

UOMC GENERAL CHURCH MEETING REPORTS 2019 –2020



Unity Oldland Methodist Church,
West Street,
Oldland Common,
Bristol BS30 9QS
www.uomc.org.uk

We are part of the Bristol Methodist District
Bristol and South Gloucestershire Methodist Circuit. 7/2

WELCOME

Our Mission

Unity Oldland Methodist Church seeks to proclaim the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out our discipleship in worship and mission.

Relationship with God

- ◆ The worship of God in word and sacrament in the power of the Holy Spirit
- ◆ Celebrating the Good News and the love of Jesus Christ
- ◆ Encouraging growth in faith, discipleship and spirituality

Relationship with each other

- ◆ Welcoming, open and inclusive church, offering fellowship and support for all
- ◆ Encouraging and supporting, working amongst people of all ages (babies to older people)

Relationship with the community

- ◆ Serving as a focal point in the community
- ◆ Encouraging our relationship with other churches and community groups
- ◆ Reaching out to the local and wider community with God's love in Christ offering opportunities to express their spirituality

**UNITY OLDLAND METHODIST CHURCH
General Church Meeting
DATE TO BE AGREED**

AGENDA

Welcome and Devotions

Attendance, Apologies and Remembrance

Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th May 2019

**Matters Arising (that are not covered later in the
agenda)**

Appointment of Church Officers

Election of Representatives to Church Council

**Treasurer's Report and Appointment of External
Examiner**

Reports on Church Life – questions or comments

Pastoral Issues

Ministry and Witness of the Church

Closing Prayer

UNITY OLDLAND METHODIST CHURCH GENERAL CHURCH MEETING 15th MAY 2019

Present: Rev David Willis (Chair), Rev Chris Spencer, Jane Allinson, Roger Allinson, Brenda Andrews, Alison Bennett, Christine Blake, Colin Cradock, Norma Cradock, Gwyneth Dean, Liane Efthymiou, Brenda Flay, Joy Harris, Molly Hathway, Ruth Mallett, Monica Pullin, Reg Pullin, Shaun Rickerby, Susan Rickerby, Margaret Slucutt, Jo Stevens, Phil White.

Dr Vicky Davies, Circuit Steward, also attended.

Apologies: Bob Andrews, Helen Day, Jean Gay, Richard Helliar, Val Helliar, Rev Gordon James, Joyce James, Pat Lansdale, Linda Pope, Susan Weaver, Eunice Wilson.

Rev David Willis welcomed everyone to the meeting and led the opening devotions.

The meeting stood to remember the life and witness of Margaret Richards who had belonged to UO until she left the area.

Minutes of the General Church Meeting held on 16th May 2018.

These were signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

The meeting recorded its thanks to Margaret Slucutt not only for producing the booklet information for this meeting, but also for the weekly notices and monthly magazine.

Appointments of Church Officers

The meeting thanked Shaun Rickerby who stood down as steward after serving 6 years.

Joy Harris, whose term of office also ended, was re-elected as steward.

Susan Rickerby was re-elected as Treasurer.

Alison Bennett and Eunice Wilson were confirmed as Communion Stewards.

The following were also appointed: Liane Ethymiou, JMA, Phil White, Property Steward and Brenda Andrews as Pastoral Secretary.

Election of Representatives to the Church Council

Thanks were extended to Sheila Jennings and Marlene Pullin who have served on the Church Council but do not wish to be re-elected.

Helen Day and Molly Hathway were elected to serve and Naomi Howell and Monica Pullin, re-elected.

Jane Allinson (2014), Richard Helliard (2016), Ruth Mallett (2016), and Linda Pope were confirmed as representatives to the Church Council.

Colin Cradock was confirmed as a member of the Church Council representing the Social and Fundraising Committee.

Treasurer's Report

Susan Rickerby had previously presented a simplified account sheet to the church showing the current shortfall between income and expenditure.

There has been a small increase in giving and it is hoped that the Gift Day on July 20th will put the Finances back on track.

The full accounts, currently being audited, are available to any person wishing to see them.

The meeting, having seen the simplified accounts, agreed that they should be signed.

The Warmley Tower Graveyard Fund has received a grant from Bitton Parish Council and has approached Oldland Parish Council for funding.

It was noted that if at any time neither the church nor parishes are able to fund the upkeep, South Gloucestershire Council has a duty to do so.

David thanked all those responsible for keeping the graveyard in such good order.

