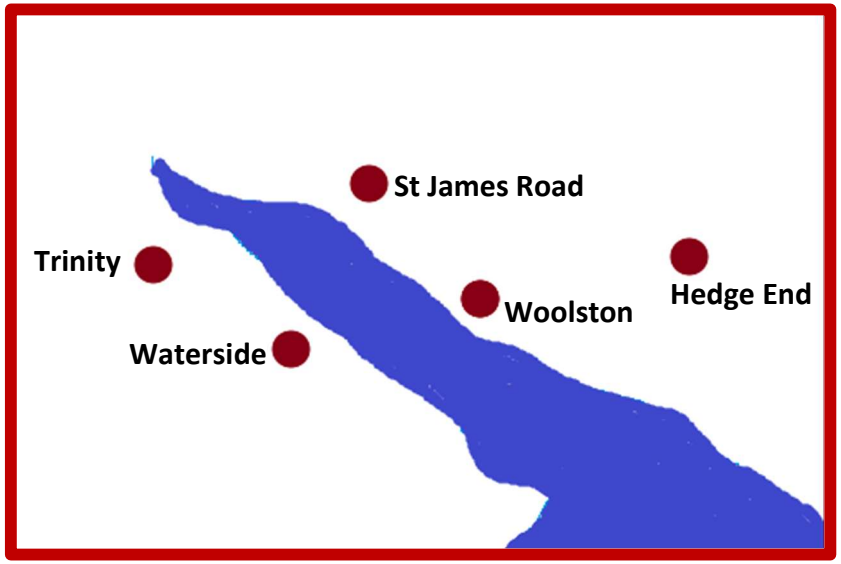
The **Methodist** Church

Southampton Circuit 26/1

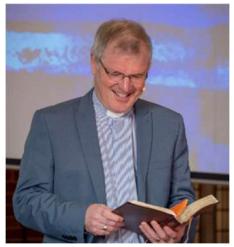
PREACHING PLAN AND NEWSLETTER



DECEMBER 2026 to FEBRUARY 2027

Immanuel…God with us

SUPER'S SOAP BOX



Dear Friends

This Quarter includes some very important services as we journey through the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Lent. In the midst of that we have our Covenant Service. The danger is we just 'cruise' through them, with a 'here we go again' attitude. However, they are rich in meaning and I encourage you to enter into all these services seeking a deeper understanding of our relationship with Jesus, which leads to a greater commitment to God.

I want to use my 'soapbox' to continue the theme I shared in the last Plan of *togetherness*. At the September Circuit Meeting we began to explore what this looks like as a circuit. Our staff team is growing *together.* The new Circuit Leadership Team format gives us more time to reflect on leading the circuit *together*. All of this is encouraging and gives us important foundations for our work of mission *together* as a circuit.

Our working *together,* though, is not about humans agreeing a plan of how to 'get on'. It's not about arranging more social events to get to know each other better...though building relationships is important. I suggest that our working *together* is because we have a common aim and goal….of serving God and making His name known in our communities. How we do that might look different in our different communities, but if we are not *together* in our focus on mission then we are not *together* at all.

My prayer for the circuit is the same as St Paul for the church in Ephesus:

Ephesians 3 v17. *And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

Your Superintendent,
Stephen

CHURCH DETAILS

Church	M	P	Address
Hedge End	53	SO	St Johns Road SO30 4AG
St James Road	153	SR	St James Road, Shirley, Southampton SO15 5HE
Trinity	48^	WW	Hazel Farm Road, Totton, SO40 8WU
Waterside	33	SO	North Road, Dibden Purlieu, SO45 4PG
Woolston	23	SO	Manor Road North, Woolston, SO19 2DU

(M=Membership; P= Presbyter in pastoral oversight)
^Membership Numbers for Trinity include Methodist and United Reformed members

Circuit Dates for the Diary

Wed. 2nd Dec	7.30pm	Circuit Meeting	St James Road, Shirley
Wed. 6th Jan	7.30pm	Preachers Meeting	St James Road, Shirley
Tues. 16th Feb	7.30pm	Circuit Leadership Team	St James Road, Shirley

