

ST. ALDHELM'S CHURCH, PICKWICK ROAD, CORSHAM, WILTS SN13 9BS (A united Methodist/United Reformed Church)

WE ARE A FAIRTRADE CHURCH

St. Aldhelm's Church Mission Statement

Our mission as a church is . . . TO LOVE AND WORSHIP GOD
. . . TO LOVE AND SERVE EACH OTHER
. . . TO LOVE AND SERVE THE COMMUNITY

To love and worship God we will offer:

Relevant, sincere heartfelt worship.
Encouragement towards a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
Opportunity for prayer, Bible study, learning, preaching and praise in music.

To love and serve each other we will commit to:

Pray for and with each other; Attendance at Church meetings.
Pastoral support of one another; Giving our time and money.
Encouragement and practical expressions of our love for one another.
Supporting the social life and activities of the fellowship.

To love and serve the community we will give ourselves to:

Befriending and making the Gospel known.
Holding special outreach events open to all.
Involvement in local issues; Identifying and meeting local needs.
Encouraging short term mission projects locally and in the wider world.

WE WILL SEEK AND EMBRACE GOD'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Priorities for St. Aldhelm's

Our **priorities** are evangelism, spiritual, church growth, preaching, teaching, children's and youth work (in particular a senior after school club), pastoral care to encompass all ages, those in their own homes and those in residential care, house groups, music, stewardship, administration, world mission, ecumenical relations and exploring new forms of Worship such as Contemplative Prayer and Cafe Church and on some Sundays after Morning Worship an opportunity for Prayers for Healing and Wholeness.

We have 55 on our pastoral care list, 37 are members, and the rest are adherents including 9 children. Some of the adherents attend church regularly. We have a very good Pastoral Team who care for our Church family. We also have a Prayer Circle.

The average Sunday morning congregation is 25-30, we have a Junior Church and a crèche for under 4's. Music is provided either by our pianist on the Clavinova or by Hymnal Plus which is operated by a few members of the congregation on a rota basis. We have a video projector for use in our worship, this enables us to use programmes such as PowerPoint, films, etc. Services include, All Age Worship quarterly, Communion is celebrated by both Methodist and URC styles with URC style being 1 in 3. Refreshments are served following all morning services and every 3rd Sunday a Traidcraft stall is available during refreshments. Members of the congregation give their collection through the Goodwill Offering System, cash, or by standing order. This year we received £3,210:44 as a Gift Aid rebate.

Our Church Council is served by Elders who play an important role in the running of the Church. One of our Elders is a Worship Leader. Elders usually meet three or four times a year and we have two Church meetings per year. Within the Eldership are the Treasurer, Secretary, Worship, Property, Outreach & Mission Committees. Members of the congregation also serve on these committees.

Ecumenically there is the Corsham Area Christian Churches which includes Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Baptists and ourselves. Two members of our congregation are Members of that Committee. Several joint activities are organised by the Committee for Lent, Good Friday, Pentecost and an outdoor Carol Service.

Our church is the host church for Corsham Churches Food Bank, an ecumenical enterprise. The food is mainly stored on our premises and people come to St. Aldhelms to collect their food parcels usually on a Tuesday and Saturday morning.

A Fundraising Group organise several fundraising events such as breakfasts, lunches, afternoon tea, jumble sales and participating in Town Fayre's etc.

We financially support:

Action for Children, mainly by means of our outdoor Carol Singing in Corsham shopping precinct, followed by a Church lunch.

JMA, Home and Overseas Missions.

Through C.O.P.A. we sponsor two children from the Dominican Republic.

Chippenham Street Pastors

Various charities by tithing

A Church Weekend Away is organised every other year alternating with 'A Church Weekend Away at Home'. Other sector churches are invited to join us on our away weekend. We have also held day retreats at a venue nearer to home, and various social activities, e.g.: town trails, entertainment events, skittles evenings, bring & share lunch, BBQ'S, and family fun days. Our Church has a skittles team (the Saints) who play in the Corsham & District Winter League, playing away in pubs and clubs. Other skittles teams are supportive of some of our events.