The Church has held over £100,000 because of the building work and therefore needs to register as a charity. Susan will complete the forms required. It is expected that the final bill for the building should be received soon and the church premises formally handed over to us.

It was proposed and agreed that Liam Davies should be appointed the External Examiner.

The meeting thanked Susan for all her hard work.

Reports on Church Life

The reports had been circulated before the meeting and reflect the active life of the church. All those leading and supporting groups were thanked for the work they do.

It was noted that since the last meeting the Church Council had appointed Alison Bennett to succeed Norma Cradock as Worship Consultation Convenor, and Norma was thanked for all she has done.

In the East Cluster a new youth group, Ichthus, has started for the 13-18 age group, and the meeting recorded thanks to Pat Lansdale for the many years of service she has given to youth work.

There is still a need to set up some form of group for the 20+ age group.

The Bible Study group expressed its thanks to Chris Spencer and will look for new leadership when Chris leaves in August.

There will be two 'special' Coffee mornings, one in August for Traidcraft and the other in September for MacMillan.

There are also concerts by the Community Choir. It is hoped that the choir will work with the Longwell Green Orchestra for a performance in October.

Events set up by the Social and Fundraising Group as well as the Film Nights, Coffee Mornings and Wednesday Welcome have already made an impact on the community. All those who help with the publicity were thanked.

The Church Council is looking to erect an exterior notice board so that events can be seen more clearly by passers-by.

Pastoral Issues

In addition to the printed report, Brenda Andrews emphasised the outreach achieved when the church flowers are taken to those outside the worshipping community.

Ministry and Witness of the Church

Rev David Willis reiterated that we have much to celebrate as a church community and thanked the church for its understanding and support as has had to take on greater responsibilities in the last 12 months.

The Methodist Church is concentrating on the power of testimony in the next year and he encouraged us to consider how this might be incorporated into our worship.

David thanked Chris Spencer for the work he has done in this church and throughout the cluster in the past 5 years and wished him well as he takes up his post as associate priest in the Anglican Church in North Wales in August.

The meeting endorsed David's good wishes, recognising the immense contribution Chris has made.

The meeting closed in prayer at 8:45pm.

Date of next General Meeting May 13th 2020

(Due to Coronavirus this meeting will be rescheduled once we are back in our church.)

A new normal...

I write this piece for our Annual Report as we near the end of April and have been in lockdown for almost six weeks. Normally within my article I would recount and celebrate with you all that we have started to do and have achieved together over the last twelve months.

Like, how we kicked the Connexional year off very differently with a wonderful Community Celebration in September. A very different kind of service where we partnered with Cherry Garden Primary School and shared in food and a number of varied activities around the theme of 'Journeys' – culminating in a time of sharing, worship and celebration. Or, how we had an action-packed Christmas programme both at Unity, but also in the wider Cluster. With 'Carols and Steam' seeing their biggest attendance yet and our Cluster Nine Lessons and Carols being wonderfully supported by our Unity Community Choir once again. Or, how it has been such a privilege to see and hear that our Film Club is growing, how the Guild have organised an exciting and varied programme and how Wriggle, Giggle, Hop has grown, and continues to connect us with young families.

I would then probably, normally, do a slight plug for our finances in order to keep growing this important and needed work. To say how thankful we are, that Staple Hill Methodist Church generously lent us the money needed to settle the remaining balance with the builders at zero percent interest, but we must ensure we match their kindness and generosity by paying back this debt.

I would probably then have ended by thanking everyone again for their hard work, generosity and dedication to our faith and community together, and shared the exciting plans for a week long Cluster Summer Playscheme we were hoping to host – plugging the need to sign up and volunteer.

However, I would still like to share these important comments with you. The problem is all the news outlets and politicians are talking about the need to discover a new normal due to the Coronavirus pandemic. It has meant that we have not been able to gather together physically for the last six weeks, and although

the newspapers and journalists are hinting at the lockdown ending soon, it is not yet clear when it is that we will be able to physically gather together again as a faith community.

Thankfully though, several of us have still been able to meet online and even worship together – to which hopefully more will be able to join us, as all are welcome. The regular phone calls, emails, thoughts and prayers have been a powerful testimony of our faith, but also, of our love for one another. Although we cannot physically be with each other, we are still in this together.