Christmas Eve Services - Thursday 24th Dec

St James Rd, Shirley	5pm	Robinson	Christingle
Trinity, Totton	11.30pm	White	Holy Communion
Waterside	7pm	Odoom	Holy Communion
Woolston	8pm	Parkinson	Holy Communion
Hedge End	11pm	Odoom	Holy Communion
St James Rd, Shirley	11.30pm	Robinson	Holy Communion

Christmas Day Services - Friday 25th Dec

Hedge End	10.00 am	L Judd
Woolston	10.00 am	Odoom
St James Rd, Shirley	10.30 am	Robinson
Trinity, Totton	10.30 am	White

December 2026

		6	13	20	27
Liturgical Year		**Advent 2**	**Advent 3**	**Advent 4**	**Christmas 1**
Special Sundays					
Please pray for		***Hedge End, St James Road***	***Trinity, Waterside***	***Woolston, MHA***	***Uni Chaplaincy Fijian Fell.***
Hedge End	10.30am	Odoom HC	L Ludd	D Robinson Car	Franks
St James Rd, Shirley	9.30am	Bailey	Robinson	Robinson HC	10.30 Robinson
	11.15am	Bailey	Robinson HC	A Judd	
	6pm	Robinson		Robinson Car	
	7.30pm		NS Cafe 7pm		
	Wed 12noon	Robinson R	Prayer space R	Robinson R	
Trinity, Totton	10.30am	S Judd	White HC	Eden LA	
	6pm			White Car	
Waterside	11am	Robinson	Odoom HC	Elkin	Craggs
	7pm		Odoom Car		
Woolston	10.30am	Pritchard P		Odoom HC	
	6.30pm		2pm LA Car	Odoom Car	

Bible Readings for the Lectionary can be found at the back of the Methodist Worship Book **Year B**

All preachers are reminded that if they cannot fulfil an appointment, they must find an accredited substitute and inform the Superintendent Minister, Circuit Administrator and the relevant local Church Steward. Thank you.

January 2027

		3	10	17	24	31
Liturgical Year		**Christmas 2**	**Epiphany 1**	**Ordinary 2**	**Ordinary 3**	**Ordinary 4**
Special Sundays						
Please pray for		***Hedge End, St James Road***	***Trinity, Waterside***	***Woolston, MHA***	***Uni Chaplaincy Fijian Fell.***	***CLT, District***
Hedge End	10.30am	Odoom Cov	S Judd	Robinson	Odoom	Pearce
St James Rd, Shirley	9.30am	10.30am Robinson PC	Robinson Cov	Barnes	Robinson	10am Robinson/ Odoom BCB
	11.15am		Robinson Cov	Quansah	Robinson	
	6pm			Robinson HC	Odoom	Castle
	7.30pm		NS Café 7pm		NS Connect	
	Wed 12noon	Robinson R				Robinson R
Trinity, Totton	10.30am	White Cov	Parkinson	White	Eden LA	Elders LA
Waterside	11am	Pritchard	Odoom Cov	Pearce	LA	Franks
	7pm					
Woolston	10.30am	A Judd	L Judd	Odoom Cov	D Robinson	Craggs

DEADLINE FOR NEXT PLAN:

March to May 2027

Sunday 3rd January 2027

February 2027

		7	14	21	28
Liturgical Year		**Sunday before Lent**	**Lent 1**	**Lent 2**	**Lent 3**
Special Sundays			*Racial Justice*		
Please pray for		***Hedge End, St James Road***	***Trinity, Waterside***	***Woolston, MHA***	***Uni Chaplaincy, Fijian Fell.***
Hedge End	10.30am	Barnes	Odoom HC	A Judd	Quansah
St James Rd, Shirley	9.30am	Robinson HC	Bailey	Odoom	Robinson
	11.15am	Pritchard	Robinson HC	Odoom	Robinson
	6pm	Robinson		Robinson HC	L Judd
	7.30pm		NS Café 7pm		NS Connect
	Wed 12 noon	Robinson 7.30pm HC	Robinson R	Robinson R	Robinson R
Trinity,Totton	10.30am	White HC	S Brown	Robinson	Eden LA
Waterside	11am	Odoom HC	LA	Elkin	D Robinson
	7pm	LA BS			
Woolston	10.30am	Parkinson	Quansah	S Judd	Odoom HC

