



# Melbourne Methodist Church ANNUAL REPORT 2022

*Dear Friends,*

In September 2020, as we arrived in Melbourne and I became your minister, none of us had any idea of what the next few months would hold. I was looking forward to sharing in worship, telling stories at Splash, eating cake at the Tea Service and so much more! Little did we know that it would be some time before we could be in the same room. Thank goodness for Zoom worship, bible studies and prayer, Blessings Bags, telephones, email and doorstep visits, all helping us to stay connected to one another and with God.

September 2021 we relaunched! Weekly activities were once more face to face. Some of those faces were new and some more familiar but I know we all felt such joy at being together. News from each of those groups can be found within this leaflet. Some of you may be amazed at all that happens in the life of our church. My hope is that you will feel encouraged and seek to encourage others as they grow in the knowledge of God's love. Our focus over the last year, alongside the relaunching of our community activities, has been prayer. We have continued to use a monthly prayer diary containing contributions from people within our church family helping us to stay connected as we pray. In the Autumn we looked at the Prayer Course, making this the main subject of our morning worship. We met weekly on a Sunday evening to be part of Prayer and Share and in Lent we focused on the theme of unanswered prayer using God on Mute as a guide, both for worship and our study group.

As we move into a new church year we are not simply going to look back and celebrate the work we have been involved in but look ahead. Often we think about what God is calling us to do, and that is important, but we also need to think about why we do it. What is it that we need to be to carry out the task that God has given to us, to "Go and make disciples"? At our General Church Meeting we will be taking time to do some dreaming and planning, thinking about how to answer that question.

*Blessings, Sally*

## THANK YOU

Whilst reflecting on the last year in our church it's important to say a big 'thank you' to everyone who helps keep the church running week by week. We have an amazing church family who are willing to share their skills and talents so that we can show God's love within our community. Thank you to everyone.

## HOLIDAY CLUB

Monday 15th August was the first day of the now annual Adventure Cruise Holiday Club. During the week over 60 primary school age children attended, to hear Bible stories, play games and make wonderful craft items. We've had so many children saying how much they enjoyed learning about Jesus whilst having lots of fun.



Many thanks to everyone who helped in any way with raising funds for Christian Aid Week this year. The total raised by all the churches in Melbourne was an amazing £3,555. This includes money donated at the events in our church, collected from the envelopes, donated on the JustGiving page and any gift aid

## AFTERNOON TEA SERVICE



Our monthly Afternoon Tea Services continue to thrive with between 40 and 50 people attending each time to sing favourite hymns, listen to a thought for the day and enjoy a delicious afternoon tea

## CAMPING WEEKEND

The camping weekend was arranged over the first weekend in July at Carsington Fields, near Ashbourne. About 25 people enjoyed walking, talking, eating, playing games and spending time together. On the Sunday Ben and Becky Wilkinson invited us back to their house for an open-air church service in their garden.

## FINANCE & PROPERTY

Over the last two years we have replaced the elderly heating boilers in the Church and in Wesley Hall. Expensive roofing repairs have also been carried out. This, and reduced income from lettings during the pandemic, means that our current reserves are at their lowest level for many years. Fortunately, many people continue to donate to the church each month by standing order so that we have a steady base income – but please review if you can.

We continue to give 10% of all our income (unless given for specific purposes) to a range of charities selected every few years by the Church General Meeting. We have also supported Ukrainian refugees in Poland through connections with a church in Ostroda. £3,000 was given through the church bank account during the 2021 -22 year.

# SUNDAY SERVICES

The focus of our church life is our Sunday service which takes place at 10.30am each week. We gather for worship and bible teaching led by our minister or one of the local preachers. This is followed by refreshments and the opportunity to chat and catch up with each other. All are welcome.

## JUNIOR CHURCH

Since Covid, we have been running only one Junior Church group for children ages from 4-11 years old. We are blessed with some wonderful children who attend regularly and are equally blessed with amazing Junior Church leaders and helpers. There is also a group of wonderful teenagers who meet regularly on Sundays. Please pray for the children and young people in our Junior Church that they would continue to be sure of how much God loves them and the plans He has for them. Pray too for our Junior Church to grow.

## PRAYER

We recognise that prayer is and should be an essential part of the life of the church. We are grateful for the monthly prayer diaries for assisting us in our prayer life. After a long, enforced period of praying together online we are pleased to be meeting together in Church on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday evenings at 7.30pm. when we can share together and wait on God. We are few in number and would love others to join us even if it's only for a few minutes.

## PASTORAL CARE

A lot of the care we show for each other happens, as it should, in an informal way but within the church there is a team of carers ready to help when needed. Please don't hesitate to pass on any concerns or requests for help to Rev Sally.

## WORSHIP GROUP

Our worship group currently has two pianists, four worship leaders and several young musicians who join us when they can.

We liaise with the preachers each week for the Sunday service and meet to practice (typically on a Thursday at 8pm) when we are able to.

## CONTACT

Our minister is  
**Rev Sally Ratcliffe**  
Tel. 01332 405286

Please contact Sally for more information about our church and any of the activities listed in this leaflet.



## TIDDLYWINKS

Tiddlywinks is a child and carer group for children aged one to two and a half years old. We meet weekly on Mondays during term time for story time, singing, craft and play, as well as providing refreshments for children and carers. Our stories are Christian. We give an age-appropriate Christian book to children when they leave, and have end of term parties and give gifts at Christmas and Easter. We have also given carers the opportunity to support the Church's charitable giving. We work to create a welcoming and encouraging group to support carers, facilitate friendships and spotlight God's love. Approximately 15 children come each week.



## Baby Group

9 Months is a baby group for parents and carers of children up to a year in age. It meets on Tuesday mornings and provides a space to meet up and make friends over a drink and a biscuit. Numbers vary but many parents enjoy this quiet, relaxing and supportive group.

## SATURDAY COFFEE MORNINGS

The monthly Saturday Coffee Mornings have been taking place for over 40 years. They're a place to meet for friendship and fellowship whilst enjoying a coffee. All are welcome on the first Saturday of the month.

## crafteasy

A community group gathering around a love of crafting. Meeting twice a month in term time we focus on friendship, sharing and discovering crafting skills. Sessions have intentional soft edges, come when you like, leave as you wish and there is no formal agenda or timetable. We have made new friends and been able to support each other when life is hard chatting over good coffee and cake. Non-crafters are welcome too!



Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month we rearrange our church for a baby and toddler friendly time of bible stories, singing, craft, playing and refreshments. Parents and carers enjoy time to catch up while the children enjoy the activities. We're very grateful for the wonderful team of volunteers that make it possible.