But the once a day walk, the Zoom meetings, the keeping two metres apart and queuing at the supermarket just to enter, has become our new normal. And although at some point it will end, things have changed, and we will be feeling the ramifications of the Coronavirus for a long time to come.

For us though as a faith community, this question of a 'new normal' is so profoundly important. Especially, after the events of Jesus on the cross. His death briefly became the new normal as the disciples hid away in locked rooms – not quite self-isolating, but instead hiding from fears of reprisals. It was at that moment though, that Jesus appeared to them and they discovered the power of the resurrection. A new way of being, of living and a purpose that took hold of them.

My hope is that like the disciples then, we discover our new normal not based on past events, but through the power of future hopes. As we begin to think about how we may once again gather to worship, socialise and pray. As we dwell on the things about our church that we have not missed while having to isolate, but also, of the things that we have longed for during the lockdown.

As we begin to process all that we have been through, and all that we now hope for through Christ, may we to discover a new normal that will lead us deeper into our faith, closer in our fellowship with one another and more aware of what we can let go of, and of what is important.

Every blessing,
Rev. David Willis

Stewards Report

It seems really odd to be writing this report at a time when the church building is closed and we are not holding our normally busy schedule of activities. We could not have known when we met at Worship Consultation and planned our Lent services that within a few months all events and worship would have been cancelled and that only a few of our planned services were able to take place. Whilst this current period of lockdown is so difficult for many people and the loss of life from the current virus has been truly horrific, it has made us appreciate how important our friends and family are to us and our church family is no different. I am sure you are all missing each other greatly.

I want to start by thanking all the stewards including the door, book and sound stewards who have over the last year continued to make sure our Sunday worship and midweek activities go smoothly. We have a very strong team that work well together and are blessed to have so many varied skills that are put to good use within the church. We rely heavily on the generosity of several people who work behind the scenes to get the building ready for events and are there regularly ensuring that maintenance is done. Your time and talent is much appreciated and the wider church family is grateful for all you do.

The last twelve months have been as busy as usual with the varied events that fill the diary as well as family celebrations including a wedding last summer! The stewards helped to organise our first Community service when we did something special for the 5th Sunday of the month and invited participation from a local primary school. We look forward to continuing with local engagement once the current lockdown is lifted. There will be a lot of catching up to do once we are allowed to return to our building!

One issue that we have been working on in conjunction with other stewards in the cluster is what we would like to do with the vacancy created by Chris Spencer's departure to North Wales with his family. I know that many of you still stay in touch with Chris and have noticed how he has continued and

built on the community led work he started here and we have been looking together at what role we would like Chris's replacement to fulfil and what areas we would like them to focus on. It is the feeling of our stewards that we would like this person, when appointed, to continue to work with the local schools to allow us to build up our youth work but also to work with local care homes and develop our pastoral work. The current situation has brought the appointment to a halt for the time being but like many other things, this will be picked up again once things ease.

As you will have seen in the May newsletter, one consequence of our not meeting as a church is a lack of regular cash collections. Some members give their Sunday collection money through a bank standing order and this will continue but on an average month we may have up to £1,000 in cash and envelopes in the collection plate plus of course revenue from Coffee Morning, Wednesday Welcome and Film Night to mention just a few. We need to ensure that we continue to keep this money coming into the church and the stewards can support you through setting up a standing order, donating via a giving website that we are setting up or arranging to collect cash from homes. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you need assistance, it would be good to think that our bills will stop arriving because the church is closed, but sadly they will not!

The stewarding team have continued in the past year to meet to discuss our church life and most recently had our first conference call over the telephone once meeting together became impossible. We are continuing to ensure that we are able to extend pastoral support where needed. Despite the fact that Mothering Sunday was the first service that was cancelled, the normal gifts of flowers were still distributed and our thanks go to Tracey Lansdale for organising that. I also want to thank Gwyneth Dean and Margaret Slucutt who should both be taking a well-deserved break from stewarding after completing their six year term this year. Both have kindly agreed to stay on until the end of this Connexional year to help us through this current difficult period. We would normally have looked to find new stewards to replace Gwyneth and Margaret had we held our AGM but this will now be delayed. Joy Harris Senior Steward

You may also know that Brenda Andrews and Richard Helliard have been organising a virtual church service on a Sunday afternoon which has allowed us to continue to worship via Zoom, albeit remotely! A couple of services were held initially to see how the technology worked and as this has gone well, it is intended to open this up to the whole church family. Please let Richard or Brenda know if you would like to join the service, for the sake of security we need to all be invited by email with the log in details. Whilst we cannot meet together in person at the moment, we can still worship as a family.