ABBREVIATIONS

B	Baptism	Cov	Covenant Service including HC	NS	New Song
BCB	Big Church Breakfast	Eden	Trinity Worship Group	P	Parade Service
BS	Breathing Space	HC	Holy Communion	PC	Pre Covenant
Car	Carol Service	LA	Local Arrangement	R	Reflective Worship
Chr	Christingle				

This Circuit Preaching Plan is a 'public document' under GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) legislation. The contact details for all preachers named within this Preaching Plan can be obtained from the Circuit Administrator

Christmas Prayer Space at SJR

I wonder if you're anything like me, every Advent Sunday you make a promise to yourself that this year Advent will be spent differently, thoughtfully, gently, in a Christ-centred way...only to find by December 5 that you are feeling stressed, a little overwhelmed and all of your good intentions have disappeared at the bottom of a 'to do' list!

If you recognise any of this in your own experience, then come along to the Christmas Prayer Space at SJR. It is an opportunity to 'press the pause button', to spend time 'being' and not 'doing'.







The Christmas Prayer Space is interactive and gives you time to breathe, to pause and reflect, listen and pray at your own pace. I've included photographs from last year's to give you a flavour of what to expect.

In it there's time to absorb yourself into the Christmas narrative, to journey to Bethlehem and know the wonder that Immanuel is born for you. There'll be opportunities to pray for yourself, those you love and the world, as well as to celebrate with the angels, the joy of that first Christmas.

The Prayer Space runs from Tuesday 15 December to Friday 18 December 10am to 4pm and additionally on Tuesday evening from 6pm to 8pm and Saturday 19 December from 10am to 12 noon. Everyone is welcome.

Dorothy Robinson



Thoughts from Sophia

'Light of the world'

Light of the world,
you stepped down into darkness,
opened my eyes, let me see
beauty that made this heart adore you
hope of a light spent with you. (StF 175)

Christmas is such a beautiful time of the year. The waiting and the anticipation make it exciting and more meaningful. There is an air of joy and expectation as we prepare to celebrate Christ, the Light of the World, who stepped into our darkness.
Light overcomes darkness and even in the midst of brokenness, there are glimpses of hope, renewal and new life.

Recently, I joined a Bible study in Woolston, where the focus was on the brokenness of our world. On the table were beautiful flowers that had grown out of a broken wall. As I looked at them, I was struck by the picture they created: even in places that are broken, something beautiful can grow. We may look at our world and see so much brokenness and darkness. Yet, even there, we can see glimpses of hope, renewal and expectation.

So, as we look forward in anticipation to Christmas, let us keep hope alive. Christ, the Light of the World is with us. Let us therefore be open and become attentive to the glimpses of light and hope that are present among us, even amid all the chaos and brokenness around us. Let us remain open and sensitive to where God's spirit is leading us in this new season, as we journey together in unity, faith and love.



Sophia

Covenant Service

On December 25th 1747 John Wesley strongly urged Methodists to 'renew their covenant with God'. The Covenant Service is traditionally held on the first Sunday of each New Year as an opportunity for Christians to begin the New Year `resolved' to be committed to God.

The Covenant service offers an opportunity for anyone to express their commitment to God in Jesus either for the first time or as a recommitment of existing faith. In the service we are assured of God's eternal promises to us. On our part we commit ourselves afresh to God in His service and ask God to be in all that we do. The service is both important and challenging.

It is appropriate that the service always includes Holy Communion as the 'new covenant', which Jesus Christ brings by His death and resurrection. Both the Covenant Service and Holy Communion remind us of our humanity and sinfulness. We are reminded in both of the grace of God in action, and He invites us to share in both Covenant and Communion. By God's grace and love in Jesus Christ He offers everyone a new start and the opportunity to know that you are a 'dearly loved child of God'.

May this service be both significant in our lives and also the motivation and purpose behind all we do in this coming year as we seek to be disciples of Jesus Christ.

In Thanksgiving

In September we were saddened to learn of the death of our longest serving Local Preacher, Margaret Doust. Margaret had been preaching since 1958 and it was only in relatively recent years that she was no longer able to take appointments.
We thank God for her life, faith and ministry and pray for her family

Be eco-friendly where possible…..

We encourage people not to make paper copies of the Plan and Newsletter as part of our commitment to the environment. We recognise some don't have internet access and paper copies can be made available for you.