms, confirmations, welcoming new members, weddings, funerals. I hope many of you will be there as we do that, gathered at Jesus' table.

The Circuit farewell service will be at 6:30pm on that same day. We will also say goodbye to Liam as he moves circuits, to give thanks to Malcolm for his interim work covering Superintendent duties, and we will be praying for James as he starts his new life as a Deacon in Cambridge.

Hopefully, many of you will be able to join us for the picnic in the manse garden at lunchtime on 5th July, following the All Age Worship.

Please hold Chris and I in prayer as we commence our new life in Oxford, and I'm sure you will offer prayerful and practical support to Shirlyn as she moves into the Oadby manse, ready for the Welcome Service on 30th August, and starting work on 1st September.

Rev Derek

General Church Meeting May 10th 2026

This year's meeting took place following the morning service on May 10th and 38 people came along.

We considered the Reports which had been earlier submitted and compiled into a booklet by Howard Smith. This is a wonderful summary of all the work which takes place year in and year out at Trinity and we thank all those involved.

Special thanks and applause went to John Cooper for his exemplary work in taking over after the sad and sudden loss of our Church Treasurer, David Frost. Thanks were also expressed to the Property Team whose work goes on behind the scenes and is very much appreciated by all who use the premises.

Chris McLean drew our attention to the difficulties in which the Junior Church will find itself when she and Derek leave us in the summer as this will probably mean we only have one leader who obviously cannot run this alone. 5 families are now involved and it would be a great loss if this were not to continue. Volunteers are urgently required.

We went on to appoint our Steward team for the coming year: Diane Price, Heather Corlett, Jane Calow, John Cooper, Lesley Green and John Aldridge. Christine Young kindly offered to be a member of the Church Council and Suzanne retired and was thanked for her service.

The Worship Support Team of Jess, Dale and Janice agreed to be re-elected.

At the close of the meeting Howard gave a very well received Vote of Thanks to Chris and Derek as this was to be their last General Church Meeting before leaving us.

Stella Orbell,

Secretary'

Life's Journey;

As I travel through my life in joyful times and sorrow,
Walk with me Lord throughout each day, and on to each tomorrow.
It's not an easy journey, but faith will be my guide.
And I shall travel trustingly with you, Lord by my side.
And, as I travel let me smile, a friendly word or two;
For what I do for others is my way of thanking you.

[It was interesting to hear Pope Leo's message this Easter; "Take the joy of Jesus to everyone you meet".]

Margaret Cartwright

BIBLE MONTH 2026 at TRINITY

Bible Month is an annual initiative promoted jointly by The Methodist Church and Leaders of Worship and Preachers Trust (LWPT). Paul's **Letter to the Philippians** which consists of just four chapters is the chosen book this year. Many churches use Bible Month resources during June, but once again at Trinity we shall be doing so on the **first four Sundays in August**. (2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd). On the final Sunday in August (30th) Trinity is hosting the Circuit Welcome Service for Revd Shirlyn Toppin and Deacon Karen McBride.

The church in the coastal trading city of Philippi was established by St. Paul c49-50CE in response to the vision in which a man of Macedonia pleaded *"Come over to Macedonia and help us"*. Acts 16.6-40 tells the story of Paul's experiences there, including his brief imprisonment and a midnight earthquake.

Philippians has been described as *"a book overflowing with joy, encouragement and Christ-centred hope"*. It is essentially a pastoral letter addressed to a mixed congregation of Gentile and former Jewish Christians. Paul was writing from prison (1.13-14), probably in Rome, c61-63CE.

Earlier this year the Regional Training Network organised an on-line training day which can still be accessed via *YouTube*. Lead speaker was Revd Catrin Harland-Davies (CH-D) of The Queen's Foundation in Birmingham. She identifies two key themes in this letter: Joy and Unity.

Joy: *"Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, Rejoice"*. (4.4). Considering Paul was writing this letter from prison his repeated use of the language of 'joy' or 'rejoice' is surprising! Paul's joy is clearly linked to his unshakable confidence in the goodness and providence of God. Joy is more substantial than 'happiness'. *"With joy in Christ deep in our being, we are freed from the need to present a happy front in all circumstances, or pretend that things are not as they are, but we are equally freed from the need to despair."* (CH-D).