I do hope that by the time you get to read this, we will all have a better idea of how much longer we will need to stay at home and we may have an idea of when our church activity might recommence. Please remember though that our church family is about a group of people, not just our building, beautiful though it is! We are a community of believers that share and support one another and if you need any help or can offer some assistance to others at this tricky time please let one of us know. Please continue to stay safe and look after yourselves!

Joy Harris
Senior Steward

Working with Southern Brooks Community Partnerships we filled Christmas 17 gift boxes for families. The boxes were given to local families in need.

Thanks to all that helped to fill the boxes especially Jo Stevens.



Annual Finance Report.

I have included the summary receipts and payments for the year to 31 August 2019 as that is the year under review. You will see that our unrestricted fund "general fund" received income of £42,440 and we spent £41,449 leaving a small amount of £991 to start the recovery of our reserves (they were largely diminished by the loss of interest from our investments used to pay for the building work and the slow recovery of income from other users of the property once we re-opened).

The income included nearly £5,000 from fundraising and events (a further £900 was raised for the building fund) and the Gift Day raised £4,600 not including any tax claims we will be able to make. Our rents brought in £3,500, nearly double that of the previous year. Our biggest source of income was the weekly collections, a combined cash and envelope total before Gift Aid of £14,700. Standing orders amounted to £8,750. We spent it mainly on the assessment, £29,400, insurance £1,400, utilities, cleaning and maintenance £5,900, laptop £440, copyright licence £430 (both of these items also allowed us to show films, which generated £1,240 included in the events income).

At 31 August, we still owed the builders £15,000. We have taken a loan from Staple Hill Methodist Church for £14,000. £10,000 has gone to the builders with the rest retained initially pending rectification work needed. Of course, these works have not yet been able to be completed and the builders have let us know that they are able to allow us to hold on to the balance of £5,000 for the time being.

At 30 April 2020, 6 weeks into the lockdown, our bank balances are £13,760. But £4,000 of this is the unspent Staple Hill loan for the building works which we should not use to fund day to day expenditure. £525 belongs to the benevolent fund which also is restricted in its use. A further £7,465 will shortly go to pay our next assessment and around £1,500 will be needed for the insurance renewal also due soon. Our ongoing monthly commitments, after taking into account the current furlough leave grant for our cleaner, are around £450. If May and June only bring in the same income as April did, we will have spent

everything except the Staple Hill money and the benevolent fund by the end of June. The following quarters assessment will be due in August and the first Staple Hill loan repayment of £4,167 is due to be paid in October.

UNITY OLDLAND METHODIST CHURCH 1 September 2018 to 31 August 2019

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	Unrestricted fund	Restrict- ed funds	Total
Receipts- local	42,440	2,722	45,162
Receipts - capital		0	0
Payments - local	41,449	1,130	42,579
Payments - capital		63,080	63,080
Net receipts/(payments) for the year	991	(61,488)	(60,497)
Increase (decrease) in value of investments			0
Transfer between funds			0
	991	(61,488)	(60,497)
Balances brought forward 1 September	(1,952)	67,803	65,851
Balances carried forward 31 August	(961)	6,315	5,354

Restricted funds:-	
Building development fund	(1,442)
Furniture and music fund	1,963
Graveyard fund	99
Youth	170
Benevolent fund	525
	<hr/>
	1,315
Contingency	5,000
	<hr/>
Balances	6,315
	<hr/>
Represented by	
Current Accounts	1,061
CFB Deposit Account	707
Cash in Hand	0
Building fund account (CFB)	14
TMCP Investment Building Fund	1,311
Graveyard account	199
Year end timing adjustments	3,333
Funds held for other organisations	(1,271)
	<hr/>
	5,354
	<hr/>

Pastoral Report

First hopefully you are keeping well, staying safe and being sensible.

Thankfully looking through the list it would appear everything is still much the same as this time last year.

Sadly, though, we have lost 3 of our family in recent days Bob Andrews, Brian Carter and Eileen Palmer. They will be greatly missed and I know the prayers and thoughts of our church family are with those who are missing them the most. Brenda and her family, Maureen and her family and Eileen's family.

I think our membership numbers are now 72, but there are a few members I have queries about. I am happy for anyone to correct me on this.