St. Aldhelm's, is a welcoming Church, and has been refurbished, replacing the pews with chairs, new floor covering and improved heating. This refurbishment ensures that along with the provision of a servery adjacent to the Church we can offer a versatile venue for services, concerts, meals and other gatherings. The large Church Hall has also been refurbished with a fully fitted kitchen and new windows have been fitted to the Hall, downstairs rooms, (with the exception of the kitchen, which already had a new window) and all upstairs windows in early 2017. Gas central heating has been fitted throughout the premises. A downstairs room has a television screen and a DVD player and the Junior Church upstairs room has a wall mounted TV combined with video player. One other room is also suitable for children's activities, committee meetings, small groups training etc. All this, together with a disabled toilet and baby changing facilities, makes the building a good venue for 'in house' activities and for hirers.

Various church activities takes place on the premises, such as:

A weekly Hive, which is a Carer's and Toddler Group (involving Mums, Grandparents etc),

Saturday Café, is held every Saturday morning in the Church, and is well attended by the community. A Book Swap takes place on the 1st Saturday of the month and a Traidcraft stall is available every 3rd Saturday of the month.

A Women's Breakfast with Bible Study meets monthly on a Thursday morning, followed by Church Prayer time; Prayer time also takes place on other dates. A Bible Study Group meets fortnightly on a Monday morning and a Bible Study Group meets fortnightly on a Monday evening.

Monthly craft morning

The premises are used by several 'outside' organisations including -

Two counselling services.

Wilts Age UK

A tap dancing group

Corsham Country Market rent storage space for their tables.

Children's Parties' and other social events.

Corsham, has a population of approximately 14,000 and growing, is situated in North Wiltshire on the A4 between Bath and Chippenham, with easy access to the M4 motorway only 6 miles away at Chippenham and a railway station in that town, many Corsham residents commute to larger towns for employment. However, there is some light industry located on several industrial estates around the town and MOD/Service establishments situated around the town are increasing. Corsham has a Comprehensive School, 3 Primary Schools, 1 private Kindergarten/Primary School and several Pre-Schools.

How St. Aldhelm's came to be

In 1790, a Congregational Chapel was founded and continued in being until 1972 when the Congregational Church joined with the Presbyterian Church to form the United Reformed Church. Approximately 150 yards away, a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel opened its doors for worship in October 1878. In 1902, a larger church was built adjacent to the original one which then became the present church hall. From 1968 onwards, the two churches grew gradually together, sharing worship occasionally and working together. Under the sensitive leadership of the ministers of that time, the two church families finally merged in 1984 to become **St. Aldhelm's Church**, using the Methodist premises. The name of our new united church was voted for on suggestions put forward by members, and St. Aldhelm's was chosen.

Who was St. Aldhelm?

He was an Irish monk who to live in the north east of Wiltshire in 654 and established a school which acquired fame as a community of scholars known as Malmesbury. In 669 he was sent to Canterbury where he became a great scholar, proficient in Greek, Latin and Hebrew, returning in 675 where shortly afterwards he became Abbot of Malmesbury until his death in 709. He was a poet, delighted in making riddles, followed the arithmetic and astronomy of his day, and worked hard at the varied forms and intricacies of metrical science. Above all, however, he loved music and could play all the known instruments of the day; he had a fine voice, and was skilled in his native song. He was distressed though because the townspeople were indifferent to church services, either by not attending, or by gossiping and remaining inattentive when they did attend. He would stand, therefore, on a town bridge, singing the popular ballads of the day. When a crowd was collected around him, he was able to give them some simple religious teaching. The days in which he lived were dark and his Christian example and saintly life brought fame and stability to Malmesbury and the surrounding area. He was a poet, writer, scholar, singer, teacher, reconciler, monk, priest and great churchman - a great example for all of us at St. Aldhelm's Church in Corsham.