Unity: *“Make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.”* (2.2). Throughout the letter Paul urges his readers to rejoice in the gifts and spiritual growth of each other as they share together in the work of the gospel. He urges them to *“do all things without murmuring and arguing”* (2.14) and *“to keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me.”* (4.9).

The ‘Christ Hymn’: This epistle is perhaps best known for the passage (2.5-11) in which there is *“a poetic outpouring of praise, a profound piece of theological hymnody.”* (CH-D). These powerful verses describe the humility and self-emptying of Christ, (*“taking the form of a slave”*) and his later exaltation and Lordship (*“every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”*). This key passage is paraphrased in the hymn *At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow.* (*Singing the Faith* 317).

These four services will be led by some of our own Local Preachers and Worship Leaders.

Week 1: **A Harvest of Joy** (*Philippians 1*): Graham Austen and Ian Bell

Week 2: **Shine Humbly** (*Philippians 2*): Anne Dodge and Lesley Green

Week 3: **Press On** (*Philippians 3*): Tricia Lockley

Week 4: **Grace be with you** (*Philippians 4*): Heather Corlett.

Look out for free copies of the **30-Day Reading Guide to the Letter to the Philippians** which will be available in the church foyer from late July onwards. *“Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”* (4.8).

Howard Smith

ZEPH'S UPDATE

I am very pleased to be able to say that we have found two people who would like to join the Zeph's Board of Directors and we will be asking Church Council to agree to this at their meeting in June.

Mark Elton brings a wealth of business experience and has been involved with a number of community groups and charities. With many years' experience with the NHS, Carla Smith has a background in business and strategy and a strong focus on people and wellbeing. Both live locally and both have been regular supporters of Zeph's!

Business since Christmas has been good and our financial position reflects this and the fact that we have optimised staffing levels wherever we can. I am conscious though that business seems to quieten down during May and June – possibly because a number of our customers go away on holiday then – so please do all that you can to support the Café during this time.

There will, as always, be a number of events in the coming weeks. The first Friday of each month is Fish Fryday. The other events for the next few weeks will be

22 May – Movie Theme Night with a choir singing classic movie song

19 June – Greek Night

24 July – Italian Night

21 August – French Night

18 September – Great British Menu Night

For all the events, call in at the café to book or simply ring Zeph's and remember, book early to avoid disappointment. Remember also that if you are in need of a buffet or some cakes for a special event then Zeph's will be pleased to help.

Our thanks to Michael, our staff and volunteers for all they continue to do to make Zeph's the excellent café it is. Thanks also to Mel Labbett who continues to look after the garden at Zeph's. Now that summer is upon us, having a garden full of beautiful flowers is a real asset.

Frazer Robson, Chair of Board of Directors



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not taking any new ad-
verts in the church
magazine.**

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so on the screen in Zephs
Café.**

The Lectionary

There is no requirement to Methodist services to follow the lectionary, but it is the normal practice of most of our circuit preachers and churches to do so. Sometimes churches seek to mark a particular theme or charity such as MHA, Action for Children or All We Can. Preachers will sometimes choose themes which are important to them, particularly for the online evening service, where we seldom follow the set readings for evening service.

On this plan, several churches have chosen to follow Bible Month where the theme is Philippians. In each case we try to mark the Plan accordingly.

Over the summer the lectionary follows two distinct paths, Continuous and Related. The Gospel readings are the same in both, but they offer a choice between reading through passages in the Hebrew Bible [Old Testament] sequentially through a particular book, or selecting a passage with some connection to the Gospel reading. On this plan, the passages listed are from the "Related" readings because few of our churches use the OT readings regularly enough for the use of the Continuous readings to make sense.

There is also a change to the lectionary underway, which is especially important at a time of increased antisemitism. The RCL [Revised Common Lectionary] was structured so that the book of Acts is read in the season of Easter. This is always slightly odd insofar as it meant that we celebrated Pentecost *after* we read about the events which followed it! More significantly the choice and the positioning of the readings has given support to an implicit antisemitism in the way that we read them. There is excellent material on the Methodist Resources website giving more information about this.

Source: Summer Preaching plan –Leicester Trinity Circuit



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