We still have the same number of pastoral visitors, who I believe have been keeping their eye on those in their care throughout this very difficult time of isolation.

Also, I would like to mention those who are not pastoral visitors who do shopping for others. I am not going to mention them by name in case there are some I am not aware of. I am extremely grateful to the person who does the bulk of my shopping. This is truly a Christian family looking out to help others.

Until we meet again, may you not give up hope, our Lord is still with us all through each day.

Love Bren

Brenda Andrews
Pastoral Secretary

Worship Consultation

In the last year we have managed to have two very different services on the 5th Sunday in the month which were both attended well and we had very positive feedback on these, we hope that this will continue in the year ahead.

During Advent 2019 we looked at the Jesse Tree and its symbols. This was a very different direction for some and offered up challenges along the way but it is nice to challenge both our preachers and congregation.

We also held a Christingle Service on Christmas Eve. This was a beautiful service and the collection was sent to Action for Children. It was felt that we must publicise this better if we choose to do this in 2020.

Due to Covid 19, our Lent services were unfortunately cut short. We started to work through John's gospel with the 'I am the...' theme. The first 3 services were all very good with positive thoughts from the whole congregation. We hope that we will pick this up again later in the year or maybe carry over for Lent 2021.

Unfortunately, our Art service on the 17th May and our Church Anniversary both have to be postponed, but we will definitely rearrange the Art service and celebrate our anniversary when we are back together for worship.

Alison Bennett
Worship Convenor

Wesley Guild Report

Like all our other activities, the Guild is not meeting at the moment, and had to be suspended before the end of the session. We had enjoyed some excellent meetings prior to this, with the majority of them led by our own members, or old friends. We are particularly fortunate in this, as many Guilds have difficulty sourcing speakers. We began the session with the annual visit of our President and Minister, the Revd David Willis, and this was followed by talks from the Revd Gordon James, Colin Cradock, Barbara Bell, Gary Best, the Revd Hilary Cooke, Christine Jones, the Sense Family Centre, John Penny and Jo Stevens. We were also pleased to welcome Methodist Women in Britain for their Autumn meeting. We had been looking forward to a visit from Action for Children (previously the National Children's Home) and Naomi Howell, but these are two of the meetings which had to be cancelled. Unfortunately, our Annual General Meeting could not take place either, and so a number of decisions remain pending. I normally start making the programme for the next session immediately after the AGM, and like to have it complete by the end of May or June at the latest, but in view of the uncertainty of the current situation, I cannot see this happening for some time.

We had maintained our Cake Collection for One25 until March, and although some members were willing to continue to bake, the charity itself indicated they were not able to accept cakes from us at the moment.

I had intended to raise the issue at the AGM of our giving some financial support to the Church, as our money situation at Unity Oldland is somewhat precarious. I had sounded out a number of our Guilders who come from other Churches, and they were totally in agreement with this. If we are able to hold an AGM sometime before the next session begins, I will mention it again then.

Before I close, I want to thank Margaret Slucutt who has looked after our finances for many years, and Linda Pope who

accompanies our hymns for us, and our invaluable band of ladies including Monica, Eunice, Joy and Joan, who serve our refreshments. We are very grateful to you all.

Let us hope it will not be too long before we can meet again.

Norma Cradock
Chair

Wesley Guild One25 Bakers

One25 Bakers are such a fab group of people making a difference for those in one of the most complicated personal situations. After all that rain in January and February at least as we are in 'lockdown', due to coronavirus, the ladies who live on the streets and are sex workers have a dry pavement or archway.

We often don't want to understand why anyone would be in this situation. If you have had a difficult upbringing, had a horrid trauma in your life, you have no confidence and little self-respect and perhaps in the wrong company you might see yourself at times like trash.

One25 really helps these women with every element of their lives and it is always a thank you to our Lord when the women respond to one to one support. Housing advice, drug and alcohol treatments, a chance to learn new skills and make small steps away from the street. The women often say why would anyone want to make cakes for us? Homemade cake helps them to see that others love them through simple tasks like cakes. It can be a lifeline when they attend the Centre or get on the yellow bus which volunteers and specialist workers use at night 11pm to about 3am. A chance for the women to talk, have physical injuries attended to, a chance to feel safe and have a coffee and a cake.

The cakes we make are collected on the second Tuesday of the month at church between 7.15pm & 7.30pm. It is open to anyone to make fresh cakes, not frozen or previously frozen. We have bakers from St Anne's, URC, UCLG, Speedwell as well as UOMC. If you'd like to participate but need a cake

collected that is fine too, just contact Margaret S.

Sadly right now in this 'lockdown' One25 cannot accept cakes but they are making sure they are accessible to the women that so benefit from their work. I guess eking out the cake in their freezer.

One25 is based on Christian principles and they always appreciate prayers for their work and the women they support.

With grateful thanks.
Margaret Slucutt



**Our Community
Celebration held on
the 5th Sunday in
September 2019**



Bible Study

We are still a small group, but have enjoyed some very interesting meetings, led by Rev. David Willis and sometimes by Shaun.

Other churches in the cluster were invited to join us through Lent, and we were just in to 'Pioneer,' a book about new ways of looking at 'Church' when things came to a halt. People from the Circuit Ark Bus project were working with us and it was going well, though at times I did find myself thinking that we had tried that, or something very like it.

We will resume when permitted.

Molly

Wednesday Welcome

Our regulars turn up faithfully - or did up to the time of lockdown.

Shaun put up tables and moved chairs for us and Kay, Mike and Kay's cousin Sue produced excellent lunches which rounded off our morning activities - if you can call doing various puzzles, reading newspapers and magazines and doing whatever hobby people brought along or just chatting with friends being active.

But that is what these mornings are about, enjoying time together doing something that interests us and sharing food together.

We thank Kay, Mike, Sue and Shaun for their hard work, and think specially of Kay and family in their present circumstances.

Brenda Flay & Molly

Social and Fundraising Group 2019-20

Like all other activities in our Church, we are unable to hold any of our planned Social and Fund Raising events in the foreseeable future. These would have included a concert from Gordon Hayley, the May Fair, the Harvest Supper, Tom's Quiz with Pizzas and a visit from Andy Flack to talk about the history of Bristol Zoo.

Events in 2019 included the Cream Tea in July, which was very popular, and raised £183 profit. The Gift Day raised £4,600 but the Harvest Supper was not well supported and no profit was raised. Some discussion took place to consider if something different would be more popular. The Christmas Fair, however, was a success, as was the visit from Bel Mooney. Other activities which had been planned did not, after all, take place for a variety of reasons. These included the Mr & Mrs evening and the Alternative Cricket event. The meeting of the group itself to plan for the May Fair has also had to be cancelled.

When things are finally back to normal, we will meet to make plans for social and fundraising events which will be much needed.

Colin Cradock
Chair

Nita Nata Fellowship Group

Nita Nata continues fortnightly during the year. We are still enjoying making articles, including Matinee coats and larger baby blankets for both Baby units.

Some of our ladies continue to provide things for Christmas boxes, Julian Trust and 125.

New members have joined us and our number is now 15. In the winter months the numbers due to illness.

Ruth Mallett

Coffee Morning

We are delighted at the support from all local residents for our coffee mornings which happen on the first Wednesday of each month from 10am to 11.30am. Not January.

Grateful thanks to those who produce the cakes and jams for us to sell. It is all so well received that we rarely have cake over! We are sad to have lost Marlene's coffee cake, but we very much understand why. Thank you.

This year we were pleased to support the Big Brew for Traidcraft in August and to host the Macmillan Coffee Morning with friends from the churches in Oldland. We are adding them to our diary for 2020.

Huge thanks to Monica who is pivotal and keeps the show on the road, and to Val and Jo who kindly covers when I can't make it.

Margaret S



**Our MHA afternoon tea
Followed a service led by Rev David Willis
Oct 2019
Thanks to all who helped make is a great event.**

50:Sixties Group

The group has increased in members slightly and continues to meet usually on the 1st Friday of the Month. However, since Covid 19 social distancing and lockdown we have started meeting every Friday and whoever is free can join a Zoom meeting online if they wish. We felt it was a way of supporting each other through these strange times.

Our first weekly meeting was on Good Friday and out of that meeting grew the idea of doing a Sunday service online, while we are in lockdown. Initially we kept the meeting small to iron out any IT Gremlins and now slowly we are expanding our Sunday afternoon virtual congregation.

The group has done various social things, mainly meals out to celebrate milestone birthdays and anniversaries. Sadly, due to several reasons we were unable to do our usual Alternative Cricket Tournament early in the year, it was decided to



postpone it, probably until next year due to the current climate. We were able to take one of the Christmas Services which is always a popular service. At our heart is fun, friendship, fellowship, with spiritual enlightenment, which is always light hearted and raises a discussion. Val Helliar

Film Night Report

Our second year of running film night has come to a somewhat unscheduled end due to the current Coronavirus lockdown, this has meant that the final film in the year to end of April – Red Joan has had to be postponed until who knows when.

During the year we have been fortunate enough to screen eleven films varying in genre and hopefully appealing to a wide audience. It seems there is a preference for musical themed films with the two highest audiences being for Bohemian Rhapsody and Fisherman's Friends where numbers were 56 and 65 respectively.

Part of our original intention was to draw in people from the community who perhaps would not normally entertain coming through the doors of Unity Oldland and this has continued and grown during the past twelve months. We can't say whether it is just for the film or the fact they can get tea and coffee along with delicious home made biscuits and enjoy a choc ice or ice lolly during the interval! During the interval we have introduced an advertising section (in the true spirit of cinema) where we are able to advertise upcoming events, activities, services etc

All we ask is for a donation and people to enjoy their evening out, as there are no expenses, the total donations / income received has been £1357.26. We have therefore purchased a new laptop – Lenova V130 that can be used on film night and also for Sunday services etc. A donation of £65 was also made to the RNLI following the success of showing Fisherman's Friends, all other funds have been paid into the Church funds.

We have also continued to try and cater for the younger first time film goer, by taking the opportunity to screen, in the afternoon of school holidays, Peppa Pig which was attended by those from Wriggle Giggle, Hop and with some of our older film goers bringing their Grandchildren.

While the current program is now 'on hold' we hope that we will be able to resume at some point in some form with whatever 'Social Distancing' has to be maintained.

Val & Richard Helliard, Sue & Martyn Wheeler

Wriggle, Giggle and Hop

Can you believe WG&H has been running for 2 years now? Reaching out to the parent and carer community has been remarkably successful and we have continued to maintain steady numbers of around 40 people to each session. Making use of both rooms has enabled us to increase our age group from under 2's to under 3's which has been greatly appreciated by the families. There have been some strong friendships formed between parents that would never normally meet and everyone is welcoming to anyone new.

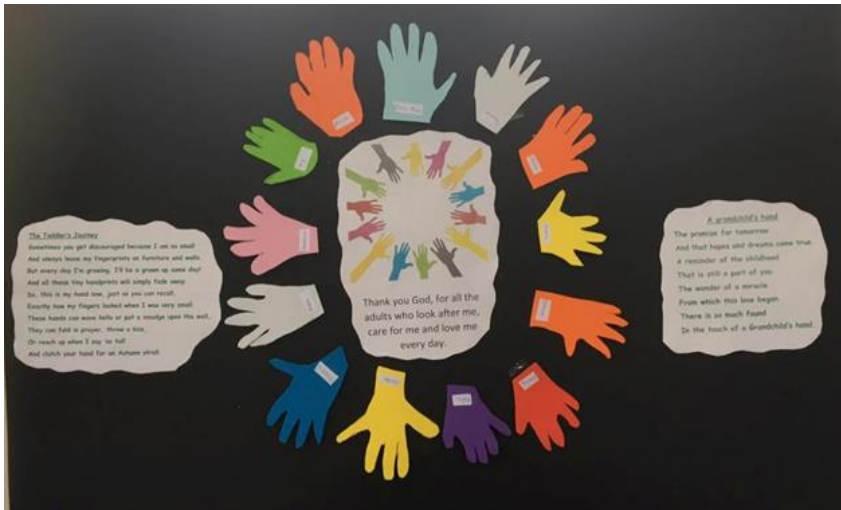


The parents and carers regularly comment on our facilities and are extremely thankful that we offer all of this for free. We have a donation bowl on a table with the sign in sheet for people to make a voluntary donation and we have been touched by the amount we have raised so far. Our hospitality says a lot about the church and provides people with a positive experience for what is sometimes their first time in the building.

Our food goes down a treat with both adults and children. Some children, like Ellie and Phoenix, run for food as soon as they arrive. It's lovely to see how confident they have grown over the years and developed into little toddlers.

We have crafts set up for the older children and they love getting involved, the messier the better. The use of the outdoor area is something that not many other places offer. The children love playing in the sand, water table, on the slide and ride-ons.

As people have become more familiar with the Church, they have started attending other activities as well. With the successful launch of our 5th Sunday service in September parents were pleased to see their older children's art work on display and stayed to worship with us. More parents are starting to attend our Family Film Afternoon and comment that it is a great way for them to watch a film whilst the children are entertained with toys and cushions at the front or colouring in the hall. We had families at our Christingle Service again and the children were happy to meet Father Christmas at our Christmas Party where each child was given a present.



Another wonderful thing about the group is our Facebook Presence. During this pandemic the families have been able to keep in touch with each other and share positive news, like Alfie taking his first steps. The strong community that has been built up is ready for more and we need to now think how we can involve them in other aspects of Church life. The Cluster Play Scheme would have been the perfect opportunity to get the parents and carers involved in something other than the once a week session and it's important we don't lose this momentum once life starts to return to normal.

I would like to offer a special thank you to everyone that has helped over the past two years; Susan, Jo, Lynette, Monica, Eunice, Tom and everyone else that has helped with setting up, supplying crafts or food, or simply keeping the group in their prayers. It all means so much and couldn't have worked without you.
Thank you.
Zoe



Unity Community Choir



The choir will have been in existence for 5 years this June. It has continued to grow in numbers and now has over 60 members! We rehearse on Thursday evenings and learn new songs along with old favourites. Our repertoire is very varied – a mixture of sacred and secular, old and new.

Last October, we worked collaboratively with Longwell Green Orchestra to put on a successful concert at Kings Oak School in aid of Young Carers. We also performed during two Christmas Carol Services at Hanham Methodist Church and Unity Oldland.

Our last rehearsal before the Coronavirus lockdown was on March 12th and we were at the time planning a concert this Autumn. It is very likely now that this will need to be postponed. It will probably be quite a while before choirs such as ours get be back together in any meaningful way.

We are all missing being together – not just for the singing but the friendship and wellbeing it brings.

Just before we stopped rehearsals, we had begun to learn a version of 'Be Still my Soul', the words of which have been helpful to many during the last couple of months.

As soon as we are able, we will be back singing and laughing together – hopefully with new vigour and appreciation of the joy of singing!

Lynette Bower

Unity Oldland Methodist Church Church Council Members

Minister	Rev David Willis
Circuit Staff	Rev David Alderman
Circuit Steward	Mike Culshaw
Senior Church Stewards	Joy Harris 2019 Phil White 2015
Church Stewards	Jo Stevens 2018 Roger Allinson 2017 Tracey Lansdale 2017 Susan Weaver 2017 Gwyneth Dean 2014 Margaret Slucutt 2014
Property Steward	Phil White 2015
Treasurer	Sue Rickerby 2019
Asst Treasurer	Alison Bennett 2016
Church Secretary	Susan Weaver 2016
Pastoral Secretary	Brenda Andrews 2014
Council Appointed	
Worship Consultation Convenor	Alison Bennett 2019
JMA	Liane Ethymiou 2016
Missions	Vacancy
Communion Stewards	Alison Bennett 2019 Eunice Wilson 2019

Social & Fundraising Committee

Colin Cradock 2017

AGM Appointed

Jane Allinson 2014

Richard Helliar 2016

Ruth Mallett 2016

Molly Hathway 2019

Helen Day 2019

Linda Pope 2019

Monica Pullin 2019

What goes on at UOMC normally

Talk to Ruth Mallett (07546101508) if you have any queries about bookings.

Services at UOMC commencing at 10.30am on a Sunday,. with a young church for children and young people.

Bible Study every Monday at 7.30pm

Wriggle Giggle & Hop Weekly. Tuesdays 10.30am for parents or carers with babies. A space to share and offering support and advice.

Stroke Club Tuesdays 1.30pm —4pm for people who have recently had a stroke. It is very friendly and sociable.

Wesley Guild 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month til May

Coffee Morning 1st Wed of each month at UOMC except January 10am—11.30am

Wednesday Welcome—3rd Wed of each month except August at UOMC 10.30am—2pm

Nita Nata—UOMC 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month 2—4pm

Yoga—From Wednesday 8th January at 7:15pm and finish at 8:45 pm. The class would suit beginners and improvers.

Community Choir—UOMC Thursdays at 7.30pm

Youth Club—UOMC talk with Jo

ONE25 cake collections either ring Margaret S for a collection or deliver to UOMC on 2nd Tuesday of each month between 7pm & 7.30pm. New bakery items always welcome. Not previously frozen please.